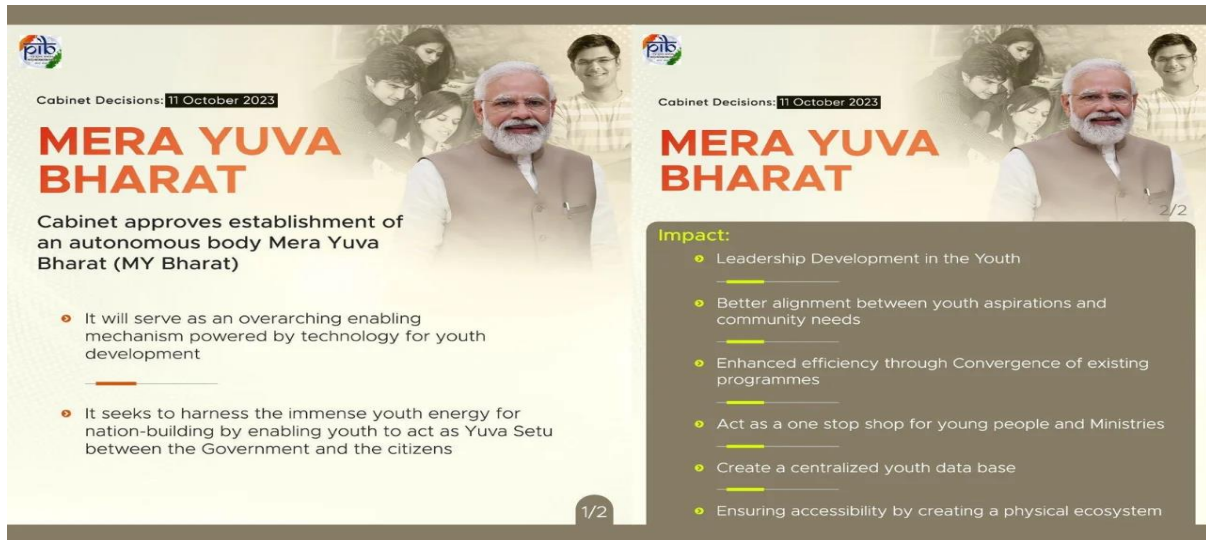# UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 12-10-2023

Cabinet approves establishment of an autonomous body Mera Yuva Bharat

The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of an autonomous body called Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat).

This body will be established for youth-led development and to provide equitable access to the youth.

This will serve as an overarching enabling mechanism powered by technology for youth development and youth led development.

The National Youth Policy, 2014 (NYP-2014) reiterates the commitment of the entire nation to all-round development of the youth of India, so that they can realize their full potential and contribute productively to the nation-building process.

About

The platform is meant to offer suitable opportunities for youngsters to engage in voluntary work in the field of their choice and look for such opportunities across the country.

It will act as a one-stop shop for young people and various central government ministries and will also create a centralised youth database.

However, there will be no financial remuneration involved.

The Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) will be launched on 31st October, 2023 on National Unity Day.

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Primary objective: To make it a whole of Government platform for youth development.

Features

The autonomous body will benefit the youth in the age group of 15-29 years, in line with the definition of youth in the National Youth Policy.

In the case of programme components meant for adolescents, the beneficiaries will be in the age group of 10-19 years.

Under the new arrangement, with access to resources & connection to opportunities, youth would become community change agents and nation builders.

This will allow them to act as the Yuva Setu between the Government and the citizens.

It seeks to harness the immense youth energy for nation building.

The establishment of Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) would lead to:

Leadership Development in the Youth:

Improve the leadership skills through experiential learning by shifting from isolated physical interaction to programmatic skills.

Investing more in youth to make them social innovators, leaders in the communities.

Setting the focus of the Government on Youth Led development and to make the Youth "active drivers" of development and not merely "passive recipients".

Better alignment between youth aspirations and community needs.

Enhanced efficiency through Convergence of existing programmes.

Act as a one stop shop for young people and Ministries.

Create a centralized youth data base.

Improved two-way communication to connect youth government initiatives and activities of other stakeholder that engage with youth.

Ensuring accessibility by creating a physical ecosystem.

Need for MY Bharat

India's youth are to play a critical role in defining the future of the nation - especially at the pivotal juncture of India's 75 years of independence.

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Vision 2047 requires a framework that can bring rural youth, urban youth and Rurban youth under a single platform.

The existing schemes of Department were designed and launched at different points in time over the last 50 years with the then prevailing understanding of needs of rural youth in our society.

