

**April – 12**

## NATIONAL

### GOBARdhan Yojana

- ❖ The Union Government will launch GOBARdhan (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources) Yojana, a central government scheme nationally from Karnal district of Haryana by end of April 2018.



**GOBAR DHAN**

Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources (GOBAR) Dhan waste to wealth

**The Opportunity**  
The total cattle and buffalo population in India is nearly 300 million (based on the 19<sup>th</sup> Livestock Census 2012) resulting in generation of 3 million tonnes of cattle dung per day (at 10kg per cattlehead per day).

**The Proposal**

- Collection of cattle waste and solid waste from farmers for sale to entrepreneurs by Biomitras
- The entrepreneurs to produce manure, biogas/ bio- CNG from the waste
- The plan will be launched in April 2018

**First Phase**

- 300** ODF districts to be covered by December 2018 while all the districts to be covered by October, 2019
- Nearly **5000** gaushalas with an average of over 400 cattle to be included
- 621** registered dairies to be covered

**Benefits to Stakeholders**

- 1. For community and environment**  
Use of cleaner fuels and a shift to biogas and bio-CNG
- 2. For farmers**  
Increase in annual income by about 10% (Source: NITI Aayog)
- 3. For economy**  
Creation of numerous job opportunities
- 4. For entrepreneurs**  
A stable fuel supply in the market for oil companies  
Accessible credit in the market through govt schemes and banks

- ❖ The government aims to cover nearly 700 districts under the scheme in this financial year (2018-19).
- ❖ The scheme focuses on managing and converting cattle dung and solid waste from farms and fields to useful compost, biogas, and bio-CNG.
- ❖ The central and state governments will provide funds in the ratio of 60:40, which will depend upon the number of households in villages.
- ❖ The scheme will be hugely beneficial for the country as India is home to highest cattle population in the world (around 300 million in number) which produces around 3 million tonnes of dung.

### **Railway link between Kathmandu and Raxaul**

- ❖ India has agreed to build strategic railway link between Raxaul in Bihar and Kathmandu in Nepal to facilitate people-to-people (P2P) contact and bulk movement of goods.
- ❖ The new electrified rail line will be financed by India.



- ❖ There are three other railway projects in the pipeline between the two countries viz. Nautanwa- Bhairahawa, New Jalpaiguri-Kakarbhatta and Nepalgunj Road-Nepalgunj.
- ❖ The proposed railway line comes nearly two years after China in March 2016, agreed to construct strategic railway link with Nepal through Tibet.
- ❖ China aims to reduce landlocked Nepal's dependence on India for transit connectivity.
- ❖ China and Nepal have recently also signed a transit treaty which also comes years after a sense of mistrust that had prevailed.



## INTERNATIONAL

### External Affairs Minister's Azerbaijan visit

- ❖ External Affairs Minister (EAM) Sushma Swaraj embarked a three-day official visit to Azerbaijan's capital city Baku to participate in Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Ministerial Conference.
- ❖ The NAM Mid-Term Ministerial Conference held at Baku on 5-6 April under the theme of "Promoting international peace and security for sustainable development"
- ❖ The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a group of states that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. As of 2012, the movement has 120 members.
- ❖ 17 states and 10 International organizations have an observer status to NAM. NAM plays an important role in the maintenance of the international peace and security.
- ❖ In 2011, the Republic of Azerbaijan joined the movement at the XVI Ministerial Conference held in Bali (Indonesia).
- ❖ In 2019, the Republic of Azerbaijan will host the XVIII Summit of the NAM and will be chair of NAM between 2019 -2022.

