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INDIAN EXPRESS

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FIRE SAFETY REGULATIONS IN INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Disaster Management)

Secunderabad e-scooter showroom blaze kills 8 guests in hotel above

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 13

EIGHT GUESTS staying at the multi-storey Ruby Pride Luxury Hotel in Secunderabad died of asphyxiation after a fire broke out late Monday night at an electric scooter showroom operating from the building's cellar, police said on Tuesday. At least 10 others were injured.

The condition of one of the injured, Jayanth, 39, who is from Bengaluru, is said to be critical. He is admitted in the ICU of Apollo Hospital in Secunderabad.

DCP (North Zone) Deepthi Chandana said the fire is suspected to have been triggered by an explosion either in an e-scooter or a generator in Ruby Motors showroom. The fire broke out around 10 pm, the police said. The hotel, occupying the top five floors of the building, has 28 rooms and had 25 guests at the time.

The police said Ruby Motors owners Rajender Singh Bugga, Sumeet Singh and brothers had been running the e-bike business, allegedly illegally, for the past one year from the building's cellar.



Police at the site of the fire in Secunderabad on Tuesday. PTI

Officials said a few guests and staff spotted the fire and smoke and escaped from the fifth floor of Ruby hotel to the adjacent Yatri Inn Hotel through a passage connecting both buildings. They subsequently alerted the authorities.

An FIR has been registered against the owners of Ruby Motors and the hotel. Bugga and Singh were taken into custody.

The deceased were identified as Alladi Harish (33) from Vijayawada; Seetharaman Swamy (48) and Balaji Navaneetha Krishnan (58) from Chennai; Veerender Kumar Devakar (50), Rajeev Malik and Sandeep Malik — all from Delhi; Chandan Jethi from Cuttack, Odisha; and Mithali Mahapatra (29) from Balasore, Odisha.

PM Narendra Modi expressed grief and announced ex gratia on behalf of the Centre. "Saddened by the loss of lives due to a fire in Secunderabad.... May the injured recover soon," he tweeted.

Only by God's grace I'm alive: Survivor

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 13

K K Keshavan still can't believe it. "There was no way to escape," he said, describing his miraculous escape at midnight as fire broke out below the Ruby Luxury Hotel in Secunderabad, killing eight of the 25 guests inside.

Keshavan's room was on the hotel's 4th floor. Minutes after flames engulfed the e-scooter showroom on the building's ground floor, he said, thick, black smoke filled the hotel's lobby area and his room as well. "There was no escape. So I broke the window and climbed down a drainage pipe. It was surreal," he said.

Bruised all over and in a state of shock, the 27-year-old mechanical engineer who works with a Mumbai-based private company finally managed to reach the ground. He was then taken to the Yashoda Hospital where doctors treated him for inhaling smoke and, at 3 am, discharged him.

"It is only by God's grace that I am alive," he said. "As I was coming down, people who had gathered below, gave me confidence. When I reached, they stood below and I stepped on their shoulders.".

As they narrated their ordeal, the stories of the survivors had one common thread: there was no fire alarm. They said they did not even know the building was on fire until smoke had filled the entire building.

A fire department official, who spoke to *The Indian Express*, said the flames had "never reached the hotel". "Many (of the 8 dead) would have survived had they stayed in their rooms... They all perished after inhaling smoke."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Context: Eight persons died of suffocation after a fire broke out at Ruby Motors in Telangana Secunderabad.

Fire Safety Regulations In India

- **Constitutional Provision:**
  - Fire Services is a State subject.
  - It has been included as a Municipal function in the XIIth Schedule of the Constitution of India under Article 243 (W).
- The **National Building Code (NBC) 2016** in India states on matters of building construction and fire safety.
  - As per the code, fire prevention and fire protection is a subject of the state.
  - The key responsibility for fire protection and fire prevention lies on the shoulders of the State Government.
- The **"Model Building By Laws 2016"** circular, created by the Ministry of Urban Development, outlines the engineering requirements and regulatory framework that must be taken into consideration before beginning any construction project in India.
- **Guidelines by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**: In addition to design guidelines on maintaining a minimum amount of open safety space, protected exit mechanisms, designated staircases, and essential drills to carry out evacuations, it has also specified requirements for fire safety in public buildings, including hospitals, which incorporate elements of the NBC.