The dynamic shifts in the urban-rural landscape have necessitated a re-evaluation of these approaches.

It is imperative to create a framework that unites rural, urban, and rurban youth on a common platform.

Mera Yuva Bharat can help to create such a framework.

There is a need to establish a new contemporary technology led platform for the Government to engage with the present-day youth.

In today's fast-paced world, characterized by rapid communication, the prevalence of social media, a technology driven platform can connect youth to programs.

It can help them improve their capabilities and also connect them with community activities. It would help to increase the Youth outreach efforts of the Department of Youth Affairs.

Ensuring accessibility by creating a phygital ecosystem

The Mera Yuva Bharat platform will create and sustain such a phygital eco-system and empower young individuals to become catalysts for community transformation.

Phygital - (physical plus digital).

Recently, a web portal of the Department of Youth Affairs, yuva.gov.in, hosted a nation-wide program called "Meri Maati Mera Desh" in which 50 million young people participated.

It helped to plant 23 million saplings to create Amrit Vatikas pan-India.

23rdCouncil of Ministers' meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association

External Affairs Minister attended the 23rdCouncil of Ministers' (COM) meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

The meeting was hosted by Sri Lanka, the current IORA Chair.

It was held under the theme of theme of "Strengthening Regional Architecture: Reinforcing Indian Ocean identity".

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IOR is a geographical region that encompasses the Indian Ocean and its surrounding areas, including the littoral states and islands.

The region spans from:

African coast in the west to the Australian coast in the east, and from Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf in the north to the southern coast of Sri Lanka and Australia in the south.

The Indian Ocean is the world's third-largest ocean, covering an area of ~70.6 million square kilometres. It is home to several important sea lanes of communication, including the Strait of Malacca, the Suez Canal, and the Baba-al-Mandeb strait, which connect Asia, Europe, and Africa.

What is the Significance of Indian Ocean Region (IOR)?

Due to its geographical location, it serves as a major transit route for global trade, including oil and gas shipments. It is home to several important chokepoints, such as the Strait of Malacca and the Bab-el-Mandeb strait.

Economic Importance:

IOR is home to several fast-growing economies, including India, China, and several Southeast Asian nations.

The region is rich in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, and fisheries, and is a major destination for foreign investment.

It shares 64% of the global population and 60% of the global GDP.

Security Importance:

Several countries in the region face threats from terrorism, piracy, and maritime security challenges.

The region has seen increased military activity in recent years, with major powers such as US, India, and China increasing their presence in the region.

Environmental Importance:

IOR is home to several important marine ecosystems, including coral reefs and mangrove forests that are vital for maintaining biodiversity and supporting local communities.

The region is also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels and increased frequency of extreme weather events.

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IORA

IORA is an inter-governmental organisation which was established in March 1997.

It was formerly known as the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative and the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC).

The IORA Secretariat is based in Mauritius. It became an observer to the UN General Assembly and the African Union in 2015.

Members – It has 23 Member States and 11 Dialogue Partners.

China is a dialogue partner in the IORA.

Objectives

To promote sustainable growth and balanced development of the region;

To focus on those areas of economic cooperation which provide maximum opportunities for development, shared interest and mutual benefits;

To promote liberalisation, remove impediments and lower barriers towards a freer and enhanced flow of goods, services, investment, and technology within the Indian Ocean rim.

Priority pillars

Significance

The IOR has always made significant contributions to the world economy.

The region is home to 35% of the world's population and also accounts for 19% of total gross domestic product.

Moreover, 80% of seaborne trade uses routes through the Indian Ocean.

Furthermore, 80% of seaborne oil trade and 100,000 commercial vessels depend on this route every year.

News Summary: Key highlights of 23rd Council of Ministers' meeting of IORA

Sri Lanka took over as Chair and India as Vice Chair of the IORA

Sri Lanka assumed the Chairship of IORA for the term 2023-25.

India assumed the Vice-Chair role of IORA for 2023-25, leading to Chairship in 2025-27.

Saudi Arabia became the 11th Dialogue Partner of the Association.

Adoption of the IORA's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (IOIP)

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The outcome document welcomed the adoption of the IORA's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (IOIP) by the 22nd Council of Ministers in Dhaka in November 2022.

It appreciated India's initiative to formulate a Roadmap for the implementation of IOIP.

Agreements signed between India and Sri Lanka on the sidelines of the summit

India and Sri Lanka signed 3 agreements on bilateral cooperation regarding:

Indian assistance for housing projects,

Modernising schools

New joint project between the Indian National Dairy Development Board, Amul cooperative and the Sri Lankan Cargill Group to increase milk production in Sri Lanka.

