

NEWS TODAY

NGT fines Punjab Government ₹1,000 crore for poor waste management

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered fine to be deposited with the **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** for failing to manage legacy waste (solid waste kept for years) and untreated sewage.

Present framework for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) management

- **The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** empowers the Central Government to establish authorities charged with the mandate of preventing environmental pollution in all its forms.
- The management of MSW is the function of **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)**.
- **Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016** requires ULBs to set up waste collection, transportation, processing, and disposal systems.

Challenges in waste management

- **Public attitudes** to waste and Poor segregation of waste at source.
- **There is a lack of strategic MSW plans** and availability of qualified waste management professionals is limited.
- Lack of budget with the **Municipal authorities**
- **Data on waste generation** in terms of composition and quantities is still lacking with cities.

Way forward

- **Circular economy** by using wastes as resources with increased value extraction, recycling, recovery and reuse.
- **A strong and independent authority is needed** to regulate waste management.
- **Long-term waste management planning** by considering the private sector and NGOs as stakeholders.

About National Green Tribunal

- **Genesis:** Statutory body under NGT act, 2010
- **Mandate:** Specialized judicial body equipped with expertise solely for the **purpose of adjudicating environmental cases in the country.**
- **Function:** providing effective and expeditious remedy in cases relating to **environmental protection, conservation of forests and other natural resources** and enforcement of any **legal right** relating to the environment.
- It is guided by Principles of **natural justice** and decisions are **binding**.

Supreme Court stayed Ayush Ministry's notification due to concerns over misleading advertisements

This ruling was a part of the ongoing case **Indian Medical Association & Anr v. Union of India and Ors (2022)**.

- Ayush Ministry's notification omitted **rule 170 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945** that prohibits misleading advertisements of Ayurvedic, Siddha, and Unani drugs.
- **Earlier, SC in May, 2024 issued orders to discourage misleading advertising** including provisions like **self-declaration** by advertisers.

Misleading advertising: It is any published claim that gives a consumer an incorrect understanding of the product or service.

Issues with Misleading Advertisements

- Violation of **consumer's right to information and choice**.
- **Potential health risks:** Misleading claims, especially related to medicines, pose health hazards.
- **Ethical perspective:**
 - ⊕ **Profitability vs. efficacy:** Lack of ethical considerations in advertisements to fulfill **economic considerations**.
 - ⊕ **Lack of transparency:** Overstating benefits, downplaying risks, making unsupported claims etc.
 - ⊕ **Social influence:** **Long-term impact** on people's **perception** about advertised products.
 - ⊕ **Breach of public trust:** Misinformation influences **consumer behavior**, impacting **conscious decision-making**.

Way Forward

- Encouraging **full disclosures** through **self-declaration**.
- Effective **regulatory oversight** and stringent **implementation of law**.

Initiatives to combat misleading advertisements

- **Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022** issued by Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA).
- **GAMA (Grievances Against Misleading Advertisements) portal** by Department of Consumer Affairs for online complaint registration.
- **Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954** to prohibits advertisement for remedies alleged to possess magic qualities.

Centres for promotion of four classical languages demand autonomy for proper functioning

India has six classical languages namely **Tamil (declared in 2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Odia (2014).**

- **Tamil language** is promoted through an **autonomous institute** named **Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT).**
- **Sanskrit** is promoted through **three Central Universities.**
- However, **special centres** set up for the promotion of other four classical languages – **Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia** – **function under the aegis of the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru.**

Demand for Autonomy

- **Financial Dependency:** Any event or activity planned for them had to get financial sanction from the CIIL.
- **High vacancy:** For e.g., Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Telugu (Andhra Pradesh) have only 12 staff out of approved 36.
- **Unequal funding:** Between 2017-18 and 2019-20, Union government has spent **₹643.84 crore** on promotion of Sanskrit, while only **₹29 crore** was spent on other five classical Indian languages.

Benefits of classical language status

- **Two major annual international awards for scholars** of eminence in classical Indian languages
- **A Centre of Excellence** for studies in Classical Languages is set up.
- **University Grants Commission** is requested to **create certain number of Professional Chairs in Central universities** for classical languages.

