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A. GS1 Related

Category: GEOGRAPHY

1. 'Fani' may not make landfall near T.N. coast

What's in the news?

- There is a limited chance of rainfall over Tamil Nadu as cyclonic storm 'Fani' may not make landfall close to the State's coast, according to the Meteorological Department.

Context:

- Balachandran, Deputy Director General of Meteorology, Chennai, recently said that the cyclonic storm, centred over southeast Bay of Bengal and East Equatorial Indian Ocean, 1,240 km southeast of Chennai, is likely to become a severe cyclonic storm.
- Moving at a speed of 18 km per hour, it may reach near the north Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh coast by end April, 2019.
- There may not be any heavy rainfall activity over the State.
- The weather models indicate that only light to moderate rain may occur in a few places of north coastal areas on April 30 and May 1, 2019.
- Balachandran said, "Any direct impact of the system depends on its movement. It is now not favourable to make landfall close to the Tamil Nadu coast. If it comes closer, up to 200-300 km off Tamil Nadu coast, we can have moderate rains. We are monitoring the system for any changes in its track,"
- The department has advised fishermen not to venture into sea from April 28 to May 1, 2019. The sea condition would be rough along and off the Puducherry and Tamil Nadu coast.

2. History of life

What's in the news?

- Several changes in geography happened about 50 million years ago when the landmass that is now India collided with Asia.
- Currently, Princeton University researchers argue that this also resulted in increased oxygen content in the oceans, thereby altering the conditions for life in the region.
- Their inference comes after a study of the nitrogen cycle.

B. GS2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. 15 dead after gun battle with bombing suspects in Sri Lanka

What's in the news?

- Fifteen people including six children were killed in Sri Lanka when suspected Islamist militants blew themselves up in a raid.

A Closer Look:

- Gunmen opened fire as troops attempted to raid a house. Three suspected jihadists died in the gunfire, while three others are believed to have blown themselves up, also killing six children and three women in the process, according to the police.
- Based on a tip-off, troops surrounded "a safe house" used by suspected terrorists. The suspects opened fire, the Army spokesman said, and the troops "retaliated and raided the safe house."
- **Explosives, detonators, gelignite sticks, acid bottles, detonating cords, ISIS flags, suicide kits and military uniforms were seized from the safe house.**
- The development comes in the wake of Sri Lanka's heightened search for suspects linked to the Easter Day serial blasts that claimed over 250 lives recently.

- Sri Lanka said a local radical Islamist group and its affiliates were behind the attacks. As a matter of fact, the Islamic State too had claimed responsibility for the attacks.

The Outfits that have been banned

- Recently, President Maithripala Sirisena banned the local National Thawheed Jammath (NTJ) and Jamathe Millathu Ibraheem (JMI), under Emergency Regulations.
- Steps are being taken to ban other ‘extremist organisations’ operating in Sri Lanka.

2. India issues travel advisory on Sri Lanka

What’s in the news?

- As more violence erupted in Sri Lanka during raids by security forces in the wake of the Easter bombings, **the government has advised Indian citizens to avoid all non-essential travel to Sri Lanka.**
- “In view of the prevailing security situation in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of terror attacks on 21 April 2019, Indian nationals intending to travel to Sri Lanka are advised not to undertake non-essential travel,” the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement recently.
- **The nationwide emergency and night-time curfews in place would make travelling within Sri Lanka more difficult, the Ministry noted.**
- As a matter of fact, several countries including the U.S., the U.K, Canada and Australia, which had issued travel advisories after the Easter bombing, have upgraded their advisories after reports that more attacks could be planned by the same group.

3. \$64 bn deals signed at BRI summit: Xi

What’s in the news?

- Chinese President Xi Jinping recently said that \$64 billion in deals were signed at a summit on his Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and more nations would join the global infrastructure programme.
- Xi and 37 world leaders wrapped up a three-day forum in Beijing with pledges to ensure that projects on the new Silk Road are green and financially sustainable.
- “This year’s forum sends a clear message: more and more friends and partners will join in the Belt and Road co-operation,” Mr. Xi said.
- A document released after the meeting showed **Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Luxembourg, Jamaica, Peru, Italy, Barbados, Cyprus and Yemen were the latest countries to join the club.**

C. GS3 Related

Category: INDIAN ECONOMY

1. Submit report on any adverse reaction to pelvic mesh, J&J told

What’s in the news?

