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## IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR PRELIMS VOL 07

- DIGITAL TAX
- 2DG DRUGS
- BLACK SOFTSHELL TURTLE
- EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT
- UMLING LA PASS
- HAGUE CONVENTION
- NATIONAL PROGRAMME ON ADVANCED CHEMICAL CELL BATTERY STORAGE



SCAN TO EXPLORE





**IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**FOR PRELIMS VOL - 07**

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**INDIAN ECONOMY****1) DIGITAL TAX**

IN NEWS: - The United States recently announced 25% tariffs on over \$2 billion worth of imports from six nations over their digital services taxes, but immediately suspended the duties to allow time for international tax negotiations to continue.

**ABOUT DIGITAL TAX**

- India was the one of the first countries to introduce a 6 per cent equalisation levy in 2016, but the levy was restricted to online advertisement services. These are called Digital Advertising Taxes or DAT's
- However, India introduced the digital tax in April 2020 for foreign companies selling goods and services online to customers in India and showing annual revenues more than INR 20 million.
- The scope was further widened in the Finance Act 2021-22 to cover e-commerce supply or service when any activity takes place online.
- Since May 2021, this also includes any entity that systematically and continuously does business with more than 3 lakh users in India.
- Offshore e-commerce firms that sell through an Indian arm will not have to pay.
- This means if the goods and services sold on a foreign e-commerce platform are owned or provided by an Indian resident or Indian permanent establishment, they will not be subject to the two percent equalization levy.

- The equalisation levy was imposed “to give a level playing field between Indian businesses who pay tax in India and foreign e-commerce companies who do business in India but do not pay any income tax here.

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements regarding digital tax

1. India was one of the first countries in the world to introduce a 6% equalization levy in 2016, but the levy was restricted to online advertisement services
2. No other nation imposes a digital service tax Which among the above statements are correct?
  - a. 1 only
  - b. 2 only
  - c. Both 1 and 2
  - d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - a

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

#### 2) 2DG DRUGS

IN NEWS: - Central Government released the first batch of the indigenously developed anti-Covid-19 drug, 2-deoxy-D-glucose or ‘2-DG’. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had cleared the formulation for

emergency use as an adjunct therapy in moderate to severe Covid-19 patients.

### **ABOUT 2DG DRUGS**

- 2-DG has been developed by the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), New Delhi, a lab of the (DRDO), in collaboration with Hyderabad-based pharma company Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL).
- Clinical trial data show that the molecule helps in faster recovery of patients hospitalised with Covid-19, and reduces their dependence on supplemental oxygen.
- The drug accumulates in virus-infected cells, and prevents the growth of the virus by stopping viral synthesis and energy production.
- Its selective accumulation in virally-infected cells makes this drug unique.
- 2-DG being a generic molecule and an analogue of glucose, it can be easily produced and made available in large quantities.
- The drug is available in powder form in a sachet, and can be taken orally after dissolving in water

### **ABOUT DRDO**

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency under the Ministry of Defence charged with the military's research and development activities.

- It is headquartered in Delhi.

### 3) **NATIONAL PROGRAMME ON ADVANCED CHEMICAL CELL BATTERY STORAGE**

IN NEWS: - The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs. 18,100-crore Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for manufacturers of Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) battery storage, to reduce imports.

#### **ABOUT NATIONAL PROGRAMME ON ADVANCED CHEMICAL CELL BATTERY STORAGE**

- The plan is to set up 50-gigawatt hour (GWh) manufacturing capacity for ACC batteries by attracting investments totaling Rs. 45,000 crores.
- It is under the Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises.
- Requires each selected ACC battery Storage manufacturer to set-up an ACC manufacturing facility of minimum 5 GWh capacity, achieve a domestic value addition of at least 25% and incur the mandatory investment Rs.225 crore /GWh within 2 Years.
- The beneficiary firms need to ensure a minimum 60% domestic value addition at the Project level within five years.
- The incentive will be disbursed over a period of five years. It will be paid out on the basis of sales, energy efficiency, battery life cycle, and localization levels.

## ABOUT ADVANCED CHEMICAL CELL BATTERY STORAGE

- ACCs are the new generation of advanced storage technologies that can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required.
- Such battery storages will cater not only to electric vehicles but also to the consumer electronics industry and electricity grids.

## ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### 3) BLACK SOFTSHELL TURTLE

IN NEWS: - A major temple in Assam has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with two green NGOs for long-term conservation of the rare freshwater black softshell turtle (*Nilssonina nigricans*). A vision document 2030 was also launched after Turtle Survival Alliance India and Help Earth signed the pact involving the Hayagriva Madhava Temple Committee. The temple, revered by both Hindus and Buddhists, is at Hajo, about 30 km northwest of Guwahati.



