



News Analysis (23 Jun, 2020)

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Initial Public Offer: LIC

Why in News

The Central government has started the process to launch the Initial Public Offer (IPO) of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).

- LIC is **fully owned by the government**. It was set up in 1956.
- It has the **biggest share in India's insurance business**.

Initial Public Offer

- IPO is the selling of securities to the public in the **primary market (a type of capital market)**.
 - **Primary market** deals with new securities being issued for the first time. It is also known as the new issues market.
 - It is **different from the secondary market** where existing securities are bought and sold. It is also known as the stock market or stock exchange.
- Under IPO, an unlisted company makes **either a fresh issue of securities** or an **offer for sale of its existing securities** or **both for the first time to the public**.
 - Through an IPO, an unlisted company can get listed on the stock exchange.
- It is generally used by new and medium-sized firms that are looking for funds to grow and expand their business.

Key Points

- **LIC IPO:**
 - The IPO is **expected to be the biggest in the Indian capital markets** given the size and scale of LIC.
 - The LIC's total assets had touched an all-time high of Rs. 31.11 lakh crore in 2018-19.
 - The government is seeking some exemption related to the LIC IPO from the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
- **Benefit:**
 - It will help the government **to meet its rising fiscal deficit**.
The rating agency S&P has estimated India's government (centre and states) fiscal deficit to rise to 11% of GDP in FY21 from 7.8% in FY20.
 - An IPO **will bring transparency into affairs of LIC** since it will be required to inform its value and other market-related developments on time to the stock exchanges.
 - It also **gives an opportunity for retail investors to participate** in the wealth creation of LIC.
 - Listing of companies on stock exchanges **disciplines the company** since it comes under greater scrutiny. It also **provides access to financial markets**, thus raising the company's value.
- **Issues Involved:**

LIC is currently dealing with huge non-performing assets.
- **Background:**
 - In the Budget 2020-21, the government had **announced plans for IPO of LIC** and a proposal to **sell the government's equity in the stressed IDBI Bank** to private, retail and institutional investors through the stock exchange.
LIC is also a majority shareholder in IDBI Bank.
 - The government expects to raise Rs. 90,000 crore through stake sale in LIC and IDBI Bank, and another Rs. 1.2 lakh crore through other **disinvestments**.
 - Earlier, in 2017, the government had listed the shares of General Insurance Corporation and New India Assurance through IPOs.

Source: IE

Senkaku Islands

Why in News

Recently, a **local council in southern Japan** has approved a bill to **change the name of an area containing Senkaku Islands** from Tonoshiro to Tonoshiro Senkaku.

- Senkaku Islands are known as the **Diaoyus by China and Tiaoyutai by Taiwan**.

- The islands are **disputed with China and Taiwan.**

Key Points



- **Japan's Stand:**
 - **Resolving Administrative Confusion:** The **name change is aimed at resolving administrative confusion** between a locale in downtown Ishigaki, which shares the name "Tonoshiro" similar to the island.
 - **Increased Chinese Presence:** It is also done in response to the increased Chinese presence in the waters close to the Senkakus. In a move to protect territorial integrity, Japan has decided to change the name.
 - **Support of the USA:** The United States has a mutual defense treaty with Japan. If Japanese territory is attacked by a foreign power, the United States is obligated to defend it.

- **China's Stand:**

- **China's Territorial Sovereignty:** Bill by Japan is a serious provocation to China's territorial sovereignty. The move is illegal.
- **Four-Principle Consensus:** Urged Japan to abide by the spirit of the four-principle consensus, avoid creating new incidents on the Diaoyu Islands issue, and take practical actions to maintain the stability of the East China Sea situation.

A four-point principle on improving China-Japan ties was approved in 2014 to develop a mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests.

- **Risk of a Crisis:** Changing the administrative designation would only make the dispute more complicated and bring more risks of a crisis

- **Taiwan's Stand:**

It also protested the move and claimed that the islands are part of its territory, and the **sovereignty of Tiaoyutai islands belongs to the country** and any move attempting to alter this fact is invalid.

- **Overall Impact:**

- **Asia's next military flashpoint:**

- Japan is not the only territorial and maritime dispute that China has long had with many of its neighbours.
- It has island and maritime border disputes with Taiwan, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam in the **South China Sea** and its extension.

- Hence, **Japan's move can strengthen the other countries territorial and maritime** claims.

