

GOVERNANCE**Regulations on OTT and Digital Content**

Recently, the Government has brought Over The Top (OTT) platforms, or digital video streaming service providers such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and others, under the ambit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Key Points**Background:**

- The government had indicated the necessity to monitor these platforms and wanted the platforms to come up with a self-regulatory body.
- In January 2019, eight video streaming services had signed a self-regulatory code that laid down a set of guiding principles for content on these platforms which prohibited five types of content:
 - Content that deliberately and maliciously disrespects the national emblem or national flag.
 - Any visual or storyline that promotes child pornography.
 - Any content that “maliciously” intends to outrage religious sentiments.
 - Content that “deliberately and maliciously” promotes or encourages terrorism.
 - Any content that has been banned for exhibition or distribution by law or court.
- However, the government refused to support this code and expressed displeasure at a model suggested by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), and Digital Curated Content Complaints Council (DCCC).
- IAMAI is a not-for-profit industry body registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Its mandate is to expand and enhance the online and mobile value-added services sectors
- DCCC was launched by the Online Curated Content Providers (OCCP) in February 2020 to empower consumers to make informed choices on viewing content over OTT platforms and to also provide consumers with a complaints redressal mechanism.
- It held that the model lacked independent third-party monitoring, did not have a well-defined code of ethics and did not clearly enunciate prohibited content.

Current Order:

- It covers “Digital/Online Media”, including “films and audio-visual programmes made available by online content providers” and “news and current affairs content on online platforms”.
- It will give the government control over these platforms, which were unregulated till now as there is no law or autonomous body governing digital content.
- Online content providers come under the legal framework of the Information Technology Act 2000 but, unlike print and broadcast media, were not directly under any Ministry.
- However, there are no details on how the government will regulate it. There is a possibility that the Programme Code of the Cable Television Network Regulation Act 1995, that governs content on TV, may serve as a template to frame rules for online content.

Reasons Behind the Order:

- The Ministry also keeps receiving complaints from the public underlining the concerns of unregulated content and need to regulate it. In October 2020, the Supreme Court issued notice to the Centre and the IAMAI, on a petition to regulate OTT platforms.
- The Ministry is already regulating news and entertainment content on TV and radio through statutory bodies so it is important to bring the digital content under its purview as well.
- With the growth of the digital media and a significant shift of viewership from traditional media platforms to digital media, there is a real need for having an appropriate oversight framework for online news and content, at par with traditional media platforms.
- Rules and Regulatory Bodies for Other Platforms

Regulations:

- The Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995 penalises television channels for any violation of the programming and advertising.
- Complaints can be sent directly to the Ministry, or raised through the internal mechanism of the Electronic Media Monitoring Centre.
- In November 2019, the Government had brought out a draft Registration of Press and Periodicals (RPP) Bill, which sought to replace the 150-year-old Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867.
- Cable Networks Regulation Act 2005 regulates both news and entertainment on television.

- Various Sectors and Regulating Bodies:

Print Media:

- Press Council of India (a statutory, quasi-judicial authority).

Television:

- News Broadcasting Standards Authority (self-regulatory body) set up by the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) regulates television news.
- Electronic Media Monitoring Centre, set up in 2008, monitors content on TV.
- Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (independent and self-regulatory) for television entertainment.

Films:

- Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Advertisement:

- Advertising Standards Council of India (a self-regulatory body).

INDIAN ECONOMY**PLI Scheme for Ten More Sectors**

The Union Cabinet has given its approval to introduce the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme in 10 more sectors for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities and exports (Atmanirbhar Bharat).

Earlier, the government had announced a production linked incentive or PLI scheme for medical devices, mobile phones and specified active pharmaceutical ingredients, with a proposed outlay of Rs. 51,311 crore.

Key Points**PLI Scheme:**

- A scheme that aims to give companies incentives on incremental sales from products manufactured in domestic units.
- The scheme invites foreign companies to set units in India, however, it also aims to encourage local companies to set up or expand existing manufacturing units.