- Days after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned surgical pelvic meshes — used to support the abnormal descent of the pelvis in women — following reports of adverse reactions, the Union Health Ministry has written to pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson seeking information on the import, sale and stock of the product in the past three years.

A Closer Look:

- “We have also requested for information/report on any adverse reactions,” said a senior health official from the Government of India.

- **The Health Ministry is also looking at the fact that the company's licence to import surgical pelvic meshes expired in March 2019 and it hasn't come up for renewal yet.**
- While the Indian manufacturers claim that they aren't making vaginal mesh, an official added that other international mesh makers — Boston Scientific and Coloplast — were not registered for the import of mesh in India.
- There are some who have been seeking an immediate ban on the use of the product. For example, Rajiv Nath, forum coordinator of the Indian Medical Device Industry, recently said:

“Our regulators approve import of notified medical devices on the basis of the USFDA and other such regulatory approval so when these countries ban specific devices, Indian regulators too need to automatically cancel import licences and impose the same restrictions. It is distressing when these reputed overseas manufacturers continue to sell in India suspect quality batches of products that they have recalled or been asked to recall by their regulatory authority abroad.”

- Further, it is important to note that as per an analysis by the All India Drug Action Network (AIDAN), a number of mesh products for use in hernia repair, urinary incontinence and prolapse repair have been approved in India. **Given the horrific adverse events associated with the pelvic mesh in Western countries which has led to the ban, the Indian regulatory body must take immediate measures to protect patients — by initiating local investigations and issuing show cause notices on the way to ordering mandatory withdrawal of these products.**
- Some experts point out that it was tragically ironic that the Indian regulator willingly relies on the decisions of foreign regulatory authorities to grant companies access to the market, but was reluctant to act on the decisions of those same agencies to protect patient safety.

2. Pharma exports grow 11%, cross \$19 bn

What's in the news?

- India's pharmaceutical exports grew a robust 10.72% in 2018-19, and raced past the \$19-billion mark for the first time, a performance marked by a rebound in the U.S. market, improved show in almost all the top 25 destinations and across categories.
- Exports touched \$19.13 billion as against \$17.28 billion of 2017-18, the previous highest, details available with Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India show.
- While it fell short of the \$20-billion mark that was widely expected to be crossed, the performance was still special.
- **Though pharma exports have done relatively better with the nearly 25% rise to \$13.30 billion in 2011-12, the circumstances under which the latest performance came were different.**
- Making matters challenging for exporters over the last few years has been the increased regulatory scrutiny, pressure on margins in the face of mounting competition and the need to geographically diversify the market.
- As a matter of fact, in the five years to 2018-19, exports had declined in one year (2016-17). Other factors such as price control in Germany, Brexit and the lockdown in the U.S. also influenced trends.

Good practices help:

- The positives for the exporters were increase in the price of APIs/bulk drugs, the health regulators classifying lesser number of cases, post inspection, under the official action indicated class that sometimes led to import alerts.
- Further, improved good manufacturing practices (GMP) maintenance would have saved more man-days that otherwise would have been lost to carrying out rectifications suggested by regulatory authorities.

- Category-wise, drug formulations and biologicals with \$13.56 billion (\$12.09 billion) dominated the 2018-19 exports.
- The 12.13% increase was the highest across all categories and took drug formulations and biologicals share in total exports to 70.87%.
- Bulk drugs and drug intermediates, the other mainstay of exports, was next at \$3.89 billion (\$3.52 billion) or a share of a little over 20% to the total.
- **Herbal products was the only segment with negative growth, while exports of vaccines, surgicals and Ayush increased.**
- Region-wise it was North America, primarily the U.S. market, that figured at the top, accounting for \$6.14 billion or nearly one-third of the total exports. Compared to 2017-18, the change was 14.92%. The U.S., specifically with \$5.82 billion, contributed to 30.42% of the exports.

