Prelim Bits 11-10-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Tele-MANAS

Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare launched Tele-MANAS on the occasion of World Mental Health Day.

Mental Health Day is observed on October 10 every year.

- Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS) was launched under the **National Tele Mental Health Programme** (NTMHP).
- Tele-MANAS aims to provide **free tele-mental health services** all over the country 24x7, particularly catering to people in remote or under-served areas.
- This initiative is based on Karnataka's initiative E-Manas.

E-Manas, the tele-counselling programme, was first launched by the Karnataka State government during the first wave of COVID-19 in association with NIMHANS.

- **Organisation Framework** - The Union Government aims to open at least one Tele-MANAS Cell in each State/UT.
- Presently there are 5 regional coordination centres along with 51 State/UT Tele MANAS cells.

- Nodal Centre - National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru
- Technology Support - International Institute of Information Technology-Bangalore (IIITB)
- **Working Mechanism** - A toll-free, 24/7 helpline number has been set up across the country allowing callers to select the **language of choice** for availing services.
- Tele-MANAS will be organised in two tier system:
    1. Tier 1 - Tele-consultation by trained counsellors and mental health specialists.
    2. Tier 2 - Physical and/or audio visual (**e-Sanjeevani)** consultation by specialists at District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)/Medical College resources.
- Specialised care is being envisioned through the programme by linking Tele-MANAS with other services like
    1. National tele-consultation service,
    2. e-Sanjeevani,
    3. Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

4. Mental health professionals,
5. Ayushman Bharat health and wellness centres and
6. Emergency psychiatric facilities.

References

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1866498
2. https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/tele-manas-a-247-mental-health-facility-launched/article65993264.ece
3. https://indianexpress.com/article/india/government-launches-tele-mental-health-service-8201059/

Automatic Exchange Of Information

Recently, India has received the fourth set of Swiss bank account details of its nationals and organisations as part of an annual information exchange method 'Automatic Exchange Of Information' (AEOI).

- The guidelines and parameters for the AEOI are set by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- In 2013, G20 countries endorsed AEOI as the new global standard for exchange of information.
- G20 asked the OECD to develop a standard, as well as the required implementation and monitoring processes for AEOI.
- AEOI allows every country to obtain data from Financial Institutions (FIs) and "automatically" exchange it with countries with which AEOI agreements are in order, every year.
- The information exchanged relates to **individuals**, **corporate** (shell companies) and **trusts.**
- The information received under the annual exercise of AEOI, is used extensively in probes of suspected tax evasion, money laundering and terror funding.
- Under the OECD's guidelines, no details of the quantum of funds or the names of account holders are to be publicised.
- In India, the information received is kept in the custody of and for action by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

Under AEOI, India presently shares bulk financial and banking information with 78 countries and receives the same from 107 countries.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is a Paris-based international organisation of developed countries that that discuss and develop economic and social policy.
- The OECD brings together Member countries and a range of partners that collaborate on key global issues at national, regional and local levels.
- OECD is a group of 38 member countries and India is not a member.

References

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-economics/india-gets-4th-set-of-swiss-bank-account-details-significance-what-happens-next-8201032/
2. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-gets-fourth-set-of-swiss-bank-account-details-under-automatic-info-exchange-framework/article65992316.ece
3. https://incometaxindia.gov.in/Pages/eoi/automatic-exchange-of-information.aspx
4. https://www.oecd.org/tax/exchange-of-tax-information/automaticexchange.htm

Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework of OECD

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has released a global tax reporting framework for cryptocurrencies as a respond to a G20 request.

> *In 2021, the G20 mandated the OECD to develop a framework providing for the automatic exchange of tax-relevant information on Crypto-Assets.*

- The crypto assets can be used for tax evasion because of a lack of any regulations.
- The crypto market has also given rise to new intermediaries and service providers, such as crypto-asset exchanges and wallet providers.
- The crypto-assets and related transactions are not comprehensively covered by the OECD/G20 Common Reporting Standard (CRS).

> *The OECD/G20 Common Reporting Standard (CRS) is a set of guidelines developed by the OECD for automatic exchange of information.*

- In 2022, the OECD approved the Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) with a view to automatically exchanging such information.
- CARF provides for the reporting of tax information on transactions in Crypto-Assets in a standardised manner.
- The information, according to CARF, will be shared on an **annual basis** and accounting will be done on the lines of CRS.
- The CARF will target any digital representation of value that relies on a cryptographically secured distributed ledger or a similar technology to validate and secure transactions.
- The CARF contains model rules that can be transposed into domestic legislation, and commentary to help administrations with implementation.
- **Similar Links** - Regulatory Clarity on Crypto Assets

References

1. https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/oecd-releases-global-framework-to-exchange-information-on-cryptocurrency-122101100153_html
2. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/technology/oecd-finalises-global-framework-on-cryptocurrency/articleshow/94776853.cms
3. https://www.oecd.org/tax/exchange-of-tax-information/oecd-presents-new-transparency

-framework-for-crypto-assets-to-g20.htm

Kurdish Community

Recently, the Iranian Kurds began nationwide protests over the death of a young Iranian Kurdish woman in the custody of Iran's morality police.

- Kurds are an ethnic-linguistic group that inhabit the middle-east and are spread across the border regions of four countries.
- Kurds are mainly Sunni Muslims who speak a language related to Farsi.
- They live mostly in a mountainous region straddling the borders of Armenia, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey.

The Treaty of Lausanne, ratified in 1924, divided the Kurds among the new nations of the Middle East.

- Their demands have varied from wanting a separate country (Kurdistan) for themselves to demanding greater autonomy within the framework of the existing states.

- **Iranian Kurds -** Around 8 million to 10 million Kurds lives in Iran, who form about 10% of the population.
- Kurds (Sunnis) are minority in Shia-dominated Iran.
- Kurds in Iran have long suffered deep-rooted discrimination.
- Kurdish regions in Iran have been economically neglected, resulting in entrenched poverty.

References

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-global/who-are-iran-minority-kurds-mahsa-amini-death-in-custody-8201052/
2. https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/iran-says-mahsa-amini-died-of-illness-rather-than-blows/article65982581.ece

Artificial Oyster Reefs of California

Artificial reefs dropped in the San Diego Bay last year, as part of the plan to mitigate damage due to sea level rise in California, have begun growing tiny molluscs recently.

- Artificial oyster reefs are hemispheres that are made from a mixture of cement, sand and crushed oyster shells.
- They weigh around 135 kg and look like huge thimbles.
- Oyster shells are a crucial ingredient because they attract living oysters to make their home there.

- **Benefits** - The Oyster reefs protect shorelines from wave erosion naturally.
- During a storm, underwater oyster reefs or beds - dense colonies of oysters both living and dead - act as a natural breakwater, absorbing wave energy before it hits the shore.
- However, the oyster barriers work only in areas of shallow water.
- The Oyster reefs provide important habitat for wetlands, aquatic plants and ecologically and commercially important wildlife.
- Their bivalve occupants are all miniature filtration plants (oysters) that are essential to the marine ecosystem.
- As the oysters filters around 50 gallons of water every day in order to capture the nutrients they need for survival, they help remove that turbidity out of the water and help clean the water.
- This will provide additional benefits to eelgrass.

Eelgrass

- The Eelgrass are the submerged aquatic vegetation.
- They also act as a crucial food source and as a house for several birds.
- The eelgrass beds will help prevent shorelines from eroding.
- Similar link - Seagrass, Seaweed, Seaweed Mission

References

1. https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/to-save-california-coasts-scientists-turn-to-the-humble-oyster/article65991902.ece

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering