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First Internet Governance Forum

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

Why in the news?

- Recently, the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) and the Chairman of Coordination Committee have launched the first India Internet Governance Forum 2021 (IGF).

About Internet Governance Forum

- It is an Internet Governance policy discussion platform to bring representatives together from various groups, considering all at par to discuss public policy issues related to the Internet.
- It is referred to as the multi-stakeholder model of Internet Governance, which has been the key feature for the Internet's success.

Theme

- The theme of IGF-2021 is ‘**Inclusive Internet for Digital India.**’
- The multi-stakeholder concept is well adopted by IGF (Internet Governance Forum) **under United Nations and by Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).**
- **It was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December 2015.**

Significance

- India is the second-largest broadband subscription country in the world and also has the highest data consumption per user per month.
- It is the correct initiative for the country to ensure that the growth of broadband adheres to the lifestyle and requirements of the Indian community.
- IIGF 2021 is adopting the multi-stakeholder concept in organizing the event as per the true spirit of global IGF.
- It informs and inspires those with policy-making power in both the public and private sectors.

Related Information

About Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

- The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is an internationally organized, non-profit corporation.
- It has the responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domain name system management, and root server system management functions.
- These services were originally performed under a U.S. Government contract by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) and other entities.

ICANN now performs the IANA function.

As a private-public partnership, ICANN is dedicated to preserving the

- a. operational stability of the Internet;
- b. to promoting competition;
- c. to achieving broad representation of global Internet communities;
- d. to developing policy appropriate to its mission through bottom-up, consensus-based processes

Ujjwala 2.0 scheme

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

Why in the news?

- Prime Minister has recently launched Ujjwala 2.0 (Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana – PMUY) at Mahoba Uttar Pradesh.

New change in Ujjwala 2.0 scheme

Only self-declaration

- Under Ujjwala 2.0 (Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana), migrant workers would no longer have to struggle to get address proof documents to get the gas connections.
- Now migrant workers would only be required to submit a self-declaration of their residential address to get the gas connection.
- Along with a deposit free LPG connection, **Ujjwala 2.0 will provide the first refill and hotplate (stove) free of cost to the beneficiaries.**

About Ujjwala scheme

- It was launched by Prime Minister in 2016 from Ballia with a target was set to provide deposit-free LPG connections to 5 crore women members of BPL households.

- Subsequently, the scheme was expanded in April 2018 to include women beneficiaries from seven more categories (SC/ST, PMAY, AAY, most backward classes, tea garden, forest dwellers etc).
- The target was revised to 8 Crore LPG connections and this target was achieved in August 2019, seven months ahead of the target date.

Noda Agency

- It is implemented by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Marburg virus

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

Why in the news?

- Guinea has recently confirmed a case of Marburg virus disease.

About Marburg disease

- It is a highly virulent disease that is carried by bats and has a **fatality rate of up to 88 per cent.**
- **The virus is related to Ebola and is passed from animal hosts to humans, like the coronavirus.**

Transmission

- After the initial crossover of the virus from host animals to humans, transmission occurs through person-to-person contact.
- The transmission can then happen via direct contact to "**droplets of body fluids from infected persons, or contact with equipment and other objects contaminated with infectious blood or tissues.**"
- **According to the WHO, human infection with this disease initially results from prolonged exposure to mines or caves inhabited by Rousettus bat colonies.**

Symptoms

- The symptom onset -- after an incubation period of 5-10 days -- is abrupt and begins with fever, chills, headache, and myalgia.
- **Those infected are likely to experience muscle aches.**
- Nausea, vomiting, chest pain, a sore throat, abdominal pain, and diarrhoea can begin on the third day after the onset.
- A non-itchy rash may occur on the chest, back, and stomach.

- "Symptoms become increasingly severe and can include jaundice, inflammation of the pancreas, severe weight loss, delirium, shock, liver failure, massive haemorrhaging, and multi-organ dysfunction.

Is the disease treatable?

- As of yet, there is no proven treatment available for the Marburg virus disease.
- However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) explained that supportive hospital therapy, maintaining oxygen status and blood pressure, replacing lost blood and clotting factors, and treatment for any complicating infections can improve survival.

Related Information

About Guinea

- It is a country of western Africa, located on the Atlantic coast.

Geography

- Guinea is bordered by Guinea-Bissau to the northwest, Senegal to the north, Mali to the northeast, Côte d'Ivoire to the southeast, and Liberia and Sierra Leone to the south. The Atlantic Ocean lies to the west.

Natural Resources

- Guinea possesses a large portion of the world's bauxite reserves and significant amounts of iron, gold, and diamonds.

Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021' exercise

(Topic- GS Paper III –Defence, Source- AIR)

Why in the news?

- Recently India Saudi Arabia begins the first naval exercise **Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021' exercise** near the Jubail port.

About Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021' exercise

- Al-Mohed Al-Hindi comprises a number of shores and sea-based drills between the two navies

Objective

- The main objective of the ‘**Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021**’ exercise is to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies.

Related Information

- The exercise is taking place amid rising tension in the Gulf region after a drone attack on a merchant **tanker off Oman killed a British national and a Romanian citizen over a week back.**
- The UK and the US pointed fingers at Iran for the attack on MV Mercer Street, operated by an Israeli-owned firm.
- Tehran has already rejected the charges.

Faceless e-Assessment Scheme

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

Why in the news?

- The Income Tax (I-T) Department has recently notified three official email IDs to register grievances, under the Faceless e-Assessment Scheme.

Background

- In the Union Budget 2019, the Finance Minister proposed the introduction of a scheme of faceless e-assessment.
- The scheme seeks to eliminate the human interface between the taxpayer and the income tax department.
- The scheme lays down the procedure to carry out a faceless assessment through electronic mode.
- From 13 August 2020, the e-assessment scheme of 2019 stands amended and hence known as the Faceless Assessment scheme.