3. 'Address the innovation deficit in neglected diseases'

Analysis:

- Experts opine that it is encouraging that India was reported to be the fourth largest funder of research and development (R&D) in neglected diseases as per the G Finder Survey which tracks global investments in R&D for the neglected diseases.
- This reflects the government's commitment towards addressing the innovation problem in neglected diseases.
- It is important to note that neglected diseases are mostly tropical infectious diseases, and the market size for drugs for such diseases is small due to their limited geographical incidence.

Initiative Taken up by the WHO:

- To highlight the common problem of lack of innovation for drugs, diagnostics and vaccines for this basket of diseases, WHO started addressing these as neglected diseases from late 1980s.
- Some examples of neglected diseases are malaria, tuberculosis, leishmaniasis (kala azar), dengue, leprosy, lymphatic filariasis and diarrhoeal diseases.
- Some experts opine that these diseases face an innovation deficit as they are neglected in R&D efforts of the pharmaceutical industry.
- However, it is not just the neglected diseases in the developing world that face this innovation deficit. Several rare diseases that affect the developed markets are called "**orphan diseases.**"
- These are called orphans because the pharmaceutical industry does not find it profitable to develop and market products intended for only a small number of patients suffering from rare diseases.

Innovation model

- This innovation deficit is caused by the prevailing model of pharmaceutical innovation.
- It is important to note that drug discovery came about as a key component of modern medicine towards the end of the 19th century.
- Till mid-20th century, this was mostly carried out in academic settings.
- By the middle of the 20th century it became an endeavour that was largely driven by pharmaceutical companies.
- The second half of the 20th century saw consolidation of pharmaceutical entities leading to multinational pharmaceutical companies who drive innovation in the pharmaceutical sector.
- It is important to note that the business model of pharmaceutical innovation is market driven, and critics opine that **governments have adopted a hands-off policy, letting the market forces to work.**

- However, the outcome of this process, namely, new drugs, diagnostics or vaccines are subject to strict regulatory control by the governments.

What are Orphan diseases comprised of?

- Orphan diseases comprise both **rare diseases** and **neglected diseases**.
- They are orphans of research focus, market interest and even public health policies.
- The reasons why these diseases have been ignored for so long are better understood today. **The industry-led model works well in cases of diseases with markets that ensure adequate return on investment.** If the market size is not attractive, industry will not invest in such cases. **This leads to market failures resulting in innovation deficit.**
- It is important to note that when markets fail, public policies must be put in place to address the issue. For this reason, governments and patient organisations in the developed markets have emphasised the need for providing policy incentives to encourage innovation to develop solutions for the “orphaned” rare disease patients.

Steps that have been taken:

- Both the U.S. and European Union have policies to support drug development for orphan diseases.
- It is important to note that the U.S., the U.K., Denmark, France, Italy, Sweden and Spain have public policies for treatment of rare diseases.
- The policy approach has been to treat such diseases as a class and tailor suitable policies.

Lessons India can learn:

- India may learn from the above global examples treating neglected diseases as a class requiring special policy intervention to address the innovation deficit.
- A comprehensive policy supporting research, development and marketing and treatment of neglected disease aiming at their elimination is required if India aims to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Concluding Remarks: The Way Forward

- The thrust in funding research should be followed up with policies that incentivise industry to take up drug development.
- **The Orphan Drugs Act** of the U.S. has a basket of policies from drug development grants to tax credits, fast track approvals by regulatory agencies, seven-year market exclusivity, fee reductions for regulatory approvals to priority review vouchers.
- It is important to note that establishing a biomedical observatory which records and monitors the ongoing R&D in neglected diseases will help the government to ensure effective disbursement of the limited resources, identify research gaps and take corrective measures.
- The current thrust in internal resource generation in the national laboratories have the unintended effect of diverting research to diseases with market.
- A sustained and long-term funding commitment to neglected diseases will address this issue.
- In conclusion, if the Prime Minister’s slogan of ‘Jai Anusandhan’ has to reach its benefits to the poor and neglected patients, there should be a comprehensive policy to address the innovation deficit in neglected diseases.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. IIT Madras: Easy OCR system for nine Indian languages

What’s in the news?

