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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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INDIAN EXPRESS

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 -Polity & Governance)

Use of Sec 66A despite it being struck down matter of concern: SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday expressed "serious concern" over states continuing to register FIRs for offences under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act despite the court holding it unconstitutional in 2015.

"It is a matter of serious concern that despite authoritative pronouncement by this court, the offence under the provision, the validity of which was pronounced by this court, is still being registered and is being continued," a bench presided by Chief Justice of India U U Lalit said.

The bench also comprising Justice S Ravindra Bhat asked Advocate Zoheb Hossain, who appeared for Centre, to get in touch with concerned Chief Secretaries of the states where the offences are still being registered and impress upon them "to take remedial measures as early as possible".

The court was hearing an application by NGO People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), which said that the provision was still being invoked in many cases even after the top court ruled against it.

On March 24, 2015, in the case Shreya Singhal v. Union of India, the Supreme Court struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 in its entirety.

Context: The supreme court expressed "serious concern" over states continuing to register FIRs for offences under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act despite the court holding it unconstitutional in 2015.

Section 66A of the Information Technology Act

- Introduced by the UPA government in 2008, the amendment to the IT Act, 2000, gave the government power to arrest and imprison an individual for allegedly "offensive and menacing" online posts, and was passed without discussion in Parliament.
- Section 66A empowered police to make arrests over what policemen, in terms of their subjective discretion, could construe as "offensive" or "menacing" or for the purposes of causing annoyance, inconvenience, etc.
- It prescribed the punishment for sending messages through a computer or any other communication device like a mobile phone or a tablet, and a conviction could fetch a maximum of three years in jail.

ARTICLE 19 (II) OF THE CONSTITUTION	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACT SECTION 66A
■ In the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India	■ Any information that is 'grossly offensive'
■ The security of the state	■ Any information which you know to be false but which is sent for purpose of causing annoyance
■ Friendly relations with foreign states	■ Any information which you know to be false but which is sent for purpose of causing inconvenience
■ Public order, decency or morality	
■ In relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence	

INDIAN EXPRESS

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CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Environment & Ecology)

PM to launch cheetah project on Sept 17 in MP

IRAM SIDDIQUE
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 6

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will be inaugurate the intercontinental cheetah translocation project at the Kuno National Park in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh on September 17. With the release of eight cheetahs being brought from Namibia, the big cat species will be reintroduced in India after 70 years since being declared extinct in 1952.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan told the state Cabinet on Tuesday that the PM will reach Kuno National Park on September 17, which is also his birthday, and inaugurate the cheetah translocation programme. The PM will also address members of women self-help groups at Karahal at Sheopur.

According to Madhya Pradesh Forest Department officials, an Airforce chopper is being arranged to transport cheetahs from Delhi to Kuno to minimise the travel time and fatigue for the big cats. At least six helipads are being constructed around the Kuno National Park as several dignitaries are expected to arrive for the event, including Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

The translocation of cheetah was to take place in November last year, but it got delayed owing to the Covid pandemic.

Last month, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav had confirmed to The Indian Express that eight African cheetahs were being brought to Kuno in September. The programme got further delayed briefly as four leopards had entered the enclosure the cheetahs were to be released into. Forest officials said three of the four leopards have been driven out, and efforts are on to remove the fourth.

A senior official said, "We are all here at the Kuno National Park and efforts are on to get the fourth leopard out before the cheetahs arrive." However, the enclosures created for quarantine and the acclimatisation of the cheetahs are all clear, officials said.

