

IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR PRELIMS VOL 25

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SCAN TO EXPLORE





IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR PRELIMS VOL - 25

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GOVERNANCE**1) AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION**

IN NEWS:-The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission was launched by the Prime Minister through a video conference.

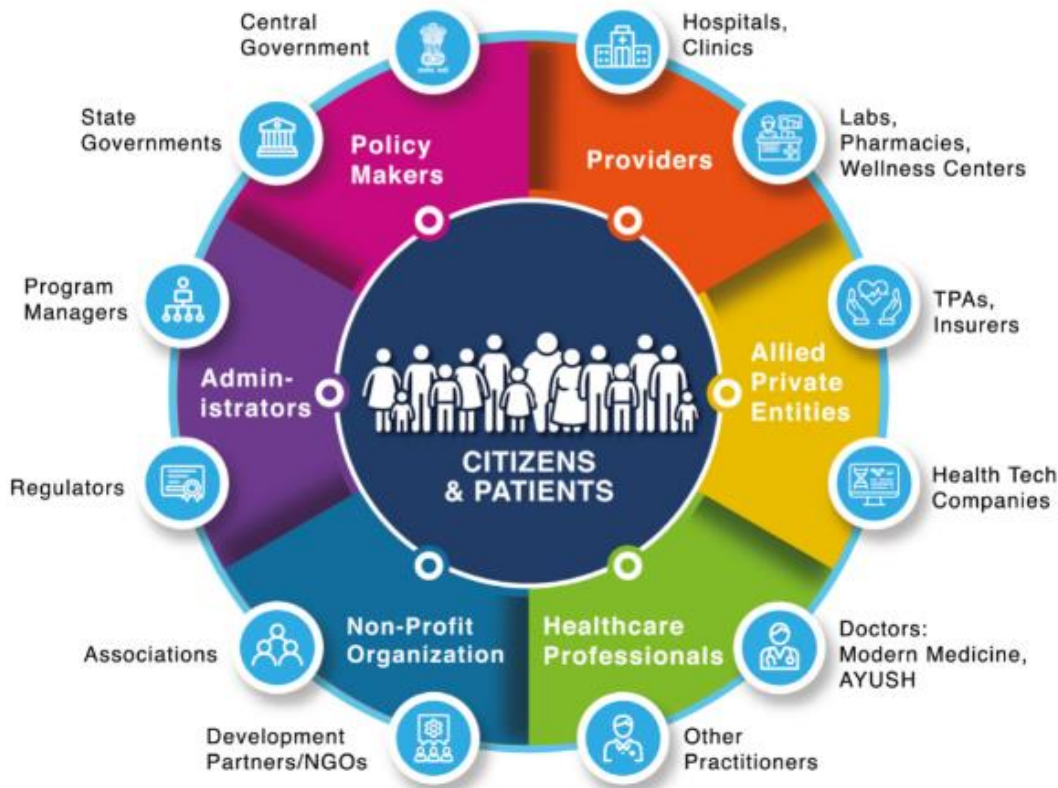
ABOUT AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION

- Under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), every citizen can get a digital health ID and the health records would be digitally protected. The digital health ID is voluntary and free of cost.
- The mission aims to develop the backbone necessary to support the integrated digital health infrastructure of the country.
- It will close the current gap that exists among the various stakeholders of the country's healthcare ecosystem through digital technologies.
- The mission was launched during the third anniversary of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
- The National Health Authority (NHA) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the implementing agency of the mission.

SALIENT FEATURES

- The ID will enable access and exchange of health records of citizens with their consent.
- The Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR) and the Healthcare Facilities Registries (HFR) components of the mission will be the repository of all healthcare providers and this includes both traditional and modern health practitioners.
- Health ID can be created using the mobile number or the Aadhaar. In the future, registering through a PAN card or driving license would also be made possible.

- An individual has the option of either deactivating his/her ID temporarily or permanently deleting the ID, so an exit option is provided.



PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements regarding Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)

1. Under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, a unique health ID can be created for a person using the mobile number or the Aadhaar.
2. Once created, there is no option for deleting the ID

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

2) NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY BOARD

IN NEWS: - The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has notified the constitution of the National Road Safety Board.