- Taking a cue from European languages, several of which have the same (Roman letter-based) script, a team at IIT Madras has, over the last decade, developed a unified script for nine Indian languages, named the Bharati script.
- The team has now gone a step further since developing the script: **it has developed a method for reading documents in Bharati script using a multi-lingual optical character recognition (OCR) scheme.**

A Look at Specifics:

- The team has also created a finger-spelling method that can be used to generate a sign language for hearing-impaired persons.
- **In collaboration with TCS Mumbai, the researchers have found a way for persons with hearing disability to generate signatures using this finger-spelling technique.**
- The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil. English and Urdu have not been integrated so far.
- **It is important to note that Urdu and English alphabet systems have a very different phonetic organisation. But that does not mean a mapping is not possible. It is quite possible and can be done.**

What does OCR Involve?

- In general, optical character recognition schemes involve first separating (or segmenting) the document into text and non-text.
- The text is then segmented into paragraphs, sentences words and letters.
- Each letter has to be recognised as a character in some recognisable format such as ASCII or Unicode.
- The letter has various components such as the basic consonant, consonant modifiers, vowels etc.

Easy to read:

- The scripts of Indian languages pose a problem for such a character recognition because the vowel and consonant-modifier components are attached to the main consonant part.
- This difficulty is removed in the Bharati script which can be easily read.
- In Bharati characters, these different components are segmentable by design. So OCR works quite accurately.

Three-tiered structure:

- The ease in design comes about because the Bharati characters are made up of three tiers stacked vertically.
- The consonant at the root of the letter is placed in the centre and the modifiers are in the top and bottom tiers.
- **Currently, the team has developed a universal finger-spelling language for the nine Indian languages.**
- **As of now, they are working on a system that can help people sign documents using a finger-spelling method, and future plans include developing a new Braille system with the Bharati script.**

2. Hungry black hole

What's in the news?

- Astronomers may have just identified a black hole devouring a nearby neutron star.
- The event, labelled for now as **#s190426c**, occurred 1.2 billion light years away.

- Observatories around the world are working to analyse their signals and confirm this, a Nature report says.

3. Jamia team develops ultrasensitive quantum thermometer

What's in the news?

- Researchers at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, have developed an ultrasensitive quantum thermometer using graphene quantum dots.
- The thermometer can precisely measure a wide range of temperature: 27 degree C to -196 degree C. The thermometer has high sensitivity when measuring different temperatures and can measure very minute (micro Kelvin) changes in temperature.

A Look at Specifics:

- The thermometer also showed extremely quick response time of just about 300 milliseconds to register a change in temperature from 27 degree C to -196 degree C. And the time taken to return to its initial temperature value was as little as about 800 milliseconds.
- The thermometer showed excellent repeatability with negligible variation in sensing response when tested for over 50 cycles during a one-year period.
- The sensor was stable and responded ultra-fast when tested repeatedly.

Applications of the Device:

- The device can find widespread applications in cryogenic temperature sensing.
- Since the sensor has high sensitivity and ability to measure minute changes in temperature, it will be useful in the pharmaceutical industry, healthcare to measure the incubation temperature of biological cells and molecules and the automobile industry to measure the ignition temperature within the engine.
- The sensor can also be used for measuring high temperatures up to 100 degree C.
- In the past, the thermometer has been tested up to 300 degree C. Compared with low temperature, the high-temperature sensitivity is low but it is still much higher than currently available solidstate thermometers in terms of sensitivity, resolution, response and recovery timings.
- Further, since the sensor is stable and shows linear sensitivity behaviour, it does not need calibration.

Preparation of the Sensor:

- The researchers first prepared graphene oxide and chemically made it reduced graphene oxide.
- The physical and chemical properties of reduced graphene oxide are very close to monolayer graphene.
- So by using reduced graphene oxide it is easy to synthesise in large-scale materials having properties similar to graphene.
- During the reduction process, quantum dots are formed in the graphene oxide.
- The reduced graphene oxide having quantum dots is mixed with a ceramic (aluminium oxide), to produce the sensor. The sensor does not need any encapsulation as ceramic forms the matrix.
- The reduced graphene oxide flakes containing the quantum dots (measuring 3-6 nanometre in size) are dispersed in the ceramic; the ceramic does not interfere with the sensor response but provides rigidity to the film.
- The graphene oxide flakes are in contact with each other in the composite. So a continuous network of current path is obtained.
- The temperature sensors were fabricated from this film by using small piece measuring 1×1 cm and depositing two silver electrodes to it for measuring the sensor response.
- The synthesis process is extremely cost effective, has high yield and batch fabrication is possible. One of the main advantages is that this device can be made to any shape and dimension.

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Will closing LoC trade end terrorism?

What's in the news?

- In the month of April, 2019, the government of India announced the suspension of trade from midnight at two designated points along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, citing concerns about “misuse” by elements from across the border to smuggle weapons, narcotics and fake currency.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs has said that cross-LoC trade will only be resumed after it puts in place stricter measures and systems.
- However, important questions arise: **What does the suspension of trade mean for the two countries?**

Why has trade been suspended?

- Explaining the decision to suspend trade, sources in the Ministry of Home Affairs said the trade corridor was being misused by terrorists based in Pakistan. This was being misused in the following ways:
 1. As a channel to smuggle arms, ammunition, narcotics, counterfeit currency and funds to support anti-India activities within Jammu and Kashmir.
 2. They also cited the illegal trade of goods from the United States, such as “California almonds”, while the cross-LoC system was meant exclusively for locally-sourced items.
 3. The government has alleged that 10 of the trading companies involved were run by Kashmiri militants who had crossed over to Pakistan.
- Officials referred to the National Investigation Agency’s (NIA) ongoing case of terror-funding against the former president of the LoC Traders’ Association Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali, who is charged with funding terror groups.
- Finally, the Ministry of Home Affairs said the route was now being used to facilitate non-Kashmiri trade, and that after India cancelled Pakistan’s MFN (most favoured nation) status in the wake of the Pulwama attack (February 2019), traders would likely misuse the route further to evade higher duties and taxes on goods.

How is cross-LoC trade different?

- Business across the LoC is different because it works on a barter system between traders on both sides of Kashmir. So far, 21 goods has been approved for barter, which include handicrafts, saffron, mushrooms, fruit, cereals, honey, spices and carpets. Since the Line of Control is disputed between India and Pakistan and not recognised as an International Boundary (IB), the goods are referred to as ‘traded out’ and ‘traded-in’, instead of exports and imports. Also, unlike regular cross-border trade between India and Pakistan at the Wagah-Attari border, cross-LoC trade takes place only four days a week.

What will be the impact?

- Since it began, experts estimate that more than ₹6,000 crore worth of trade has been conducted over the LoC points, and a total of 1.6 lakh job days created because of it.

- Starting from a mere three crore Pakistani rupees (PKR) worth of goods traded in and 2 crore Indian rupees (INR) worth of goods traded out in 2008-2009, the cross-LoC trade in 2018-2019 was pegged at 441 crore (PKR) and 454 crore (INR) respectively.
- According to a study by the Bureau of Research on Industry and Economic Fundamentals (BRIEF), about 662 traders from Jammu and Kashmir are registered to trade at both points at Uri and Poonch, of which about 110 of them trade actively.

What do the affected traders say?

- The affected traders say that with uncertainty over the reopening of the trade, their livelihoods will be in jeopardy, along with those of loaders, transporters, retailers who are part of their trade, as well as their families, totalling 40,000-50,000 people.
- **Many political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir like Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah have also protested against the move, given that the government has also severely curtailed civilian traffic on the main Srinagar-Jammu highway.** This they say will lead to small- and medium-scale traders being squeezed at both ends, and result in heavy losses particularly for the fruit business; the State is renowned for its apples and cherry crops.
- Like on other issues, Jammu leaders like former Minister Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta said **the trade had been run on an ad hoc basis, without adequate security measures, and must not be restarted in the prevailing circumstances.**

Instances from the Past:

- In the past decade, trading at the Uri-Muzaffarabad (Chakan da bagh-Salamabad) post has been stopped thrice because of cases of narcotic smuggling, and once when a shipment of arms was seized during checks in 2017.
- According to the authorities, numerous seizures have been made recently of pistols, grenades, spares and ammunition, including one particularly large cache concealed in a consignment of bananas.
- The drug hauls have been sizeable too: in 2017, J&K police found 66.5 kg of suspected heroin worth ₹300 crore packed between boxes of garments in a truck that came from PoK, while five other seizures yielded nearly ₹1 crore in counterfeit notes.
- At the Poonch-Rawalakot point, trading has been suspended more frequently due to cross-LoC shelling, particularly between 2016 and 2018, when ceasefire violations rose sharply.
- Even so, it is important to note that **the LoC trade was seen as one of the most resilient CBMs introduced more than a decade ago, as it had been able to continue despite major hostilities between New Delhi and Islamabad.**

What lies in store?