## ECONOMY

### Wi-Fi grid - TRAI

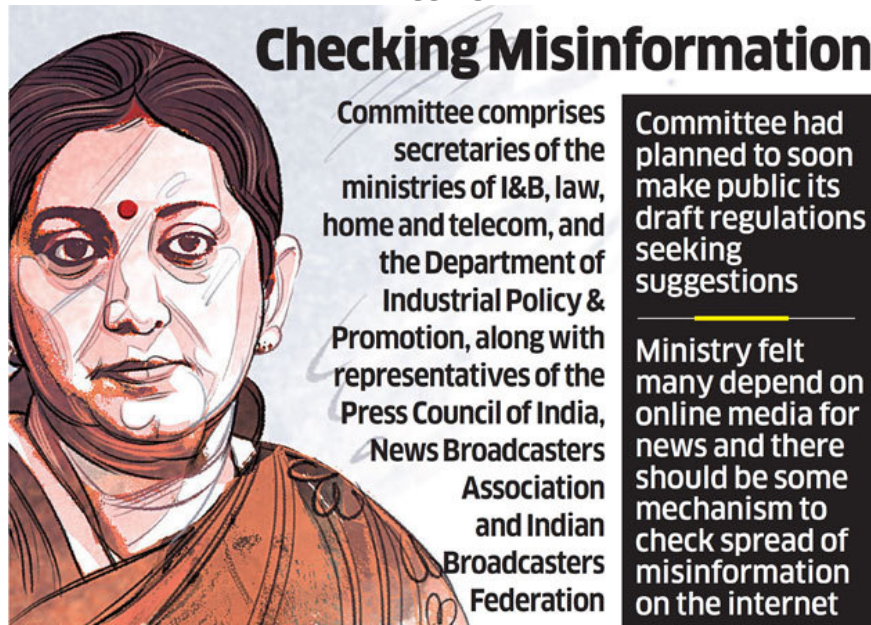
- ❖ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) submitted a proposal of open-architecture based Wi-Fi grid to bring down the cost of the internet by 90 percent.
- ❖ The proposed open-architecture will bring down data prices to one-tenth of the current level.
- ❖ The availability of broadband services at a very low cost is the basic requirement of the 'Digital India'.
- ❖ TRAI recommended that any entity - company, proprietorship, societies etc should easily be able to set up a public Wi-Fi access point.
- ❖ Under the system,
  - Authentication of the service provider and service seekers, along with accounting and payment settlement, would be done through cloud services.

- Users would be able to easily use the system, do one click authentication and payment, and connect one or more devices in a single session.
- ❖ The latest recommendations of TRAI follow Bharat Net project being pursued by the Central government that intends to provide Wi-Fi services to village panchayats across the country.
- ❖ The government has completed Bharat Net's first phase and expects the project to be completed by 2019.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Committee to regulate News portals

- ❖ The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) has constituted a 10-member committee to regulate online portals, including news websites, entertainment sites, and media aggregators.



- ❖ The committee will include secretaries of departments of Home, Electronics and Information and Technology, Legal Affairs and Industrial Policy and Promotion.
- ❖ The CEO of MyGov and representative of Press Council of India (PCI) and National Broadcasters' Association (NBA) will also be part of the committee.
- ❖ The committee will look to bring online information dissemination under regulation.
- ❖ At present both print and electronic media are regulated but online media (as well as entertainment sites) does not come under any regulatory mechanism.



- ❖ The content telecast on television channels is regulated in terms of programme and advertisement codes under Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994.
- ❖ Similarly, autonomous body Press Council of India (PCI) regulates the print media.

### **Need for Regulation**

- ❖ The social media platforms which are widely used for online information dissemination comes under the purview of Department of Telecom, Ministry of Communications and IT.
- ❖ It doesn't fall in the domain of Information & Broadcasting ministry, which looks at news, entertainment, infotainment, films, and music.
- ❖ Regulation of online news content had started because Government felt that there should be some mechanism to check the spread of misinformation (fake news) on the internet.

### **UTTAM App**

- ❖ Union Minister of Railways and Coal Piyush Goyal launched the UTTAM App for Coal Quality Monitoring.
- ❖ The word 'UTTAM' here is abbreviated as 'Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal'.
- ❖ The app has been jointly developed by the Union Ministry of Coal and Coal India Limited (CIL) developed.
- ❖ The app aims to ensure transparency and efficiency in the coal quality monitoring process and bring coal governance closer to people.
- ❖ The app has been designed with an aim to transform the citizens as stakeholders in the coal ecosystem.