ABOUT NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY BOARD

- The NRSB will be constituted of a panel of seven members and a chairman, with the members having experience in the fields related to road safety, traffic regulation, urban planning, civil engineering and police enforcement and investigation.
- Additionally, the board will also comprise technical committees to look into a variety of aspects of road safety from civil engineering to vehicle construction and safety equipment.
- The Head Office of the Board shall be in the National Capital Region and the Board may establish offices at other places in India.
- The Board shall be responsible for promoting road safety, innovation and adoption of new technology and for regulating traffic and motor vehicles.

FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY BOARD

The Board shall formulate

- specific standards for road safety, traffic management and road construction for hilly regions
- guidelines for capacity building and development of skills for traffic police, hospital authorities, highway authorities, educational and research organizations and other organizations
- guidelines for establishing and operating trauma facilities and para-medical facilities, for consideration by the Central Government
- provide technical advice and assistance to the Central Government, State Governments and local authorities on road safety and traffic management

- The board aims to promote Good Samaritans and good practices in road safety and traffic management.

PROTECTION OF GOOD SAMARITANS

- Good Samaritans who rescue victims of serious road accidents and rush them to a hospital within the golden hour will now be rewarded with ₹ 5,000.
- They will also be eligible for a cash prize of ₹ 1 lakh which will be given to 10 such Samaritans in a year.
- It has been felt that there is a need to motivate the general public through cash awards and certificates to help the road accident victims in emergency situations and to boost their morale.
- The categories of accidents that will make one eligible for the award will include those that result in a major surgery or minimum three days of hospitalisation or brain and spinal cord injuries

GOLDEN HOUR

The 'golden hour' has been defined as 'the time period lasting one hour following a traumatic injury during which there is the highest likelihood of preventing death by providing prompt medical care

3) KRISHI UDAN 2.0

IN NEWS: - The Union Minister of Civil Aviation has released Krishi Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) 2.0 to facilitate movement of agricultural produce by air.

ABOUT KRISHI UDAN 2.0

- The scheme proposes to facilitate and incentivize movement of Agri-produce by air transportation.
- It lays out the vision of improving value realization through better integration and optimization of Agri-harvesting and air transportation.
- It works by contributing to Agri-value chain sustainability and resilience under different and dynamic conditions.

- It will be implemented at 53 airports across the country mainly focusing on Northeast and tribal regions and is likely to benefit farmers, freight forwarders and Airlines.

SALIENT FEATURES

- **Facilitating and incentivizing movement of Agri-produce by air transportation:** Full waiver of Landing, Parking, TNLC and RNFC charges for Indian freighters and P2C at selected Airports. Primarily, focusing on the North East Region, Hilly, and tribal regions.
- **Strengthening cargo-related infrastructure at airports and off airports:** Facilitating the development of a hub and spoke model and a freight grid.
- **Concessions sought from other bodies:** Seek support and encourage States to reduce Sales Tax to 1% on aviation fuels for freighters / P2C aircraft as extended in UDAN flights.
- **Resources-Pooling through establishing Convergence mechanism:** Collaboration with other government departments and regulatory bodies.
- **Technological convergence:** Development of E-KUSHAL (Krishi UDAN for Sustainable Holistic Agri-Logistics).

E- KAUSHAL

- It is a platform to be developed to facilitate information dissemination to all the stakeholders.
- This will be a single platform that will provide relevant information at the same time and will also assist in coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.
- Furthermore, integration of E-KUSHAL with the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) is proposed.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements about KRISHI UDAN 2.0

1. The scheme proposes to facilitate and incentivize movement of Agri-produce by air transportation.
2. It will be implemented at all airports across the country

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

INDIAN ECONOMY

4) INDUSTRIAL PARK RATINGS SYSTEM REPORT

IN NEWS: - The 2nd edition of the Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS) Report was launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). All the States of India and 51 SEZs, including 29 Private, have participated in the IPRS 2.0 Report.