- Unlike cases in the past, the April, 2019 suspension wasn't due to any one particular incident but a series of investigations over the misuse of the cross-LoC trade service.
- As a result, resumption of trade is likely to be a more long-drawn out process.
- Traders have protested against some of the allegations levelled by the MHA, especially the case of the California almonds, which, they insist have not been traded since 2016.
- They have also asked why the government has been dragging its feet on the procurement of "truck body scanners" (which would ensure easy detection of contraband currency, drugs and arms) and save much time for traders who have to undergo lengthy manual searches.
- The case for full body truck scanners has been pending since 2010, when the government first agreed to install them.

Concluding Remarks:

- After many false starts, the MHA and J&K announced they would complete the installation of the scanners by end 2017, but still have made no headway in the process yet.
- The MHA has said that cross-LoC trade will only be resumed after it puts in place stricter measures and systems, but has not specified what they may entail.
- It seems unlikely that the suspension will be lifted soon, especially given the security requirements during the on-going general election and with State polls due later this year (2019).

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. How is a Supreme Court judge to be probed?

What's in the news?

The allegations made by a former Supreme Court employee against the Chief Justice of India have brought the focus on the mechanism that exists to examine charges of misconduct against members of the higher judiciary.

Editorial Analysis:

An important question arises: what exactly is the procedure involved and how was it devised?

How are allegations of misconduct against judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court dealt with?

- Allegations of misconduct against serving judges of the superior judiciary, that is, the various high courts and the Supreme Court, are dealt with through an **'in-house procedure'**.
- Most complaints may pertain to judicial conduct, and may be at the behest of parties aggrieved by the outcome of their cases.
- However, some may concern the personal conduct of judges.
- Two purposes are served by the adoption of an internal procedure to deal with such complaints: when the allegations are examined by the judge's peers, outside agencies are kept out, and the independence of the judiciary is maintained.
- Second, awareness about the existence of a mechanism to examine such complaints will preserve the faith of the people in the impartiality and independence of the judicial process.
- The in-house procedure envisages that false and frivolous allegations can be rejected at an early stage and only those that are not baseless, and may require a deeper probe, are taken up for inquiry.

What is the origin of the 'in-house' procedure?

- The idea of self-regulation as a method by which allegations of misconduct against judges can be approached came up first in a 1995 case concerning the then Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.
- The Chief Justice resigned amidst an uproar caused by reports that he had been paid unjustifiably high amounts by a publisher.
- In a case relating to this allegation, the Supreme Court outlined the procedure that may be adopted in such situations. Until then, misconduct on the part of superior court judges was perceived as something that only Parliament could deal with through the procedure for removal of judges given in the Constitution.
- However, the court made a distinction between 'impeachable behaviour' and bad behaviour. Later, in 1997, when Justice J.S. Verma took over as Chief Justice of India, he took up the issue.
- He circulated a document titled 'Restatement of Values of Judicial Life', a guide containing the essential elements of ideal behaviour for judges so that their independence and impartiality are beyond reproach.

- The Full Court passed a resolution that an 'in-house procedure' would be adopted for action against judges for acts of commission or omission that go against accepted values of judicial life.

When was the in-house procedure adopted?

- A five-judge committee was formed to devise the procedure. The report of the committee was adopted by a resolution of the Full Court on December 15, 1999.
- This procedure has been adhered to since then. However, the in-house procedure was not in the public domain for many years.
- In 2014, a Supreme Court Bench directed the court's registry to make the in-house procedure public for the sake of transparency. The court was then dealing with a serious allegation made by a woman district and sessions court judge that she faced harassment from a sitting judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

How does the in-house procedure work? What are the various steps?

