

UPSC Daily Current Affairs 28 May 2021

1. Streaming platforms will be covered by IBF

(Topic- GS Paper II – Governance, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- Recently the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) is expanding its purview to cover digital streaming platforms and will be renamed the **Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation (IBDF)**.

Significance of the Move

- The move would bring broadcasters and OTT (over-the-top) platforms, which have seen a substantial jump in their viewership base after the pandemic, under one roof.
- For this, the IBDF was in the process of forming a new wholly-owned subsidiary to handle all matters of digital media.
- The IBDF would also form a self-regulatory body, **the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC), for digital OTT platforms.**
- This self-regulatory body will be formed as per the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 notified by the government.
- DMCRC will be a second-tier mechanism at the appellate level similar to Broadcast Content Complaint Council (BCCC).

About the Indian Broadcasting Foundation

- It was established in 1999 to primarily fulfill this simple need.
- It is a not-for-profit organization.

Members

- Its members comprise both News and Non-News Channels (GEC, Sports, Music, Movies, Infotainment, etc).
- The members manage 400+ channels and about 91% of television viewership across the country.

Related Information

About Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC)

- It is a self-regulatory body set up in 2011 for general entertainment channels set up by the Indian Broadcasting Foundation.
- It has been formed to examining content-related complaints against non-news general entertainment television channels.

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- The initiative signifies the maturity of broadcasters to uphold freedom of speech and expression enshrined as a Fundamental Right in the Indian Constitution.
- The Guidelines set out the principles and practices that guide the Broadcasting Service Provider (BSP) in offering content that conforms to the 'Programme Code' prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Rules framed thereunder.

Members

It has 12 members which includes

- Four members from civil society
- Four broadcaster members
- Four chairpersons/members from National level statutory commissions such as National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Minorities, National Commission for Backward Classes and National Human Right Commission (NHSRC)

2. Vaccine wastage

(Topic- GS Paper II – Governance, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- Recently the Health Ministry said in a press statement that many state has wasted vaccine more than 1% which have been urged repeatedly to keep vaccine wastage below 1%.

Key highlights

- Jharkhand had “wasted” nearly 37% vaccines while in Chhagtisgarh it was 30%.
- Tamil Nadu (15.5%), Jammu and Kashmir (10.8%), Madhya Pradesh (10.7%) are reporting much higher **wastage than the national average (6.3%)**.
- Of the vaccines supplied by the Central government for healthcare and frontline workers and for 45+ year olds, only 0.95% was wasted and for those in the 18-45 age group only 0.29% was wasted.

About Vaccine wastage

- Vaccine wastage is an expected component of any large vaccination drive, and a vaccine is procured from the maker with an estimated wastage.
- For each vaccine type, the wastage has to be within recommended limits.

How Wastage happens?

IN UNOPENED VIALS

- If the vaccine has crossed expiry date
- If it's exposed to heat

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- If the vaccine has been frozen Breakage
- Missing inventory and theft

IN OPENED VIALS

- While discarding leftover doses
- Not able to draw out the number of doses
- Vials submerged in water
- Suspected contamination
- Poor vaccine administration practices

Different Stages where wastage occurs

- At cold chain points
- District vaccine stores
- Vaccination session sit
- At all times, the issue of vaccine doses should match the registered list of beneficiaries:
 - Vials with earlier manufacturing dates should be prioritized
 - Supply frequency should be monitored closely

Ways to Prevent Wastage

- Sessions should be planned well.
- Each vaccine session should service maximum 100 beneficiaries.
- The Centre has advised not to open the vials if sites do not have minimum 10 people.
- Train vaccinators: Some vaccinators end up drawing only nine doses against 10.

3. Rwanda's genocide

(Topic- GS Paper II – International Relation, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- Recently, French President Emmanuel Macron has recognised that France bears a heavy responsibility for the 1994 genocide in the central African country.

More on the news

- The previous visit by Nicolas Sarkozy in 2010 was the first by a French leader after the 1994 massacre sent relations into a tailspin Rwandas government and genocide survivor organizations often accused France of training and arming militias and former government troops who led the genocide.

About Rwanda genocide of 1994

- It is a planned campaign of mass murder in Rwanda that occurred over the course of some 100 days in April–July 1994.

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- The genocide was conceived by extremist elements of Rwanda’s majority Hutu population who planned to kill the minority Tutsi population and anyone who opposed those genocidal intentions.
- It is estimated that some 200,000 Hutu, spurred on by propaganda from various media outlets, participated in the genocide.
- More than 800,000 civilians—primarily Tutsi, but also moderate Hutu—were killed during the campaign.
- As many as 2,000,000 Rwandans fled the country during or immediately after the genocide.

