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1. Centre issues new set of health warnings for tobacco products packs (July 29, 2022)

The Central government on 29 July notified new sets of specified health warnings for all tobacco product packs by making an amendment in the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) Rules, 2008.

What are the new warnings?

- The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) **Rules, 2008** have been amended to name the "**Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) Third Amendment Rules, 2022**".
- All tobacco products manufactured or imported or packaged on or after **December 1, 2022** shall display the image with the text health warning – **Tobacco causes painful death.**
- Products that are manufactured or imported or packaged after December 1 next year will display the image with the text health warning - **Tobacco users die younger.**
- Any person directly or indirectly engaged in the manufacture, production, supply, import or distribution of cigarettes shall ensure that all tobacco product packages carry the specified health warnings.
- Violation of the provision is a punishable offence and the violators will be punished with imprisonment or fine as prescribed in the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertising and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003.
- The amended rules will come into effect from **December 1, 2022.**

2. MoU signed by ANC and AAI for promotion of inter-island connectivity under UDAN scheme (July 29, 2022)

An MoU was signed by the Andaman and Nicobar Command and the Airport Authority of India at Port Blair on 28 July to promote inter-island connectivity under the UDAN scheme.

Important facts

- According to the MoU, naval airfields at Shibpur (at Diglipur) and Campbell Bay in North Andaman will be used for civilian operations.
- Passenger flights will directly connect Port Blair to Diglipur and Campbell Bay, two separate ends of the archipelago.
- Now the bidding process will be started for operational flights.
- This will pave the way for infrastructure development and passenger terminals on these remote islands.

- As per the vision of the UDAN scheme, a low-cost 20-passenger flight will be operated between these islands.
- Diglipur is the third most populous city in the Andaman, while a major transshipment port is to be built at Campbell Bay.
- Having a direct flight from Port Blair to Diglipur and Campbell will ease the hardship of daily commuters.
- This will also boost tourism development.

About UDAN scheme

- Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) was launched in 2016 as a Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- Its objective is to provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on regional routes to the common man even in small towns.

3. Boris Johnson gives Churchill Leadership Award to Ukraine's Zelenskyy (July 28, 2022)

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on July 26 honoured Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky with the 'Sir Winston Churchill Leadership Award' and compared the two leaders in times of crisis.

Important facts

- Zelensky accepted the award through video link during a ceremony at Johnson's London office.
- Johnson recalled how Zelensky had confirmed on February 24 that Russia had invaded Ukraine.
- He said, "In the hour of the greatest crisis, you faced the test of leadership in your own way as Churchill did in 1940."
- Zelensky thanked Johnson and Britain for their cooperation.
- Johnson was the first Western leader to visit Kyiv after Russia's invasion of the northeastern country Ukraine.

Churchill Leadership Award

- It was first introduced in 2006.
- Past recipients of the award include Prince Charles, former British Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major and former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Who was Winston Churchill?

- He was a statesman, writer, orator and leader who led Britain to victory in the Second World War.
- He served as Conservative Prime Minister of Britain twice - from 1940 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1955.
- He was born on 30 November 1874, Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire.
- He died on 24 January 1965, London.

4. Cabinet approved a project for 4G Mobile services in villages (July 28, 2022)

The Union Cabinet on July 27 approved a project for saturation of 4G mobile services in all the uncovered villages of the country at a total cost of Rs 26,316 crore.

Important facts

- Under the project, 4G mobile services will be provided in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and inaccessible areas.
- In addition, 6,279 villages, which currently have only 2G/3G connectivity, will also be upgraded to 4G.
- The project has a provision to cover 20% of additional villages on account of resettlement, new settlements, withdrawal of services by existing operators, etc.
- The project will be executed by BSNL using Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Made in India) 4G technology stack.
- The project will be funded through the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- The project is a significant step towards the government's vision of providing mobile connectivity in rural areas.

What is Universal Service?

- This refers to having a phone and affordable phone service in every household.
- It means to provide telecom service with specified quality at an affordable price to all users everywhere.

About USOF

- It was established in April 2002 under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act 2003.
- Its objective is to provide financial assistance for the provision of telecommunication services in the commercially unviable rural and remote areas of the country.
- It is an attached office of the Department of Telecommunications.
- It is headed by an administrator, who is appointed by the central government.