- **Significance for India:**

- The development from Japan came just after the violent clash between Indian and Chinese troops over the **Line of Actual Control in Ladakh's Galwan Valley**.
- Given the trade volume and economic dependency that is the most dominant feature of the bilateral relationship, it would be crucial for India to act wisely.
- By supporting the **Japanese move, India can diplomatically strengthen** its position over Galwan Valley.
- However, Taiwan's engagement in the dispute is significant as it has supported India over the galwan valley but opposes the move of Japan.
- China has also augmented its naval power to strengthen its overall presence in the Indian Ocean. The move of Japan would give an opportunity to India to have a strategic edge over its presence in the Indian Ocean.

The Senkakus Island Chain Dispute

- The **Senkaku Islands dispute, or Diaoyu Islands dispute**, concerns a **territorial dispute** over a group of **uninhabited islands** known as the **Senkaku Islands in Japan, the Diaoyu Islands in China** and **Tiaoyutai Islands in Taiwan**.
- Eight uninhabited islands lie in the East China Sea. They have a total area of about 7 sq km and lie northeast of Taiwan.
- **Importance:** Islands are close to strategically important shipping lanes, offer rich fishing grounds and are thought to contain oil deposits.
- The Senkakus island chain has been administered by Japan since **1972, but its legal status has remained disputed** until now.
- Both Japan and China claim ownership of these islands.
- **Japan's Claim:**
 - After **World War II**, Japan renounced claims to a number of territories and islands including Taiwan in the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco.
 - But under the treaty the Nansei Shoto islands came under US trusteeship and were then returned to Japan in 1971.
 - Japan says that Senkaku islands are part of the Nansei Shoto islands and hence they also belong to Japan.
 - Besides, China raised no objections to the San Francisco deal. Only since the 1970s, when the issue of oil resources in the area emerged, that Chinese and Taiwanese authorities began pressing their claims.
- **China's Claim:**
 - These Islands have been part of its territory since ancient times, serving as important fishing grounds administered by the province of Taiwan.
 - When Taiwan was returned in the Treaty of San Francisco, China said the islands – as part of it – should also have been returned.

Source: HT

China to Join UN Arms Trade Treaty

Why in News

Recently, **China** has decided to join the **United Nations Arms Trade Treaty** (UN-ATT) to regulate its arms sales.

Key Points

- China held that it has always strictly controlled the export of military products and joining the treaty is an important step towards its **efforts to enhance peace and stability** in the world and **support multilateralism**.
China said that it only exports military products to sovereign countries and not to non-state actors.
- **Background:**
 - China's move comes after the **USA announced to pull out of the ATT in 2019**.
 - The reason given was that the **treaty amounts to international gun control**, and is a **threat to USA's second amendment right to bear arms**.
 - The USA also held that the **treaty fails to truly address the problem of irresponsible arms transfers** because other **top arms exporters like Russia and China were not signatories** to it that time (till now, Russia has neither signed it nor made any announcement to sign it).
 - In **May 2020**, USA announced to exit the **Open Skies Treaty (OST)**.
 - In **August 2019**, the USA along with Russia withdrew from the **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, 1987**.
 - The **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** in its annual report '**Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019**' highlighted that **China is the second-largest arms producer** in the world after the USA.

United Nations Arms Trade Treaty

- The UN-ATT **regulates the international trade in conventional arms**, from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships, and **controls the flow of weapons into conflict zones**.
- It entered into force on **24th December 2014**.
- The treaty **requires member countries to keep records of international transfers of weapons** and to **prohibit cross-border shipments** that could be used in human rights violations or attacks on civilians.

- **State parties to the treaty may seek assistance** in its implementation and the **UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR)** was launched to help in that.
 - UNSCAR is a **voluntary, flexible multi-donor trust fund** to kick-start advocacy, universalisation and implementation of the ATT.
 - **It aims to:**
 - Mobilize resources to support the ratification/accession and implementation of relevant international instruments on arms regulations.
 - Improve the effectiveness of assistance through coordination, monitoring and matching of resources.
 - Promote increased sustainability through more predictable sources of funding.

India's Stand on ATT

- **From the beginning** of the ATT process, India has maintained that such a treaty would make a real **impact on illicit trafficking in conventional arms and their illicit use** especially by terrorists and other unauthorised and unlawful non-state actors.
- India has been an **active participant in the ATT negotiations** and **stressed** consistently that the **ATT should ensure a balance of obligations between exporting and importing states**.
 - For India, the underlying principle is that member states have a legitimate right to self-defence and its own belief that there is no conflict between the pursuit of national security objectives and the aspiration of the ATT.
- **However, India has not signed the Treaty** on the grounds that it is **weak on terrorism and non-state actors** and these **concerns find no mention in the specific prohibitions** of the Treaty.
- Further, India **cannot accept that the Treaty is used as an instrument in the hands of exporting states** to take unilateral **force majeure** measures against importing states parties without consequences.

