

May – 25

## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ NITI Aayog and Zurich-based technology company, ABB India have signed Statement of Intent (SoI) to help India leverage power of advanced technologies, including robotics and artificial intelligence.
- ❖ Governments of India, Netherlands, and Sweden launched a first-of-its-kind collaborative research programme on HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has approved various measures to simplify Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP).
  - DAC is Defence Ministry's highest decision-making body on the capital procurement of Indian Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force).
- ❖ According to a report by World Health Organisation (WHO), human-triggered factors like animal's natural habitat loss due to deforestation and climate change set off infectious outbreaks such as recent Nipah cases in Kerala.

## NATIONAL

### India's first National Sports University

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved an ordinance to set up the country's first national sports university in Imphal (west), Manipur.



### National Sports University, Manipur

- ❖ The ordinance is on the lines of National Sports University Bill, 2017 which is pending in Parliament (introduced in Lok Sabha in August 2017).

- ❖ The specialized university will be the first of its kind in the country and adopt best international practices.

### **Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP)**

- ❖ Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) Project for North Eastern Region (NER) in Meghalaya to improve mobile services.
- ❖ The project has the provision of 2G and 4G mobile coverage in identified uncovered areas of Meghalaya and seamless mobile coverage along National Highways in the state.
- ❖ It will be funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- ❖ USOF was formed by Central Government to help fund projects to boost connectivity in rural areas.
- ❖ The money for this fund comes through 'Universal Access Levy,' charged from telecom operators as a percentage of various licenses fees being paid by them.

### **Healthcare access and quality (HAQ) Index**

- ❖ India ranked 145th among 195 countries in terms of Healthcare access and quality (HAQ) index in the year 2016, behind its neighbors like China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

HAQ Rankings In South Asia			
Country	HAQ Index Score, 2016	HAQ Index Rank, 2016	Improvement In Score, 1990-2016
India	41.2	145	16.5
Pakistan	37.6	154	10.8
Bangladesh	47.6	132	29.8
Afghanistan	25.9	191	10.1
Sri Lanka	70.6	71	23.2
Nepal	40	149	19.1
Bhutan	47.3	134	27.2

Source: Global Burden of Disease [study](#) published in the *Lancet*

- ❖ Goa and Kerala have highest HAQ index scores in 2016, each exceeding 60 points, whereas Assam and Uttar Pradesh have lowest, each below 40.
- ❖ The index was released as part of Global Burden of Disease study released by Lancet, one of the world's oldest and best-known peer-reviewed general medical journal.

- ❖ The study used the index to measure quality and accessibility of healthcare, based on 32 causes of death which should be preventable with effective medical care.
- ❖ For the first time, it also analyzed healthcare access and quality between regions within seven countries: Brazil, China, India, England, Japan, Mexico, and the US.
- ❖ The Top five countries with highest levels of healthcare access and quality in 2016 are Iceland (1st) followed by Norway (2nd), Netherlands (3rd), Luxembourg (4th), and Finland and Australia (5th).

### **Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming Act, 2018**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has unveiled Model Agriculture Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion & Facilitation) Act, 2018 to ensure better price to farmers.



- ❖ It is aimed at reducing farmers' risks by creating an assured market for their produce at a pre-agreed price while encouraging investment from agribusiness and food processing industries by enhancing productivity and cost efficiency.
- ❖ The draft Model Act seeks to create regulatory and policy framework for contract farming and services.
- ❖ Based on this draft Act, states legislatures can enact a law on contract farming as agriculture falls under state list of Constitution.
- ❖ It is promotional and facilitative Act and not regulatory in its structure. It not only covers contract farming in agriculture crops but also in livestock, dairy and poultry products.

- ❖ It establishes Contract Farming Facilitation Group (CFFG) for promoting contract farming and services at village or panchayat at level.

## INTERNATIONAL

### SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure meeting

- ❖ Pakistan hosted its first ever Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (SCO-RATS) legal experts meeting in Islamabad.

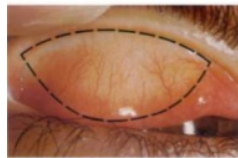


- ❖ This was the first-ever SCO meeting being held in Pakistan since it became a permanent member of the organization along with India in June 2017.
- ❖ The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss issues related to terrorist threats in the region and how to overcome them.
- ❖ Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is the permanent organ of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- ❖ It is headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The Head of RATS is elected to a three-year term. Each member state also sends a permanent representative to RATS.

### First country in south-east Asia to eliminate Trachoma

- ❖ World Health Organization (WHO) has validated Nepal for having eliminated trachoma, a contagious bacterial infection of the eye.

## Trachoma Stages



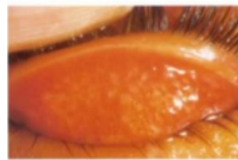
Normal tarsal conjunctiva (x 2 magnification).  
The dotted line shows the area to be examined.

**Normal Conjunctiva**  
(as described earlier)



Trachomatous inflammation – follicular (TF).

**Trachomatous inflammation follicular (TF):**  
the presence of **five or more follicles** (round swellings that are paler than the surrounding conjunctiva) in the **upper tarsal conjunctiva**.



Trachomatous inflammation – follicular  
and intense (TF + TI).

**Trachomatous inflammation intense (TI):**  
Obvious inflammatory **thickening** of the tarsal conjunctiva that obscures more than half of the normal **deep tarsal vessels**.

- ❖ It makes Nepal first country in WHO's South-East Asia Region to defeat trachoma, world's leading infectious cause of blindness.
- ❖ The eye disease was the second leading cause of preventable blindness in Nepal in the 1980s
- ❖ Trachoma is an eye disease caused by infection with bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis and the infection is particularly common in young children.
- ❖ India had self-declared itself free from infective Trachoma in December 2017 after it met the goal of trachoma elimination as specified by WHO under its GET2020 (Global Elimination of Trachoma by the year 2020) program.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Model Code of Conduct Violation Reporting App

- ❖ Election Commission of India (ECI) is launching a multi-lingual mobile application called Model Code of Conduct Violation Reporting App ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.
- ❖ The app aims at empowering people across the country to share evidence of malpractice by political parties, their candidates, and activists directly with ECI.
- ❖ The app allows sharing of photos and short audio and video clips related to electoral malpractices from spot itself.



- ❖ The app was made available for first time in Bengaluru (capital of Karnataka) in the run-up to recently concluded state assembly elections.

## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

### Chairman of Press Council of India

- ❖ The government has appointed former Supreme Court Judge CK Prasad as Chairman of Press Council of India (PCI) for the second term.



- ❖ His nomination was approved by a three-member committee headed by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu.
- ❖ He was earlier appointed to post in November 2014 after Justice Markanday Katju stepped down.

- ❖ PCI is a statutory body with a mandate to act as a watchdog to oversee the conduct of the print media. It derives its mandate from Press Council Act, 1978.
- ❖ It is statutory, quasi-judicial body acting as a watchdog of the press.
- ❖ It consists of Chairman (who has by convention, been a retired judge of Supreme Court) and 28 other members off whom 20 represent press, five are nominated from two Houses of Parliament and three represent cultural, literary and legal fields.

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