ABOUT INDUSTRIAL PARK RATINGS SYSTEM (IPRS) REPORT

- The IPRS pilot exercise was launched in 2018 with an objective of enhancing industrial infrastructure competitiveness and supporting policy development for enabling industrialization across the country.
- The IPRS report is an extension of the India Industrial Land Bank which features more than 4,400 industrial parks in a GIS-enabled database.
- It seeks to help investors identify their preferred location for investment.
- With this report, the investors can even remotely refer to this report to identify the suitable investable land area, as per the various parameters of

infrastructure, connectivity, business support services and environment and safety standards.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

- 41 Industrial Parks have been assessed as “Leaders” in the Industrial Park Ratings System Report released by DPIIT.
- 90 Industrial Parks have been rated as under the Challenger category while 185 have been rated as under “Aspirers”.
- These ratings are assigned on the basis of key existing parameters and infrastructure facilities etc.

5) GLOBAL MINIMUM TAX DEAL

IN NEWS: - The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has announced that a global deal to ensure big companies pay a Global Minimum Tax (GMT) rate of 15% has been agreed by 136 countries (including India).

ABOUT GLOBAL MINIMUM TAX DEAL

- The new proposal is aimed at squeezing the opportunities for Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) to indulge in profit shifting, ensuring they pay at least some of their taxes where they do business.
- The two-pillar package – the outcome of negotiations coordinated by the OECD for much of the last decade - aims to ensure that large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) pay tax where they operate and earn profits, while adding much-needed certainty and stability to the international tax system.
 - Pillar One will ensure a fairer distribution of profits and taxing rights among countries with respect to the largest MNEs, including digital companies. It would re-allocate some taxing rights over MNEs from their home countries to the markets where they have business activities and earn profits, regardless of whether firms have a physical presence there.

- Pillar Two seeks to put a floor on competition over corporate income tax, through the introduction of a global minimum corporate tax rate that countries can use to protect their tax bases.
- One hundred and thirty-six countries, including India, agreed to enforce a minimum corporate tax rate of 15%, and an equitable system of taxing profits of big companies in markets where they are earned.
- Four countries – Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – had not yet joined the agreement, but the countries behind the accord together accounted for over 90% of the global economy.
- Apart from low-tax jurisdictions, the proposals are tailored to address the low effective rates of tax shelled out by some of the world's biggest corporations, including Big Tech majors such as Apple, Alphabet and Facebook, as well as those such as Nike and Starbucks.
- These companies typically rely on complex webs of subsidiaries to Hoover profits out of major markets into low-tax countries such as Ireland, the British Virgin Islands, the Bahamas, or Panama.
- The US loses nearly \$50 billion a year to tax cheats, according to the Tax Justice Network report, with Germany and France also among the top losers.
- India's annual loss due to corporate tax abuse is estimated at over \$10 billion.
- The global minimum tax rate would apply to overseas profits of multinational firms with 750 million euros (\$868 million) in sales globally.
- Governments could still set whatever local corporate tax rate they want, but if companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments could "top up" their taxes to the 15% minimum, eliminating the advantage of shifting profits.

- A second track of the overhaul would allow countries where revenues are earned to tax 25% of the largest multinationals' so-called excess profit – defined as profit in excess of 10% of revenue.

6) PANDORA PAPERS

IN NEWS: - Several prominent Indian names have been included in the Pandora Papers leak. There are over 300 Indian names in the leak, including over 60 prominent ones.

ABOUT PANDORA PAPERS

- Pandora Papers are 11.9 million leaked files from 14 global corporate services firms which set up about 29,000 off-the-shelf companies and private trusts.
- The Pandora Papers reveal how trusts are used as a vehicle in conjunction with offshore companies set up for the sole purpose of holding investments and other assets by business families and ultra-rich individuals.
- The trusts can be set up in known tax havens which offer relative tax advantages. For Example: Samoa, Belize, Panama, and the British Virgin Islands.
- They reveal how the rich set up complex multi-layered trust structures for estate planning, in jurisdictions which are loosely regulated for tax purposes, but characterised by air-tight secrecy laws.
- Businesses have created a new normal after countries have been forced to tighten the laws on such offshore entities with rising concerns of money laundering, terrorism funding, and tax evasion.
- The Panama and Paradise Papers dealt largely with offshore entities set up by individuals and corporations respectively.

TRUST

- A trust can be described as a fiduciary arrangement where a third party, referred to as the trustee, holds assets on behalf of individuals or organisations that are to benefit from it.
- A trust is not a separate legal entity, but its legal nature comes from the 'trustee'. At times, the 'settlor' appoints a 'protector', who has the powers to supervise the trustee, and even remove the trustee and appoint a new one.