About Faceless e-Assessment Scheme

- The faceless assessment scheme applied only to scrutiny assessment and best judgment assessment.

Objective

- The main objective of the scheme is to remove physical interaction as much as possible, and hence, the taxpayers may not have the opportunity to explain (in person) business-related complexities and explain various positions they have taken while filing their income tax returns.
- The scheme allows for appropriate cases where a certain hearing is necessary, so then after following protocols, a hearing is given.

Key Features of Faceless e-Assessment Scheme

- Selection of a taxpayer only through the system using data analytics and Artificial Intelligence.
- Abolition of territorial jurisdiction
- Automated random allocation of cases
- Central issuance of notices with Document Identification No. (DIN)
- No physical interface, no need to visit the income tax office
- Team-based assessments and team-based review
- Draft assessment order in one city, review in another city and finalisation in the third city.

Cases exempted from the Faceless e-Assessment

- a. Serious frauds, major tax evasion, sensitive & search matters
- b. International tax
- c. Black Money Act and Benami Property.

PM outlines the five-point framework for maritime security debate at UNSC

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

Why in the news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a debate on maritime security at UN Security Council.

Prime Minister Modi outlined a five-principle framework for the debate.

a. Removing barriers to maritime trade

- In this context, Prime Minister highlighted SAGAR (‘Security and Growth for all in the Region’) — a 2015 Indian framework for regional maritime security.

b. Peaceful resolution of maritime disputes

- The maritime disputes “should be resolved peacefully and in accordance with international law.
- It will be extremely important for promoting mutual trust and confidence, and ensuring global peace and stability.”

c. Jointly tackling maritime threats

- The third framework asked countries to jointly tackle maritime threats from non-state actors and natural disasters.

d. Protection and conservation

- The fourth framework called for the protection and conservation of the maritime environment and marine resources

e. Responsible maritime connectivity

- The fifth framework asked countries for responsible maritime connectivity.
- It was a reference to China's Belt & Road initiative.

Doctor-population ratio

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

Why in the news?

- According to the NITI Aayog member Vinod Paul, India is well on the path to achieving the World Health Organisation-recommended ratio of one doctor per thousand populations by 2024.

More in the news

- The Economic Survey 2019-20 has released information regarding the medical infrastructure evincing a shortage of doctors in the country.

Current Scenario

- The doctor-population ratio in India is 1:1456 against the WHO recommendation of 1:1000.

Initiatives to reduce doctor- population ratio

- **Ayushman Bharat Yojna and Jan Arogya Yojna** are programmes that focus on providing all kinds of health facilities to people and are steps towards universal health coverage, making health services affordable and ensuring access to health facilities.

Economy Survey 2019-20

- **According to Economy Survey 2019-20**, the number of PHCs, Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Sub-Centres has gone up to 1, 89,784 in 2018 from 1, 82,709 in 2014.
- PHCs must subscribe to Indian Public Health Standards parameters in terms of infrastructure and manpower, according to the Economic Survey 2018-19.
- The Economic Survey of 2019 claimed that in addition to all these achievements, Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadi Pariyojana had reduced out-of-pocket expenditure (OoPE) on drugs but did not quantify.

- The Economic Survey 2019 also took credit for the fact that the OoPE had **declined to 58.7 per cent in 2016-17 from 64.2 per cent in 2013-14.**

Out-of-pocket expenditure

- India ranked 182 out of 191 countries in terms of **out-of-pocket expenditure**, according to a report submitted to the 15th Finance Commission in January 2020.
- The per cent of GDP spent by the government on health also did not seem to be in the line of achieving the desired target.
- **India had aimed to up its health budget to 2.5 per cent of GDP.**
- The report submitted to the Finance Commission had said even if this was to be achieved by 2025, a plan proposed by the commission will have to be worked out, setting targets for every year.
- **In the last five years, the per cent of GDP allocated to health by the government has remained between 1.2 to 1.6.**

Graphene oxide

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

Why in the news?

- Indian scientists have developed a composite paper made of carbon (**graphene oxide**) loaded with preservatives that can be used as wrappers to help extend the shelf life of fruits.

How it works?

- The activated graphene oxide-loaded molecules were then loaded with preservatives.
- This high preservative-loaded graphene oxide, when cast into a paper used for fruit wrapping, ensures that the fruit is not loaded with toxic preservatives.
- But when the fruit over-ripens or gets infested by pathogens, the acidity increases by the secretion of acids, citric, and oxalic acids trigger the release of the preservatives for the preservation of the fruit.
- Otherwise, the preservative stays with the carbon wrapper.

Related information

- Fruits are highly perishable, hence 50% of fruits produced are wasted, causing huge losses. Conventional preservation relies on coating the preservative with the resin, wax, or edible polymer, which may cause chronic health problems.

Significance

- **In the traditional fruit dipping method**, the preservative will be lost along with the fruit, whereas the wrapper can be re-used after the consumption of the fruit for the preservation of the next batch of fruits.
- It helps to reduce the chronic toxicity which has been developed in the fruit dipping method.
- In this, the preservatives wrapper releases the preservative only when needed.
- The wrapper can be reused, which is not possible with the present technology.

About Graphene

- It is a single layer (monolayer) of carbon atoms which is one atom thick.
- It is the building block of Graphite.

Properties

- It is harder than diamond yet more elastic than rubber; tougher than steel yet lighter than aluminium.
- **Graphene is the strongest known material.**

Other Properties of Graphene are:

- The lowest resistivity substance is known at room temperature.
- High thermal stability.
- High elasticity.
- High electrical conductivity.
- Electron mobility is high at room temperature.
- Graphene oxide (GO) membranes can be used to filter common salt from seawater.