Expansion of PLI Scheme to Ten More Sectors:

- The ten sectors include food processing, telecom, electronics, textiles, specialty steel, automobiles and auto components, solar photo-voltaic modules and white goods such as air conditioners and LEDs.
- The sectors had been identified on the basis of their potential to create jobs and make India self-reliant.
- The PLI scheme for these ten sectors will be operational for five years with a total estimated outlay of Rs 1.45 lakh crore.
- The PLI scheme will be implemented by the concerned ministries/departments.
- Savings from one PLI scheme of an approved sector can be utilized to fund another sector.
- The scheme for these sectors will be in addition to the PLI schemes for mobile phones and allied equipment manufacturing, pharmaceutical ingredients and medical devices.
- Several more pharmaceutical products have been brought under the aegis of the PLI scheme, including complex generics, anti-cancer and diabetic drugs, in-vitro diagnostic devices and special empty capsules.
- Benefits: The PLI scheme across these 10 key specific sectors will make Indian manufacturers globally competitive, attract investment in the areas of core competency and cutting-edge technology; ensure efficiencies; create economies of scale; enhance exports and make India an integral part of the global supply chain.

Push to Digital Economy:

- India is expected to have a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2025. Additionally, the Government's push for data localization, Internet of Things, projects such as Smart City and Digital India are expected to increase the demand for electronic products.

Increase Exports:

- The Indian pharmaceutical industry is the third largest in the world by volume and 14th largest in terms of value. It contributes 3.5% of the total drugs and medicines exported globally.

- India is the world's second largest steel producer in the world. It is a net exporter of finished steel. A PLI scheme in Specialty Steel will help in enhancing manufacturing capabilities for value added steel leading to increase in total exports.
- Specialty steel is made by adding various elements to iron, to achieve various properties, such as heat resistance, hardness, and corrosion resistance.

Secure Telecom Infrastructure:

- Telecom equipment forms a critical and strategic element of building a secured telecom infrastructure and India aspires to become a major original equipment manufacturer of telecom and networking products.

Doubling Farmers' Income:

- The growth of the processed food industry leads to better price for farmers and reduces high levels of wastage.

Way Forward

- Growth in production and exports of industrial goods will greatly expose the Indian industry to foreign competition and ideas, which will help in improving its capabilities to innovate further.
- Promotion of the manufacturing sector and creation of a conducive manufacturing ecosystem will not only enable integration with global supply chains but also establish backward linkages with the MSME sector in the country.
- It will lead to overall growth in the economy and create huge employment opportunities.

INDIAN POLITY**Amendment in FCRA Rules**

Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has notified new rules under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010.

Key Points**Background:**

- Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) first enacted in 1976, was once amended in the year 2010 to regulate the foreign contributions or donations and hospitality (air travel, hotel accommodation etc) to Indian organizations and individuals and to stop such contributions which might damage the national interest
- It has been amended again in 2020 to enhance transparency and accountability in the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions and facilitating the genuine non-governmental organisations or associations who are working for the welfare of society.
- The Act is applicable to all associations, groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who intend to receive foreign donations.
- As per the FCRA, members of legislatures, political parties, government officials, judges and media persons are prohibited from receiving any foreign contribution.
- The MHA has notified new rules under the FCRA, 2010 thereby amending the FCRA Rules, 2011.

New Rules:

- Norms for farmers, students, religious and other groups who are not directly aligned to any political party to receive foreign funds, if the groups are not involved in active politics, has been relaxed.
- FCRA registrations have been made more stringent.
- Any organisation that wants to register itself under FCRA shall be in existence for three years and should have spent a minimum amount of 15 lakh on its core activities for the benefit of society during the last three financial years.
- However, the Central Government in exceptional cases or in cases where a person is controlled by the Central Government or a State Government may waive the conditions.
- Office bearers of NGOs or organisations seeking registration under the FCRA are required to submit a specific commitment letter from the donor indicating the amount of foreign contribution and the purpose for which it was being given.

Political Groups:

- A new clause has been inserted which says that groups mentioned in Clause V and VI will only be considered a political group by the Centre if they participate in "active politics or party politics".

- Earlier, the rules on said clauses dealt with “guidelines for the declaration of an organisation to be of a political nature, not being a political party”, and the Central government could specify an organisation as that of political nature based on six criteria.
- Clause V of Rule 3 (FCRA rules 2011) qualified a political group as organisations of farmers, workers, students, youths based on caste, community, religion, language or otherwise, which is not directly aligned to any political party, but whose objectives as stated in the memorandum of association, or activities gathered through other material evidence, include steps towards advancement of political interests of such groups.
- The other 2011 clause (VI) qualified a group as political if the organisation by whatever name habitually engages itself in or employs common methods of political action like rasta roko, jail bhara, rail roko, bandh or hartal in support of public causes.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

MoUs Between India-Maldives

Recently, India and the Maldives have signed four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).