White Goods

The government recently tightened its oversight over the selected applicants under the Production Linked Incentive for white goods.

Brown Goods / White Goods

White goods are large home appliances such as stoves, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, dishwashers, and air conditioners.

They are large consumer durables for the house which were traditionally available only in white.

Even though you can purchase them today in a wide range of different colors, they continue being called white goods.

White goods are known for their durability and longevity, as they are designed to withstand the demands of daily use.

The term may also refer to white fabrics, especially linen or cotton – articles such as curtains, towels, or sheets that historically used to be made of white cloth.

In the beverage industry, white goods are colorless spirits, such as vodka or gin.

Brown Goods

They are relatively light electronic consumer durables such as computers, digital media players, TVs and radios.

Unlike large household appliances (white goods), brown goods are more focused on entertainment, communication, and convenience.

These devices often have electronic components, and their primary function is to provide audio, video, or data-related services.

Baiga Tribe

Recently, the Baiga Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) became the second to get habitat rights in the state of Chhattisgarh.

About Baiga Tribe:

- The Baiga Tribe is one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

- They reside in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

- Occupation: Traditionally, the Baiga lived a semi-nomadic life and practised slash-and-burn cultivation. Now, they are mainly dependent on minor forest produce for their livelihood.

- They practice a form of shifting cultivation called, "Bewar."

- Mahua is an important aspect of Baiga's food and drink. It is an intoxicant prepared from the fermentation and distillation of the flowers of the Mahua tree.
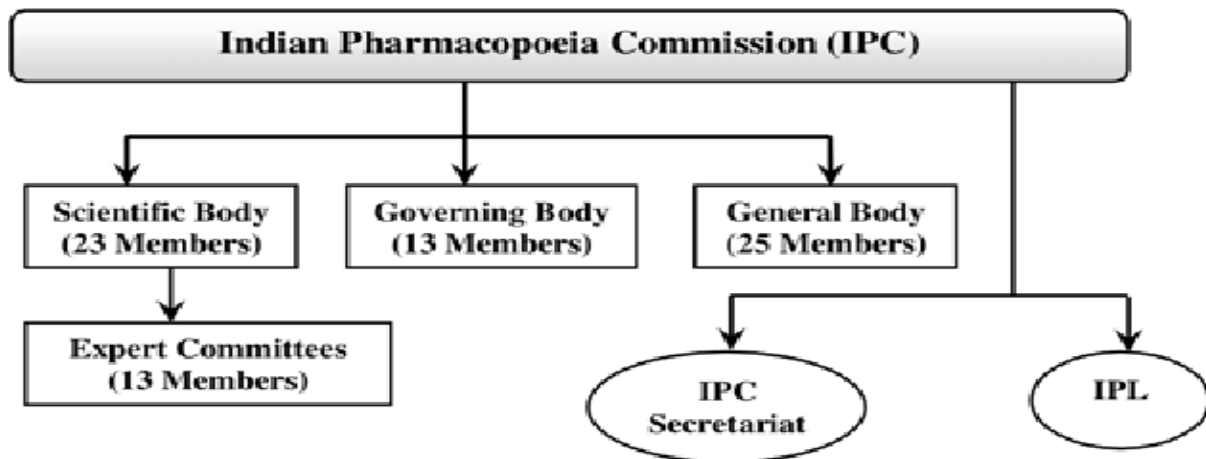
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- Tattooing is an integral part of Baiga culture, every age and body part has a specific tattoo reserved for the occasion.

What are habitat rights?

- Habitat rights recognition provides the community concerned rights over their customary territory of habitation, socio-cultural practices, economic and livelihood means, intellectual knowledge of biodiversity and ecology, traditional knowledge of use of natural resources, as well as protection and conservation of their natural and cultural heritage.

- These rights safeguard and promote traditional livelihood and ecological knowledge passed down through generations.

- They also help converge different government schemes and initiatives from various departments to empower PVTG communities to develop their habitats.

- These rights are given under section 3(1) (e) [rights including community tenures of habitat and habitation for primitive tribal groups and pre-agricultural communities] of The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 also known as the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission

Recently, the Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG) announced the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) as a PDG member during PDG Stakeholder's meeting in Hyderabad.

After 1 year of pilot phase, based on IPC's involvement, contribution and future potential, the decision on inclusion as permanent member of PDG was taken.

It is an autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India.

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It is created to set standards of drugs in the country.