Way Forward

- Civilian populations often in conditions of poverty, deprivation and extreme inequality suffer the most because they are on the receiving end of the misuse of arms by state armed and security forces, non-state armed groups and organized criminal groups.
- Inadequate controls on arms transfers lead to the widespread availability and misuse of weapons disrupting the humanitarian and development operations of the UN.

- In many areas of work, the UN faces serious setbacks that ultimately can be traced to the consequences of the poorly regulated arms trade so the adoption of the ATT is very important for the UN system as a whole.
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Employment Scheme for Urban Poor: Jharkhand

Why in News

Jharkhand is set to launch a 100-day employment scheme for **urban unskilled workers** similar to the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme** (MGNREGS) amid the **coronavirus pandemic** and **increasing unemployment**.

- Recently the Government of India has launched a **rural public works** scheme '**Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan**' to provide livelihood opportunities to the returnee migrant workers and **rural citizens**.
- Even Jharkhand launched **three employment schemes** earlier to create wage employment for **workers in rural areas**. In this context, an **employment guarantee scheme for urban poor** is unique and timely intervention.

Key Points

- **Name of the Scheme:** The scheme will be known as **Mukhyamantri SHRAMIK (Shahri Rozgar Manjuri For Kamgar) Yojana**.
- **Objective:** Enhancing livelihood security for **urban poor**. They will be given priority in the existing schemes. If they could not be accommodated in existing schemes, exclusive schemes for the purpose will be created and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) would be given separate funds for this.
- **Basic Provisions:**
 - The workers will be able demand work either in writing or orally for a **minimum of seven days and a maximum of 100 days**.
 - If a worker has a child of five years or less, then a female worker will need to be employed—to take care of the child—and paid the minimum wage. All **basic amenities, medical facilities, registration as well as a social security** will be provided.
- **Demand based Work:** The work will be demand based and divided into various categories like cleanliness, water harvesting, tree plantation, public works construction or repair and managing shelter homes, among others.
- **Minimum Wage:** Workers will be paid the minimum wage as notified by the state government.
- **Decent Wage:** The wages under the proposed Yojana are likely to be at least 40% higher than that provided under the MGNREGA programme in the state.

- **Swift Transfer of Wages:** The amount will be credited to the bank account of workers, either after work or within seven days of the completion of work. In any situation, the payment has to be made within 15 days of the completion of work.
- **Unemployment Allowance:** Like MGNREGA, the scheme will also have a provision for unemployment allowance where a person who has asked for work does not get it within 15 days will be liable to be paid **one-fourth of the minimum wage** as allowance for the **first month**, **half the wage** in the **second month**, and the **full minimum wage** amount in the **third month of no work**.
- **Job Cards & Dedicated Website:** Urban workers will also be registered and they would be provided job cards. A special website is also being designed, similar to the website functions in MGNREGS.
- **Implementation:** The scheme will be implemented by the urban development and housing department through the state urban livelihood mission. Municipal commissioners, executive offices or special officers of municipal bodies will be the nodal officer of the scheme.

Background

- **Large Number of Casual Labours:** There are about 13-14 lakh households in urban areas of Jharkhand, of which around 15% are employed as casual labourers. An estimated 25% households in urban areas have been adversely affected by the extended lockdown.
- **Influx of Migrants:** There was a need for a scheme like this because of the huge influx of migrant workers to the state. This will help the migrant workers who returned to urban Jharkhand after the coronavirus outbreak.
- **Skill Mapping of Migrants:** Skill mapping of 2.5 lakh workers has revealed that 30% of workers who returned from different states are unskilled labourers.
- **Addressing Urban Poor:** Till now there was a notion that poor means rural people. So, a lot of poor alleviation schemes were launched for rural areas. However, there is also a chunk of urban poor and they also need job guarantee like in rural areas.
- **Examples from Other States:**
 - Recently, **the Odisha** government announced a **Rs 100-crore Urban Wage Employment Initiative**.
 - Kerala also runs **Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme (AUEGS)**.
AUEGS aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in urban areas by guaranteeing **hundred days of wage-employment** in a financial year to an **urban household** whose adult members **volunteer to do unskilled manual work**.
 - "**Yuva Swabhiman Yojana**" of **Madhya Pradesh** provides employment for both skilled and unskilled workers among **urban youth**.

