Prelim Bits 08-03-2019

Women's Workforce Participation

- A report notes that women's participation in the country's workforce has had a massive fall from 36.7 % in 2005 to a low 26 % in 2018.
- There are about 19.5 crore women employed in the unorganized sector or in unpaid work in the country.
- The lack of access to quality education and the widening digital divide limits women from gaining employable skill-sets and entering the workforce.
- The employment ratio of women remains low despite the increasing focus on re-skilling and up-skilling of workforce in general and women in particular, in line with the evolving industry needs.
- The empowerment of women can be facilitated by

    1. better access to quality education
    2. gaining managerial, leadership and soft skills
    3. attaining financial and digital literacy
    4. influencing social settings and building support systems
    5. access to resources like finance, technology, raw materials, talent and joining the right networks

Marine Heat-waves

- The number of marine heat-wave days has increased by more than 50% since the mid-20th century.
- Marine heat-waves have damaged ecosystems across the globe and are poised to become even more destructive.
- It is becoming more frequent and prolonged.
- For instance a 10-week marine heat-wave near Western Australia in 2011 shattered an entire ecosystem and permanently pushed commercial fish species into colder waters.

Rationale behind fog formation

- Fog is a cloud of small water droplets that is near ground level.
- It is also sufficiently dense to reduce horizontal visibility to less than 1,000 meters.
- During daytime, the earth gets heated due to exposure to sunlight.
- At night, if the skies are clear, all this heat is radiated into space causing the

ground and the air above it to cool down.
- When this happens, the water vapour in the air condenses on tiny, suspended particles like dust, aerosol, etc. creating a fog.
- Fog does not form during summer because the ground gets very hot but summer nights being shorter, there is not enough time for the ground to cool completely.
- Winter nights are long and cool and more suitable for fog formation.
- This fog stays until the heat of the sun evaporates the condensed water droplets in the fog.

White Label ATM

- The Reserve Bank of India has allowed white-label ATM operators (WLAOs) to display advertisements pertaining to non-financial products/services within the WLA premises, among others.
- White label ATMs are set up by non-banking entities.
- Broadly, ATMs differ from WLAs in two ways:

    1. In case of a White Label ATM, the logo displayed on the ATM machine and in the ATM premises pertain to the WLA operator instead of a bank.
    2. Cash deposits are not accepted at WLAs as it is not permitted by the RBI at present

- The country's first WLA was set up by the Tatas' Indicash in 2013.
- Non-bank entities were allowed by the RBI to set up White Label ATMs as banks won't be able to provide their ATM facilities in each and every place.
- At present, cash crunch following demonetization and transaction fees that do not cover costs are affecting these services hardly.

WHO Reforms

- The World Health Organization (WHO) announced sweeping reforms to modernize and strengthen the organization.
- It would align its processes and structures with the triple-billion targets:

    1. One billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage
    2. One billion more people better protected from health emergencies
    3. One billion more people enjoying better health and well-being

- Its new structure and operating model would also align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- Among 17 SDGs set by the UN in 2015, at No.3 was 'Good Health and Well-being'.
- WHO announced a slew of new structures:

1. A division of the chief scientist
2. A department of digital health
3. A division of data
4. A division of emergency preparedness

- Soumya Swaminathan will be the first to hold the Chief Scientist position.
- She was moved from the position of Deputy Director-General of WHO

Source: PIB, The Hindu, Down to Earth