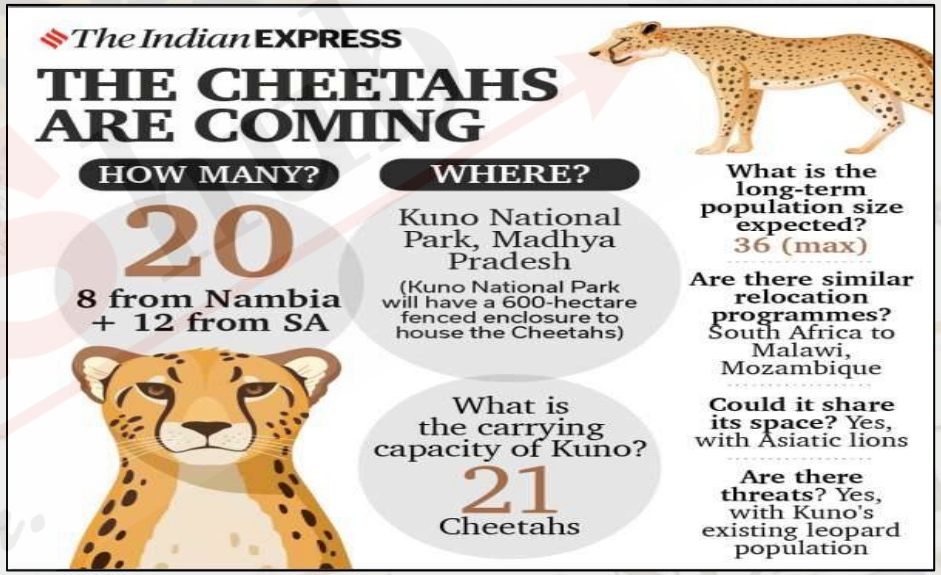
Union ministry officials, meanwhile, said that over the next 3–4 years, the Indian government aims at acquiring 50 African cheetahs.

The cheetah is believed to have disappeared from the Indian landscape when the Maharaja Ramanuj Pratap Singh Deo of Koriya in the present day Chhattisgarh hunted and shot the last three recorded Asiatic cheetahs in India in 1947. The species was declared extinct in 1952. The 'African Cheetah Introduction Project in India' was conceived in 2009.

CHEETAH TO GROWL AGAIN

- Last cheetah died in India in 1947 and species was declared extinct in 1952
- Project to translocate the big cat from Africa was conceived in 2009
- An Air Force chopper will transport the cheetahs from Delhi to Kuno National Park to minimise travel time and fatigue
- Six helipads being built around the park as several dignitaries are expected





African Cheetah	Asiatic Cheetah
Scientific Name: Acinonyx Jubatus	**Scientific Name**: Acinonyx Jubatus Venaticus
Habitat: Found all over the African continent in thousands of numbers.	**Habitat**: Found only in Iran with less than 100 individuals left.
Protection Status: • IUCN Red List: Vulnerable. • CITES: Appendix 1. • WPA: Schedule-2.	**Protection Status:** • IUCN Red List: critically endangered. • CITES: Appendix 1. • WPA: Schedule-2.
Characteristics: • Slightly brownish and golden skin which is thicker than the Asiatic Cheetahs. • Much more prominent spots and lines on their face as compared to their Asian cousins.	**Characteristic**: • Slightly smaller than the African Cheetahs. • Pale yellowish fawn coloured skin with more fur under their body, specifically on the belly.

LIVEMINT

BHARAT BIO'S INTRA-NASAL VAX

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

Govt approves Bharat Bio's intra-nasal vax against covid

Priyanka Sharma
priyanka.s@livemint.com
NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday gave emergency approval to the world's second covid-19 vaccine that can be delivered as nasal drops. The vaccine was jointly developed by Covaxin-maker Bharat Biotech and Washington University St. Louis.

Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) V.G. Somani approved restricted emergency use of the vaccine iNCOVACC (BBV154) for primary two-dose schedule for people above 18 years of age.