7) OPEN NETWORK FOR DIGITAL COMMERCE

IN NEWS: - The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry chaired a meeting for the review of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

ABOUT OPEN NETWORK FOR DIGITAL COMMERCE

- Open Network for Digital Commerce christened ONDC is globally first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to democratise Digital Commerce, moving it from a platform-centric model to an open-network.
- As UPI is to the digital payment domain, ONDC is to e-commerce in India.
- ONDC will enable buyers and sellers to be digitally visible and transact through an open network, no matter what platform/application they use.
- ONDC will empower merchants and consumers by breaking silos to form a single network to drive innovation and scale, transforming all businesses from retail goods, food to mobility.
- ONDC aims at promoting open networks developed on open-sourced methodology, using open specifications and open network protocols independent of any specific platform.
- ONDC is expected to digitize the entire value chain, standardize operations, promote inclusion of suppliers, derive efficiencies in logistics and enhance value for consumers.

AGRICULTURE

8) RIVER RANCHING

IN NEWS: - Nationwide River Ranching Programme was recently launched in Uttar Pradesh. Along with Uttar Pradesh, other 4 states namely, Orissa, Uttarakhand, Tripura and Chhattisgarh also participated in the launch of 'nationwide River Ranching program'.

ABOUT RIVER RANCHING

- River Ranching is a form of aquaculture in which a population of a fish species (such as salmon) is held in captivity for the first stage of their lives.
- They are then released, and later harvested as adults when they return from the sea to their freshwater birthplace to spawn.
- River ranching programme was introduced as a special activity under the 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme to augment and enhance fish production and productivity by expanding, intensifying, diversifying and utilizing land & water productively.
- National Fisheries Development Board, Hyderabad is the nodal agency under central component of the PMMSY

PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements

1. River Ranching is a form of aquaculture in which a population of a fish species (such as salmon) is held in captivity for the first stage of their lives.
2. River ranching programme was introduced as special activity under the 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme

Which among the above statements are not correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - d

9) BIO ENZYMES (BEs)

IN NEWS: - Some farmers in Punjab, especially in the Kinnow belt, have started making Bio-Enzymes (BEs) from this waste fruit — peel and 'D' grade, very small kinnows.

ABOUT BIO ENZYMES (BEs)

- Chemically, the Bio Enzymes are a mixture of complex organic substances such as proteins, salts and other materials that are by-products of the bacteria/yeast.
- They are produced through fermentation of organic waste including various fruits, vegetable peels and flowers, by mixing in sugar, jaggery/molasses and water.
- BE's also have a lot of usage in our daily lives. They can be used as natural cleansers.
- BEs have a lot of good microbes and one of the major methods which helps overall improvement of our ecology.
- It helps in mitigating the imbalance occurring due to overuse of chemicals, in our soil, air and water.
- In a state like Punjab where the water table is depleting fast and water contamination is also a major issue, BEs can bring the soil back to life.
- It helps in better water recharging and also stops the contamination of water by improving the health of soil.

KINNOW FRUIT

- The 'Kinnow' is a high yield citrus fruit cultivated extensively in the wider Punjab region of India and Pakistan.

- It is a year-long duration crop and the main harvesting period is from November-end to March.
- It looks similar to orange but is smaller in size.
- Fallen fruit is a major challenge for kinnow farmers in the state as one needs to dig up small pits to bury them, otherwise the fallen fruit rot and invite a fly attack on the healthy fruit still on the plants.

But now, some farmers are using this waste kinnow to improve the pH level and soil fertility of their land by making BEs from this waste fruit.



ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

10) ADI CASCADE FROG

IN NEWS: - A team of researchers from Delhi University (DU) have discovered a new species of cascade frog in Arunachal Pradesh. They have named the frog species as “Adi Cascade Frog (Amolops Adicola)”

ABOUT ADI CASCADE FROG

- Adi Cascade Frog is a predominantly brown colour frog with a size ranging roughly between 4 cm to 7 cm.
- The frog was discovered on the Adi hills in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The frog has been named after Adi tribes, an indigenous group of people from the Himalayan regions of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The literal meaning of Adi is “hill” or “mountain top”. Historically, the Adi Hills region was also known as Abor hills.

