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Important Fact For Prelims (5th March 2019)

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Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT)

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has imposed a penalty on seven banks for **delayed implementation of SWIFT-related operational controls**.
- Earlier in February 2018 RBI had directed banks on time-bound implementation and strengthening of SWIFT-related operational controls following the ₹14,000-crore **fraud in Punjab National Bank**.

SWIFT

- The **Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT)** provides a network that enables financial institutions worldwide to **send and receive information about financial transactions in a secure, standardized and reliable environment**.
- **Established in 1973**, SWIFT uses a standardized proprietary communications platform to facilitate the transmission of information about financial transactions.
- **SWIFT neither holds funds on its own nor manages external client accounts**.
- SWIFT is headquartered in **Belgium**.
- Prior to SWIFT, the only reliable means of message confirmation for **international funds transfer was Telex**. It was discontinued due to a range of issues such as **low speed, security concerns, and a free message format**.

Open Market Operations

- Recently a decline in the liquidity deficit in the banking system was reported on account of liquidity infusion through **Open Market Operations (OMO) by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
- Open Market Operations (OMO) is **one of a quantitative (To regulate or control the total volume of money) monetary policy tool** which is an employed by the central bank of a country to **control the money supply in the economy**.

- Open market operations are conducted by the RBI by **way of sale or purchase of government securities (g-secs) to adjust money supply conditions.**
- The central bank sells g-secs to remove liquidity from the system and buys back g-secs to infuse liquidity into the system.
- These operations are often **conducted on a day-to-day basis** in a manner that balances inflation while helping banks continue to lend.
- The RBI uses OMO along with **other monetary policy tools such as repo rate, cash reserve ratio and statutory liquidity ratio to adjust the quantum and price of money in the system.**

Kole Wetland

- Recently scientists have raised alarm over the **presence of alien fish species in the Kole wetland** as they have potential to outnumber the native species.
- Kole Wetlands is located in **Thrissur District in Kerala, India.**
- In terms of the number of birds, the Thrissur Kole Wetlands is the **third largest in India** after **Chilika Lake** in Orissa and Amipur Tank in Gujarat.
- The Kole lands which form one of the **rice granaries of Kerala (serves 40% of Kerala's rice requirement)** are part of the unique **Vembanad-Kole wetland ecosystem** which was included as a **Ramsar site** in 2002.

MSTC to go for Initial Public Offering

- Recently, MSTC (Metal Scrap Trade Corporation Limited), a mini-Ratna under Ministry of steel has got Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) nod for **Initial Public Offering (IPO).**
- The mini-Ratna company, under the Ministry of Steel, has three main business verticals -- e-commerce, trading, and recycling.

Initial Public Offering

- The initial public offering is the process by which a **privately owned company (owned by the government in case of MSTC) can go public by the sale of its stocks to the general public.**
- It could be a new, young company or an old company which decides to be listed on an exchange and hence goes public.
- By IPO, companies can **raise capital with the help of an IPO by issuing new shares** to the public or the existing shareholders can sell their shares to the public without raising any fresh capital.
- The company that sells its shares are known as an 'issuer' and does so with the help of investment banks present in the market.
- After an initial public offering, the company's shares are traded in an open market.

Param Shivaay Super-Computer

- Recently, **Param-Shivaay, a supercomputer**, was inaugurated at **Indian Institute of Technology- Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) under the National Supercomputing Mission**.
- Under this project, the **Center for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)** has developed the first supercomputer 'Param Shivay' of 833 teraflop capacities.
- The supercomputer will help in simulation and modeling which will be applied in many areas like climate assessment, weather forecasting, space engineering, seismic analysis, finance, disaster simulation and management, search astrophysics, macro-data analytics, information collection.
- India's **first supercomputer called PARAM 8000 was launched in 1991**.
- At present, **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology has Pratyush supercomputer, which is the fastest supercomputer in India, it has a speed of 4.0 Petaflops**.
- National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting has **Mihir, which has a speed of 2.8 petaflops**.

Note:

- **Teraflops:** It is a unit of computing speed equal to one million million (10^{12}) **floating-point operations per second (FLOPS)**.
- **Petaflops:** It is a unit of computing speed equal to one thousand million million (10^{15}) **floating-point operations per second (FLOPS)**.

YUva Vigyani KARYakram (YUVIKA)

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has launched a special programme for School Children called "**Young Scientist Programme**" "**YUva Vigyani KARYakram**" **from 2019**.
- The Program is primarily aimed at imparting basic knowledge on **Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications** to the younger ones with the intent of arousing their interest.
- It is a **residential training programme of around two weeks** duration during summer holidays and it is proposed to **select 3 students from each State/ Union Territory**.

Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)

- The Ministry of Finance plans to set up a **special cell in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)** for the **monetization of non-core assets of state-owned companies**.
Non-core assets are assets that are either **not essential or simply no longer used in a company's business operations**.

- The Asset Monetisation cell will also deal with cases related to the **sale of immovable enemy property**, which refers to the assets left behind by people who migrated to Pakistan or China and are no longer citizens of India.
- **NITI Aayog has been tasked** with drawing up a list of non-core assets of various CPSEs, both healthy and sick ones, as the first step towards finance ministry's plan to monetize such assets.

DIPAM

- The Department of Disinvestment was one of the Departments under the Ministry of Finance.
- The **Department of Disinvestment was renamed as Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) from 14th April 2016.**
- The mandate of the Department is as follows:
 - All matters relating to the **management of Central Government investments in equity** including disinvestment of equity in Central Public Sector Undertakings.
 - All matters relating to the **sale of Central Government equity** through offer for sale or private placement or any other mode in the erstwhile Central Public Sector Undertakings.