- When a complaint is received against a High Court judge, the Chief Justice concerned has to examine it. If it is frivolous or concerns a judicial matter, she may just file the complaint and inform the Chief Justice of India.
- If she considers it serious, she should get a response from the judge concerned. If she is satisfied with the response and feels no further action is required, she may close the matter and keep the CJI informed. However, if the CJI feels a deeper probe is needed, she should send the complaint as well as the judge's response to the CJI, with her own comments, for further action.
- The procedure is the same if the CJI receives the complaint directly. The comments of the high court Chief Justice, the judge concerned and the complaint would be considered by the CJI. If a deeper probe is required, a three-member committee, comprising two Chief Justices from other High Courts and one High Court judge, has to be formed. The committee will hold a fact-finding inquiry at which the judge concerned would be entitled to appear. It is not a formal judicial proceeding and does not involve lawyers or examination or cross-examination of witnesses.
- If the charge is against a high court Chief Justice, the same procedure of getting the person's response is followed by the CJI. If a deeper probe is deemed necessary, a three-member committee comprising a Supreme Court judge and two Chief Justices of other High Courts will be formed.
- If the charge is against a Supreme Court judge, the committee would comprise three Supreme Court judges. There is no separate provision in the in-house procedure to deal with complaints against the CJI.

What are the possible outcomes from the inquiry committee?

- If it finds that there is substance in the allegations, the committee can either hold that the misconduct is serious enough to warrant removal from office, or that it is not so serious as to warrant removal. In the former case, it will call for initiation of proceedings to remove the judge.
- The judge concerned would be advised to resign or take voluntary retirement. If the judge is unwilling to quit, the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned would be advised to withdraw judicial work from him, and the President of India and the Prime Minister would be informed of the situation.
- Such an action may clear the way for Parliament to begin the political process for impeachment. In case, the committee finds substance in the allegation, but it is not grave enough to warrant removal from office, the judge concerned would be advised accordingly, and the committee's report will be placed on record.

F. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Prelims Facts

<https://byjus.com>

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements, regarding the recently developed 'ultrasensitive quantum thermometer' at Jamia Millia Islamia:

1. This thermometer has been developed using graphene quantum dots.
2. **The device can find widespread applications in cryogenic temperature sensing.** Since the sensor has high sensitivity and ability to measure minute changes in temperature, it will be useful in the pharmaceutical industry, healthcare industry to measure the incubation temperature of biological cells and molecules and the automobile industry to measure the ignition temperature within the engine.

Which among the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

(c) Both 1 and 2

- This thermometer has been developed using graphene quantum dots.
- The device can find widespread applications in cryogenic temperature sensing. Since the sensor has high sensitivity and ability to measure minute changes in temperature, it will be useful in the pharmaceutical industry, healthcare to measure the incubation temperature of biological cells and molecules and the automobile industry to measure the ignition temperature within the engine.

Q2. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'Bharati' script:

1. The 'Bharati' script is a unified script currently developed for nine Indian languages.
2. The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil.

Which among the above statements is/are *incorrect*?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

- The 'Bharati' script is a unified script currently developed for nine Indian languages.
- The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil.

Q3. What is the geographical divide that separates Sri Lanka from India?

- a) Palk Strait
- b) Malacca Strait
- c) Hormuz Strait
- d) Magellan strait

Answer

(a) Palk Strait

- The Palk Strait is the geographical divide that separates Sri Lanka from India.

Q4. Which among the following international organizations releases the “Global Nutrition Report”

- a) World Health Organization
- b) International Monetary Fund
- c) ILO (International Labour Organization)
- d) UNIDO(United Nations Industrial Development Organization)

Answer

(a) World Health Organization

- The “Global Nutrition Report” is released by the World Health Organization.

I. Practice Questions for UPSC Mains Exam

1. The office of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) has come under controversy recently. Examine the need to restore faith in the third pillar of democracy. What are some of the reformatory steps that can be taken towards ensuring probity in the higher offices of the judiciary. (12.5 Marks, 250 Words)
2. The issue concerning closing of trade at the LoC (Line of Control) has sparked criticisms from a section of people. To what extent would this move serve as a means towards curbing terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir? Discuss. (12.5 Marks, 250 Words)

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