

Current Affairs search results for tag: national-news

1. Rajya Sabha passes Pharma Education Bill (Dec. 10, 2021)

1. Rajya Sabha passed the **National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Amendment) Bill, 2021** which amends the **National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Act, 1998**.
2. **It has already been passed by the Lok Sabha .**
3. The **1998 Act established the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Mohali, Punjab**, and declared it as an **Institution of National Importance**.
4. The Bill declares six additional National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research as Institutions of National Importance. These institutes are located in:

(i) Ahmedabad,

(ii) Hajipur,

(iii) Hyderabad,

(iv) Kolkata,

(v) Guwahati,

(vi) Raebareli.

- The **Bill provides for a Council** to coordinate the activities among the institutes under the Bill to ensure the development of pharmaceutical education and research and maintenance of standards.
- An Institution of National Importance refers to an autonomous institute established under an Act, with the power to hold examinations, grant degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions or titles.
- **These institutes of national importance receive funding from the central government.**

2. Government of India extends PMGAY-G till March 2024 (Dec. 10, 2021)

The Government of India has extended the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin(PMAY-G) beyond March 2021 till March 2024 so as to provide financial assistance for the construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses under the scheme. .

The scheme was launched on 20 November 2016 to 2 crore 95 lakh houses by 2022.

Out of this 155.75 lakh houses are to be constructed and it will require Rs 2,17,257 crore, with a central share of Rs 1,25,106 crore and a state share of Rs 73,475 crores .

The continuation of the scheme till March 2024 will ensure that the remaining 155.75 lakh households within the overall target of 2.95 crore houses would be provided assistance for construction of pucca houses with basic amenities to achieve the objective of 'housing for all' in rural areas.

As of November 29 this year, 1.65 crore PMAY-G houses have been constructed out of the total target of 2.95 crore houses.

Under the PMAY-G yojana the cost of the scheme is shared in a 60 :40 ratio between the Central Government and the State Government .

In the Hilly states, Union Territory and in the North- Eastern States the ratio is 90:10 between Centre and States.

3. International flights to be resumed after 31st Jan. 2022 (Dec. 10, 2021)

Directorate General of Civil Aviation announced on 09th December that full resumption of international flights stands postponed at least till January 31,2022.

Highlights:

- Authority has decided to extend suspension of scheduled commercial international passenger services to/ from India till 2359 hours IST of 31st January, 2022”.
- However, the flights under the air-bubble agreement with 32 countries would continue as before.
- Travelers from Singapore will no longer be subjected to on-arrival RT-PCR test and 7 days mandatory quarantine after the government removed Singapore from its list of “at-risk” countries.
- The Union Health Ministry updated the list of at-risk countries that now includes those in Europe including UK, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Hong Kong and Israel.

Unlike several countries like Germany, France, the UK, US, Canada and UAE that have had an air bubble with India during the pandemic allowing eligible categories of people to travel, **Singapore and India created a vaccinated travel lane from November 29, 2021. The arrangement has started with six daily flights from Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai and Singapore Changi.**

4. IAF has ordered tri-service investigation into chopper crash (Dec. 10, 2021)

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has ordered a tri-service investigation led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Training Command, in the Mi 17 V5 chopper crash in Tamil Nadu on 8th December in which Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 officials of the Armed Forces were killed.

Black box of the ill-fated chopper has been recovered by the investigation team.

What is a tri-service inquiry?

It is a kind of an inquiry, in which the representatives of three armed forces - **Army, Navy and Air Force**--will be included..

- The inquiry will also include a thorough investigation of the **black box** and the **remaining debris of the helicopter**.
- Such kind of an inquiry includes four important points: **Human error, mechanical error, weather conditions** and **terror attack**."

Normally a chopper crash inquiry is done by the Air Force officials only, but since the list of deceased includes the CDS, a tri-service inquiry has been ordered.

Black Box

A black box is a device (Similar to a hard disk) that is installed in aircraft to help investigators in case of unfortunate accidents.

- It is a highly protective machine that records all flight data and conversations in the cockpit. Apart from recording cockpit conversations, the recorder also holds information on automatic computer announcements, radio traffic, discussions with the crew and announcements to the passengers.
- There are two types of flight recording devices:
 - Flight Data Recorder (FDR) that stores all the recent history of the flight through the recording of dozens of parameters collected multiple times per second
 - Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) that records cockpit sound including pilot conversations.

Why is it called Black Box?