Way Forward

- These types of interventions by the States are a welcome step which give urban residents the right to work and thereby ensure the **right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution**.
- Programmes like the **Smart Cities Mission** and **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)** have disproportionately focussed on development of bigger towns and cities. Hence, it is important to re-focus our attention to improving the livelihoods and ecology of urban areas beyond India's major cities.
- An urban employment guarantee programme not only improves **incomes of workers but also has multiplier effects on the economy**. It will **boost local demand** in small towns, **improve public infrastructure and services, spur entrepreneurship, build skills of workers and create a shared sense of public goods**. Hence, the time is ripe for an employment guarantee programme in urban India.

Source: IE

Variyamkunnath Kunjahammed Haji

Why in News

The year 2021 will mark the **100th year anniversary** of the **Malabar/Moplah uprising of 1921**.

The freedom fighter **Variyamkunnath Kunjahammed Haji** led the Moplah uprising against the British in Kerala's Malabar region.

Key Points

- **Variyamkunnath Kunjahammed Haji** was born into an **affluent Muslim family sometime in the 1870s** (the exact date is not confirmed) and grew up hearing stories of the torture and injustice done by the British.
- His father, **Moideenkutty Haji**, was **deported and jailed in the Andaman Islands** for his participation in a rebellion against the British.

- Kunjahammed Haji was very much **fascinated by the traditional music-based art forms** like **Daffumutt** and **poems** like ‘**Malappuram Padappattu**’ and ‘**Badr Padappattu**’ and he used them as an instrument to rally the locals against the British.
 - These poems were on the **exploitation of the peasants by feudal lords** under the British so these were banned later on by the British.
 - Kunjahammed Haji **simultaneously challenged the British and ignited sentiments against them** among the local population.
- Haji was respected for his **scholarship and knowledge in Urdu, Arabic and English**.
- **Leaders of the Khilafat movement and the INC introduced him to the Khilafat cause** and he promised to join them against the atrocities of the British and the landlords.
- Haji decided to take arms against the British and **took the leadership of the Khilafat** and was mostly heard all over **Calicut and south Malabar**.
- Haji **ensured that the movement had a secular character** as he was aware of the strength of Hindu-Muslim unity and ensured people of other faiths were given adequate security.

Britishers cast him as a religious fanatic to create divisions within the movement and there was a possibility of the movement losing direction and perhaps even resulting in a communal riot.
- As the **rebellion spread across the Ernad and Valluvanad taluks of erstwhile Malabar** district, **Britishers and their loyal escaped**, leaving vast territory under the control of the local rebels.
- The territory was declared an ‘**independent state**’ in **August 1921** with **Haji as its undisputed ruler**.
 - For **nearly six months**, Haji ran a **parallel Khilafat regime** headquartered in **Nilambur**, with its own separate passport, currency and system of taxation.
 - An **extensive army with the participation of Hindu men was built** with the aim of thwarting any attempt by the British to overthrow the Khilafat rule.
 - **Tenants were granted the power over the lands** they cultivated along with tax incentives.
- In **January 1922**, under the **guise of a treaty**, the **British betrayed Haji through his close friend Unyan Musaliyar and arrested** him. He was **sentenced to death** along with his compatriots.
- The bodies were **cremated fearing that the grave may become an inspiration** for the rebels and **all the records** connected with the Khilafat raj were **burnt** in order to make the people forget the Mappila khilafat rule of six months.

Malabar/Moplah Rebellion of 1921

- The Malabar rebellion, also known as the Moplah rebellion, was an **armed revolt** staged by the **Mappila Muslims of Kerala** in **1921**.
- In **August 1920**, **Gandhi** along with **Shaukat Ali** (the leader of the Khilafat movement in India) **visited Calicut** to spread the combined message of **non-cooperation and Khilafat** among the residents of Malabar.
- In response to Gandhi's call, a **Khilafat committee was formed in Malabar** and the **Mappilas**, under their **religious head Mahadum Tangal of Ponnani** who **pledged** support to the non-cooperation movement.
- During the same time, the **agrarian situation in Malabar was worsening** with the **low-class tenants suffering under the oppressive measures** of the landlords who were patronised by the British.
- In this situation, the **Indian National Congress (INC) reached out to the Mappila cultivators** to actively support both the agrarian reforms and independence.
- The Moplah tenants **agitated against the Hindu landlords** (locally referred to as **janmi**) and the **British government**.