5. UN Rights Panel Calls To Repeal Hong Kong Security Law Imposed By China (July 28, 2022)

Experts from the UN Human Rights Committee said on July 27 that Hong Kong's controversial national security law should be repealed as the law is being used to crack down on free expression and dissent.

Important facts

- Chinese and Hong Kong officials have used the NSL imposed by Beijing in 2020 to restore stability after the city was destabilized by sometimes violent anti-government and anti-China activities in 2019.
- This UN committee, which oversees the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), released its findings on Hong Kong after periodic review.
- The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is a signatory to the ICCPR but China is not.
- This is the first recommendation by an independent UN expert body since 2020.

About Hong Kong

- Hong Kong is an autonomous region, and a former British colony in southeast China.
- It became a colony of the British Empire in 1842 at the end of the First Opium War.
- Sovereignty over the region was returned to China in 1997.
- As a Special Administrative Region (SAR), Hong Kong maintains governing power and economic systems that are separate from those of mainland China.
- The Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 guarantees basic law for 50 years.

About Hong Kong Security Law

- Hong Kong was handed back to China by the British government in 1997, but this was done under an agreement.
- This agreement is called the 'Basic Law' and it affirms the principle of 'one country, two systems'.
- This minor constitution is a product of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration.
- Under this, China promised in 1997 that in the coming 50 years it would respect Hong Kong's liberal policies, governance system, an independent judiciary and individual freedoms that no other part of mainland China has.
- The Basic Law will expire in the year 2047. Under Article 23, Hong Kong can make its own national security law.

6. Government initiates work on consumer spending survey (July 28, 2022)

The Centre has started the process of conducting the five-year Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) this month.

Important facts

- The questionnaire for the survey has been modified to capture data on items received free of cost from welfare programs of the government.
- Field work for the survey, which for the first time will involve three visits in a year to assess spending patterns in selected households, will begin soon.
- The survey was last conducted in 2017-18, but its findings were not published, citing data quality concerns.
- Therefore, the last official publicly available estimates on consumer spending are from the 2011-12 survey.

What is the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES)?

- CES is traditionally a quinquennial survey conducted by the government's National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).
- It is designed to collect information about consumption expenditure patterns of urban and rural households across the country.
- The data collected in this survey reveals the average expenditure on goods (food and non-food) and services and helps in estimating the household Monthly per Capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE).
- The survey is conducted between July and June and this year's exercise is expected to be completed by June 2023.

Need of CES

- There is no official estimate of India's per capita household expenditure.
- It provides separate data sets for rural and urban areas, and different spending patterns for each state and union territory, as well as for different socio-economic groups.
- It also helps to calculate the demand dynamics of the economy.

7. Rs 1.64 lakh crore revival package for BSNL gets Cabinet nod (July 28, 2022)

In a bid to revive state-owned telecom company Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), the Union Cabinet on July 27 approved a ₹1.64 lakh crore package for its revival.

Important facts

- The package has a cash component of ₹43,964 crore and a non-cash component of ₹1.2 lakh crore for over four years.

- The package will include administrative allotment of 4G spectrum worth ₹44,993 crore.
- Bharat Broadband Network Ltd (BBNL), was set up to implement the ambitious BharatNet project, which will be merged with BSNL.
- The revival package will enable BSNL to improve services and generate net profit in 3-4 years.
- BSNL 5G services launch will happen in the next 1.5-2 years.
- Its 4G telecom services will reach the people in 1-1.5 years.

Other key components of the package

- Capex support of ₹22,471 crore
- Viability gap funding of ₹13,789 crore for rural wireline operations
- Debt structuring by raising of bonds with sovereign guarantee worth ₹40,399 crore
- Financial support for Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) dues worth ₹33,404 crore.

Capex support

- The Cabinet had approved the allocation of 900/1800 MHz band spectrum worth ₹ 44,993 crore to support 4G services of BSNL.
- This will allow BSNL to compete in the market and provide high speed data.
- The government will make a capital expenditure of ₹22,471 crore over the next four years to "promote development and deployment of self-reliant 4G stacks".

About BSNL

- BSNL was incorporated on 15th september 2000.
- It is a 100% Govt of India owned Public Sector Undertaking.
- It is a technology-oriented integrated telecom service providing company.
- It provides Wire line Services, GSM Mobile Services including 2G, 3G, 4G & Value added Services (VAS), Internet and Broadband services, Wi-Fi services, Data Centre services etc.

