

GOVERNANCE

Shifting Health to the Concurrent List

Fifteenth Finance Commission Chairman N.K. Singh said that health should be shifted to the Concurrent list under the Constitution. Presently, 'Health' is under the State List.

He also pitched for a Developmental Finance Institution (DFI) dedicated to healthcare investments.

Key Points

Arguments for Shifting 'Health' to the Concurrent List:

- **Centre with Greater Flexibility:** Bringing health into the Concurrent list would give the Centre greater flexibility to enact regulatory changes and reinforce the obligation of all stakeholders towards providing better healthcare.
- **Rationalisation and Streamlining of the Multiple Acts:** There is a multiplicity of Acts, rules and regulations, and mushrooming institutions, yet the regulation of the sector is far from adequate.
- With the health in the concurrent list, uniformity of acts can be ensured.
- **Centre Expertise to States:** The Central government is also technically better equipped to come up with the health schemes because it has the assistance of multiple research bodies and departments dedicated to the management of public health.
- States on the other hand do not have the technical expertise to independently design comprehensive public health policies.

Arguments Against Shifting 'Health' to the Concurrent List:

- **Right to Health:** It is neither necessary nor sufficient to guarantee the provision of accessible, affordable and adequate healthcare for all.
- Besides, the right to health is, arguably, already provided for via the Constitution's Article 21 that guarantees protection of life and liberty.
- **Challenges Federal Structure:** Shifting ever more subjects from the states to the Centre would erode India's federal nature and impair efficiency by abandoning the principle of subsidiarity, which holds that any task should be left to the level of government best placed to do it.
- **More Burden With Centre:** The Centre has onerous responsibilities of its own, for which it struggles to find resources. Taking more functions would help neither the states nor the Centre discharge their constitutional obligations.

Developmental Finance Institution (DFI) for Health Care:

- A health sector-specific DFI is much needed on the same lines as that of DFIs for other sectors like National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development -NABARD (agriculture), National Housing Bank- NHB (Housing) and Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd. - TFCI (tourism).
- Such a DFI would increase health care access in tier-2 and tier-3 cities and also come with technical assistance that ensures proper usage of funds.

Other Suggestions by N.K. Singh:

- Increase the government spending on health to 2.5% of GDP by 2025.
- Primary healthcare should be a fundamental commitment of all States in particular and should be allocated at least two-thirds of health spending.
- To have a standardisation of health care codes for both the Centre and states.

Forming an All India Medical and Health Service.

- Given the inter-state disparity in the availability of medical doctors, it is essential to constitute the Service as is envisaged under Section 2A of the All-India Services Act, 1951.

Need for Universalisation of Healthcare Insurance:

- **Existing Insurance Coverage:** The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) covers the bottom two income quintiles and commercial insurance largely covers top-income quintiles, thereby creating a 'missing middle' class in between.
- **Missing Middle:** This refers to people in the middle two income quintiles, where the population is not rich enough to afford commercial insurance and not poor enough to be covered under government-sponsored health insurance schemes.

INDIAN ECONOMY

Tata - Mistry Judgement

Recently, the Supreme Court overturned the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) decision and upheld Tata Group's decision to remove Cyrus Pallonji Mistry as the Executive Chairman and Director of Tata Sons.

Key Points

Supreme Court Observations:

- Minority shareholders or their representatives are not automatically entitled to a seat on the private company's board like a small shareholder's representative.
- The provisions contained in the Companies Act 2013 only protects the rights of small shareholders of listed companies by asking such companies to have on their board at least one director elected by such small shareholders.
- Since the Mistry family and the Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group are not small shareholders, but minority shareholders, there is no statutory provision which gives them the "right to claim proportionate representation," on the board of Tata Sons.
- Private companies, which have minority shareholders, are free to make an enabling provision but are under no statutory obligation to give minority shareholder seats on the board.

Minority Shareholders

- They are the equity holders of a firm who do not enjoy the voting power of the firm by virtue of his or her below 50% ownership of the firm's equity capital.
- Small Shareholders
- According to the Companies Act, small shareholders is a shareholder or group of shareholders who hold shares of nominal value of not more than Rs. 20,000.
- The Companies Act 2013
- It is an Indian company law which regulates incorporation of a company, responsibilities of a company, directors, dissolution of a company.