The term "black box" was first used by the British during World War Two and referred to the secret development of radar and electronic navigational aids in British aircraft. These secretive devices were housed in non-reflective black boxes.

- The black is usually of **bright orange colour**, which makes it easier to spot amid the wrangled mess of the crash.

While crashes can happen anywhere both on land and over seas, the flight recorder is designed in a way that it can be recovered from underwater locations as well. The device sends out a signal on contact with saltwater that can be picked up within a radius of about two kilometres. The device can withstand water pressure found in depths of up to 6,000 meters.

Double wrapped in a corrosion-resistant stainless-steel container with high-temperature insulation, the black box is designed to withstand the harshest crashes -- on the land and seas.

5. India amongst the most unequal countries in the world (Dec. 9, 2021)

As per the 'World Inequality Report 2022' by **World Inequality Lab**, which **aims to promote research** on global inequality dynamics., India is among the most unequal countries in the world, with rising poverty and an 'affluent elite'.

Highlights of the report:**• Distribution of Wealth:**

- The average national income of the Indian adult population is Rs 2,04,200. Here, the bottom 50% earns Rs 53,610 while the top 10% earns Rs 11,66,520, over 20 times more. In India, the top 10% and top 1% hold 57% and 22% of the total national income respectively while the share of the bottom 50% has gone down to 13%.
- The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are the most unequal regions in the world, whereas Europe has the lowest inequality levels.

• Gender inequality:

- in India is also considerably on the higher end of the spectrum. The share of female labour income share in India is equal to 18% which is significantly lower than the average in Asia (21%, excluding China) & is among the lowest in the world. Although, the number is slightly higher than the average share in the Middle East (15%).
- **Women's share of total incomes** from work (labour income) was about 30% in 1990 and is less than 35% now

• Wealthy Countries Poor Governments:

- Countries across the world have become richer over the past 40 years, but their governments have become significantly poorer.

• Impact of COVID crisis:

- The Covid-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that followed hit all world regions, but it hit them with varying intensity.
- Europe, Latin America, and South and Southeast Asia recorded the largest drops in national income in 2020 (between -6% and -7.6%) while East Asia (where the pandemic began) succeeded in stabilizing its 2020 income at the level of 2019.

World Inequality Lab

- It is a research laboratory focusing on the study of inequality worldwide. The WIL hosts the World Inequality Database, the most extensive public database on global inequality dynamics.
- It gathers social scientists committed to helping everyone understand the drivers of inequality worldwide through evidence-based research.
- **Missions:**
 - The extension of the World Inequality Database.
 - The publication of working papers, reports and methodological handbooks.
 - The dissemination in academic circles and public debates.

6. UK, Canada joins diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Games (Dec. 9, 2021)

Canada will join the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics over human rights concerns, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on December 8.

Highlights:

- The United States was the first to announce the boycott, saying its government officials would not attend February's Beijing Olympics because of China's human rights "atrocities".

7. Only 56% Funds of Poshan Abhiyaan Used (Dec. 9, 2021)**Highlights**

- State Governments and Union Territories utilized only 56% of the total funds released under the Poshan Abhiyan or Nutrition Mission in the past three years.
- Out of a total amount of Rs, 5,312 crores disbursed by the Centre between financial years 2019 to 2021, a sum of Rs 2,985 crores was utilized
- The number of "severe acute malnourished" children in the country has become less than 15 lakh.

National Nutrition Mission / Poshan Abhiyaan**Nodal Ministry - Ministry of Women and Child Development**

It is under the **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)** which ensures convergence with various programs i.e., Anganwadi Services, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) of MWCD Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), National Health Mission (NHM), Swachh-Bharat Mission, Public Distribution System (PDS), Department Food & Public Distribution, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.

This flagship program is to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.

Launched on 8th March, on the occasion of International Women's Day 2018, the POSHAN Abhiyaan directs the attention of the country towards the problem of malnutrition and addresses it in a mission mode.

It targeted the goal of attaining "Kuposhan Mukh Bharat" or malnutrition-free India, by 2022.

Post the launch of the Abhiyaan, NITI Aayog was entrusted with closely monitoring the scheme and undertaking periodic evaluations.

Aims:

- To reduce stunting, undernutrition, anemia (among young children, women, and adolescent girls), and low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3%, and 2% per annum respectively.
- To address the problem of malnutrition in a mission mode

Finance:

- 50% of the total budget comes from the World Bank or other multilateral development banks and the rest of the 50% is through the Centre's budgetary support.
- The Centre's budgetary support is further divided into 60:40 between the Centre and the States, 90:10 for the north-eastern region and the Himalayan States, and 100% for the Union Territories (UTs) without legislature.