## UTTAM APP FOR COAL QUALITY MONITORING



### Salient features UTTAM

Coverage of third party sampling

Interactive map based view for holistic coverage of coal quality

Accurate representation of declared vs analysed Gross Calorific Value

Trends of complaints reflected

Presents latest quantity sampled - infuses transparency in coal quality

Incorporates coal import trends

### **The ban on Imports of hormone oxytocin**

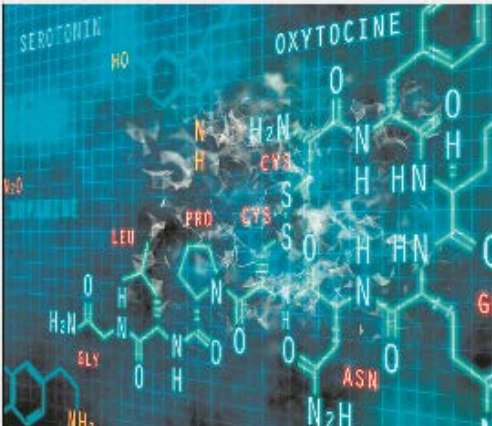
- ❖ The Union government has banned imports of the hormone oxytocin to stop its misuse in the livestock industry, where activists say it causes hormonal imbalances and shortens the lives of milch animals.
- ❖ The government has decided to rely on domestic production to satisfy requirements of the hormone.
- ❖ Drug Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) in February 2018 had recommended import ban of oxytocin.
- ❖ It also recommended that sale is limited to registered government hospitals and clinics, a bar code system used on all forms of the drug to ensure tracking and prevent abuse.
- ❖ The drug is used by dairy owners and farmers to boost milk production and make vegetables look bigger and fresher.
- ❖ But, it was found that indiscriminate use of Oxytocin in milch animals and by farmers was causing irreversible hormone damage.

## Oxytocin

- ❖ Oxytocin has also been dubbed the hug hormone, cuddle chemical, moral molecule, and the bliss hormone due to its effects on behavior, including its role in love and in female reproductive biological functions in reproduction.
- ❖ It acts both as a hormone and as a brain neurotransmitter.

# What is oxytocin

- Oxytocin is a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland
- It plays a role in reproduction, child birth and lactation, apart from social interaction
- Oxytocin is used both for humans and animals, to accelerate normal labour
- It is supposed to act directly on the uterus to induce rhythmic contractions



- In certain animals, especially farm animals, it is used to achieve 'milk let down'
- Oxytocin is believed to stimulate the mammary gland and induce milk production in farm animals, provided the udder is prepared to do so

## ENVIRONMENT

## Sight of 4 kingfisher species

- ❖ Four kingfisher bird species thriving in Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh were recently sighted.



- ❖ In India, 12 species of Kingfisher bird can be sighted. The species have been identified are
  - Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*),
  - White-throated Kingfisher (*Halcyon smyrnensis*),
  - Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileate*) and
  - Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*).
- ❖ The four sighted in the sanctuary are wetland dependents where wetland ecosystem is a prime attraction for them. The conservation status of four sighted species is “least concern”.
- ❖ Kingfisher belongs to the family of small to medium-sized, brightly colored birds in order Coraciiform.

### Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary

- ❖ Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary and estuary located in Andhra Pradesh, India.
- ❖ It is one of rarest eco-regions of the world because of its harbor's vast tracts of pristine mangrove forests.
- ❖ It is believed to be one of the last remaining tracts of thick primary mangrove forests of South India and it spread across Krishna and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The estuary of Krishna River passes through it. It is believed that this region potentially holds one most significant populations of fishing cats in the world.

## STATES

### Discovery of 2 unknown languages

- ❖ A linguist from the University of Hyderabad has discovered two endangered languages Walmiki and Malhar predominantly spoken in remote regions of Odisha.
- ❖ They were discovered by Professor Panchanan Mohanty as part of the activity of Centre for Endangered Languages and Mother Tongue Studies.
- ❖ Walmiki is spoken in the district of Koraput of Odisha and on bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh. It is an isolate language and does not belong to the particular family of languages.
- ❖ Malhar is spoken in a remote and isolated hamlet about 165 km away from Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



- ❖ Malhar belongs to “North Dravidian subgroup of a Dravidian family of languages.
- ❖ It has close affinities with other North Dravidian languages like Malto and Kurux spoken in Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Bihar.

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