8. India achieved replacement level fertility (July 28, 2022)

According to Health Ministry data India has achieved replacement level fertility, with as many as 31 States/Union Territories reaching a Total Fertility Rate of 2.1 or less.

Important facts

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar informed about the data during National Family Planning Summit 2022.

- Between 2012 and 2020, India added more than 1.5 crore additional users for modern contraceptives thereby increasing their use substantially.
- Between 2012 and 2020, the number of additional people using modern contraceptives in India increased by more than 15 million, leading to a significant increase in contraceptive use.
- India quickly understood the importance of family planning and became the first country to start a national program in this regard in 1952.

What is Replacement Level Fertility?

- It is the level of fertility at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next.
- The rate is around 2.1 children per woman in most countries, although it can vary with mortality.

Government initiative

- Mission Parivar Vikas (MPV) launched in 2016 has given further impetus to the National Family Planning Programme.
- Under this scheme, innovative strategies like distribution of new initiative kits, Saas Bahu Sammelan and Sarathi Vans are helping in family planning.
- Over 17 lakh Naya Pahal kits have been distributed to newlyweds, over 7 lakh Saas Bahu Sammelans have been organised, and over 32 lakh customers have been mentored through Sarathi Vans since inception.

India Family Planning 2030 vision document unveiled

- During the event, the Minister also unveiled the India Family Planning 2030 vision document.
- She also launched the Medical Eligibility Criteria (MEC) Wheel Application, E-Module of Family Planning Logistics Management System (FPLMIS), and Digital Archive on Family Planning under the category of Digital Intervention.
- He also launched the National Family Planning Helpline Manual, Community Health Officer (CHO) Handbook, and ASHA brochures and leaflets (Family Planning).

9. India contributes \$2.5 million to UN RWA for Palestine refugees (July 27, 2022)

India contributed US \$ 2.5 million for the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees and Working Agency (UNRWA).

Important facts

- India is a dedicated donor for UNRWA. Since 2018, it has contributed 20 million USD to support the UNRWA core services to Palestine refugees in the Middle East.

Importance of contribution

- This contribution highlights India's strong performance and unbreakable support for UNRWA's work.
- It also highlights India's commitment to the good of Palestine.
- It supports Palestinian refugees in the Middle East.

Palestinian refugee

- He is a citizen of compulsory Palestine, who was expelled from his country during the 1947–49 Palestine War.
- This phenomenon is known as 1948 Palestinian migration.
- They mostly live in Palestinian refugee camps at Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza Strip, Syria and West Bank.

About the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine refugees

- UNRWA was established as a human agency.
- It is funded completely through voluntary contribution and grant from donor countries.
- Establishment- 8 December 1949
- Headquarters- Amman and Gaza
- Commissioner General- Philip Lazarini

10. Survey on Snow Leopard under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (July 27, 2022)

Recently, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) conducted a survey on Snow Leopard, which gives some interesting information about the Snow Leopard and its prey species.

Main features of the study

- The ZSI study highlights a strong link between habitat use by the snow leopard and its prey species such as the blue sheep and Siberian ibex.
- According to this study, snow leopards are more likely to be detected if the site is used by its prey species.
- According to the study, habitat variables such as barren areas, grasslands, slopes and distance from water were major drivers of habitat use for both the snow leopard and its prey species.
- Predators such as the snow leopard control populations of herbivores such as the blue sheep and Siberian ibex, thereby protecting the health of grasslands.

About Snow Leopard

- Scientific name- *Panthera uncia*
- It is a Schedule-I species of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- It can be found in alpine and subalpine regions at altitudes of 3,000–4,500 m in Afghanistan, the Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau, Mongolia, Siberia and western China.
- In India, it is found in Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand.
- The snow leopard is listed on the IUCN Red List of World Conservation Species.
- India has been a part of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Conservation (GSLEP) program since 2013.
- Snow Leopard Project: This project was launched in the year 2009 to promote an inclusive and participatory approach to the conservation of snow leopards and their habitat.
- Snow Leopard Conservation Breeding Program has been started at Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling, West Bengal.

About Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)

- The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) was established on July 1, 1916 in the then 'British Indian Empire' with the objective of promoting pioneering survey, exploration and research to provide information on various aspects of prosperous life.
- The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), is an organization under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
- It originated in 1875 with the establishment of the Zoology Section at the Indian Museum in Calcutta.
- It is headquartered in Kolkata and presently its 16 regional stations are located in different geographical locations of the country.