Significance of the Judgement:

Though the judgment does not directly impact the right of minority shareholders, such shareholders will have to ensure that they have a contract with the majority shareholders or the promoters of the company to ensure they have adequate representation on the board.

INTERNATIONAL RELATION

India-South Korea: Friendship Park

Recently, Indian Defence Minister and his South Korean counterpart inaugurated the India-Korea Friendship Park in a ceremony at the Delhi Cantonment.

- Later on both the ministers concluded a bilateral meeting and explored different areas of cooperation.
- Earlier in February 2019, the Prime Minister of India visited South Korea (Republic of Korea).



Key Points

- Spread across a green area of six acres, the park includes an entrance gate made in Korean style, a jogging track, well landscaped garden and an amphitheatre.
- Has an imposing handshake artifact standing tall at the entrance bearing flags of India and South Korea.
- Has statue of General KS Thimayya, a celebrated soldier who led the Indian contingent in the Korean War as Chairman of Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in Korea headed by India.

Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission:

- One of the follow-up actions to the Armistice Agreement in the Korean War was the establishment of a NNRC which was to decide on the fate of over 20,000 prisoners of war from both sides.
- India was chosen as the Chair of the NNRC, with Poland and Czechoslovakia representing the Communist bloc and Sweden and Switzerland representing the Western world.
- The five pillars raised in the backdrop of General Thimayya's statue are embossed with details of operations carried out by 60 Parachute Field Ambulance (deployed by India) during the Korean war where they had treated about 1,95,000 cases, and performed about 2,300 field surgeries.
- One pillar also encompasses Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's narration of Korea as "The Lamp of the East" which was published in Korean daily "Dong-A-ilbo" in 1929.

Developed By:

- The park has been developed in joint consultation with the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Indian Army, Delhi Cantonment Board, Embassy of Korea and Korean War Veterans Association of India.

Significance:

- The park's significance is not only because of it being a symbol of strong India-South Korea friendly relations, but also as a monument to India's contributions as part of 21 countries which participated in Korean war 1950-53, under the aegis of the United Nations.

Issues Discussed at the Meet:

- Discussed maritime cooperation as part of the Indo-Pacific strategy and also cooperation in the defense industry and future technologies.
- The two countries have a logistics agreement helping the Indian navy while operating in the Indo-Pacific region.

India-South Korea Relations

Economic:

- The current bilateral trade between India and South Korea is at USD 21 billion and the target that has been set is USD 50 billion by the year 2030.
- India and South Korea have signed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), 2010 which has facilitated the growth of trade relations.
- To facilitate investment from Korea, India has launched a "Korea Plus" facilitation cell under 'Invest India' to guide, assist and handhold investors.
- India's share in Korea's global trade was 1.72% in 2020 and India's contribution in Korea's global imports increased from 0.78% in 2001 to 1.05% in 2020.

Multilateral Platforms Shared by Both the Countries:

- **United Nations, World Trade Organization, ASEAN Plus, East Asia Summit (EAS) and G-20.**

Way Forward

- India and South Korea relations have made great strides in recent years and have become truly multidimensional, spurred by a significant convergence of interests, mutual goodwill and high level exchanges.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Digha & Kankarbagh Sewage Projects

Financing agreements for developing STPs and Sewerage networks for Digha and Kankarbagh zones of Patna were signed recently.

Key Points

- The scope of the project includes development of Sewage Treatment Plants of 150 MLD capacity along with sewerage network of over 453 km in the Digha and Kankarbagh zones of Patna, one of the most populous cities on the banks of the river Ganga.
- This is the first of its kind project which comprises a mix of Design, Build, Operate and Transfer ('DBOT') scope and Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) scope.
- With its implementation, all the sewage zones of Patna city will be covered with sewerage network and sewage treatment capacity.
- It shall help in achieving the objective of the Namami Gange program of preventing any untreated wastewater entering the river Ganga.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

NISAR: Joint Earth Observing Mission of NASA and ISRO

NASA and ISRO are collaborating on developing an SUV-sized satellite called NISAR, which will detect movements of the planet's surface as small as 0.4 inches over areas about half the size of a tennis court.

- The satellite will be launched in 2022 from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh) into a near-polar orbit.

