



1. India's Women in Science

Topic: Society



In News: The publication of Lab Hopping: A Journey to Find India's Women in Science, showcases the struggle women in Science in India has to endure.

More on the Topic

- Recent data from the Department of Science and Technology (DST) showed women made up 28% of participants in 2018-19 in extramural Research and Development (R&D) projects, up from 13% in 2000-01.
- The proportion of women primary investigators in R&D increased more than four times — from 232 in 2000-01 to 941 in 2016-17. The proportion of women researchers rose from 13.9% in 2015 to 18.7% in 2018.

Issues faced by Women in Science?

- Institutional apathy
- Poor working conditions
- Sexual harassment
- Carrying the twin burden of home and the workplace,
- Deeply entrenched patriarchy

Government Initiatives to promote Women in Science:

- **SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research):** The Scheme is aimed to mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering research funding in various S&T programs in Indian academic institutions and research and development (R&D) laboratories, address comparatively lower participation of women scientists in research activities and to identify and support competitive women researchers in the country.



- SERB – POWER provides **structured support in research to ensure equal access and weighted opportunities for Indian women scientists engaged in R&D activities.**
- The R&D support to women scientists is provided through two components, namely: **SERB POWER Fellowships & SERB POWER Research Grants.**
- **“Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN)” Scheme:** ‘Women Scientist Scheme (WOS)’ under KIRAN provides career opportunities including fellowships to unemployed women scientists and technologists, especially those who had a break in career, for pursuing research in frontier areas of science and engineering.
- **‘Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities (CURIE)’ Programme:** only women Universities are being supported for development of research infrastructure and creation of state-of-the-art research laboratories to enhance women’s participation in S&T domain.
- **Indo-US Fellowship for Women in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine):** encourages Indian women scientists and technologists to undertake international collaborative research in premier institutions in USA for duration of 3-6 months.
- **‘Biotechnology Career Advancement and Re-orientation Programme (BioCARE)’** to encourage women scientists in Biotechnology research.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences has initiated a special award called “National Award for woman scientist” and is being conferred to one-woman scientist each year on the Foundation day.
- **Women Entrepreneur’s Quest (WEQ) Programme** was initiated by DST in partnership with Anita Borg Institute, USA for scouting and supporting Women Entrepreneurs in Technology.
- **Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Foundation (WEE)** is India’s first of its kind initiative by IIT Delhi supported and sponsored by DST to strengthen women eco - system.

Source: Indian Express

2. Indian Fisheries Sector

Topic: Economy



In News: India's fish production touches a record 162.48 lakh tons per annum in 2021-22.

More on the Topic:

- From a mere 7.5 lakh tons in 1950-51, India's total fish production has reached a record 162.48 lakh tons per annum in 2021-22, with a **10.34% growth in fish production in 2021-22 in comparison to 2020-21.**
- Today, India is **the 3rd largest fish producing country with about 8% share in global fish production.**
- It stands **2nd in aquaculture production and one of the top cultured shrimps producing nation in the world.**
- From mere 28.23 lakh tons per annum in 2000-01, **the inland fish production** stood at 121. 21 lakh tons per annum in 2021-22, a staggering **400 percent increase.**

Government Initiatives that helped to Increase the Fish Production:

- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana:** The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana. (PMMSY) is designed to address critical gaps in fish production and productivity, quality, technology, post-harvest infrastructure and management, modernisation and strengthening of value chain, traceability, establishing a robust fisheries management framework and fishers welfare.
- **Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF):** It was launched in 2018 aims to augment the country's fish production to the level of about 20 million tonnes by 2022-23.
- The objectives of FIDF includes (i) Creation and modernization of capture & culture fisheries infrastructure, (ii) Creation of Marine Aquaculture Infrastructure, (iii) Creation and modernization of Inland Fisheries Infrastructure,

- (iv) Reduce post-harvest losses and improve domestic marketing facilities through infrastructure support, (v) To bridge the resource gap and facilitate completion of ongoing infrastructure projects.
- **Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme:** Launched in 1998, Kisan Credit Card Yojana is a scheme that offers short-term, revolving credit to farmers across India.
- The scheme which was exclusive for conventional farming was further extended for the investment credit requirement of farmers viz. allied and non-farm activities in the year 2004. These include Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries Sector.
- **5 major fishing harbours – Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradip, and Petuaghat –** will be developed as hubs of economic activity with world class infrastructure and amenities, Seamless and quality cold chain and Hygienic handling, reduce post-harvest losses for which around 600 crores would be spent.
- **Blue Revolution:** Blue Revolution, the Neel Kranti Mission has the vision **to achieve economic prosperity of the country and the fishers and fish farmers as well as contribute towards food and nutritional security through full potential utilization of water resources for fisheries development in a sustainable manner**, keeping in view the bio-security and environmental concerns.

