

June – 08

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Home Ministry has instructed all NGOs and associations registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010 have to submit online application for addition, deletion and change of details about office-bearers and key functionaries within one month.
 - FCRA Act regulates the receipt and usage of foreign contribution by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in India.
- ❖ The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a fine amounting to Rs.74 crores on four chemists and pharmaceutical companies in Madhya Pradesh after they were found violating the provisions of Competition Act, 2002.
 - CCI is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002 throughout India and to prevent activities that have an adverse effect on competition.
- ❖ Under the proposal announced by the Delhi government, women will have the option to not pay for rides in Delhi buses and metro.
 - The move is aimed at improving safety and security of women.
- ❖ The United States government has updated Visa application forms to require nearly all applicants to provide their social media usernames, email addresses, and phone numbers for the past five years.
 - The Donald Trump administration aims to ensure more stringent screening of potential immigrants and visitors to the United States.
- ❖ A team of evolutionary geneticists have identified a previously unknown group of ancient people who lived in north eastern Siberia during the last Ice Age that lasted from about 126,000 to 11,700 years ago.
 - The team named the group 'Ancient North Siberians' and described their existence as the 'missing link' in the Native American ancestry.
- ❖ The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) had recently organized a two-day orientation workshop for Population Research Centres (PRCs) at Delhi.
 - The event was to highlight the various features of Health Ministry's flagship schemes and for their concurrent monitoring.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved a monthly pension scheme for small retail traders and shopkeepers and is expected to cover 3 crores of them.

- Under the scheme all small shopkeepers, retail traders and self-employed persons are assured a minimum of Rs. 3,000 monthly pensions after attaining 60 years of age.
- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research has recommended 'complete' ban on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), including e-cigarettes.
 - As e-cigarettes contain nicotine and not tobacco, they do not fall within the ambit of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA).
- ❖ Nirmala Sitharaman assumed charge as India's first full time woman Finance Minister.
 - Before that, Indira Gandhi was the finance minister for the period of 1970 to 71 during her Prime Ministership. Other women cabinet ministers in 17th Lok Sabha are Smrithi Irani and Harsimrat Kaur Badal.
- ❖ United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) recently appointed Indian-origin Anita Bhatia as Deputy Executive Director of United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for Resource Management, Sustainability and Partnerships.

TAMILNADU

24 Hours shop

- ❖ The Government has allowed Shops and commercial establishments in Tamil Nadu to operate 24 hours on all seven days.
- ❖ The order has been passed under Section 6 of Tamil Nadu Shops and Establishments Act.
- ❖ The order will extend for a three-year period and is expected to give a boost to the trader's community.
- ❖ The government order also lays emphasis on safety of women employed in these units.

NATIONAL

National Party

- ❖ The Election Commission of India (ECI) has declared the National People's Party as a National party.
- ❖ This has made the NPP the first political party from the north-eastern region to earn the tag. Its election symbol is a book.
- ❖ It was formed by PA Sangma in 2013. Its headquarters is at Imphal, Manipur.
- ❖ The NPP is recognised as a State party in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland.
- ❖ In 2015, NPP became the first party to get suspended by ECI due to its failure of to provide its party expenditure during Lok Sabha Elections held in 2014.
- ❖ Registration of Political parties is governed by the provisions of Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- ❖ Criteria to be recognised as a National party are

If a party secures at least six percent of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the House of the People or, to the State Legislative Assembly;

and

In addition, it wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States.

or

It wins at least two percent seats in the House of the People (i.e., 11 seats in the existing House having 543 members) and these members are elected from at least three different States.

Shanta Kumar Committee

- ❖ The Shanta Kumar committee has submitted its recommendations to Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan.
- ❖ It was constituted to

- Restructure Food Corporation of India (FCI)
 - Improve its financial management
 - Improve operational efficiency in procurement, storage and distribution of food grains.
- ❖ The ministry has accepted to implement key recommendations of this committee.
- ❖ Key Recommendations are

- Reduce the number of beneficiaries under the Food Security Act — from the current 67 per cent to 40 per cent.
- Allow private players to procure and store food grains.
- Stop bonuses on minimum support price (MSP) paid by states to farmers, and adopt direct cash transfer system.
- FCI should involve itself in full-fledged grains procurement only in those states which are poor in procurement.
- Abolishing levy rice: Under levy rice policy, government buys certain percentage of rice (varies from 25 to 75 per cent in states) from the mills compulsorily, which is called levy rice. Mills are allowed to sell only the remainder in the open market.
- Deregulate fertiliser sector and provide cash fertiliser subsidy of Rs.7,000 per hectare to farmers.
- Outsource of stocking of grains
- Clear and transparent liquidation policy for buffer stock

ECONOMY

Stressed Asset Resolution

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has issued a new 'prudential framework for resolution of stressed assets.