Key Points

- The Name 'NISAR': The name NISAR is short for NASA-ISRO-SAR.
- SAR here refers to the Synthetic Aperture Radar that NASA will use to measure changes in the surface of the Earth.
- It refers to a technique for producing high-resolution images. Because of the precision, the radar can penetrate clouds and darkness, which means that it can collect data day and night in any weather.
- Function: It will scan the globe every 12 days over the course of its three-year mission of imaging the Earth's land, ice sheets and sea ice to give an unprecedented view of the planet.

Role of NASA:

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA - space agency of the USA) will provide one of the radars for the satellite, a high-rate communication subsystem for science data, GPS receivers and a payload data subsystem.
- NISAR will be equipped with the largest reflector antenna ever launched by NASA.

Role of ISRO:

Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO) will provide the spacecraft bus, the second type of radar (called the S-band radar), the launch vehicle and associated launch services.

Primary Goals:

- Tracking subtle changes in the Earth's surface,
- Spotting warning signs of imminent volcanic eruptions,
- Helping to monitor groundwater supplies, and
- Tracking the rate at which ice sheets are melting.

Expected Benefits:

- NISAR's data can help people worldwide better manage natural resources and hazards, as well as providing information for scientists to better understand the effects and pace of climate change.
- The images will be detailed enough to show local changes and broad enough to measure regional trends.
- As the mission continues for years, the data will allow for better understanding of the causes and consequences of land surface changes.
- It will also add to our understanding of our planet's hard outer layer, called its crust.

ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

New Red Algal Seaweed Species

Recently, two new red algal seaweed species have been discovered along India's coastline.

India has a vast coastline of over 7,500 kms.



Hypnea indica sp. nov.



Hypnea bullata sp. nov.

Key Points

- They grow in the intertidal regions of the coast, namely the area that is submerged during the high tide and exposed during low tides.
- The genus *Hypnea* consists of calcareous, erect, branched red seaweeds.
- There are 61 species of which 10 were reported in India. With two new species, the total number of species now would be 63.

Location:

- *Hypnea indica* was discovered in Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu, and Somnath Pathan and Sivrajpur in Gujarat.
- *Hypnea bullata* was discovered from Kanyakumari and Diu island of Daman and Diu.

Significance:

- *Hypnea* variants of seaweeds can fetch good monetary value if commercial-scale cultivation is taken up. *Hypnea* contains Carrageenan, a biomolecule commonly used in the food industry.

Seaweeds

- They are the primitive, marine non-flowering marine algae without root, stem and leaves, play a major role in marine ecosystems.
- Large seaweeds form dense underwater forests known as kelp forests, which act as underwater nurseries for fish, snails and sea urchins.
- Some species of seaweeds viz. *Gelidiella acerosa*, *Gracilaria edulis*, *Gracilaria crassa*, *Gracilaria verrucosa*, *Sargassum* spp. and *Turbinaria* spp.

Location:

- Seaweeds, found mostly in the intertidal region, in shallow and deep waters of the sea and also in estuaries and backwaters.
- The southern Gulf of Mannar's rocky intertidal and lower intertidal regions have rich populations of several seaweed species.

Ecological Importance:

Bioindicator: When waste from agriculture, industries, aquaculture and households are let into the ocean, it causes nutrient imbalance leading to algal blooming, the sign of marine chemical damage. Seaweeds absorb the excess nutrients and balance out the ecosystem.

Iron Sequestrator: These aquatic organisms heavily rely on iron for photosynthesis. When the quantity of this mineral exceeds healthy levels and becomes dangerous to marine life, seaweeds trap it and prevent damage. Similarly, most heavy metals found in marine ecosystems are trapped and removed by seaweeds.

Oxygen and Nutrient Supplier: On their part, the seaweeds derive nutrition through photosynthesis of sunlight and nutrients present in seawater. They release oxygen through every part of their bodies. They also supply organic nutrients to other marine life forms.

Role in Climate Mitigation: Seaweed has a significant role in mitigating climate change. By afforesting 9% of the ocean with seaweed, it is possible to sequester 53 billion tons of carbon dioxide annually. Hence, there is a proposal termed as 'ocean afforestation' for farming seaweed to remove carbon.

Other Utilities:

- They can be used as fertilizers and to increase aquaculture production.
- When livestock is fed with seaweed, methane emission from cattle may be reduced substantially.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

Maharaja Chhatrasal

The Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre has been inaugurated at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh.