Functions:

Its basic function is to update regularly the standards of drugs commonly required for treatment of diseases prevailing in this region.

It publishes official documents for improving Quality of Medicines by way of adding new and updating existing monographs in the form of Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP).

It further promotes rational use of generic medicines by publishing National Formulary of India.

It prescribes standards for identity, purity and strength of drugs essentially required from health care perspective of human beings and animals.

It also provides IP Reference Substances (IPRS) which act as a finger print for identification of an article under test and its purity as prescribed in IP.

What is Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP)?

These standards are authoritative in nature. They are enforced by the Regulatory authorities for quality control of medicines in India.

During Quality Assurance and at the time of dispute in the court of law the IP standards are legally acceptable.

It is an official document meant for overall Quality Control and Assurance of Pharmaceutical products marketed in India by way of contributing on their safety, efficacy and affordability.

It contains a collection of authoritative procedures of analysis and specifications for Drugs.

The IP, or any part of it, has got legal status under the Second Schedule of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945 there under.
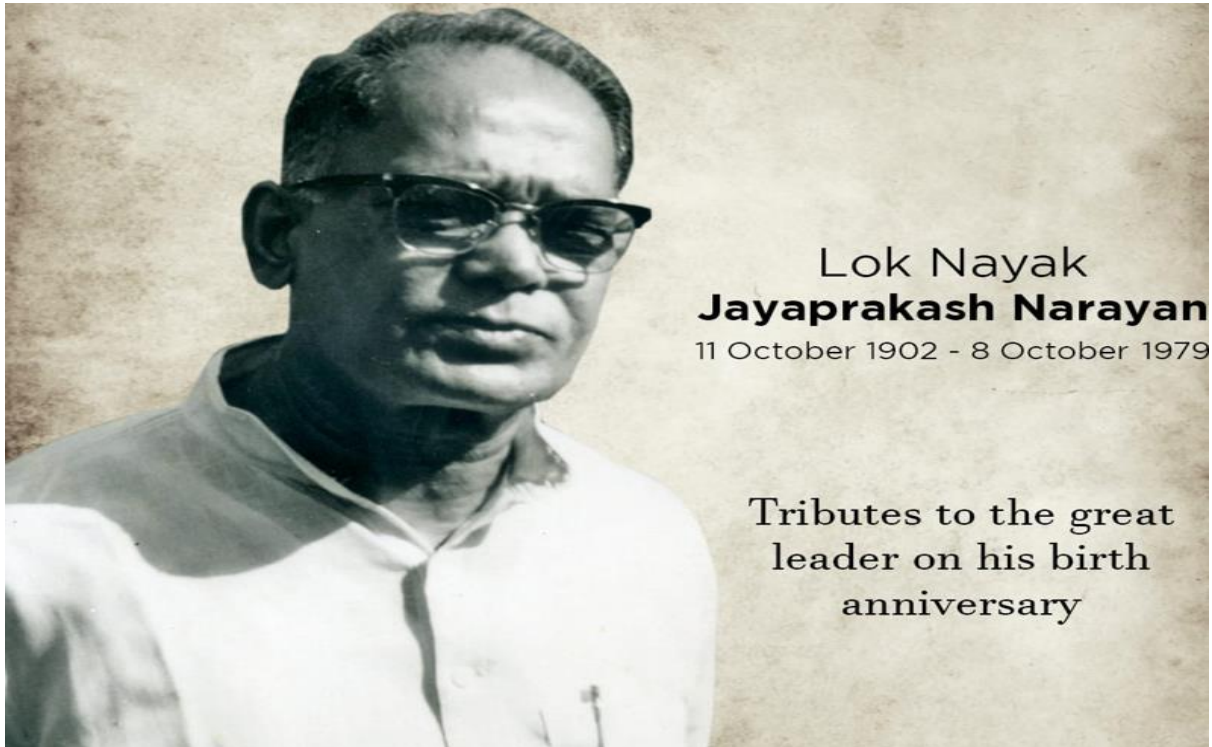
Key facts about the Pharmacopeial Discussion Group

It was formed in 1989 with representatives from the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines in the Council of Europe (the European Pharmacopoeia), the Ministry of Health and Welfare—now the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW) the Japanese Pharmacopoeia, and the United States Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc., (the U.S. Pharmacopeia).

In May 2001, PDG welcomed the World Health Organization as an observer.

It generally meets twice a year and holds monthly status and technical teleconferences to advance harmonization work.