Prevalence in India: Kindly refer to the November 25 news report on the NHFS-5 Survey on Malnutrition in India.

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8. Bills on Assisted Reproductive Technology, surrogacy passed (Dec. 9, 2021)

- The Rajya Sabha passed two Bills to regulate and supervise assisted reproductive technology clinics and surrogacy on December 8.
- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021 was passed by the Lok Sabha on December 1. It was passed by a voice vote in the Upper House

Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021

- The Bill establishes the National Board, the State Boards and the National Registry to regulate and supervise Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) clinics
- It establishes ART Banks to promote ethical practice.
- It will help in maintaining a database of all clinics and medical professionals serving in the field.
- It proposes stringent punishment for those who attempt to control the offspring's sex, sell embryos or gametes.

9. Human Rights Violation Data by Ministry of Home Affairs (Dec. 9, 2021)

According to data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Rajya Sabha on 8th December 2021, around 40% of human rights violation cases lodged annually by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in the past three financial years till this October 31 were from Uttar Pradesh.

Highlights:

- The total number of rights' violation cases lodged by the NHRC reduced from **89,584 in 2018-19 to 76,628 in 2019-20** and to **74,968 in 2020-21**. In **2021-22**, the data showed.
- Of the total number of cases, Uttar Pradesh accounted for 41,947 cases in 2018-19, 32,693 cases in 2019-20, 30,164 in 2020-21 and 24,242 in 2021-22 till October 31.
- Current Chairman of the NHRC : Justice Arun Kumar Mishra

10. Cabinet Nod for Ken-Betwa River Linking Project (Dec. 9, 2021)

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the funding and implementation of the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project. It is the **first out of the 30 projects of the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers**.

Highlights-

- Benefit **Water Starved Districts of the Bundelkhand region of MP and UP** like Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh, and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh,
- The total cost of the project **Rs 44,605 crore at the 2020-21 price level**. The Centre would fund Rs 39,317 crore for the project, with Rs 36,290 crore as a **grant** and Rs 3,027 crore as a **loan**.
- The project involves **transferring surplus water from the Ken river to the Betwa river** through the construction of the **Daudhan dam** and a canal linking the two rivers, **the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage, and the Bina Complex Multipurpose Project**

- The project is slated to irrigate 10.62 lakh hectares annually, provide drinking water supply to 62 lakh people and generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.
- The project is proposed to be completed in eight years.
- The project is expected to boost socio-economic prosperity in the backward Bundelkhand region on account of increased agricultural activities and employment generation.
- It would also help in arresting distress migration from this region
- The project will partly submerge the **Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh** and **affect the habitat of vultures and jackals, which is the major environmental and wildlife concern hindering the progress of the project for all these years.**
- The two states signed a **tripartite agreement with the Centre on World Water Day (22nd March)** to finally implement this ambitious project.
- After years of protests, it was finally **cleared by the apex wildlife regulator, the National Board for Wildlife, in 2016**

Ken and Betwa Rivers

- Ken and Betwa rivers **originate in MP and are the tributaries of Yamuna.**
- Ken river originates at Ahirgawan, **Kaimur range near Jabalpur district** and meets with Yamuna in Banda district of UP
- Betwa River **arises in the Vindhya Range just north of Hoshangabad**, Madhya Pradesh. and meets with Yamuna in the Hamirpur district of UP.
- **Rajghat, Paricha, and Matatila dams are over Betwa river, whereas Gangau Dam is over Ken river.**
- **Ken River passes through Panna tiger reserve.**

Benefits of river interlinking:

- Enhances water and food security.
- Proper utilization of water.
- Boost to agriculture.
- Disaster mitigation.
- Boost transportation.
- Rejuvenate Bio-diversity

National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers:

- **The National River Linking Project (NRLP) formally known as the National Perspective Plan**, envisages the transfer of water from water 'surplus' basins where there is flooding, to water 'deficit' basins where there is drought/scarcity, through inter-basin water transfer projects.
- Under the National Perspective Plan (NPP), the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) **has identified 30 links (16 under the Peninsular Component and 14 under the Himalayan Component)** for the preparation of feasibility reports (FRs).
- **The NPP for transferring water from water surplus basins to water-deficit basins was prepared in August 1980.**