Criteria for declaring Classical languages

- **High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history** over a period of **1500-2000 years;**
- **A body of ancient literature/texts,** which is considered a **valuable heritage;**
- Literary tradition be original and **not borrowed from another speech community;**
- **Classical language and literature** being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity with its later forms or its offshoots.

Himachal Pradesh Assembly passes bill raising marriage age for women from 18 to 21

Prohibition of Child Marriage (Himachal Pradesh Amendment Bill 2024) proposes to amend The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and related acts in the State.

- Earlier, in June 2024, a Central bill '**Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021**' lapsed in Lok Sabha which aimed to bring uniformity in the age of marriage for men and women.
- 2021 Bill was based on **recommendations of Jaya Jaitley Committee**

Benefits of Raising age of Marriage for Women

- **Secure Constitutional mandate of Gender Equality:** Age for marriage for men is 21 years
- **Reproductive Health:** improved physical and psychological health through lower maternal mortality rate, bringing down teenage pregnancies
- **Women Empowerment:** Better education and employment outcomes
- **Helps in achieving SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities).**

Concerns

- **Illegal Marriages:** May push a portion of the population into non-institutional marriages
- **Negatively impact marginalized communities** with high prevalence of marriage at lower ages
- **Misuse by Parents:** to control daughter's choice, may give rise to meta-son preference, female foeticide.
- Does not address the **social and cultural patriarchal norms**

Other steps that can be taken

- **Formalisation of Sex education** in the school curriculum
- **Formulation of specific programmes** for girl's health and nutrition

Historical perspectives related to age of marriage in India

- **The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929/(Sarda Act):** Fixed marriage age for girls at 14 years and 18 years for boys.
- **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006:** Replaced 1929 Act to prohibit solemnisation of child marriages raising age to 18 for bride and 21 for groom.

Union Health Minister launches National Medical Register (NMR) Portal

The NMR will be a comprehensive database for all allopathic (MBBS) registered doctors in India.

About NMR

- It is mandated under Section 31 of the **National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019**.
 - ⊕ It requires the **Ethics & Medical Registration Board (EMRB) of NMC** to keep an electronic National Register of licensed medical practitioners' names, addresses, and qualifications.
- NMR will be **linked with the Aadhaar ID of the doctors** to ensure the individual's authenticity.
- It aids in interlinking of **State Medical Councils (SMCs)** involved in verification of registrations.
- **Significance of the NMR:** strengthens the digital healthcare ecosystem, ensures transparent access to quality medical professionals, consolidates public trust in healthcare etc.

About NMC

- It is a statutory body that came into force in 2020 replacing the **Medical Council of India**.
- **Aim:** improve **access to quality and affordable medical education, ensure availability of adequate and high-quality medical professionals, objectively assess medical institutions** periodically in a transparent manner; etc.
- **Functions of NMC**
 - ⊕ **Policy formulation and regulation** of medical education, medical institutions, medical researches and medical professionals.
 - ⊕ Frame guidelines for **fee determination for 50% seats in Private** medical institutions and deemed to be universities.
 - ⊕ **Assess requirements of healthcare** and develop a roadmap for meeting requirements.

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Sanction for prosecuting a public servant

Recently, the Governor of Karnataka gave approval for **investigation for prosecution of the Chief Minister**.

Sanction for prosecution:

- There is a **requirement of grant of sanction** before prosecution of a public servant to **protect public servants from malicious prosecution**.
- **Competent authority for granting sanction:** State or Central government (CrPC) and authority having **power to remove** the public servant (PCA).

Legal Framework:

- Section 218 of the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)** (earlier covered under Section 197 of CrPC)
- Section 17A (2018 amendment) and 19 of the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (PCA)**.



Codon De-optimisation Technology (CDT)

Indian Immunologicals Limited in collaboration with Griffith University has developed a needle-free intra-nasal booster vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 using CDT

About CDT

- It is a technology which involves **decreasing the frequency of underrepresented codon pairs (genetic determinants for amino acids) without changing the amino acid sequences**.