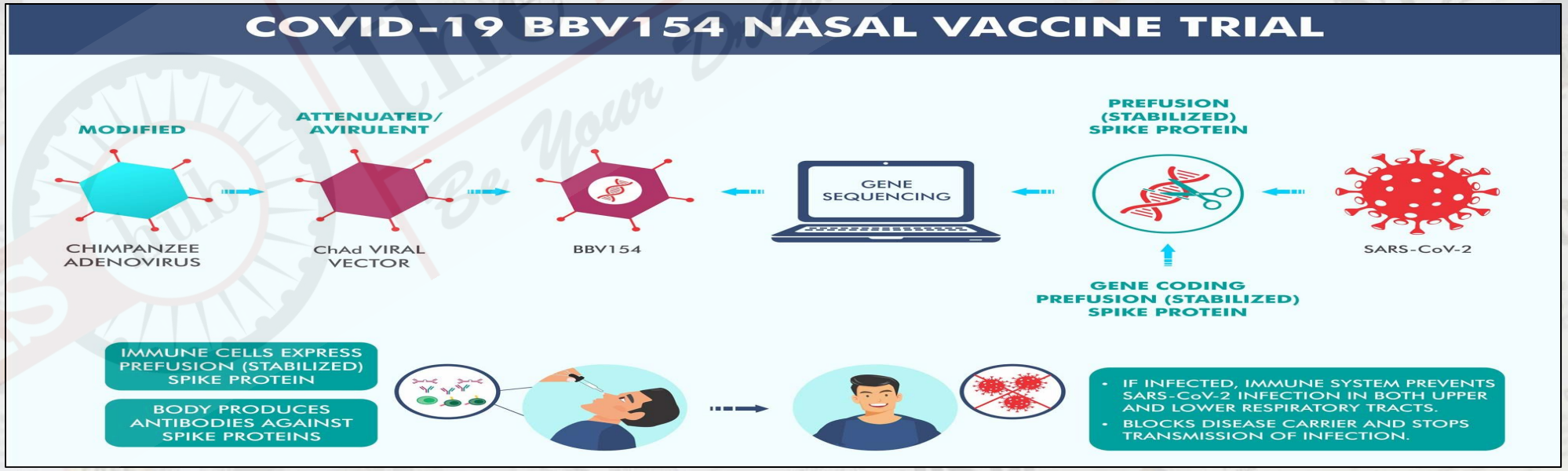
Dr. Krishna Ella, chairman and managing director of Bharat Biotech, termed the vaccine a "global game changer" in intra-nasal vaccine technology and delivery systems.

"Despite the lack of demand for covid-19 vaccines, we continued product development in intra-nasal vaccines to ensure that we are well-prepared with platform technologies for future infectious diseases," Ella said, expressing gratitude to the health ministry, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, the government's biotechnology

Context: India gave emergency approval to the world's second covid-19 vaccine that can be delivered as nasal drops.

Bharat Bio's intra-nasal vax

- An intranasal vaccine stimulates a broad immune response – neutralizing IgG, mucosal IgA, and T cell responses.
- Immune responses at the site of infection (in the nasal mucosa) – essential for blocking both infection and transmission of COVID-19.
- The nasal route has excellent potential for vaccination due to the organized immune systems of the nasal mucosa.
- Non-invasive, Needle-free.
- Ease of administration - does not require trained health care workers.
- Elimination of needle-associated risks (injuries and infections).
- High compliance (Ideally suits for children's and adults).
- Scalable manufacturing - able to meet global demand.



LIVEMINT Page 3

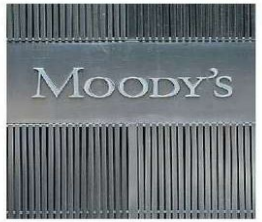
INDIA'S BAA3 RATING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Context: Global headwinds, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, higher inflation, and tightening financial conditions, are unlikely to derail India's ongoing recovery from the pandemic in 2022 and 2023.

Moody's retains India's Baa3 rating with stable outlook

Dilasha Sethi
dilasha.seth@livemint.com
BENGALURU



The agency said India's credit profile reflects its strengths. AFP

Global headwinds, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, higher inflation, and tightening financial conditions, are unlikely to derail India's ongoing recovery from the pandemic in 2022 and 2023, ratings company Moody's Investors Service said on Tuesday.

Moody's retained India's sovereign credit rating of Baa3 with a stable outlook. The agency said that India's credit profile reflects strengths, including its large and diversified economy, a relatively strong external position, and a stable domestic financing base for government debt. However, it noted that principal credit challenges include low per capita income, high general government debt, low debt affordability and limited government effectiveness.