Most of their **grievances** were related to the **security of tenure, high rents, renewal fees and other unfair exactions** of the landlords.

- The British government **responded with much aggression**, bringing in Gurkha regiments to suppress it and imposing martial law.

Wagon Tragedy: A noteworthy event of the British suppression was the wagon tragedy when approximately 60 Mappila prisoners on their way to prison, were suffocated to death in a closed railway goods wagon.

- The **six-month-long rebellion** is often perceived to be **one of the first cases of nationalist uprisings in Southern India**.
 - However, the **real motive of the revolt still remains a highly debated topic** among historians.
 - There are some who call it a case of **religious fanaticism**, there are others who look at it as an **instance of struggle against British authority** and then there are others who perceive the Malabar rebellion to be a **peasant revolt against unfair practices of the landlords**.

Source: IE

Smuggling of Exotic Macaws

Why in News

Recently, the **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)** has busted a wildlife syndicate (smuggling group) which was involved in smuggling of exotic macaws from Bangladesh.

The joint operation was carried out in coordination with the **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)** and the Customs Department at the Kolkata airport.

Key Points

- **The Joint Operation:**
 - The cargo containing 22 exotic birds which had been smuggled in through the Bongaon area of Indo-Bangla border, were seized at Kolkata airport.
 - The birds were identified as **hyacinth macaw, pesquet's parrot, severe macaw and hahn's macaw.**
 - The seized macaws are **protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**, with **hyacinth macaw** being accorded the highest protection.
- **Provisions Related to Illegal Wildlife Trade:**
 - Illegally imported birds are **confiscated under Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962** which is read with the **CITES provisions and the Foreign Trade Policy (Import-Export Policy) of India.**
 - Also, Sections 48 and 49 of the **Wildlife Protection Act** prohibit trade or commerce in wild animals, animal articles or trophies.
- **Concerns:**
 - The possibility of spread of **zoonotic diseases** on account of smuggling in such exotic species is increasingly becoming a global concern against the backdrop of **Covid-19**.
 - Illegal wildlife trade was ranked the **fourth largest transnational organised crime globally**, after the smuggling of narcotics, counterfeit goods and human trafficking.
 - West Bengal and northeast India are vulnerable to cross-border wildlife smuggling because of their proximity to the Bangladesh and Myanmar borders, and to Thailand.
 - Over the recent years, the DRI has seized a range of endangered species, including black-and-white ruffed lemur, **hoolock gibbons**, palm civets and Indian star tortoise etc.
 - Another major concern has been the smuggling of elephant tusks and ivory products.
 - Many international organisations involved in wildlife crime use the **Indo-Bangladesh Border** for various other illegal activities, such as **smuggling of drugs, commercial goods, and even gun-running, apart from illegal movement of foreign currency.**

Hyacinth Macaw



- **Scientific Name:** *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*,
- It is a parrot native to **central and eastern South America**.
- With a length of about one meter it is **longer than any other species of parrot**.
- It is the largest macaw and the **largest flying parrot species**.
- **Threat:** Habitat loss and the trapping of wild birds for the pet trade have taken a heavy toll on their population in the wild.
- **Protection Status:**
- **International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List: Vulnerable**
- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES): Appendix I**

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

- It is a **statutory multi-disciplinary body**, established by the Government of India under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**, to **combat organized wildlife crime** in the country.
- The Bureau has its headquarters in New Delhi.

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence

- It is India's **chief anti-smuggling intelligence, investigations and operations** agency.
- It works under the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**, Ministry of Finance.
- It is **headed** by a **Director General of the rank of Special Secretary** to the Government of India.

- DRI works to secure **India's national and economic security** by preventing the outright smuggling of **firearms, gold, narcotics, fake Indian Currency notes, antiques, wildlife and environmental products**.
- Moreover, it also works to prevent the proliferation of black money, commercial frauds and trade based money laundering.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

Source: TH

Mt. Merapi of Indonesia

Why in News

Mount Merapi, an **active volcano in Indonesia**, erupted twice on 21st June, 2020.

Key Points

- **Mt Merapi:**
 - Merapi (Mountain of Fire) is the most active of Indonesia's 130 active volcanoes.
 - It rises to **2,911 metres** and has steep slopes with dense vegetation on its lower sides.
 - It is located near the centre of the island of Java and Indonesia's cultural capital, Yogyakarta.
 - Mt Merapi's last significant eruption was in 2010. At that time, more than 300 people were killed and some 2,80,000 residents were forced to evacuate the surrounding areas.

