

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**Neonatal Deaths**

According to the National Health Mission (NHM), Madhya Pradesh has recorded the highest percentage of newborn deaths of 11.5% against the total admissions to government-run sick newborn care units (SNCUs) in the past three years across the country. The country's average is 7%.

About:

- Although admissions of neonates (under 28 days) in the Madhya Pradesh have dropped from April 2017 to December 2019 — remaining lower than West Bengal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh — the percentage of deaths at 12.2% surpassed Bihar's last year.
- In Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, one in every five children admitted to a unit died in the three years — the highest death percentage of 19.9% in the State, ten times above the NHM's mandated key performance indicator of below 2%.
- Staff crunch, low community referrals, absence of a special neonatal transport service to health centres, and the non-availability of enough units to cater to increasing institutional deliveries had contributed to the spike in the percentage of deaths.
- Meanwhile, West Bengal, where 34,344 neonatal deaths occurred in the period, the most in the country, the declining percentage of deaths from 9.2% in 2017 to 8.9% in 2019 coincided with a slump in admissions.

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY**Medaram Jatara**

Recently, the festival of Medaram Jatara concluded.

About:

- Medaram Jatara is also known as Sammakka Saralamma Jatara.
- It is a tribal festival honouring the fight of a mother and daughter, Sammakka and Saralamma, with the reigning rulers against an unjust law.
- It is celebrated in the state of Telangana. The Jatra begins at Medaram in Tadvai Mandal in Warangal district. Medaram is a remote place in the Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, a part of Dandakaranya, the largest surviving forest belt in the region.
- It is held every two years (biannually). It is celebrated during the time the goddesses of the tribals is believed to visit them.
- Ritual: People offer bangaram/gold (jaggery) of a quantity equal to their weight to the goddesses and take holy bath in Jampanna Vagu, a tributary to River Godavari.
- Significance: Many tribal Devotees from different states of India reach to the festive place to celebrate the Jatara. It is believed that after Kumbha Mela, the Medaram jatara attracts the largest number of devotees in the country.

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Recusals**

Supreme Court judge Justice Mohan M. Shantanagoudar recused himself from hearing a petition filed against the government's move to charge J&k CM Omar Abdullah under the Public Safety Act. The case was finally heard by another bench.

About:

- Recusal usually takes place when a judge has a conflict of interest or has a prior association with the parties in the case.
- There are no written rules on the recusal of judges from hearing cases listed before them in constitutional courts. It is left to the discretion of a judge.
- The reasons for recusal are not disclosed in an order of the court. Some judges orally convey to the lawyers involved in the case their reasons for recusal, many do not.
- A recusal inevitably leads to delay. The case goes back to the Chief Justice, who has to constitute a fresh Bench.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**SPICe+**

The Corporate Affairs Ministry (MCA) has come out with the format of the new web form — SPICe+ — for incorporation of companies with effect from February 15.

About:

- The web form has replaced the existing electronic form SPICe (Simplified Proforma for Incorporating Company Electronically).
- The 22-page integrated web form will, among other things, offer 10 services by three Central Government Ministries and Departments (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Department of Revenue in the Finance Ministry) and one State Government (Maharashtra).
- The incorporation of companies are made through the Corporate Affairs Ministry's portal MCA21. The new form would be available on this portal.
- The web form will help save many procedures, time and cost for starting a business in India.
- The Ministry has also come up with an AGILE PRO form, part of SPICe+, for GSTIN/ EPFO/ ESIC/ Profession Tax/ Bank Account.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Cyrtodactylus Urbanus

Guwahati, the largest city in the Northeast, has yielded a new species of Urban lizard – the urban bent-toed gecko.

About:

- The new species of lizard, zoologically named *Cyrtodactylus urbanus*, is markedly different in molecular structure, blotch and colour from the *Cyrtodactylus guwahatiensis*, or the Guwahati bent-toed gecko, that was discovered two years ago.
- It was also the 12th recorded gecko from the Northeast.
- All bent-toed geckos in Northeast India were thought to be a single species, the *Cyrtodactylus khasiensis* found primarily in the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya.
- Though the urban bent-toed gecko falls within the *khasiensis* group, it differs from other members of this group in mitochondrial sequence data as well as aspects of morphology.

INTERNAL SECURITY

Darknet

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has arrested the country's first 'darknet' narcotics operative, who allegedly shipped hundreds of psychotropic drug parcels abroad in the garb of sex stimulation medicines.

About:

- Dark Net (or Darknet), also known as the dark web, refers to the deep hidden internet platform that is used for narcotics sale, exchange of pornographic content and other illegal activities by using the secret alleys of the onion router (ToR) to stay away from the surveillance of law enforcement agencies.
- Darknet is the part of the Internet below the private deep web that uses custom software and hidden networks superimposed on the architecture of the Internet.
- Owing to its end-to-end encryption, darknet is considered very tough to crack when it comes to investigating criminal activities being rendered over it.

Dark Net vs. Deep Web

- The terms "dark net" and "deep web" are occasionally used interchangeably. However, this is not correct.
- The dark net is part of the greater deep web. The deep web encompasses all unindexed sites that don't pop up when you do an Internet search

PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETC

P. Gopichand

India's chief National badminton coach P. Gopichand was named among the recipients of the International Olympic Committee's 2019 Coaches Lifetime Achievement Award. He is the first Indian to get it across all Olympic disciplines.