The report follows a sharp revision of India's growth forecast last week to 7.7% from 8.8% estimated earlier. It attributed monetary policy tightening, uneven distribution of monsoon, and slowing global growth to the downward revision.

The report follows a sharp revision of India's growth forecast last week to 7.7% from 8.8% estimated earlier

Moody's had also cut the growth estimate for 2023 to 5.2% from the 5.4% estimated earlier. It has estimated India's gross domestic product growth for FY23 at 7.6%.

"The stable outlook reflects our view that the risks from negative feedback between the economy and financial system are receding. With higher capital buffers and greater liquidity, banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) pose much less risk to the sovereign than we previously anticipated, facilitating the ongoing recovery from the pandemic," Moody's said in the report. While risks stemming from a high debt burden and weak debt affordability remain, we expect that the economic environment will allow for a gradual narrowing in the general government fiscal deficit over the next few years, avoiding further deterioration in the sovereign credit profile, it added.

The report comes days after the official data showed that India's economy expanded well below expectations at 13.5% during the fiscal first quarter, with the manufacturing sector performing dismally.

The ratings agency had in October last year revised India's outlook on its credit ratings to stable from negative earlier on the back of receding downside risks.

Moody's highlighted that India could see an upgrade in the rating if the economic growth potential would increase materially "beyond our expectations", supported by effective implementation of economic and financial sector reforms that led to a significant and sustained pickup in private sector investment.

About Baa3 Rating

- Baa3 is the subdivision of Baa, a credit rating for long-term bonds and investments by Moody's.
- The Baa is divided into - Baa1, Baa2, Baa3 and Baa. A Baa represents a bond or investment of relatively low-risk.
- Banks are permitted to make investment in Baa rated bonds.
- Baa3 is the lowest investment grade in the Moody's rating scale.
- If an economy is rated as Baa3, it implies that it is just one notch above the junk or non-investment grade.
- Baa3 rating represents a relatively low-risk investment or bond.
- Investors, who look forward to make low-risk investments, exercise caution in Baa3, especially when the rating has been downgraded recently.

Moody's & its moods - what the ratings mean

RATING SYMBOL	MEANING
Aaa	Highest quality, lowest credit risk
Aa	High quality, low credit risk
A	Upper medium grade, low credit risk
Baa	Medium grade, moderate credit risk, speculative characteristics
Ba	Speculative, substantial credit risk
B	Speculative, high credit risk
Caa	Poor standing, very high credit risk
Ca	Very near default, with some prospect of recovery of principal & interest
C	Typically, in default, with little prospect of recovery of principal & interest

THE HINDU Page 1

EWS RESERVATION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

SC asks Centre, States to allay EWS quota concerns

It asks the parties to 'crystallise' thoughts by tomorrow

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the governments at the Centre and the States and petitioners to address a list of concerns raised in the Supreme Court about granting reservation on a purely economic basis, one of them being whether it is a violation of the Basic Structure of the Constitution to exclude the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and some of the most impoverished Socially and Educationally Backward Classes in the country from its scope.

The five-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit, is considering the validity of the 103rd Constitutional Amendment, which provides the 10% reservation to economically weaker sections (EWS) of society in government jobs and educational institutions.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, on the court's orders, had prepared the draft legal issues for the Bench to examine. On Tuesday, the Bench asked the draft issues to be circulated to the parties. The court scheduled the next hearing for Thursday to "crystallise" the issues finally. The CJI said the Bench would start hearing the case next Tuesday.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 10

Basic concerns | With the SC scrutinising the EWS quota, senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan had prepared the draft legal issues for the Bench to examine:

- Whether the 103rd Constitution Amendment Act removes the basis of Indra Sawhney judgment that quota cannot be given on a purely economic basis
- Whether the amendment breaches the Basic Structure of the Constitution in excluding the SEBCs, OBCs, SCs, STs from the scope of EWS reservation
- Whether it breaches the equality code and the Constitutional scheme by giving sanctity to the 'existing reservation', which is only created temporarily
- Whether it breaches the 50% quota limit by permitting EWS reservations up to 10% over and above the existing reservation
- Whether the imposition of EWS quota on private unaided institutions violates the Basic Structure



Context: A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court asked the governments at the Centre and the States and petitioners to address a list of concerns raised in the Supreme Court about granting reservation on a purely economic basis.

