

28 Sep 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

1. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

Context:

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare unveiled a timeline depicting ICMR's historical achievements.

About ICMR:

- The ICMR is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research and is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world.
- The ICMR was established in 1911 as the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) by Sir Harcourt Butler. It was set up with the specific objective of sponsoring and coordinating medical research in the country.
- In 1949, the IRFA is renamed as the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) with an expanded scope of functions.
- The ICMR is neither a statutory body nor a regulatory body.
- The ICMR performs research on and control and management of communicable diseases, fertility, maternal and child health, nutritional disorders, health care delivery (including the development of alternative strategies), environmental and occupational health problems; major non-communicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, blindness, diabetes and other metabolic and haematological disorders; mental health; and drugs (including traditional remedies).
- The Council also promotes biomedical research through intramural and extramural research.
 - Much of the intramural research is carried out by the council's Permanent Research Institute and Centres.
 - Extramural research is carried out by the establishment of centres for advanced research, task forces, and through open-ended research.
- The ICMR is funded by the Government of India through the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

2. UMANG App

Context:

Facility to apply for Scheme Certificate under EPS, 1995 now available on UMANG application.

To know more about the [UMANG App](#), click on the linked article.

3. H-CNG

Context:

Notification allowing the use of H-CNG issued.

Details:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has allowed the use of H-CNG (18% mix of hydrogen) in CNG engines.
- This is seen as a major step towards adopting alternative clean fuel for transportation.

To know more about H-CNG, check [PIB dated Jul 23, 2020](#).

4. Himalayan Chandra Telescope

Context:

Workshop to mark 20 years of Himalayan Chandra Telescope to highlight the science it produced.

About Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT):

- The 2-m diameter optical-infrared Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) at the Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO), Mt. Saraswati, Digpa-ratsa Ri, Hanle is at an altitude of 4500 m above mean sea level.
 - Hanle is a village in the UT of Ladakh.
- The HCT is operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bangalore.
 - The IIA is an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- It is remotely operated using a dedicated satellite communication link from the Centre for Research & Education in Science & Technology (CREST), Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Hosakote, about 35 km northeast of Bangalore.
- The Telescope is available to the astronomical community, though some time is reserved for observations of Target of Opportunity programmes and service observations.
- The telescope has been scanning the night sky in search of stellar explosions, comets, asteroids, and exo-planets for two decades.
- The HCT has provided data that has been used in the PhD theses of many students.
- The area of research covers a wide range of topics, from solar system objects to cosmology.
 - Some of the thrust research areas are the study of solar system bodies like; comets, asteroids, the study of star formation processes and young stellar objects, study of open and globular clusters and variable stars in them, abundance analysis of elements in the atmosphere of evolved stars, star formation in external galaxies, Active Galactic Nuclei, stellar explosions like novae, supernovae, gamma-ray bursts and so on.
- The telescope has been used in many coordinated international campaigns to monitor stellar explosions, comets, and exo-planets, and has contributed significantly to these studies.

5. Ultra-Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT)

What is UVIT?

- The Ultra-Violet Imaging Telescope, or the UVIT, is a 3-in-1 imaging telescope simultaneously observing in the visible, the near-ultraviolet (NUV), and the far-ultraviolet (FUV) spectrum.
- It is one of the five payloads onboard India's first multi-wavelength astronomical observatory [AstroSat](#).
- The UVIT weighs 230 kg and comprises of two separate telescopes.
 - One works in the visible (320-550 nm) and the NUV (200-300 nm).

- The second works only in the FUV (130-180 nm).
- It has carried out 1166 observations of 800 unique celestial sources proposed by scientists both from India and abroad.
- It has explored stars, star clusters, mapping of the large and small satellite galaxies nearby to the Milky Way galaxy called the Magellanic Clouds, supernovae, active galactic nuclei, and so on.
- Observations from UVIT has recently led to the discovery of a galaxy located at a distance of about 10 billion light-years from Earth and emitting extreme ultraviolet radiation that can ionize the intergalactic medium.
- It also detected the first extreme-UV rays in the Universe from the cosmic noon.
- The UVIT project was led by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) in collaboration with the Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, several centres of [ISRO](#) and the Canadian Space Agency.

6. INS Viraat

Context:

INS Viraat, which was decommissioned from the Indian Navy in 2017, reached Alang, Gujarat for recycling.

INS Viraat was commissioned into the Navy on [May 12, 1987](#), read more about INS Viraat in the linked article.

About Alang:

- Alang in Gujarat is one of the world's biggest ship recycling yards where around 30% of the global ships (250-280) are recycled annually.
- Alang provides employment to more than 30,000 people from various states, especially, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Gujarat
- It also supports 3.5 lakh people indirectly through other business activities.

7. Mission Olympic Cell

Context:

Mission Olympic Cell sanctions overseas training and rehabilitation of weightlifter.

About Mission Olympic Cell (MOC):

- This cell is a dedicated body created to assist athletes selected under the [Target Olympic Podium Scheme](#) (TOPS).
- It is under the Chairmanship of the Director-General, Sports Authority of India.
- The MOC deliberates on the processes and methods by which athletes can receive the best assistance in their preparation.
- It also focuses on the selection, exclusion and retention of athletes, coaches, training institutes that can receive TOPS assistance.
- Assistance is provided to athletes under the MOC in the form of:

- Customized training under reputed coaches or institutes.
- Participation in international competitions.
- Purchase of equipment.
- Service of support staff like physical trainers, sports psychologists, etc.
- Out-of-pocket allowance to the athletes as an incentive.
- The Cell has a Selection and Review Committee which meets regularly to evaluate the athletes' proposals.
 - The committee also periodically evaluates the athletes and sends recommendations for their retention or exclusion under TOPS.

Functions of MOC:

- Approving customized programs for athletes selected under TOPS.
- Recommending financial disbursement for these customized programs.
- Supporting, monitoring and reviewing the progress of athletes as per the training programs.
- Setting up a regular reporting structure on the training programs.
- Taking decisions on the sudden and unexpected needs of the athletes.
- Communicating with the athletes on their progress and requirements.