INDIAN EXPRESS

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FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE (FATF)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Internal Security)

FATF Asia-Pacific group rates Pak low on 10 of 11 global goals

Anti-money laundering, combating terror finance are among them

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 13

THE ASIA-PACIFIC Group of the FATF, a global watchdog for terror financing and money laundering, has rated Pakistan's level of effectiveness as 'low' on 10 out of 11 international goals on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terror, a media report said on Tuesday.

Asia-Pacific Group (APF), the Sydney-based regional affiliate of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), released an update as of September 2 on the rating of its regional members suggesting that Pakistan had a 'moderate level of effectiveness' on only one out of 11 outcomes, reported *Dawn*. Under this 'immediate outcome', Pakistan extends international cooperation on appropriate information, financial intelligence, and evidence and facilitates action against criminals and their assets.

A 15-member joint delegation of FATF and APG paid an onsite visit to Pakistan from August 29 to September 2 to verify the country's compliance with a 34-point action plan committed with FATF at the highest level in June 2018, the report said.

The taskforce had found Pakistan compliant or largely compliant on all the 34 points in February this year and had decided to field an onsite mission to verify it on the ground before formally announcing the country's exit from the grey list. The APG noted that Pakistan had a low level of effectiveness on 10 "Immediate Outcomes (IOs)." PTI

EXPLAINED

How does exit from FATF grey list help

THE EXIT from the FATF grey list will restore Pakistan's image and give confidence to foreign investors for doing ventures in the country. The grey-listing makes it hard for countries to do financial transactions and raises the cost of doing business. Pakistan's removal from the grey list will help give impetus to its economy.

Context: The Asia-Pacific Group of the FATF, a global watchdog for terror financing and money laundering, has rated Pakistan's level of effectiveness as 'low' on 10 out of 11 international goals on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terror.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body decision-making body.
- It was established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris to develop policies against money laundering.
- It is a "policy-making body" which works to generate the political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in money laundering.
- It has also started dealing with virtual currencies.
- The FATF Secretariat is located in Paris.
- FATF sets standards and promotes effective implementation of:
    - legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering.
    - The FATF works to identify national-level vulnerabilities with the aim of protecting the international financial system from misuse.
- India has been a member of the FATF since 2010.
- FATF has 2 types of lists:
    - **Black List:** Countries knowns as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly, adding or deleting entries.
    - **Grey List**: Countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the FATF grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

LIVEMINT

Page 2

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (SEZ)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Centre weighs allowing work-from-home in special economic zones

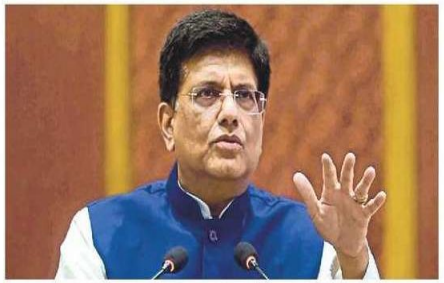
Ravi Dutta Mishra
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NEW DELHI

The government is considering extending work-from-home (WFH) to 100% of the workforce in all Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in order to boost services exports and tackle a shortage of manpower, commerce minister Piyush Goyal said on the sidelines of a board of trade meeting on Tuesday.

Around two million people are employed across 350 SEZs, which contribute to over 25% of India's exports.

Notably, a majority of SEZs in India house information technology (IT) or IT-enabled service firms involved in manufacturing software, electronic items and assembled parts such as printed circuit boards. "The situation right now is such that if you force employees (to join offices), people move elsewhere or change the company. So, allowing WFH can boost services exports. This is being considered for all sectors.

We had allowed work from home in SEZs during covid-19 which proved beneficial for our services sector and the exports jumped sharply. This year the jump will be even higher. Global MNCs have robust hiring plans from India," commerce minister Piyush Goyal said.



Commerce minister Piyush Goyal said that MNCs have robust hiring plans from India. PTI

The Centre in July allowed WFH to 50% of the employees, including contract workers, for a maximum of one year for companies operating in SEZs.

The board of trade meeting saw representative across sectors discuss impediments to exports. The meeting was held at a time when exports have declined on a sequential basis, although the trade deficit eased slightly in August to $28.7 billion from a record $30 billion in July.

Official estimates suggest merchandise exports are expected to grow by 7-8% to at least $450 billion after registering an all-time high of $420 bn in the last financial year.

Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) secretary general Praveen Khandelwal called for reconsidering restrictions imposed on the import of tyres. Khandelwal said that more efforts are needed to promote small artisans, craftsmen and artists.

Meanwhile, Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) India proposed cheaper export finance for ministry of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and guidelines for rupee trade with Russia in the Board of Trade meeting. EEPC India Chairman Mahesh Desai also proposed withdrawal of export duty on selected steel items as it will be especially helpful for MSMEs.

Desai further asked the government to take a relook at the rates under Refund of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) and give full rebates on the taxes that still remain in the export production chain. He recommended including the steel sector under RoDTEP as steel is the most widely used raw material in the engineering industry.

"Speaking of taxes on exports, Goyal expressed his concern that the effect of taxes in the international market was that India's products would become uncompetitive. He urged stakeholders to consider striving to lower taxes across sectors and said that overall tax collection was bound to improve with lower taxes," the ministry said.

Context: The government is considering extending work-from-home (WFH) to 100% of the workforce in all Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in order to boost services exports and tackle a shortage of manpower.

Centre's new Work-from-Home rules

- The Centre inserted a new rule - 43A (work from home) in Special Economic Zones Rules, 2006.
- Rule 43A that enables work from home is valid on employees of IT/ITeS SEZ units, those who are temporarily incapacitated, those travelling and for employees who are working offsite.
- The notification states that WFH may be extended to maximum 50 per cent of total employees, including contractual employees of the unit.
- Work from home would be allowed for a period of one year. However, that period could be extended for another year by the Development Commissioner (DC) of SEZs.
- In respect of SEZ units whose employees are already working from home, the notification has provided a transition period of 90 days to seek approval.

Special Economic Zones (SEZ)

- A special economic zone (SEZ) is an area in which the business and trade laws are different from the rest of the country.
- SEZs are located within a country's national borders, and their aims include increasing trade balance, employment, increased investment, job creation and effective administration.
- The definition of an SEZ is determined individually by each country.
- India was one of the first in Asia to recognize the effectiveness of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) model in promoting exports, with Asia's first EPZ set up in Kandla in 1965.
- The Special Economic Zones Act was passed in 2005. The Act came into force along with the SEZ Rules in 2006.
- SEZs were operational in India from 2000 to 2006 (under the Foreign Trade Policy).
- The government began to establish SEZs in 2000 under the Foreign Trade Policy to redress the infrastructural and bureaucratic challenges that were seen to have limited the success of EPZs.

LIVEMINT Page 9

NATIONAL PENSION SYSTEM (NPS)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Social Justice)

IRDAI eases norms for pensioners

To bring ease of living for NPS retirees, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has relaxed the requirement of submitting a separate proposal form for taking the Immediate Annuity products from proceeds of the National Pension Scheme (NPS). In the current scenario, NPS retirees submit an exit form to NPS and a proposal form to insurers at the time of superannuation. The regulator IRDAI said, "It has been observed that Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is collecting exhaustive exit form from the NPS retirees which capture necessary details which insurance companies require in the proposal form."

This way, the exit form of NPS will now be treated as a proposal form for purchasing annuities, thereby reducing the time and efforts of senior citizens and insurers. NAVNEET DUBEY

Context: To bring ease of living for NPS retirees, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has relaxed the requirement of submitting a separate proposal form for taking the Immediate Annuity products from proceeds of the National Pension Scheme (NPS).

National Pension System (NPS)

- NPS is a government-sponsored pension scheme.
- It was launched in January 2004 for government employees. However, in 2009, it was opened for the general population.
- The scheme allows subscribers to contribute regularly to a pension account during their working life.
- On retirement, subscribers can withdraw a part of the corpus in a lump sum and use the remaining corpus to buy an annuity to secure a regular income after retirement.
- Any Indian citizen between 18 and 60 years can join NPS. The only condition is that the person must comply with know your customer (KYC) norms.
- An Non Resident Indian (NRI) can join NPS. However, the account will be closed if there is a change in the citizenship status of the NRI.
- Every NPS subscriber is issued a card with a 12-digit unique number called Permanent Retirement Account Number or PRAN.
- NPS offers two accounts: Tier-I and Tier-II accounts.
    - Tier-I is a mandatory account and Tier-II is voluntary.
    - The big difference between the two is in the withdrawal of money invested in them.
    - The subscriber cannot withdraw the entire money from the Tier-I account till your retirement.
    - Even on retirement, there are restrictions on withdrawal on the Tier-I account.
    - The subscriber is free to withdraw the entire money from the Tier-II account.
    - The subscriber has to contribute a minimum of Rs 6,000 to your Tier-I account in a financial year.
- The government will not contribute to NPS account.
- The money invested in NPS is managed by PFRDA-registered Pension Fund Managers.

