



Important Facts For Prelims (25th April 2019)

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Echidnas Milk as Antimicrobial



- Scientists have isolated an antimicrobial protein found in the milk of an **egg-laying mammal, Echidnas**.
- The protein can serve as an alternative to **antibiotics used on livestock**.
- The protein in the milk of echidna can puncture the cell membranes of multiple bacterial species, thus destroying the source of infection.
- There are many ways to produce the protein in large quantities and one among them is using E. coli bacteria. It can then be used to fight infections.
- The scientist pointed out that there is a rise of the antimicrobial resistance bugs in livestock which can be checked by use of this antibiotics in the animal husbandry industry.

Monotremes: Egg Laying Mammals

- Egg laying mammals are also known as **Monotremes**.
- There are only **five living monotreme species: the duck-billed platypus and four species of echidna** (also known as spiny anteaters).
- All of them are found only in Australia and New Guinea.

Marsquake

- NASA's Mars **InSight lander** has measured and recorded, for the first time ever, tremors on Mars called "Marsquake." (Like Earthquakes on Earth)
- A faint seismic signal was detected by the lander's **Seismic Experiment for Interior Structure (SEIS)** instrument, was recorded on April 6, the lander's **128th sol (Mars Solar Day)**.
- The new seismic event was too small to provide solid data on the Martian interior, which is one of InSight's main objectives.
- **Mars and the Moon do not have tectonic plates, but they still experience quakes.**
- On Mars and Moon, quakes are caused by a **continual process of cooling and contraction of the surface that creates stress**. This stress builds over time until it is strong enough to break the crust, causing a quake.

World Book and Copyright Day

- World Book and Copyright Day are celebrated **by UNESCO** every year on the **23rd of April**.
- It is an occasion to **promote the joy of books and the art of reading**.
- 23rd April was selected by UNESCO to pay **tribute to great literary figures including William Shakespeare, Miguel Cervantes and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega** who died on this day.
- This date was **finalized in the year 1995** in the UNESCO General Conference, held in Paris.
- The 24th edition of World Book and Copyright Day celebrated literature and reading while focusing particularly on the **importance of enhancing and protecting Indigenous languages**.
- Each year UNESCO on the recommendation of the three major sectors of the book industry - publishers, booksellers, and libraries, **declare the world book capital for one year effective from 23rd April**.
- In 2019 **Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates** has been recognized as **World Book Capital**.
- **New Delhi** was declared as the world book capital in the year 2003.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

- Formed in **1945**, it is a **specialized agency of the United Nations (UN)** based in Paris.
- Its declared purpose is to **contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through educational, scientific, and cultural reforms in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights** along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.
- As of **January 2019**, it has **193 member states**.

Domkhar Rock Art Sanctuary

- **Created in 2012**, it is a **constellation of rock art** on the right bank of the river Indus **in Domkhar village in lower Ladakh**.
- **Stanzin Thangjuk**, a farmer, has been instrumental in single-handedly **protecting 500 odd rock carvings** at Domkhar.
- The archaic scripts on these rocks have been discovered to be **similar to those found among the nomadic tribes of the steppe region of Central Asia who lived 2,000 years ago**.
- No one has been able to put an exact date to the carvings, but they are believed to be over two millennia old. They also shed some light on the pattern of human movement during that era. Also, there is a stylistic representation of animal figures.

INC-22

- INC-22 is the **Notice of situation or change of address of the registered office of the company**.
- INC-22 form requires companies incorporated on or before December 31, 2017, to provide details regarding the location of their offices, directors, and proof of business.

E-Way Bill System

- Recently, the Finance Ministry has introduced changes in the **e-way bill system**, including auto calculation of distance based on PIN codes for the generation of e-way bill and blocking generation of multiple bills on one invoice, as it seeks to crack down on GST evaders.
- Additionally, Non-filers of GST returns for two straight months will be barred from generating e-way bills for transporting goods.
- **EWay Bill is an Electronic Waybill for movement of goods to be generated on the eWay Bill Portal. A GST registered person cannot transport goods in a vehicle whose value exceeds Rs. 50,000 (Single Invoice/bill/delivery challan) without an e-way bill .**
- These enhanced features would add value to both, businesses and tax officers as the mixed bag aims at propelling ease of doing business together with acting as a deterrent for tax evaders.

Composition Scheme

- **Taxpayers under the composition scheme of the GST will now have more relaxed rules with an increased turnover limit for the applicability, inclusion of service providers and reduced tax rates.**

- This scheme is also applicable to the real estate sector with respect to under-construction, ready and affordable homes.
- The **composition scheme is an alternative method of tax levy under GST designed to simplify compliance and reduce compliance costs for small taxpayers.**
- The main feature of this scheme is that the business or person who has opted to pay tax under this scheme can pay tax at a flat %age of turnovers every quarter, instead of paying tax at a normal rate every month.

Eligibility

- The **composition scheme is applicable to manufacturers or traders whose taxable business turnover is up to ₹1.5 crore** (₹75 lakh in case of North-Eastern States).
- A service provider can opt for the scheme **if his taxable turnover is up to ₹50 lakh.**
- Businesses with inter-State supplies, manufacturers of ice cream, pan masala and tobacco, and e-commerce players cannot opt for the composition scheme.

Importance

The composition scheme effectively **acknowledges the importance of the MSME sector**, by granting relief to it on GST filings, procedures and tax rates.

RBI divest its share in NABARD

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has divested its entire stake in Nabard and National Housing Bank (NHB).** The move is part of ending the cross-holding in regulatory institutions and follows the recommendation of the second Narasimham committee.
- The **Committee on Banking Sector Reforms (Narasimham Committee II)**, inter-alia, observed that it is inconsistent with the principles of effective supervision that the regulator is also an owner of a bank and this would require the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to divest its holding in banks and financial institutions.
- With this divestment, **the government now holds a 100 % stake in both these financial institutions.**
- The current change in the capital structure of both the financial institutions was brought in by the Government of India through amendments to the NABARD Act, 1981 and the NHB Act, 1987 which were notified vide gazette notifications dated January 19, 2018, and March 29, 2018, respectively.
- The **Nabard came into existence on July 12, 1982**, by transferring the **agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation.**

- The **National Housing Policy of 1988** envisaged setting up of NHB as the apex level institution for promoting the housing sector.