Key Points

Four MoUs:

- Two MoUs for High Impact Community Development Projects.
- An MoU on Cooperation in Sports and Youth Affairs.
- An MoU for a USD 100 million grant to fund the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) which is the largest ever such infrastructure project undertaken in the Maldives.
- GMCP is a financial package by India, consisting of a grant of USD 100 million and a new line of credit of USD 400 million.
- This will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives, connecting Malé (the capital) with three neighbouring islands viz. Villingili, Gulhifalhu (where a port is being built under Indian line of credit) and Thilafushi (new industrial zone) by the construction of a bridge-and-causeway link.
- This will boost economic activity, generate employment and promote holistic urban development in the Malé region.

Other Recent Initiatives:

- In April 2020, India supplied 6.2 tonnes of essential medicines to the Maldives, under Operation Sanjeevani to tackle the pandemic.
- In May 2020, India under Mission Sagar, supplied food items and medical assistance teams to the countries in the southern Indian Ocean including the Maldives.
- Indian Government assures that the Maldives will be among the first countries to receive Covid-19 vaccines as soon as one is developed in India.
- In August 2020, the bilateral Air Travel Bubble was established which connects five Indian cities with Male through 13 weekly flights leading to a steep increase in the number of tourists.

- Creating a travel bubble involves reconnecting countries or states which have shown a good level of success in containing the Covid-19 domestically.
- Such a bubble would allow the members of the group to restart trade ties with each other and open travel and tourism.
- In October 2020, both governments inked a deal for a USD 400 million line of credit from the Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank), premier export finance institution of India.
- The soft loans to the Maldives have funded connectivity, water, sewerage projects, Addu Development Project, an international cricket stadium, Gulhifalhu port, etc.

Significance:

- The MoUs are symbolic of India-Maldives’ strong development partnership which is multi-faceted and designed to meet the specific requirements of the government and people.
- The Maldives enjoys a special and central place in India’ Neighbourhood First policy and itself has a foreign policy of India First.
- India is supportive of Maldivian Foreign Minister’s candidature for the Presidency of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2021.
- Both nations have consistently supported each other in multilateral fora such as the UN, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- Amid India’s growing concern over China’s increasing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the ties with the Maldives are of crucial importance.
- The current Maldivian President is being criticised by the opposition for having an “India-tilt”. The Former President was dislodged from office in 2018 and was widely perceived as a close ally of China.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

New Species in Andaman

Recently a group of scientists has reported a new genus of treefrog from the Andaman Islands called Striped Bubble-nest frog.



Key Points

- Biological name: *Rohanixalus vittatus*
- The new genus ‘Rohanixalus’ is named after Sri Lankan taxonomist Rohan Pethiyagoda.
- Striped Bubble-nest frog belongs to the genus of the Old World treefrog family Rhacophoridae.
- This is the first report of a tree frog species from the Andaman Islands.

Bodily Features

- Small and slender body (2-3 cm long).
- A pair of contrastingly coloured lateral lines on either side of the body. Minute brown speckles scattered throughout the upper body.

- Light green-coloured eggs laid in arboreal bubble-nests.
- Arboreal means living in trees or related trees
- They are also known as Asian Glass Frog or see through frogs.
- While the general background coloration of most glass frogs is primarily lime green, the abdominal skin of some members of this family is translucent (allowing light to pass through). The internal viscera, including the heart, liver, and gastrointestinal tract, are visible through this translucent skin, hence the common name.

The genus has several unique behavioural traits:

Maternal egg attendance:

- The female (mother) attends the egg clutches until hatching and assists in release of the tadpoles into the water.
- During the first three days after egg laying, the female sits over the eggs and produces a gelatinous secretion with which she glazes (covers) the egg mass through clockwise movement of her legs. This behaviour provides necessary moisture to the eggs laid on exposed leaf surfaces and protects them from insect predation.

Community egg attendance:

- A large number of egg clutches (over 50) of different developmental stages on a single leaf or plant. Multiple females usually attend such clutches in a behaviour termed as 'community' egg attendance.
- Frequent male-male combats involving pushing, kicking and dislodging to mate with a female.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. What is nanotechnology? Discuss the recent developments in applications of nanotechnology in India. (150 words)

Ans:

Nanotechnology is the use and the developments of techniques to study physical phenomena and develop new material and devices structures in the physical size range from 1 to 100 nanometres (nm). Nanotechnology influences almost all areas of our lives, including manufacturing, electronics, computers and information technologies, medicine, the environment and energy storage, chemical and biological technologies and agriculture.

