

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)**

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recommended the setting up of a National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) to manage “enormous amounts of health data” generated by Ayushman Bharat, the Centre’s flagship health programme.

National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)

- The NDHM would provide technology to manage and analyse data, and create a system of personal health records and health applications. Central to the “ecosystem” would be a Personal Health Identifier (PHI) to maintain a Personal Health Record (PHR).
- The PHI would contain the names of patients and those of their immediate family, date of birth, gender, mobile number, email address, location, family ID and photograph.
- While Aadhaar assures uniqueness of identity and provides an online mechanism for authentication, it cannot be used in every health context as per the applicable regulations.
- The design of PHI, therefore, must allow multiple identifiers (chosen from the specified types of identifiers) for designing the structure and processes relating to PHI.

Blueprint of the mission

- The Health Ministry has decided to consult Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which issues Aadhaar, and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) in the design of the PHI.
- These recommendations come from a National Digital Health Blueprint (NDHB) created by a committee.
- The 14-member committee included officials from the Health Ministry, state governments, NITI Aayog, MeitY, National eGovernance Division (NeGD), NIC, CDAC and AIIMS.
- The panel envisions the new Mission to be autonomous like UIDAI and GSTN (Goods and Services Tax Network).
- It would be partly funded by the government but will also “raise a part of its funding through a transaction fee” with private players.
- The committee has also suggested a Command, Control, and Communication Center (CCCC) as a single point of contact in public health emergencies.
- It estimates that all the components of the Mission would take about 18 months to develop.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS**Sahiwal Cattle**

The Sahiwal migrated to Kenya around 80 years ago from the Subcontinent and is now considered as the backbone of the Kenya’s milk production. The breed is the main source of earning for many dairy farmers and is also helping adaption in the face of climate change.

Sahiwal Cattle

- The British, who ruled both British India (today’s India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) as well as Kenya, brought the Sahiwal breed to Kenya in the 1930s for increasing milk production to help their army.
- The origin of the Sahiwal is the similarly named town (known in the British Era as Montgomery) in today’s Pakistani province of Punjab.
- It is commonly of a reddish dun colour, with more of a dark brownish colour around the hump and the neck.
- Also, during the 1930s, the British introduced the Red Sindhi breed of cow in Tanganyika, their colony to the south of Kenya (today’s Tanzania).

- According to the International Livestock Research Institute, the present Sahiwal cattle in Kenya are descendants of some 60 bulls and 12 cows imported between 1939 and 1963.

ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Changes in NIA (Amendment) Bill 2019

Recently Lok Sabha has passed the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019 after a heated debate in the House. It is a move to foster 'Zero Tolerance' policy towards terrorism and other crimes.

About NIA

- NIA was created after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks as need for a central agency to combat terrorism was realized.
- The agency is empowered to deal with terror related crimes across states without special permission from the states.
- The Agency came into existence with the enactment of the National Investigation Agency Act 2008 by the Parliament of India on 31 December 2008 Headquartered in New Delhi.
- The conviction rate of this anti-terrorism agency is currently 95 per cent as it has managed to convict 167 accused in the 185 cases registered by it since its inception.

What are changes introduced in the NIA (Amendment) Bill?

There are three major amendments to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act of 2008:

I. Type of offences

- Under the existing Act, the NIA can investigate offences under Acts such as the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967.
- The latest amendments will enable the NIA to additionally investigate offences related to human trafficking, counterfeit currency, manufacture or sale of prohibited arms, cyber-terrorism, and offences under the Explosive Substances Act, 1908.

II. NIA's jurisdiction

- Under the Act, for the offences under its purview, NIA officers have the same power as other police officers and these extend across the country.
- The Bill amends this to give NIA officers the power to investigate offences committed outside India.
- Of course, NIA's jurisdiction will be subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries.

III. Special trial courts

- The amendment seeks for special trials courts for the offences that come under NIA's purview or the so-called "scheduled offences".
- The existing Act allows the Centre to constitute special courts for NIA's trials.
- But the Bill enables the Central government to designate sessions courts as special courts for such trials.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

'Blue Flag' Certification

The MoEFCC has selected 12 beaches in India to vie for a 'Blue Flag' certification, an international recognition conferred on beaches that meet certain criteria of cleanliness and environmental propriety.

Blue Flag Programme

- The Blue Flag Programme for beaches and marinas is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education).
- It started in France in 1985 and has been implemented in Europe since 1987, and in areas outside Europe since 2001, when South Africa joined.

- Japan and South Korea are the only countries in South and southeastern Asia to have Blue Flag beaches.
- Spain tops the list with 566 such beaches; Greece and France follow with 515 and 395, respectively.

Proposed Beaches

- These beaches are at Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Bhogave (Maharashtra), Ghoghla (Diu), Miramar (Goa), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Eden (Puducherry), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden Beach Puri (Odisha), and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).

Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) Initiative

The government has said that the SATAT initiative has the potential of addressing environmental problems arising from landfill emissions, farm stubble burning, etc. and also bring down dependency on oil/gas import. Till June, 2019, Oil Marketing Companies and Gas Marketing Companies have awarded Letter of Intent (LoI) for 344 plants for production and supply of CBG.