ABOUT CASCADE FROG

- Cascade Frogs belong to the genus Amolops.
- They are one of the largest groups of Ranid frogs (family Ranidae).
- They are named so because of their preference for small waterfalls or cascades in flowing hill streams.
- Both adults and tadpoles of Adi cascade frogs, are particularly adapted to fast flowing sections of stream.
- Currently, there are 73 known species of Cascade Frogs.

They are widely distributed across Northeast and North India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, through Indochina, to the Malay Peninsula.



11) RAMGANGA NATIONAL PARK

IN NEWS: - The Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change has recently proposed to change the name of Corbett National Park to Ramganga National Park.

ABOUT RAMGANGA NATIONAL PARK

- Jim Corbett's name has lent itself to India's oldest and most celebrated national parks and to the cottage industry that has grown around it.
- Corbett's name lives on in and around the forests of Uttarakhand where the celebrated hunter-naturalist once lived and whose efforts led to the establishment of the national park.
- But the Park was not always called Corbett. Set up in 1936 as India's — and Asia's — first national park, it was called Hailey National Park after Sir Macolm Hailey, the governor of the United Province.
- It was renamed Ramganga National Park, named after the river that flows through it, shortly after Independence and was rechristened yet again as Corbett National Park in 1956.

- It was at the insistence of Corbett's friend, the great freedom fighter from Kumaon and the first chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Govind Ballabh Pant, that the park was renamed after him, to honour his conservation efforts.
- Located in the Himalayan foothills near the tourist hill station of Nainital, Corbett National Park is spread over 520 sq km and is part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve which is over 1,288 sq km.
- The national park along with the neighbouring 301-sq km-Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary together make the critical tiger habitat of the Corbett Tiger Reserve.
- The place from where Project Tiger was launched in 1973, with its tiger population at 163, it boasts of a single largest tiger population in a tiger reserve and one of the highest tiger densities in the country.



PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements

1. Ramganga National Park is located in Uttar Pradesh
2. It is the place from where Project Tiger was launched in 1973.

Which among the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: - b

MINISTRY OF TOURISM**12) NATIONAL DIGITAL TOURISM MISSION**

IN NEWS: Ministry of Tourism had constituted an inter-ministerial task force for National Digital Tourism Mission in 2021. The Task Force has prepared a draft report on proposed National Digital Tourism Mission, which inter-alia lays down domain and technology principles, standards, digital stack, governance structure and plan for implementation of the envisaged National Digital Tourism Mission (NDTM).

VISION: National Digital Tourism Mission is to bridge the existing information gap amongst different stakeholders of tourism ecosystem through a digital highway.

OBJECTIVE: The National Digital Tourism Mission envisages to achieve the objective of harnessing the full potential of digitization in tourism sector by facilitating exchange of information and services in tourism sector spreading across national and state tourism organizations, tourism service providers, tourism destinations, products, experiences and tourists.

DIGITIZATION AND TOURISM SECTOR:

- The efforts are accordingly being made by Ministry of Tourism and MeitY to collaboratively explore the possibilities of developing a Unified Tourism Interface, for seamless exchange of information amongst the stakeholders of the tourism ecosystem
- Such a Unified Tourism Interface would enable an open and interoperable network for search, discovery, information exchange and digital transactions which can herald the next generation tourism services.
- This interface is envisaged to enable both private and public solutions and applications to become a part of the tourism eco-system
- Digitalization in tourism sector presents opportunities for tourism enterprises to expand their market reach, increased growth, improved operational efficiencies, and sharpen their competitive edge

INDIA'S TOURISM SECTOR:

- India has 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites, more than 70% of the Himalayas, 10 biogeographic zones, 10 blue flag beaches, 8 national parks, 441 sanctuaries, islands and plenty of other natural assets.
- Besides that, India's achievement in tiger population conservation has led to a rise in the tiger population to 2,967 in 2018 making India home to 75% of the world's tiger population.
- This competitive advantage can help India become a tourism hub in the world.
- Medical tourism industry was estimated at US\$ 9 billion in 2020.
- The travel market in India is projected to reach US\$ 125 billion by FY 27 from an estimated US\$ 75 billion in FY 20.
- International tourists arrivals are expected to reach 30.8 million by 2028.

- India ranked 34 in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 published by the World Economic Forum.



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