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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Rohatgi set to become Attorney-General again

Venugopal's tenure ends on Sept. 30

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi is set to become Attorney-General from October 1 for a second time. The tenure of the incumbent Attorney-General, K.K. Venugopal, is coming to a close on September 30. The 90-year-old jurist has made it clear that he would not want to continue as the top law officer.



Mukul Rohatgi

Mr. Rohatgi (67) had served as the 14th Attorney-General of India when the Narendra Modi government came to power in 2014. He had served for three years, till 2017. He had returned to private practice and Mr. Venugopal was appointed the 15th Attorney-General.

Mr. Venugopal had initially served a tenure of three years and was later given extensions. The last one was in June 2022 for a period of three months.

Mr. Rohatgi recently represented the Special Investigation Team in the Zakia Jafri case in which the Supreme Court had upheld the clean chit given to the Gujarat government in connection with the 2002 riots.

Context: Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi is set to become Attorney-General from October 1 for a second time.

Attorney General of India

- Article 76 and 78 deals with the Attorney General of India.
- Attorney General of India is appointed by the President of India under Article 76(1) of the Constitution.
- He must be a person qualified to be appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
- The Attorney General of India is the highest law officer of the country.
- He is responsible to assist the government in all its legal matters.
- The constitution does not provide for fixed tenure to the AG. So, he holds office during the pleasure of the president.
- He can be removed by the president at any time.
- There is no procedure or ground mentioned in the constitution for his removal.
- The AG receives such remuneration as the president may determine.
- The constitution has not fixed the remuneration of the AG.
- Following are the Rights of the AG:
    - In the performance of his duties, he has right of audience in all courts in the territory of India.
    - Hee has the right to speak or to take part in the proceedings of both the Houses of Parliament and their joint sittings, but without a right to vote.
    - He has the right to speak or to take part in the meeting of any committee of the Parliament of which he is named as a member, but without a right to vote.
    - He enjoys all the privileges and immunities that are available to a member of parliament.

THE HINDU Page 12

NATIONAL LIST OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES (NLEM)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

384 drugs on essential medicines list

Ivermectin and mupirocin have been added, while ranitidine and sucralfate have been dropped

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Twenty-six drugs, including the common gastrointestinal medicines ranitidine and sucralfate, have been excluded from the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), 2022, released on Tuesday by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

A total of 384 drugs find place on the list with the addition of 34 drugs. Twenty-six from the previous list have been dropped. The medicines have been categorised into 27 therapeutic categories. The first NLEM was compiled in 1996 and was revised thrice in 2003, 2011, and 2015.

According to a Health Ministry official, drugs deleted from the NLEM include medicines banned in India and those having reports of concerns on the safety profile.

"Drugs also go off the list if medicines with better efficacy or favourable safety profile and better cost-effectiveness become available. Also if the disease burden for which a medicine is indicated is no longer a national health concern, it is deleted from the NLEM," the official said. In case of antimicrobials, if the resistance pattern has rendered them ineffective, the drugs are taken off the list.

The new list includes four drugs that are still under patent – bedaquiline and delamind used in the treatment of multiple drug-resistant tuberculosis, dolutegravir used to treat human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, and daclatasvir used in treating viral infections such as Hepatitis C, the Health Ministry said.

No drugs used specifically for the treatment of COVID-19 have been made part of the list as the committee in charge of the list is of the view that the clinical trials to check the efficacy of the drugs are not yet conclusive, it said.

Several antibiotics, vaccines and anti-cancer drugs are set to become more affordable with their addition to the list. Ivermectin, mupirocin and nicotine replacement therapy have been added. Endocrine medicines and contraceptives fludrocortisone, ormeloxifene, insulin glargine and teneligliptin have been added to the list. Montelukast, which acts on the respiratory tract, and ophthalmological drug latanoprost figure in the list.

Cardiovascular medicines dabigatran and tenecteplase also find place in the list, as also medicines used in palliative care. The drugs in the NLEM are included in the schedule category and their price is regulated by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority.