EWS reservation

- The 10% reservation was implemented in January 2019 as part of the 103rd Constitution Amendment.
- It added Clause (6) to Article 15 to give the government the authority to make special provisions for the EWS among citizens who are not already eligible for reservation.
- It allows up to ten percent reservation in public and private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided, with the exception of minority-run institutions.
- It also added Clause (6) to Article 16 to make employment reservations easier.
- The new clauses state unequivocally that the EWS reservation will be added to the existing reservation.
- Initially, the Constitution only permitted special provisions for the socially and educationally disadvantaged classes.
- The main criterion is that those with an annual income of more than Rs. 8 lakh are barred from applying (income from all sources such as salary, business, agriculture, and profession for the fiscal year preceding the application) of the family (applicants, their parents, siblings and minor children).
- Possession of any of the following assets, in addition to five or more acres of agricultural land, a residential flat of 1,000 square feet or more, a residential plot of 100 square yards or more in notified municipalities, and a residential plot of 200 square yards or more in other areas, can take a person out of the EWS pool.
- The income limit of Rs. 8 lakh per year has piqued the court's interest, as it is the same figure used to exclude the 'creamy layer' from OBC reservation benefits.

THE HINDU Page 10

HILSA FISH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Environment & Ecology)

Hilsa fish reach Kolkata ahead of Durga Puja

Bangladesh allows 2,450 tonnes of fish

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Coinciding with the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in New Delhi, the first consignment of Hilsa fish arrived in the markets of Kolkata on Tuesday. "We have received this year's first consignment of about 8.5 tonnes of Hilsa from Bangladesh today," Syed Anwar Massod, secretary of West Bengal Fish Importers Association, said.

Mr. Masood told *The Hindu* that Bangladesh has given permission to export 2,450 tonnes of the fish ahead of the Durga Puja festival. Bangladesh had imposed a ban on export of Hilsa to India in 2012, but since 2019 has allowed relaxations on the export of the fish.

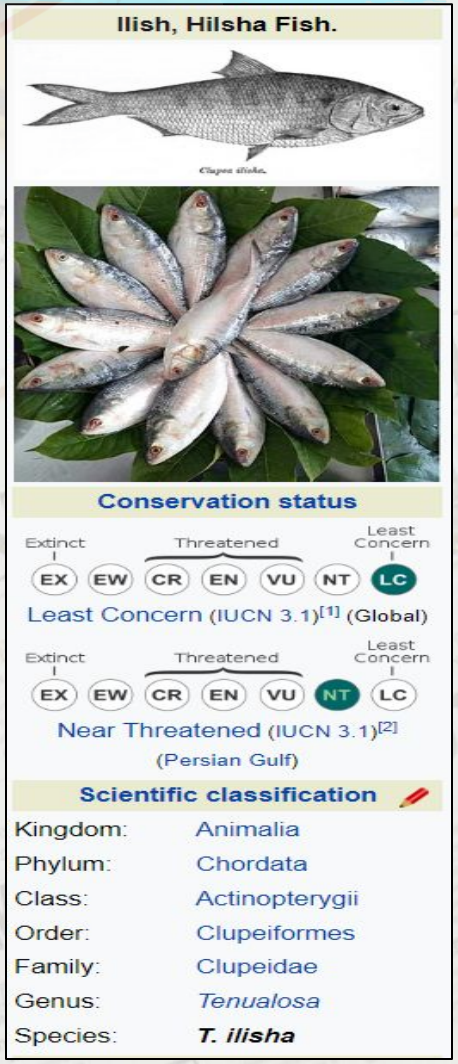
Diplomacy over Hilsa has played out on several occasions. Only a few months ago, State's Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee had asked visiting Bangladesh's Minister of Commerce Tipu Munshi to request Ms. Hasina to send Hilsa to India during the festival season.

According to the association, in September 2021, Bangladesh gave permission to export around ₹4,600 tonnes of Hilsa fish, the highest since 2019, when the ban was eased out. However, due to paucity of time only ₹1,200 MT could be exported to India.

Context: Coinciding with the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister in New Delhi, the first consignment of Hilsa fish arrived in the markets of Kolkata.

About Hilsa Fish

- The Hilsa is a species of fish related to the herring, in the family Clupeidae.
- It is a very popular and sought-after food fish in the Indian Subcontinent.
- It is the national fish of Bangladesh and state symbol in the Indian states of West Bengal and Tripura.
- The fish contributes about 12% of the total fish production and about 1.15% of GDP in Bangladesh.
- Hilsa has a history of migrating to Allahabad in the Ganga river system from Bangladesh.
- **Though it's a saltwater fish**, it migrates to sweet waters of the Ganges from the Bay of Bengal.
- It travels upstream of the river during the mating seasons and returns to its natural abode after spawning.
- **IUCN status**: Least Concerned



TIMES OF INDIA

Page 1

AZITHROMYCIN AND COVID-19

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

'Azithromycin most misused drug in India'

Azithromycin was the most misused antibiotic drug in the country during the Covid pandemic and before that, as Indians take an excessive amount of broad spectrum antibiotics and the majority of them have yet to be approved by the central drug regulator, according to a study published in Lancet Regional Health-Southeast Asia. The researchers investigated antibiotic sales in private hospitals in India in 2019 (pre-Covid period) and found that most of them were used inappropriately. Flap Opp

Context: Azithromycin was the most misused antibiotic drug in the country during the Covid pandemic and before that, according to a study published in Lancet Regional Health Southeast Asia.

Azithromycin and Covid-19

- Azithromycin is a broad-spectrum antibiotic that is widely available. It is prescribed for various bacterial infection.
- Having been shown to reduce exacerbations in chronic airway diseases, it was widely prescribed for Covid-19 initially, including in India.
- In the early days of the pandemic, the treatment protocol from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had noted that there were no specific antiviral drugs proved to be effective against Covid-19.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had allowed physicians to consider hydroxychloroquine in combination with azithromycin for patients with severe disease and requiring ICU management.
- Azithromycin is used to treat certain bacterial infections, such as bronchitis; pneumonia; sexually transmitted diseases (STD); and infections of the ears, lungs, sinuses, skin, throat, and reproductive organs.
- Azithromycin also is used to treat or prevent disseminated Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) infection [a type of lung infection that often affects people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)].
- Azithromycin is in a class of medications called macrolide antibiotics. It works by stopping the growth of bacteria.
- Antibiotics such as azithromycin will not work for colds, flu, or other viral infections.
- Using antibiotics when they are not needed increases risk of getting an infection later that resists antibiotic treatment.

DOWN TO EARTH

Sept 7

POSHAN ABHIYAN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Social Justice & Health)

HEALTH

More than half the funds for POSHAN Abhiyaan unutilised: NITI Aayog report

The scheme has an earmarked three-year budget of Rs 9,046.17 crore from 2017-18, when it was launched

By Taran Deol
Published: Tuesday 06 September 2022



Poshan Abhiyan

- Poshan Abhiyaan was launched on 8th March, 2018 in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan.
- The focus of Abhiyaan is to lay emphasis on nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age.
- The programme, through use of technology, convergence and community involvement with a targeted approach strives to reduce the level of stunning, under-nutrition, Anemia and low birth weight in children, as also focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers, thus holistically addressing malnutrition.

Context: Less than half the funds set aside for the POSHAN Abhiyan have been utilised by India's states, according to the fourth progress report released by the NITI Aayog September 1, 2022.