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Prime Minister pays tributes to Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan on his birth anniversary

Lok Nayak
Jayaprakash Narayan
11 October 1902 - 8 October 1979

Tributes to the great leader on his birth anniversary

Jayaprakash Narayan is also called Jaya Prakash Narayan, (born October 11, 1902, died October 8, 1979, Patna), Indian political leader and theorist.

Narayan was educated at universities in the United States, where he became a Marxist. Upon his return to India in 1929, he joined the Indian National Congress (Congress Party). In 1932 he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for his participation in the civil disobedience movement against British rule in India. Upon release he took a leading part in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party, a left-wing group within the Congress Party, the organization that led the campaign for Indian independence.

He was imprisoned by the British again in 1939 for his opposition to Indian participation in World War II on the side of Britain, but he subsequently made a dramatic escape and for a short time tried to organize violent resistance to the government before his recapture in 1943. After his release in 1946 he tried to persuade the Congress leaders to adopt a more militant policy against British rule.

In 1948 he, together with most of the Congress Socialists, left the Congress Party and in 1952 formed the Praja Socialist Party. Soon becoming dissatisfied with party politics, he announced in 1954 that he would thenceforth devote his life exclusively to the Bhoodan Yajna Movement, founded by Vinoba Bhave, which demanded that land be distributed among the landless.

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His continuing interest in political problems, however, was revealed when in 1959 he argued for a "reconstruction of Indian polity" by means of a four-tier hierarchy of village, district, state, and union councils.

In 1974 Narayan suddenly burst on the Indian political scene as a severe critic of what he saw as the corrupt and increasingly undemocratic government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Although he gained a following from students and opposition politicians, there was less enthusiasm from the masses.

The next year a lower court convicted Gandhi of corrupt election practices, and Narayan called for her resignation. Instead, she declared a national emergency and jailed Narayan and other opposition leaders. In prison his health broke down. He was released after five months but never regained his health. When Gandhi and her party were defeated in elections in 1977, Narayan advised the victorious Janata party in its choice of leaders to head the new administration.

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IMF Growth Forecast: 2024

1. Italy IT: 0.7%
2. Spain ES: 1.7%
3. Japan JP: 1.0%
4. Canada CA: 1.6%
5. China CN: 4.2%
6. India IN: 6.3%
7. Russia RU: 1.1%
8. Brazil BR: 1.5%
9. Mexico MX: 2.1%
10. Morocco MA: 3.6%
11. KSA SA: 4.0%
12. Nigeria NG: 3.1%
13. RSA ZA: 1.8%

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Cutting-edge quantum-technology backed green hydrogen production unveiled to power a green future

A new high throughput quantum backed green hydrogen production technology could boost the green hydrogen production in bulk.

The technology developed by the Green Keplerate Team from Banaras Hindu University, was inaugurated at the University in Varanasi, by Dr. Anita Gupta, Head of the Climate Change & Clean Energy Division, DST & Dr. Ranjith Krishna Pai, Scientist & Director of Climate Change & Clean Energy Division, DST and Prof. R. R. Sonde, Chairman of the expert committee, IIT Delhi in the presence of eminent domain experts drawn from all over the country.

The technology developed by the team comprising of Dr. Somenath Garai and Prof. S. Srikrishna showcased the uses of Green Hydrogen as eco-friendly energy alternatives. They introduced next-generation quantum-powered photo-catalyst with a charge transfer system coupled with high proton availability and mobility, and delivered quantum catalytic applications for energy generation.

The patent for this technology, supported under the project titled "Boosting the H_2 Economy by Harnessing the Merits of Quantum Encapsulation Chemistry: Augmented Kinetics for Water Splitting Reaction Under Confinement" under Hydrogen and Fuel Cell program, Clean Energy Research Initiative, is pending.

The state-of-the-art photochemical-reactor design features built-in illumination assembly and external concave reflective panels to maximize the capture of solar energy. The team has engineered a continuous electron coupled proton supply system, propelled with an electron injector mechanism utilizing industrial metal-waste, and after rigorous optimizations, the peak rate of Green Hydrogen production at lab scale was achieved to be about 1 litre/min per 10 g of Quantum Photocatalysts.

Due to the high purity of the hydrogen gas produced, the fuel can be used without additional purification, thus enhancing the cost-effectiveness of the technology. This transformative innovation would offer wide ranging application possibilities across various sectors ranging from energy production to applications in transportation and agriculture.

The Green Keplerate Team have envisaged storage free direct hydrogen internal combustion engine technologies and have also demonstrated the same onto automobiles of varied range of engine/cylinder capacities and functionalities as a part of this ongoing project funded by the DST.

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