About:

- Pullela Gopichand is a former Indian badminton player. He won the All England Open Badminton Championships in 2001 becoming the second Indian to achieve this feat after Prakash Padukone.
- Presently, he is the Chief National Coach for the Indian Badminton team. He runs the Gopichand Badminton Academy.
- As a coach his work has been instrumental in putting India firmly on the world badminton map by shaping the careers of players like Saina Nehwal, Kidambi Srikanth, PV Sindhu etc. Saina and Sindhu went on to win Olympic medals for the country.
- He received the Arjuna Award in 1999, the Dronacharya Award in 2009 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.

Related Info:

- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Coaches Lifetime Achievement Award was created three years ago in 2017 in order to recognise coaches who have dedicated their lives to training some of the best athletes to have graced the Olympic Games.

ODISHA DEVELOPMENT
Door Delivery Of Services By Aug 15, Mo Sarkar In All Depts

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, during his speech on the Motion of Thanks to the Governor's Speech, stressed on some of the ambitious targets of his government like reaching out to every household with door delivery of services and implementation of 'Mo Sarkar' in all departments. Citing that the State government is determined to measure up to the expectation of citizens and work hard for the complete transformation of the State by implementing the "5T Mantra", CM Naveen listed the following targets which the State Government is focusing on.

- By August 15th 2020 our citizens will have the freedom not to visit Government offices for any services.
- They will have the option of online services OR professionally run common service centre or door delivery.
- April 1st is the dateline for shifting of all wage payments through banks for All line departments.
- IFMS in all government transactions across departments by April 1st.
- Mo Sarkar in all departments by March 5th 2020.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. What do you understand by sex ratio? Examine the implications of a declining sex ratio and meta son preference? What are the reasons for such trends in India?

Ans:

The sex ratio refers to the number of females per 1000 males in a given area at a specified time period. At world level, sex ratio has been in favour of females (1050 females per 1000 males). This is due to two reasons:

- Female children appear to have an advantage over male in terms of resistance to disease in infancy.
- Women have tended to outlive men in most societies, so that there are more older women than men.

In India, the sex ratio has been declining due to prevailing social norms that tend to value males much more than females, which leads to 'son preference' and the relative neglect of girl child. In 1901 it was 972, 946 in 1951, 927 in 1991. Though it showed increasing trend since then (940 in 2011), but there has been declining child sex ratio (0-6 years age) from 945 in 1991 to 914 in 2011.

Reasons and Implications of declining sex ratio

- Health risk of child bearing by mothers: India's maternal mortality remains high (4.2 per 1000 live births) as compared to international standards. This necessitates focus on levels of nutrition, general education and awareness, as well as, the availability of medical and communication facilities.
- Severe neglect of girls in infancy, leading to higher death rates, sex-specific abortions that prevent girl babies from being born and female infanticide. This is due to social reasons like patriarchal nature of society, dowry etc. Such meta son preference is shown by educated urbanised sections evident in use of modern techniques like sonogram combined with adoption of modern values like nuclear family necessitating fewer children and meta son preference.

Some Corrective Steps

- Improving the health of mothers through institutional deliveries, free pre- and post-natal check-ups.
- Banning use of modern tools for sex-selective abortions like Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act.
- Removing biases in societal norms and values like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Andolan, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana.
- Gender Sensitising policy making like gender budgeting, 33% reservation in local bodies.

Way Forward

- All such steps have helped tackle declining sex ratio to some extent like increase in overall sex ratio since 1991, increase in child sex ratio in Haryana (worst affected) since Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Andolan is a case in the point.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. Medaram Jatara is celebrated in the state of:
 - (a) Kerala
 - (b) Telangana**
 - (c) Odisha
 - (d) Tamil Nadu
2. With reference to the Recusal by Judge, consider the following statements:
 1. It usually takes place when a judge has a conflict of interest or has a prior association with the parties in the case.
 2. The reasons for recusal are not disclosed in an order of the court.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to the Dark Net (or Darknet), consider the following statements:
 1. It refers to the deep hidden internet platform that is used for illegal activities by using the secret alleys of the onion router (ToR) to stay away from the surveillance of law enforcement agencies.
 2. The dark net is part of the greater deep web. The deep web encompasses all unindexed sites that don't pop up when you do an Internet search.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2**
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. SPICE+, a new web form, recently seen in news, is an initiative of:
 - (a) Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
 - (b) Ministry of Women and Child Development
 - (c) Ministry of Finance
 - (d) Ministry of Corporate Affairs**
5. Which of the following committee had proposed a more transparent presentation of the RBI's annual accounts and change in its accounting year from July to June to April to March from the financial year 2020-21?
 - (a) Bimal Jalan Committee**
 - (b) Abhijit Sen Committee
 - (c) Abid Hussain Committee
 - (d) Chandra Shekhar Committee
6. The new species of lizard, named *Cyrtodactylus urbanus* has been discovered in:
 - (a) Assam**
 - (b) Karnataka
 - (c) Goa
 - (d) Himachal Pradesh
7. With reference to the Neonatal Deaths, consider the following statements:
 1. According to the National Health Mission (NHM), Odisha has recorded the highest percentage of newborn deaths in the past three years across the country.
 2. The country's average is 7%.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only**
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2