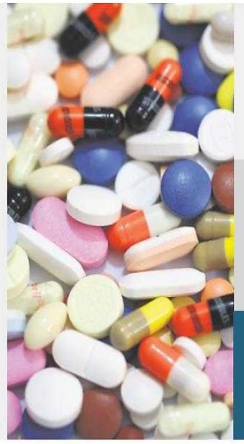
In a tweet on Tuesday, the Health Minister said that several antibiotics, vaccines, anti-cancer drugs and many other important drugs would become more affordable, and the "out-of-pocket expenditure" on health care would come down.

"The primary purpose of the NLEM is to promote rational use of medicines considering the three important aspects – cost, safety and efficacy. It also helps in optimum utilisation of healthcare resources and budget; drug procurement policies; health insurance; improving prescribing habits; medical education and drafting pharmaceutical policies," he said.

Bharati Pravin Pawar, Minister of State for Health, stressed the need to enhance awareness regarding antimicrobial resistance (AMR) which she said "is emerging as a big challenge for our scientists and community and we need to create awareness in the society about AMR". Sudarshan Jain, secretary-general, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, noted that the pharmaceutical industry in India was a strategic sector that was recognised around the world for providing affordable and high-quality medicines.

Malini Aisola, of the All India Drug Action Network, said that the release of the NLEM, 2022, comes after a long gap of seven years, when it is recommended for an NLEM to be revised more frequently, every two-three years, to be responsive to changing health needs. She said that the industry associations had been rallying to keep patented medicines out of the NLEM which to some degree was successful.

"However, in respect of cancer, it is disappointing that more of the highly priced, effective treatments for various cancers have not been included in the list. It is positive that the diabetes section has been expanded to include teneligliptin and insulin glargine. However, there was a need to include more synthetic insulins and other classes of oral antidiabetics keeping in view the diabetes epidemic in the country ," she said.



Core medicine needs

- The pricing of essential medicines is regulated by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority
- The new list includes four drugs that are still under patent – bedaquiline and delamind used in the treatment of drug-resistant tuberculosis, dolutegravir used to treat HIV infection, and daclatasvir used in treating viral infections such as Hepatitis C
- No drugs used specifically for the treatment of COVID-19 have been included in the list

The list has 384 drugs across 27 categories

Several antibiotics, vaccines, anti-cancer drugs and many other important drugs would become more affordable, and the "out-of-pocket expenditure" on health care would come down —MANSUKH MANDAVIYA, Health Minister

Context: Twenty-six drugs, including the common gastrointestinal medicines ranitidine and sucralfate, have been excluded from the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), 2022.

National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)

- The National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) is a list released by the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA), fixing a ceiling on the prices of essential medicines so that they are affordable and widely available to everyone.
- In India, it was framed on the lines of the Essential Medicines List (EML) released by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- **Criteria for a medicine to be included in NLEM:**
  - Essentiality: In the context of NLEM, a medicine may be essential considering the population at large and should fit into the definition mentioned earlier.
  - Changing disease burden: The prevalent disease is considered while preparing the list.
  - Efficacy and Safety: The medicine must have "unequivocal" evidence of efficacy and wider acceptance based on its safety to be included in the list.
  - Cost-Effectiveness: The NLEM guidelines state that the total price of the treatment must be considered while including the drug in NLEM. Only unit price may not be the best benchmark for this.
  - Fixed Dose Combinations (FDCs): The single dose medicines are considered for inclusion in NLEM. FDCs are only included if they have a proven advantage concerning the therapeutic effect.
  - Turnover: High sales turnover alone is not considered a good benchmark for inclusion in the NLEM.
- **Exclusion criteria:**
  - A drug is deleted from the list if it gets banned in India. Also, it is removed if reports of concerns about drug safety emerge.
  - "If medicine with better efficacy or favourable safety profile and better cost-effectiveness is now available," it is removed from NLEM.

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 6

Indian Ocean humpback dolphin

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

In a 1st, state to study dolphin popn along 70km MMR coast

Chittaranjan.Tembhekar
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The state government is all set to embark on an 18-month-long study to assess the distribution, population size and habitat quality of coastal cetaceans, primarily the Indian Ocean humpback dolphin and Indo-Pacific finless porpoise, and also possibly document other cetacean species found within 10 kilometres of Mumbai's shore.

This is the first time an official assessment of this magnitude will be conducted in Maharashtra along the coastal waters of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) covering a length of around 70km.

The decision was taken on Tuesday after Maharashtra's forest minister Sudhir Mungantiwar approved the proposal tabled by the Mangrove and Marine Biodiversity Conservation Foundation during its fifth meeting of the board of governors at the Sahyadri State Guest House.

"It is a matter of pride for the entire country that Maharashtra has decided to undertake such a unique study to document the wealth of its biodiversity. It echoes the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement on August 15, 2020, on Project Dolphin that focuses on the long-term conservation and protection of dolphins in rivers and in oceans of the country," said Mungantiwar.



Study on Indian Ocean humpback dolphin & Indo-Pacific finless porpoise

Commencing on October 2022, the Mangrove Foundation will carry out the study in partnership with the non-profit organisation Coastal Conservation Foundation (CCF). The study area will cover the western seaboard, starting at the mouth of the Vaitarna river in the north to Thane creek in the south as well as the southern tip of Greater Mumbai. The area will also include multiple bays such as Back Bay, Haji Ali and Mahim Bay as well as five river mouths in MMR, including Mithi, Dahisar, Poisar, Oshiwara and Vaitarna.

"The objective is to identify the risks caused by human activity to the cetacean population in these waters. This will be accomplished by understanding how near-shore fishing activities, which may result in entanglements and net damage, have an impact on their ecosystem," Mungantiwar said.

Parallel to Tuesday's decision, the mangrove cell has submitted a proposal to the ministry of environment, forests and climate change for the study of near-shore cetaceans along the coastline of the MMR as part of Project Dolphin. This proposal's budget is Rs. 33.2 lakh.

The CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) was also given a go-ahead to conduct a pilot study for the installation of artificial reef surfaces along the Coastal Road-reclaimed territory in south Mumbai, among other agenda.

The creation of a mangrove information centre at Marambal Pada, MMR's first eco-tourism hamlet in the Palghar district, was given the green signal by the governing body as well.

Context: The Maharashtra government is all set to embark on an 18-month-long study to assess the distribution, population size and habitat quality of coastal cetaceans, primarily the Indian Ocean humpback dolphin and Indo-Pacific finless porpoise.

Indian Ocean humpback dolphin

- The Indian Ocean humpback dolphin (Sousa plumbea) is a member of the Delphinidae family occupying coastal areas ranging from Southern Africa to Western Indochina.
- The Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (Sousa chinensis) was formerly included within the same species, but a 2014 study revealed them to be a separate species.
- The most limiting factor to habitat-usage is water depth, with most specimens remaining in waters shallower than 20 meters.
- As a result, the Indian Ocean humpback dolphin offshore range is largely dependent on the coastlines' specific physiographic characteristics.
- The species has been reported to inhabit nearly every type of coastal habitat, although preference and prominence of any given habitat type is highly dependent on the geographical location.
- Indian Ocean humpback dolphins experience extremely high rates of calf and juvenile mortality due to anthropogenic disturbances such as environmental pollution, habitat deterioration and noise pollution.
- Indian Ocean humpback dolphins are social delphinids that live in groups averaging twelve individuals, although group size can be highly variable.
- The majority of their diet is composed of sciaenid fishes, cephalopods, and crustaceans.
- **Protection status:**
  - The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categorizes the Indian Ocean Humpback Dolphin as Endangered.
  - In India, Dolphins are endangered cetacean species, protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
  - Indian Humpback Dolphin is listed in Appendix I of The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

DOWN TO EARTH

Sept 14

INDIA'S HEALTH EXPENDITURE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

HEALTH

India's health expenditure down to 3.2% of GDP in 2018-19

National Health Accounts report shows out-of-pocket expenses down, but still significantly higher than global average

NEXT NEWS ›

By Taran Deol
Published: Tuesday 13 September 2022



Context: India's total health expenditure went down from 3.9 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2013-14 to 3.2 per cent in 2018-19, according to the latest national health estimates.

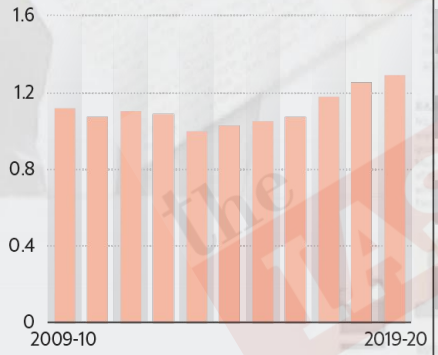
Key points

- Total health expenditure is the money spent by the government, people, private entities and external funding.
- The trend was mirrored by the Union government, whose expenditure on healthcare went down to 1.28 per cent of the GDP in 2018-19 from the previous year's figure of 1.35 per cent.
- Out-of-pocket expenditure on healthcare by households — a key reason pushing Indians into poverty — has declined by 16 percentage points, from 64.2 percent to 48.2 percent in the same period.
- In Uttar Pradesh, out-of-pocket health expenditure accounts for 71.3 percent of the state's total health expenditure (THE).
- The economic burden of healthcare in India is largely borne by households that contribute Rs 3,24,717 crore to the current healthcare expenditure.
- The Union government's share is Rs 63,256 crore, the state governments' share is Rs 1,06,056 crore and local bodies contribute Rs 5,451 crore.
- Non-governmental organisations spend Rs 8,484 crore, while external/donor funding contributes about Rs 2,493 crore.

Health a low priority

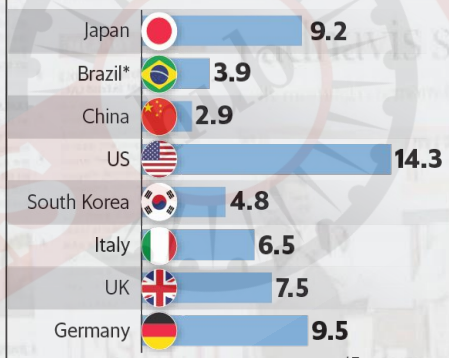
India's public health expenditure was just 1.29% of GDP in 2019-20. In 2018 too, the country lagged behind BRICs peers as well as developed nations.

India's (centre plus states) public expenditure on health (as % of GDP)



Source: National Health Profile 2019, Government of India; CARE Ratings' calculations

Public expenditure on health in 2018 (as % of GDP)



*For 2017

Source: OECD, Conta-Satélite de Saúde

Budget: 2022-23: Spending on Health

- There has been a hike of 16% on budget allocation on health compared to that in Budget 2021-22.
- A bulk of the allocated budget on health will be transferred to the Department of Health and Family Welfare.
- About ₹3200 crores have been allocated to the Department of Health Research.
- The issue of mental health has been addressed significantly with the announcement of the National Tele-Mental Health Programme.
- The National Tele-Mental Health Programme will include a network of 23 tele-mental health centres of excellence having National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences as the nodal centre and IIT-Bangalore providing technical support.

PIB

Sept 14

REGISTERED UNRECOGNISED POLITICAL PARTIES (RUPP)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Election Commission declares 253 RUPPs as inactive - bars them from availing benefits of the Symbol Order, 1968

Additional 86 Non-existent RUPPs shall be deleted from the list and benefits under the Symbols Order (1968) withdrawn

Action against these 339 (86+253) non-compliant RUPPs takes the tally to 537 defaulting RUPPs since May 25, 2022

Context: In continuation of the earlier action initiated on May 25, 2022 for enforcing due compliances by Registered Unrecognized Political Parties (RUPPs), the Election Commission of India delisted 86 non-existent RUPPs and declared additional 253 as 'Inactive RUPPs'.

Key points

- As per statutory requirements under section 29A of the RP Act, every political party has to communicate any change in its name, head office, office bearers, address, PAN to the Commission without delay.
- 86 RUPPs have been found to be non-existent either after a physical verification carried out by the respective Chief Electoral Officers of concerned States/UTs or based on report of undelivered letters/notices from Postal Authority sent to the registered address of concerned RUPP.

Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPP):

- Unrecognized parties are those that have recently been registered, did not receive a sufficient number of votes in the assembly or general elections to qualify as a state party, or have never run in an election after being registered.
- These parties do not get all the advantages given to the recognised parties.

Recognised Political Party:

- If a recognised political party satisfies specific requirements, it will either be a national party or a state party.
- A party must obtain a specific minimum percentage of valid votes cast or a specific number of seats in the state legislative assembly or the Lok Sabha during the most recent election to be recognised as a political party, either at the state or national level.
- The parties' eligibility for certain privileges, like as the assignment of party emblems, the allotment of time for political broadcasts on state-owned television and radio stations, and access to electoral rolls, is determined by the recognition the Commission grants the parties.

DST

Sept 14

BL LACERTAE OBJECT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

Startling rapid oscillations of brightness discovered in blazar jet rich in gamma rays

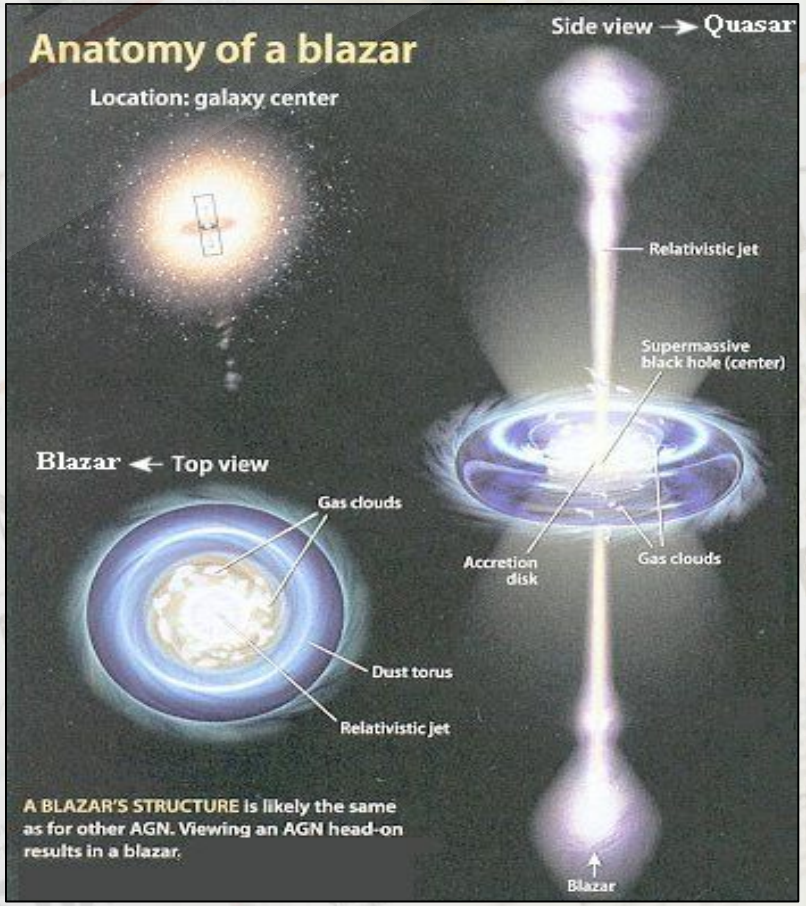
Scientists have spotted surprising rapid oscillations of brightness in the jet of a blazar called BL Lac during a strong multi-wavelength outburst in the second half of 2020, which was rich in gamma rays. They have attributed these cycles of brightness changes termed quasi-periodic oscillations (QPOs) to twists in the magnetic field in the jet.

About BL Lacertae object

- A BL Lacertae object or BL Lac object is a type of active galactic nucleus (AGN) or a galaxy with such an AGN, named after its prototype, BL Lacertae.
- In contrast to other types of active galactic nuclei, BL Lacs are characterized by rapid and large-amplitude flux variability and significant optical polarization.
- Because of these properties, the prototype of the class (BL Lac) was originally thought to be a variable star.
- When compared to the more luminous active nuclei (quasars) with strong emission lines, BL Lac objects have spectra dominated by a relatively featureless non-thermal emission continuum over the entire electromagnetic range.
- This lack of spectral lines historically hindered identification of the nature and distance of such objects.
- Some examples of BL Lac objects are BL Lacertae itself, OJ 287, AP Librae, PKS 2155-304, PKS 0521-365, Markarian 421, 3C 371, W Comae Berenices, ON 325 and Markarian 501.

Active galactic nucleus

- An active galactic nucleus (AGN) is a compact region at the center of a galaxy that has a much-higher-than-normal luminosity over at least some portion of the electromagnetic spectrum with characteristics indicating that the luminosity is not produced by stars.
- Such excess non-stellar emission has been observed in the radio, microwave, infrared, optical, ultra-violet, X-ray and gamma ray wavebands.
- A galaxy hosting an AGN is called an "active galaxy".
- The non-stellar radiation from an AGN is theorized to result from the accretion of matter by a supermassive black hole at the center of its host galaxy.
- Active galactic nuclei are the most luminous persistent sources of electromagnetic radiation in the universe, and as such can be used as a means of discovering distant objects; their evolution as a function of cosmic time also puts constraints on models of the cosmos.



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