- ❖ Supreme court had struck down its earlier 'revised framework for resolution of stressed assets'.
- ❖ The new framework gives 30 days for lenders to review the borrower account on default.
- ❖ Banks have to draw a resolution plan (RP) for implementation within 180 days of the first default.
- ❖ The new circular is also applicable to small finance banks and systemically important non-deposit taking non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and deposit-taking NBFCs.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Gene Editing

- ❖ In a bid to make babies immune to infection from HIV virus Chinese researcher Dr. He used a clinically untested gene editing tool (CRISPR-Cas9) to modify a particular gene.
- ❖ He edited and disabled a gene called CCR5 in twin girl embryos.
- ❖ The CCR5 gene encodes a protein that allows HIV to enter and infect cells.
- ❖ Babies without a functional CCR5 gene will become resistant to HIV infection.
- ❖ Ethical concerns were raised about the experiment.
- ❖ So Chinese government has laid down stringent rules in gene editing technique.

Snip and change

A DNA editing technique, called CRISPR/Cas9, works like a biological version of a word-processing programme's "find and replace" function



- It is generally believed that babies without a functional CCR5 gene will become resistant to HIV infection
- On the other hand, the CCR5 gene is known to protect the lungs, the liver and the brain during certain serious infections and chronic diseases. The gene is known to prompt the immune system to fight the influenza virus in the lungs
- Human clinical trials have not been carried out anywhere in the world to test whether disabling the gene completely prevents HIV infection and what the side-effects of doing so would be

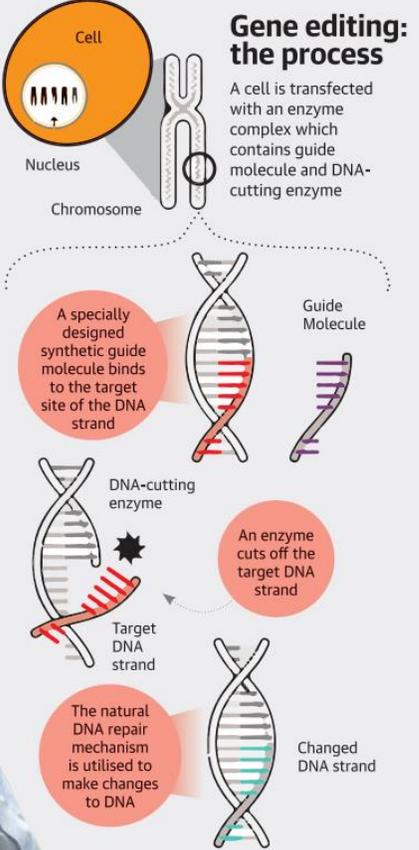
On January 21 this year, Dr. He was fired from the university where he worked after a probe by the Guangdong health commission found that he had violated the national regulations against using gene-editing for reproductive purposes

Chinese scientist He Jiankui • AP

Source: Reuters, Nature

Gene editing: the process

A cell is transfected with an enzyme complex which contains guide molecule and DNA-cutting enzyme



- A specially designed synthetic guide molecule binds to the target site of the DNA strand
- DNA-cutting enzyme
- An enzyme cuts off the target DNA strand
- Target DNA strand
- The natural DNA repair mechanism is utilised to make changes to DNA
- Changed DNA strand

Legend: * Guide molecule, ✂ DNA-cutting enzyme

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Yoga Awards

- ❖ The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has constituted the Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman Awards.
- ❖ This award aims to encourage the media to help propagate yoga during the run-up to International Yoga Day on June 21.
- ❖ In total 33 awards will be given out, 11 each in the three main formats - print, radio and television.
- ❖ Media houses working in all the 22 eighth schedule languages and English will be eligible for consideration of the awards.

SPORTS

Balidan Badge

- ❖ The International Cricket Council has asked the BCCI to get army insignia removed from MS Dhoni's wicket-keeping gloves.
- ❖ Former Indian skipper MS Dhoni was spotted wearing the 'Balidan Badge' of the Indian Para Special Armed Forces on his wicket-keeping gloves.
- ❖ It was during India's opening Cricket World Cup match against South Africa at Southampton, England.
- ❖ Balidan badge has a commando dagger pointed downwards, with upward-extending wings from the blade and a scroll superimposed on the blade with "Balidan".
- ❖ Balidan means sacrifice.
- ❖ Dhoni is an Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Parachute Regiment of the Territorial Army.



IMPORTANT DAYS

UN Russian Language Day – June 6

- ❖ UN Russian Language Day is observed annually on June 6.
 - ❖ The event was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2010.
 - ❖ The commemoration of this day coincides with the birthday of the Russian poet Aleksandr Pushkin.
 - ❖ He is considered as the father of modern Russian literature.
 - ❖ UN celebrates this day to promote multilingualism and cultural diversity and to promote equal use of all six of the UN's official working languages throughout the organization.
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