Benefits:

- **Efficient virus attenuation strategy**, where the degree of attenuation can be regulated as required.
 - ⊕ **Attenuated (weakened/thinned) strains of viruses are used as vaccines** as they stimulate a protective immune response while causing no/mild disease.
- **Extremely Safe and takes less time.**



Anubhav Awards

7th Anubhav Awards Ceremony is to be held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

About Anubhav Awards

- **Given by:** Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare
- **Based on:** Anubhav Write ups, i.e, sharing of experiences by retiring central government employees/pensioners on **Anubhav Portal**
- **Aim:** to foster good governance and administrative reforms in future on the basis of the experience shared by retiring employees.



Axis of Resistance

Experts believe that Iran can launch an attack on Israel through its 'axis of resistance' coalition.

About Axis of Resistance

- It is a network of autonomous militant Islamist groups led by **Iran and its roots go back to the Iranian Revolution of 1979.**
- It includes
 - ⊕ **Hezbollah** (Lebanese Shia militant organization)
 - ⊕ **Hamas** (Palestinian Sunni militant group)
 - ⊕ **Palestinian Islamic Jihad**
 - ⊕ **Houthis** (Yemen militant group)
- **Hezbollah (meaning 'Party of God')** which was founded in the early 1980s in Lebanon is the biggest and most capable member of the "axis of resistance".



Green shoots

RBI held that India's rural economy is playing the role of **Green Shoots** in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Sector.

Green Shoots

- These are signs that an **economy or a sector is growing** after an economic downturn.
- The term was first used by UK chancellor **Norman Lamont in 1991.**

FMCG sector

- It is characterized by **high turnover consumer packaged goods**, i.e, goods that are produced, distributed, marketed and consumed within a short span of time.
- **Examples:** detergents, toiletries, tooth cleaning products, cosmetics.



Cholera

Bharat Biotech launched its **Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV), Hillchol.**

- Hillchol vaccine is an **inactivated, single-strain oral vaccine** suitable for **children older than one year.**
 - ⊕ It will address the **global shortage of cholera vaccines**

About Cholera

- It is an **acute diarrheal infection of the intestine** caused by **bacteria Vibrio Cholerae.**
- **Sources:** Faecal contamination of water and food (**poverty-related disease**).
- It causes **severe diarrhea and dehydration.**



Perpetual bonds

India's first additional Tier I (AT-1) perpetual bond was issued after recent rule changes to make them more appealing.

Perpetual bonds:

- They are **fund-raising instruments** that do **not carry any maturity date** as bonds usually do.
- Instead, they offer to **pay their buyers a coupon or interest at a fixed date for perpetuity.**
- Investors can **get the principal back by selling** the bond in the **secondary market**, or when the issuer decides to **redeem** the bonds.
- These bonds have an **obligation only to pay interest** and are not required to repay the debt.



Solar Paraboloids

Solar Paraboloid technology is being seen as the **frontier technology in improving solar energy efficiency.**

About Solar Paraboloids:

- It is an **advanced form of Concentrating Solar Power (CSP)** and operates using a **Parabolic Trough Collector (PTC).**
- It consists of **parabolic mirrors focussing sunlight** onto the **receiver tube** placed at the focal line.
- **Advantages over traditional PV system:** Ability to operate at **high temperatures, higher thermal efficiency, reduced heat losses.**
- **Challenges:** high upfront costs, infrastructure requirements.



Sea Level Rise

WMO's **State of the Climate in the South-West Pacific 2023** report showcases that sea level rise is **faster in the Pacific Ocean than global average.**

Impact of this Sea Level Rise

- **Pacific Islands** are at higher risk **due to the increasing sea level despite accounting for merely 0.02% of global emissions.**
- **Heightened Vulnerabilities is due to:**
 - ⊕ Average elevation is just **1-2 meters** above sea level
 - ⊕ **90% of population** live within **5 kms** of the coast and
 - ⊕ **50% of the infrastructure** is within **500 meters** of the sea.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



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PUNE



RANCHI