Source: PIB

3.The National Capital Civil Service Authority (NCCSA)

Topic: Polity and Governance



Empowering the LG

- 1 Top court's May 11 order nullified**
 The move has effectively nullified SC's judgment of May 11, wherein a Constitution bench handed over the control of services in the national capital to the Delhi government, excluding those related to police, public order and land.
- 2 National Capital Civil Service Authority made**
 Centre introduced a new chapter in the GNCTD Act, Part IVA, to create a new service commission for Delhi for the first time.
- 3 LG is strengthened**
 The move makes the LG the final authority who can act on his 'sole discretion' in deciding the matters relating to transfer and posting of bureaucrats.



In News: The President Promulgated the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023.

More on the Topic:

- The Ordinance creates a new statutory authority – **the National Capital Civil Service Authority (NCCSA)** – which will be headed by **the elected Chief Minister of Delhi in addition to the Chief Secretary and the Principal Secretary of the Home department.**
- The NCCSA will make “recommendations” to the LG regarding “transfer posting, vigilance and other incidental matters.”
- Notably, all matters required to be decided by the body shall be decided by **“majority of votes of the members present and voting.”**
- This means, that in effect, the decision of the elected chief minister of can be overruled by the two senior bureaucrats.
- Furthermore, in case the LG differs with the recommendation made, they would be empowered to “return the recommendation to the Authority for reconsideration” and, in case of continuing difference of opinion, “the decision of the Lieutenant Governor shall be final.” This effectively reverses the verdict delivered by the Supreme Court, which vested the Delhi government with final authority over the matter.

Background of the Issue:

- The recent Supreme Court verdict has given power of transfer and posting of bureaucrats to the elected Delhi government.
- But the the ordinance designates the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) as the administrator of Delhi, with the final say on the postings and transfer of all bureaucrats serving the Delhi government.
- Which is a very clear departure from the SC verdict.

Source: Hindu



4. World Bee Day

Topic: Science and Technology



In News: The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW), Government of India is celebrating World Bee Day.

More on the Topic:

- World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20. On this day Anton Janša, the pioneer of beekeeping, was born in 1734.
- The purpose of the international day is **to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem.**
- The UN Member States approved Slovenia's proposal to proclaim 20 May as World Bee Day in December 2017.

Significance of Bees :

- **Bees are some of the most important pollinators,** ensuring food and food security, sustainable agriculture, and biodiversity.
- Climate change is causing bees, among nature's primary pollinators, to die in Himachal Pradesh and the Kashmir Valley.
- This has led to major losses for apple growers in the two areas and could impact their respective economies.
- Bees significantly **contribute to the mitigation of climate change and the conservation of the environment.**
- Bees are important for the **economic opportunities Bees provide for farmers.**
- India ranked eighth in the world in terms of honey production. beekeeping can be an important contributor in achieving the 2022 target of doubling farmer incomes.

Source: Indian Express

5. RBI Dividends to Government

Topic: Economy



In News: The board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved a higher-than-expected dividend to the government in FY23 due to large dollar sales and low provisioning requirements.

More on the Topic:

- The RBI is obligated, as per Section 20 of the RBI Act 1934, to undertake receipts and payments for the Centre and conduct exchange, remittance, and other banking operations.
- Section 47 of the RBI Act requires the RBI to make provisions for bad debts, depreciation in assets, staff contributions, superannuation funds, and other expenses provided by bankers. **The remaining profits are then paid to the central government.**
- The RBI pays dividends to the central government from the surplus income it earns on investments and valuation changes on its foreign exchange holdings, **including dollar, and the fees it gets from printing currency notes.** The dividends for fiscal 2022-23 will be paid in the current fiscal.

Major Sources of RBI Income:

- The RBI generates its profits primarily from interest earned through the sale and purchase of government securities, lending to banks, and interest on bond holdings through open market operations.
- **The surplus profit is calculated by subtracting operating expenditures and other costs stipulated in Section 47 of the RBI Act.** It can be understood as the residual income earned after subtracting the expenditure component from the RBI's balance sheet.

Source: Business Standard

6. ASTR

Topic: Science and Technology



In News: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has developed an artificial-intelligence-based facial recognition tool that it claims has the capability of running checks on subscriber databases of telecom operators to deduce whether it contains multiple connections associated with the same person.

More on the Topic:

- Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR) — can potentially bring down cyber frauds by detecting and blocking possible fraudulent mobile connections.
- Human faces in subscribers' images are encoded using convolutional neural network (CNN) models in order to account for the tilt and angle of the face, opaqueness and dark colour of the images.
- After that, a face comparison is carried out for each face against all faces in the database, and similar faces are grouped under one directory. Two faces are concluded to be identical by ASTR if they match to the extent of at least 97.5 per cent.
- ASTR is capable of detecting all SIMs against a suspected face in less than 10 seconds from a database of 1 crore images.

Source: Business Standard



7. The National Productivity Council (NPC)

Topic: Governance



In News: The National Productivity Council (NPC) to conducts seven major field studies under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

More on the Topic:

- NPC was established in 1958 as a registered society to promote productivity culture in India.
- It is an autonomous organisation under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It provides consultancy, training, research and evaluation services to various sectors of the economy, both public and private.
- It offers customized solutions to address the specific needs and challenges of its clients.

Source: Business Standard