About Rwanda



- It is a landlocked republic lying south of the Equator in east-central Africa.
- Rwanda is often referred to as le pays des mille collines (French: “land of a thousand hills”).
- **The capital is Kigali, located in the centre of the country on the Ruganwa River.**

4. Centre plans one-stop centres in 9 countries

(Topic- GS Paper II – Social Issue, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) has recently announced that it will set up One-Stop Centres (OSC) in nine countries in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.
- These nine countries where first ten One-Stop Centres (OSC) has been introduced are- Australia, Canada, Singapore, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

Funding

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- The countries have been identified by the MEA based on the Indian diaspora population and that these centres will be run by the MEA, though they will be funded by the WCD Ministry.

Significance

- It will help women overseas, who are victims of violence or are simply stuck due to particular situations.
- They can now approach these centres for immediate as well as non-immediate support including legal aid, medical support and counseling.
- There are currently 700 One-Stop Centres in the country.

About One stop centre Scheme

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) for addressing the problem of violence against women. It will provide integrated support and assistance under one roof to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces.

Subscheme

- It is a **subscheme of umbrella scheme for National Mission for Empowerment of Women including Indira Gandhi Matritav Sahyaog Yojana.**

Funding

- The scheme is funded through Nirbhaya Fund and the central government provides 100% financial assistance to the state governments /Union Territories administrations.

Auditing

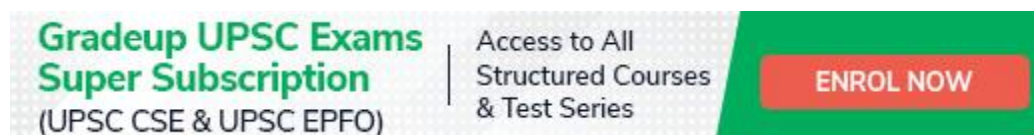
- Audit will be done as per Comptroller & Auditor General of India norms and social audit will also be undertaken by civil society groups.

Services

One stop centres will be integrated with women helplines to provide following services:

- Medical assistance
- Assistance to women in lodging the FIR
- Psycho- social support and counseling
- Legal aid and counseling
- Shelter
- Emergency response and rescue services
- Video conferencing facility.

About Nirbhaya Fund



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- The Nirbhaya Fund Framework provides for a non-lapsable corpus fund for safety and security of women.
- It is administered by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) of the Ministry of Finance of the Government of India.
- It can be utilized for projects and initiatives related to women safety.

5. Pfizer vaccine supply may start in July

(Topic- GS Paper III – Science and Technology, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news ?

- Recently, the NITI Aayog Member (Health) V.K. Paul has been said that the Centre was in talks with various vaccine manufacturers and that Pfizer may start supply by July.

About the Pfizer vaccine

- It is jointly developed by Pfizer and BioNTech.
- It has been developed by using messenger RNA (mRNA) technology which relies on synthetic genes that can be generated and manufactured in weeks.
- Unlike traditional vaccines, which work by training the body to recognise and kill proteins produced by pathogens, mRNA tricks the patient's immune system to produce viral proteins itself.
- The proteins are harmless, but sufficient to provoke a robust immune response.

Efficacy

- It has been 90 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19 infections in ongoing Phase 3 trials.

6. Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme

(Topic- GS Paper II – Governance, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- Recently the congress leader wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to restart the Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme and make MPLAD funds available to MPs.

More on the news

- Last year, the Government of India in the event of struggle against Covid-19 has suspended Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme or MPLADS funds

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for two years (2020 and 2021) and directed these funds to be transferred to the Consolidated Fund of India.

About Members of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLADS) Scheme



- The Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) was launched on 23rd December, 1993.
- Initially, Ministry of Rural Development was the Nodal Ministry for this scheme but in October, 1994 this scheme was transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation as a nodal agency.

The salient features of the MPLAD Scheme include:

- It is a Central Plan Scheme fully funded by the Government of India under which funds are released in the form of grants-in-aid directly to the district authorities.
- The funds released under the Scheme are non-lapsable, i.e. the entitlement of funds not released in a particular year is carried forward to the subsequent years, subject to eligibility.
- Under MPLADS, the role of the Members of Parliament is limited to recommend works.
- Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the district authority to sanction, execute and complete the works recommended by Members of Parliament within the stipulated time period.