About the initiative:

- The initiative is aimed at providing a Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) as a developmental effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.
- Compressed Bio-Gas plants are proposed to be set up mainly through independent entrepreneurs.
- CBG produced at these plants will be transported through cascades of cylinders to the fuel station networks of OMCs for marketing as a green transport fuel alternative.
- The entrepreneurs would be able to separately market the other by-products from these plants, including bio-manure, carbon-dioxide, etc., to enhance returns on investment.
- This initiative is expected to generate direct employment for 75,000 people and produce 50 million tonnes of bio-manure for crops.
- There are multiple benefits from converting agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste into CBG on a commercial scale:
 - Responsible waste management, reduction in carbon emissions and pollution.
 - Additional revenue source for farmers.
 - Boost to entrepreneurship, rural economy and employment.
 - Support to national commitments in achieving climate change goals.
 - Reduction in import of natural gas and crude oil.
 - Buffer against crude oil/gas price fluctuations.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Stay away from stupid people. Otherwise they will drag you down to their level and beat you with their expertise.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: Examine the advantages of Ayushman Bharat over its predecessors, along with its major challenges.

Health insurance penetration in India is dismally low, covering only about 29% of households surveyed under the NFHS-4. One of the aims of National Health Policy 2017 is to achieve universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence. Hence, Ayushman Bharat scheme is a much needed step in the right direction.

Following are the components and objectives of Ayushman Bharat Mission:

- Health and wellness centers: Under this, 1.5 lakh centers will provide comprehensive health care, for non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services. These centers will also provide free essential drugs and diagnostic services.
- National Health Protection Scheme (PM Jan Arogya Yojana): Scheme to provide insurance based coverage to poor and most vulnerable sections of society.
- It will subsume the on-going centrally sponsored schemes – Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS). However, there are certain improvements over its predecessors:
- Enhanced reach and coverage: It benefits 10 crore families (40% of the population), going much beyond a total of 3.6 crore families under RSBY. Also, coverage under RSBY was Rs.30,000 annually for healthcare. Under NHPS, it is upto Rs.5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.
- Private hospital's participation: Private hospitals can also empanel themselves to the scheme. Pre-determined packages for treatment have been provided.
- Cost of surgeries like C-section and knee replacement will be fixed which will get reimbursed to the hospital by the government.
- Priority is being given to strengthening primary healthcare. 70% of allocated funds are being spent on upgrading health and wellness centers to provide comprehensive accessible healthcare.
- Simple product design which is easy to administer. It is an entitlement based scheme where beneficiaries are enrolled automatically based on deprivation criteria in the SECC database. There is no cap on family size and age of the beneficiaries.
- Scheme is entirely cashless and nationally portable. Hence, it will have a major impact on the most vulnerable migrant population.
- However, certain challenges remain in the implementation of such a scheme which covers almost 40% of the country's population.

Challenges

- Financial constraints: Overall budget outlay for the scheme was Rs 2000 crore for 2018-19 which questions its feasibility. There needs to be a balance between the interests of the patient, the insurer and the hospital as well for the model to sustain. Hence, the prices of packages need to be rationalized accordingly.
- Though it improved access to health care, it may not reduce out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) or health payment-induced poverty.
- Infrastructural issues: Hospital infrastructure, which includes beds and emergency care services, still remain defunct in most of the cities.
- Human resource management: Equipping the centers with trained health personnel and retaining talented human resources in rural and remote areas still needs to be done.
- Prevention of unethical medical practices and frauds while availing insurance facility still persist.
- Past experience of RSBY shows that India lacks the institutional expertise and capacity to implement public health insurance schemes effectively at such a scale.

Conclusion: Ayushman Bharat is the largest government-funded healthcare scheme in the world. Even though there are challenges in the implementation of the scheme at such a large scale, yet it has a potential to change the lives of millions if properly implemented.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS BASED MCQS

1. Blue Flag Certification is given for which of the following?
 - (a) **Beaches**
 - (b) Mangroves
 - (c) Coral Reefs
 - (d) Lakes
2. Which of the following is incorrect about the NIA?
 1. NIA was created after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks as need for a central agency to combat terrorism was realized.
 2. The agency is empowered to deal with terror related crimes across states without special permission from the states.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below

 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Recently in news, the cattle Sahiwal belongs to which of the following countries?
 - (a) Ghana
 - (b) Nigeria
 - (c) **Kenya**
 - (d) Tanzania
4. Consider the following statements w.r.t National Digital Health Mission (NDHM).
 1. It's main purpose is to manage "enormous amounts of health data" generated by Ayushman Bharat.
 2. It is to be an autonomous entity like UIDAI and GSTN.

Which of the statements is/are incorrect?

 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following statement about Ayushman Bharat Program is wrong?
 - (a) Ayushman Bharat Programme which will ensure enhanced productivity, wellbeing and avert wage loss and impoverishment.
 - (b) It has aim of opening more than 1.5 lakh health and wellness centers across the country.
 - (c) Initial budget of the scheme is Rs 2000 crores, in addition the money coming from Cess.
 - (d) **Health insurance coverage of up to Rs. 8 lakh a family a year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization is provisioned under the scheme.**