The Convention Centre, named after the legendary Bundelkhand King Maharaja Chhatrasal, was built under the Swadesh Darshan scheme of the Ministry of Tourism.

Key Points

- Birth : Born on 4th May 1649, to Champat Rai and Lal Kunwar, into the Bundela Rajput clan.
- Medieval Indian warrior, fought against the Mughal Empire, and established his own kingdom in Bundelkhand.
- Descendant of Rudra Pratap Singh of Orchha.
- Ancestors were vassals of the Mughal emperor.
- Death: 20th December, 1731.

Power Struggle Against the Mughal:

- He started his struggle in 1671, and first captured Naugaon region of Chhatarpur district.
- He fought for 50 years against Mughals and captured a large part of Bundelkhand with his seat of power at Panna.

Relation with Baji Rao I:

- Baji Rao I helped Chhatrasal against the Mughals. He sent military aid against the Mughal force led by Muhammad Khan Bangash in 1728.
- The Maratha Peshwa Baji Rao I's second wife Mastani was Chhatrasal's daughter.
- Before his death, Chhatrasal transferred Mahoba and the surrounding area to Baji Rao I in return for his assistance against the Mughals.

Patron of Literature :

- His court housed several noted poets. His eulogies written by Kavi Bhushan, Lal Kavi, Bakhshi Hansaraj and other court poets helped him gain lasting fame.

Disciple of Mahamati Prannathji.

- Swami Prannathji also guided him in political, social, and economic matters.
- Swami Prannathji told Chhatrasal regarding Diamond mines of Panna and thus helped him in strengthening his financial position.

Legacy:

- The Chhatarpur town and its district in Madhya Pradesh are named after Chhatrasal.
- Maharaja Chhatrasal Museum in Madhya Pradesh and the Chhatrasal Stadium in Delhi are also named after the Maharaja Chhatrasal.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns Account for the present location of iron and steel industries away from the source of raw material, by giving examples. (250 words)

Ans:

Raw material and power resources are key components of the establishment, development, and concentration of the Iron and steel industry. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, due to the high amount of weight loss during processing, early steel plants were mostly located where coal was available.

However, with the passage of time, the depletion of raw material, emergence of new technologies (like electric furnaces), and fuel-saving transportation, promoted the Iron and Steel industry to locate away from the raw material sources.

- Apart from the availability of raw materials, capital and market are also important factors in the localization of industries, including the iron and steel industry.

Market-based location is generally found in countries where coal and iron ore deposits are rare.

- For example, Japan is deficient in both iron ore and coal and almost all raw materials are to be imported from overseas countries.
- This makes Japanese steel plants mostly market-based.
- The great 'Tokyo-Yokohama' and 'Osaka – Kobe – Heemeji' iron steel regions are market-based.
- Transportation is another controlling factor of the location of iron and steel industry.
- The intermediate location, in some cases, gets distinct advantages in terms of the accessibility with raw materials, market and transportation. Its port location is of advantage.
- For example, the Vizag Steel Plant, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, is the first port-based plant that started operating in 1992.

The raw material-based industries are now facing disadvantages because of depleting reserves of raw material.

- Apart from this, the drastic reduction of coal use and development of fuel economy also attracted industries to the areas where transport is cheaper.
- For example, a cheap water route or break of bulk location, where due to loading and unloading facilities, raw materials are available at a much cheaper rate.

Conclusion

Nowadays, the localization of steel plants, each of the three factors, i.e., coal, iron ore, and the market, have equal importance. The geographic coincidence of any two factors, however, determines the steel plant site.

DAILY QUIZ

1. With reference to Swadesh Darshan Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for integrated development of theme based tourist circuits in the country.
2. The Ministry of Culture provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory for development of circuits.

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**

2. Consider the following statements about NISAR:

1. It is a collaborative effort of ISRO and JAXA.
2. NISAR will be launched in the geosynchronous orbit.
3. The ISRO has provided the S-band radar and launch vehicle in this mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. Consider the following statements:

1. The Khajuraho temples belong to the Vesara style of architecture.
2. Khajuraho temples were built by the Chalukyas of Badami.

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 are a bilateral exercise between the defence forces of India and Japan?

1. JIMEX
2. SHINYUU
3. Dharma Guardian
4. Malabar Exercise

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. The Cape Agulhas is the southern tip of Africa.
2. The Agulhas current is the cold-water current of Indian ocean.

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