Some of the recent developments in the application of nanotechnology in India are listed below:

Medical and Healthcare applications-

- Nanotechnology is already broadening itself in the areas of medical tools, knowledge, and therapies currently available to clinicians.
- Nanomedicine, the application of nanotechnology in medicine, draws on the natural scale of biological phenomena to produce precise solutions for disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.
- For example, better imaging and diagnostic tools enabled by nanotechnology are paving the way for earlier diagnosis, more individualized treatment options, and better therapeutic success rates.

Electronics and IT Applications-

- Nanotechnology has greatly contributed to major advances in computing and electronics, leading to faster, smaller, and more portable systems that can manage and store larger and larger amounts of information.

Energy Applications-

- Nanotechnology is finding application in traditional energy sources and is greatly enhancing alternative energy approaches to help meet the world's increasing energy demands.
- For example, Nanotechnology is improving the efficiency of fuel production from raw petroleum materials through better catalysis. It is also enabling reduced fuel consumption in vehicles and power plants through higher-efficiency combustion and decreased friction

Environment remediation-

- In addition to the ways that nanotechnology can help improve energy efficiency, there are also many ways that it can help detect and clean up environmental contaminants
- For example, Nanotechnology could help meet the need for affordable, clean drinking water through rapid, low-cost detection and treatment of impurities in water.

Future Transportation Benefits-

- Nanotechnology offers the promise of developing multifunctional materials that will contribute to building and maintaining lighter, safer, smarter, and more efficient vehicles, aircraft, spacecraft, and ships. In addition, nanotechnology offers various means to improve the transportation infrastructure

Everyday Materials and Processes-

- Nanoscale additives to or surface treatments of fabrics can provide lightweight ballistic energy deflection in personal body armor, or can help them resist wrinkling, staining, and bacterial growth.
- Clear nanoscale films on eyeglasses, computer and camera displays, windows, and other surfaces can make them water- and residue-repellent, anti-reflective, self-cleaning, resistant to ultraviolet or infrared light, anti-fog, antimicrobial, scratch-resistant, or electrically conductive.

Nanotechnology In India

- The emergence of nanotechnology in India has witnessed the engagement of a diverse set of players, each with their own agenda and role.
- Presently nanotechnology in India is mostly government-led initiative. Industry participation has very recently originated.
- Nanotechnology R&D barring a few exceptions is largely being ensued at public-funded universities as well as research institutes.
- Scientific experts from all over the country came together at the National Conference - Nano India 2019 to discuss ways of using nanotechnology for the development of products and processes for national development, especially in areas of national relevance like safe drinking water, materials development, sensors development, and drug delivery.

Conclusion

- Nanotechnology is helping to considerably improve technology in sectors like information technology, homeland security, medicine, transportation, energy, food safety, and environmental science.
- Because of their small size, much concern has been expressed about the potential for adverse health effects arising from the ability of nanoparticles to penetrate cell walls and the blood-brain barrier. These concerns also include possible detrimental health effects during manufacturing and transportation. Therefore, there is a need to identify key gaps in knowledge and areas where further research may be targeted in order to efficiently exploit the technology.

DAILY QUIZ

1. With reference to the Viability Gap Funding (VGF), which of the given statements are correct?

1. VGF refers to the one-time grants provided to support infrastructure projects that are economically justified but fall short of financial viability.
2. The VGF Scheme was launched by the Department of Economic Affairs for the public sectors undertaking infrastructure projects only.
3. The government of India provides 40% of the Total Project Cost (TPC) as the Viability Gap Fund.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) **1 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2 and 3

2. In which of the sectors, the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme has been allowed by the Central Government?

1. Telecom
2. Steel
3. Electronics
4. Solar photo-voltaic modules
5. Food processing

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 4 and 5
- b) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- c) 2, 3, 4 and 5
- d) **1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**

3. With reference to Over the Top (OTT) Platform, consider the following statements:

1. There is no law yet to regulate the OTT platform in India.
2. Now the OTT and digital content is under the ambit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

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. Which of the following initiatives have been undertaken by India to assist Maldives?

1. Operation Sanjeevani
2. Mission Sagar
3. Operation Neer

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) **1, 2 and 3**

5. With reference to Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), consider the following statements:

1. It is implemented by the Ministry of External Affairs.
2. The act prohibits the political parties from receiving any foreign contribution.
3. The Act is applicable to all associations, groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) **2 only**
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3 only



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