## ABOUT BLACK SOFTSHELL TURTLE

- It is also called Bostami turtle
- It is a freshwater species found in India and Bangladesh.
- Their scientific name is Nilssononia nigricans
- IUCN Status: Critically Endangered
- CITES: Appendix I
- It has no legal protection under Wildlife Protection Act

## TURTLES IN INDIAN WATERS

There are 5 species in marine Indian waters —

- Leatherback (Vulnerable),
- Loggerhead (Endangered),
- Hawksbill (Critically Endangered),
- Green (Endangered)
- Olive Ridley Turtles (Vulnerable).

## PREVIOUS UPSC QUESTION

Consider the following statements

1. Some species of turtle are herbivores
2. Some species of fish are herbivores
3. Some species of marine animals are herbivores
4. Some species of snakes are viviparous Which among the above statements are correct?



- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 2, 3 and 4 only
- c. 2 and 4 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 4 only

Answer: - d

### PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements about Indian turtles

1. There are 5 species of turtles in marine Indian waters.
  2. Black softshell turtle has the IUCN status critically endangered. Which of the above statements are correct?
- a. 1 only
  - b. 2 only
  - c. Both 1 and 2
  - d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - c

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### 5) PYROSTRIA LALJI

IN NEWS: - *Pyrostromia lalji*, a new species which belongs to the genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Andaman Islands.

### ABOUT PYROSTRIA LALJII

- It is the first record of the genus *Pyrostromia* in India.
- The species belongs to the genus of the coffee.

- It is a 15-meter-tall tree.
- Plants belonging to genus *Pyrostria* are usually found in Madagascar but the recently discovered species is new to science
- It can be distinguished by a long stem with a whitish coating on the trunk
- It has oblong-ovate leaves with a cuneate base, and was first reported from South Andaman's Wandoor forest.
- Its umbellate inflorescence with eight to 12 flowers is also a distinct feature.
- IUCN Status: - Critically Endangered



## INDIAN POLITY

### 6) EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT

IN NEWS: - The Union government directed States and Union Territories to invoke the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 to fight the Covid-19 outbreak.

## ABOUT EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT

- The law was first enacted to tackle bubonic plague in Mumbai in former British India.
- The law is meant for containment of epidemics by providing special powers that are required for the implementation of containment measures.
- Section 2A of the Act empowers the central government to take steps to prevent the spread of an epidemic.
- Health is a State subject, but by invoking Section 2 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, advisories and directions of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare will be enforceable.
- It allows the government to inspect any ship arriving or leaving any port and the power to detain any person intending to sail or arriving in the country.
- Section 3 provides penalties for disobeying any regulation or order made under the Act. These are according to section 188 of the Indian Penal Code (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant)
- Section 4 gives legal protection to the implementing officers acting under the Act.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements about the Epidemic Diseases act

1. It was first enacted to tackle Bubonic Plague in British India
2. Though health is a state subject, the directions of the Union Health Ministry will become enforceable on invoking the epidemic diseases act.

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - c

## INDIAN GEOGRAPHY

### 7) UMLING LA PASS

IN NEWS: - Defence Minister flagged off the first ever Solo Woman Motorcycle Expedition by Ms Kanchan Ugursandi to Umling La Pass, Ladakh and back

#### ABOUT UMLING LA PASS

- Umling La Pass, located at an altitude of 19,300ft, has overtaken Khardung La Pass to become the highest motorable road in the world.
- The construction of this road has been achieved by the Border Road Organization as part of “Project Himank”.
- Umling La Pass connects Chisumle and Demchok villages in close proximity to the Indo-China border in the eastern sector.

#### ABOUT KHARDUNG LA PASS

- The pass is on the Ladakh Range to the north of Leh
- The Khardung La road connects the town of Leh to Nubra Valley and Siachen Base Camp
- It is the gateway to the Shyok and Nubra valleys.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 8) HAGUE CONVENTION

#### ABOUT HAGUE CONVENTION

- The Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction came to force on 1st December 1983.
- It seeks to protect children from the harmful effects of abduction across international boundaries and to bring about their prompt return to their habitual residence.
- For the Convention to be applied, there are two conditions that must be met
  - The involved states should be parties to the Convention
  - The child in question should not be older than 16 years.
- The convention has currently 90 Members: 89 States and 1 Regional Economic Integration Organisation
- India has not signed the Hague Abduction Convention

HAGUE: - Hague is a city on the western coast of the Netherlands and the capital of the province of South Holland.



**PRACTICE QUESTION**

With reference to the Hague convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, consider the following statements:

1. For the convention to be applied the child must not be older than 18 years
2. India is a party to the convention

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - d



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