Prelim Bits 11-10-2019

SUMAN

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN) initiative.
- It was launched during the 13th Conference of Central Council of Health and Family Welfare along with State Health Ministries.
- It aims to end all preventable maternal and newborn deaths by assuring dignified, respectful & quality health care at no cost.
- It focuses on zero tolerance for denial of services for every woman and newborn visiting the public health facility.
- It also provides a positive birth experience to both mother and infant.

Amitabh Kant Panel

- Ministry of Railways has constituted Amitabh Kant Panel to oversee the entry of private operators for 150 trains and development of 50 railway stations as per global standards.
- Other members of the panel are,

i. Railway board Chairman,
ii. Economic Affairs secretary,
iii. Housing and urban affairs secretary and
iv. Railways financial commissioner

- The tenure of the Panel is 1 year.
- The panel will approve and monitor the bidding process and also take decisions to ensure the projects are awarded in a time-bound manner.

Operation Peace Spring

- It is a military operation launched by Turkey against the Syrian Democratic Forces in Northeast Syria.
- The Turkish Armed Forces together with the Syrian National Army launched this after U.S. troops pulled back from the border area last week.
- It is to prevent the creation of a terror corridor across border, and to bring peace to the area.
- It is to create a safe zone to ensure that Syrian refugees return to their home countries.

UNICEF Cryptocurrency Fund

- UNICEF becomes first UN organisation to hold and make transactions in cryptocurrencies ether and bitcoin.
- UNICEF will use cryptocurrencies to fund open source technology benefiting children and young people around the world.
- Under the structure of the fund, contributions will be held in their cryptocurrency of contribution, and granted out in the same cryptocurrency.
- The first contributions to the Fund will benefit UNICEF Innovation Fund and **GIGA initiative** to connect schools across the world to the internet.

Planet Saturn

- Scientists at International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Centre have identified 20 new moons around Saturn.
- With this discovery, Saturn has become the planet with the highest number of moons (82) surpassing Jupiter with 79 moons.
- 17 of the new moons orbit the planet in the opposite, or retrograde, direction and 3 moons have prograde orbits, circling in the same direction.

ICON Satellite

- NASA has recently launched Ionospheric Connection Explorer (ICON) spacecraft from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.
- It is designed to probe Earth's upper atmosphere (Ionosphere), a massive layer that overlaps with the boundary of space.
- Its measurements will help scientists better understand the link between space weather and terrestrial weather, and how the two interact in the ionosphere.
- It is the region where strange and unique phenomena, such as the auroras and geomagnetic storms are created.

Source: The Hindu, PIB, The Indian Express

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