- **Volcanoes in Indonesia:**

- Indonesia is **located on the Pacific Ring of Fire**.
- The Ring of Fire, also referred to as the **Circum-Pacific Belt**, is a path along the Pacific Ocean characterized by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes.
- Its length is approximately 40,000 kilometers. It traces boundaries between several tectonic plates—including the Pacific, Cocos, Indian-Australian, Nazca, North American, and Philippine Plates.
- 75% of Earth’s volcanoes i.e. more than 450 volcanoes are located along the Ring of Fire. 90% of Earth’s earthquakes occur along its path, including the planet’s most violent and dramatic seismic events.
- The abundance of volcanoes and earthquakes along the Ring of Fire is caused by the **amount of movement of tectonic plates** in the area.
 - Along much of the Ring of Fire, plates overlap at convergent boundaries called **subduction zones**. That is, the plate that is underneath is pushed down, or subducted, by the plate above. As rock is subducted, it melts and becomes magma. The abundance of magma so near to Earth’s surface gives rise to conditions ripe for volcanic activity.
 - A significant exception is the border between the Pacific and North American Plates. This stretch of the Ring of Fire is a **transform boundary**, where plates move sideways past one another. This type of boundary generates a large number of earthquakes as tension in Earth’s crust builds up and is released.

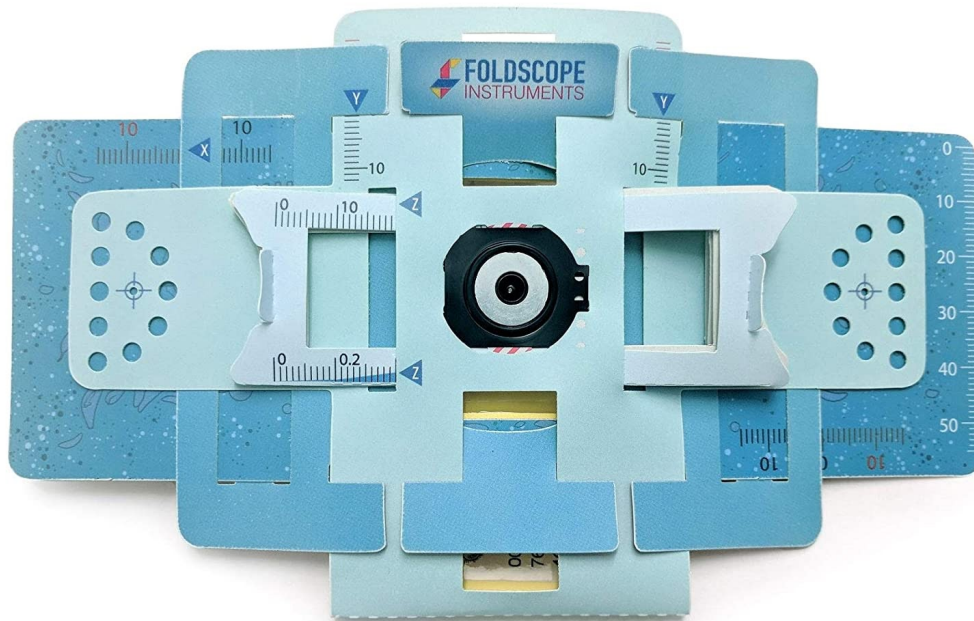


Source: IE

The Paper Microscope: Foldscope

Why in News

Recently, some doctors have explored and validated the clinical utility of **foldscope** in the diagnosis of diseases using various patient samples.



Key Points

- **Foldscope:**

- It is an **affordable microscope** that can be made from simple components, including a **sheet of paper and a lens**. It cost less than a Rs. 100 to make a Foldscope.
- Upon assembly, the device can hold a specimen slide for observation, and this **specimen can be viewed via a mobile phone camera** attached to it.
- It is **portable and durable**, and performs on par with conventional microscopes.
- It was **developed by Manu Prakash** and is part of the "**frugal science**" movement which aims to make cheap and easy tools available for scientific use in the developing world

- **Benefits:**

- Foldscope can be **used to diagnose diseases** like oral health, urinary tract infection (UTI), leishmaniasis, schistosomiasis, and monitor kidney stones.
- It can be **employed in public healthcare centres for primary diagnosis** or as **personal health monitoring devices**.
- Apart from the medical field **it can also be used in agriculture**, to detect various types of microorganisms which affect the crops and animals.

Source: PIB