Note:

- The elected Lok Sabha Members can recommend works in their respective constituencies.
- The elected members of the Rajya Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the state from which they are elected.
- Nominated Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha can recommend works for implementation, anywhere in the country.

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7. Uncertainty, risks cloud outlook: RBI

(Topic- GS Paper III –Economics, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its annual report cited that the global and domestic economic outlook has once again turned grim and overcast with extreme uncertainty and downside risks.

Key findings of the report

Consumption revival key

- A durable revival of private consumption and investment would be critical for sustaining economic growth post-pandemic.
- “For a self-sustaining GDP growth trajectory post-COVID-19, a durable revival in private consumption and investment demand together would be critical as they account for around 85% of GDP.

Price pressures

- The RBI also cautioned that demand-supply imbalances could continue to exert pressure on the prices of pulses and edible oils, even as prices of cereals could likely see softening on the back of bumper food grains production in 2020-21.
- The RBI also expects global crude oil prices remaining volatile in the near term.

‘Monitor bad loans’

- The regulator also asked banks to closely monitor bad loans and prepare for higher provisioning in the wake of the second COVID wave and the Supreme Court order lifting the ban on classification of non-performing assets.
- The waiver of compound interest on all loan accounts that had opted for moratorium during March-August 2020 may put stress on banks’ financial health.

Non-performing assets ratio

- The gross non-performing assets ratio of scheduled commercial banks declined to 6.8% by end-December 2020, from 8.2% in March 2020.
- The Reserve Bank said prudent provisioning had resulted in an improvement in the **provision coverage ratio to 75.5% from 66.6%**.

8. SeHAT OPD portal

(Topic- GS Paper III –Defence, Source- The Hindu)

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Why in the news ?

- Recently, Defence Minister has launched the SeHAT OPD portal.

About SeHAT OPD portal



- It is an online medical consultation service for the armed force personnel, veterans and their families through video conferencing.
- The 'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD portal' will provide telemedicine services to the beneficiaries.

Significance

- The portal will help reduce the load on hospitals and patients will be able to get contactless consultations in an easy and effective manner.
- This will provide additional services and ensure greater convenience to the Armed Forces personnel.

9. WHO BioHub initiative

(Topic- GS Paper III – Health, Source- The Hindu)

Why in the news?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and Switzerland has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch a BioHub facility.

About BioHub Facility

- It has been launched to enhance the rapid sharing of viruses and other pathogens between laboratories and partners globally.
- It is based in **Spiez, Switzerland**.

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Key features of BioHub Facility

- It will allow rapid sharing of pathogens between laboratories and partners to facilitate a better analysis and preparedness against them.
- The facility will help in safe reception, sequencing, storage and preparation of biological materials for distribution to other laboratories, so as to facilitate global preparedness against these pathogens.
- It will enable member states to share biological materials with and via the BioHub under pre-agreed conditions, including biosafety, biosecurity, and other applicable regulations.
- This will ensure timeliness and predictability in response activities.

Significance

- The move is significant in the view of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the need to underline the importance of sharing pathogen information to assess risks and launch countermeasures.

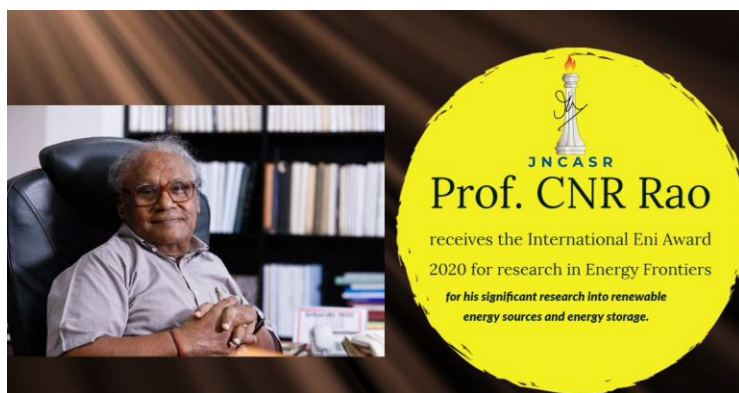
10. Eni International Award for renewable energy research

(Topic- GS Paper III – Environment, Source- The Hindu Business Line)

Why in the news?

- Recently, Bharat Ratna Professor C.N.R. Rao has received International Eni Award 2020 for research into renewable energy sources and energy storage.

About the Eni International Award



- The Eni Award is a prize awarded by the Italian oil and gas company Eni with the aim of encouraging better use of energy sources and increased environmental research.
- It is also called the Energy Frontier award.
- This award is considered to be the **Nobel Prize in Energy Research**.

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