Key points

- **Only three states had used more than 50% of their POSHAN Abhiyan funds** between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. This improved marginally to 12 between 2017-2019 and FY 2019-2020.
- Nagaland (87 per cent), Meghalaya (78 per cent), Sikkim (71 per cent), Mizoram (67 per cent) and Lakshadweep (65 per cent) had utilised the maximum proportion of funds by the end of 2019-2020.
- Punjab (22 per cent), Puducherry (22 per cent), Tripura (16 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (9 per cent) and Odisha (8 per cent) were the poorest performers.
- The amount of funds being utilised improved across most states and UTs - 30 of 35. It decreased in Telangana, Mizoram, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Puducherry.
- Besides under-utilisation of funds, other indicators assessed in the report include system readiness and capabilities to deliver POSHAN Abhiyaan interventions - which has improved compared to previous progress reports - human resources, infrastructure, supplies, training, and capacity building.
- On a scale of 0-100, only Punjab scored less than 50 among the large states, Arunachal Pradesh (36.25), Manipur (27.25) and Mizoram (37.00) were the poor performers among the small states while no UT scored less than 50.
- **The report listed five key elements of the POSHAN Abhiyaan scheme:**
  - Deliver a high impact package of interventions in the first 1,000 days of a child's life
  - Strengthen the delivery of these interventions through technology and management
  - Improve the capacity of frontline workers
  - Facilitate cross-sectoral convergence to address the multi-dimensional nature of malnutrition
  - Enhance behaviour change and community mobilisation

PIB

Sept 7

PRICE SUPPORT SCHEME

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Union Agriculture Ministry raises existing limit of purchase of Moong and Urad under Price Support Scheme for Madhya Pradesh farmers

Now 40 quintals can be purchased under PSS per day per farmer in Madhya Pradesh

Context: Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare relaxed the existing limit of 25 quintals for purchase of Moong and Urad under Price Support Scheme (PSS) during the summer season 2021-22 for farmers in Madhya Pradesh. It has been now increased to 40 quintals per farmer per day.

About Price Support Scheme (PSS)

- The Price Support Scheme (PSS) is being implemented by the Government of India in the state.
- Main crops of the state like Bajra, Jowar, Maize, Paddy, Cotton, Tur, Moong, Urad, Groundnut, Sesamum Wheat, Gram, Mustard, and Sugarcane etc. are covered.
- The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation implements the PSS for procurement of oil seeds, pulses and cotton, through NAFED which is the Central nodal agency, at the MSP declared by the government.
- NAFED undertakes procurement as and when prices fall below the MSP. Procurement under PSS is continued till prices stabilize at or above the MSP.
- **Eligibility**: Farmers of the State
    - Farmers get benefit of the scheme by selling their produce at support price in APMC centers opened by Nodal procurement agency.
- **Benefits**:
- When prices of commodities fall below the MSP, State and central notified procurement nodal agencies purchase commodities directly from the farmers at MSP, Under specified FAQ (fair Average Quality).
- By this way prices of the main commodities are procured and protect the farmers against the economical loss in farming.

DST

Sept 7

HACKATHON, SERB-INAE, 2022

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

Students participate in SERB-INAE Hackathon 2022

Creative-minded undergraduate and postgraduate science and engineering students in the country submitted their innovative ideas of technological solutions using artificial intelligence and machine learning, big data computation, cyber security, and data-driven finance at the SERB-INAE Hackathon 2022.

A total of six Prizes were announced at the Hackathon organised jointly by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) and Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE).

Hackathon, SERB-INAE, 2022

- The Hackathon organised for innovative and creative minded science and engineering students to focused on artificial intelligence and machine learning, big data computation, cyber security and data driven finance.
- **Event type**: Hackathon and Challenges
- **Target Group**: Graduation, Post-Graduation
- **National/International**: National
- **Area**: Computer Sciences and Information Technology, Engineering Sciences
- **Focus**:Artificial intelligence & machine learning; Big data computation; cyber security; Data driven finance
- **Ministry/Deptt/Institution**:Jadavpur University, Kolkata

THANK YOU!

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/mkyadav

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