# Prelim Bits 14-03-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

## National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE)

*India recently launched the 'National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE)' along with a booklet on Snakebite and a Poster on "Dos" and "Don'ts".*

- It is a broad framework for management, prevention and control of Snake bite envenoming in India.
- **Launched by** – Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Aim** – To halve the number of deaths and disability due to snakebite envenoming by 2030 through 'One Health' approach

| **Snakebite Envenoming** |
|---|
| • A potentially life-threatening disease following the bite of a venomous snake.<br>• Snake bites can cause paralysis, bleeding disorders, kidney failure and local tissue destruction, etc.<br>• **WHO** – It formally lists the snakebite envenoming as a highest priority Neglected Tropical Disease in 2017.<br>• **India** – It accounts for 50% of all snakebite deaths globally.<br>• Known as the *Snakebite capital of the world*.<br>• Around 90% of snakebites in India are caused by the 'Big 4 Crawlers'<br>- Common Krait<br>- Indian Cobra<br>- Russell's Viper and<br>- Saw Scaled Viper |

- **Mission** – To progressively *reduce the morbidity, mortality* and its associated complications in humans due to Snake bite.
- **Components** – Human, wildlife, tribal and animal health component.
- **Human-health Component** – Surveillance of snake bite case, emergency care services, anti-snake venom at all health facilities, and institutionalization of Regional Venom Centre.
- **Wildlife-health component** – Public awareness, research & monitoring, snake venom collection, antivenom distribution and snake relocation.
- **Animal & agriculture component** – Prevention of snake bites in livestock, community engagement etc.

*Human health component are already being implemented under snakebite prevention and control through the State and District Nodal Officer (SNO & DNO) under National Health Mission.*

- **Joint monitoring** – Component wise monitoring and independent external evaluation of the state action plan.
- **Key stakeholders** – As a nodal agency, they directly involve in providing technical and logistic support to the State/District and below level and also help in formalizing the State Action Plan.
- **A guidance document** – For the states / UTs and stakeholders to develop their own action plan, specific to their needs.
- The states will identify and nominate State and District Nodal Officer (SNO & DNO).
- **A helpline number '15400'** – For immediate assistance & guidance to individuals and communities affected by snakebites.
- It will be *piloted in 5 states and Union Territories* (UTs) - Puducherry, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi.

**Reference**

PIB| Launch of NAPSE

## Project SOORYA

*ISRO has formalised a project team, internally named 'SOORYA', to start building the New Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV).*

- **Aim** – To develop NGLV and thereby to build the country's own space station and send Indians to the Moon.

  *NGLV will be India's biggest rocket and is to be ready by 2034-35.*

- **Requirement** – *3rd launch pad* at Sriharikota will be necessary as NGLV's configuration will differ from the current class of rockets.
- **Features** – A *3-stage* launch vehicle.
- **Fuel** – G*reen fuel combinations* like methane-liquid oxygen or kerosene-liquid oxygen.
- **Payload capacity** – *Up to 10 tonnes to Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO)* that is more than twice the capability India's current heaviest rocket, the LVM-3, has.
- **Reusability** – Its parts are recoverable and can be reflown.
- **Cost-competitive rocket** – Reusability reduces the launch costs, of *around $1,900 per kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO)*, compared to $3,000/kg for an expendable configuration.
- **In line with India's Space Vision 2047** – It helps in achieving the goals of *building a space station by 2035* and eventually sending Indians to Moon.
- **Private sector participation** – While ISRO will provide technical support, the private industry is expected to eventually handle building, operations and launches.

***Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO),*** *a space agency of India, created in 1969 by superseding Indian National Committee for Space Research*

*(INCOSPAR). Its headquarters is in Bengaluru, Karnataka and works under the control of Department of Space (DOS), Government of India.*

**Reference**

Times of India| Project Team ready for NGLV

## Committee on Digital Competition Law (CDCL)

*The Committee on Digital Competition Law (CDCL) has submitted its report with the Draft Bill on Digital Competition Law.*

- **Constituted by** – Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)
- **Aim** – To examine the need for a separate law on competition in digital markets and to prepare a draft Digital Competition Act and submitting a report.
- **Composition** – ***16-member*** inter-ministerial committee.
- **Committee headed by** – ***Manoj Govil***
- **Activity** – It reviewed whether the existing provisions of the Competition Act 2002 are sufficient to deal with the challenges emerging from the digital economy.
- **Recommendation** – They are largely *modelled on the EU's Digital Markets Act*, with some India specific variations.
- *Ex-ante (before the event) measures* be introduced to complement the current ex-post framework.
- Legislate to regulate the market power of Big Tech firms like Google and Meta to better equip the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to rule on competition matters for tech firms.
- *Identifying large digital enterprises* with a 'significant presence' in India in selected 'core digital services' and terming them as "***Systemically Significant Digital Enterprises***," or SSDEs.
    - They shall be identified by using *2 test basis*, companies' significant financial strength and significant spread.
    - These companies need to do a *self-assessment and report* it to the CCI if they fall within the same.
    - Any non-compliance with the requirement, may lead to *significant fines* which can be up to 10% of global turnover.
- Implement a mechanism for *inter-regulatory consultations*.
- **Challenges** – Ex-ante regulation could *potentially stifle innovation* which could lead to unintended consequences, such as reduced consumer choice and higher prices.

**References**


1. The Hindu Business Line| Draft bill on Digital Competition Law
2. The Hindu| Recommendation of Manoj Govil Committee

## Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) 2024

*Government issues marketing code for pharmaceutical firms under the tag 'Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) 2024'.*

- **Issued by** – Department of Pharmaceuticals

> *The Department of Pharmaceuticals, created in 2008 under the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers with the objective to give greater focus and thrust on the development of pharmaceutical sector in the country.*

- **Code for pharmaceutical associations** – Constitute an *Ethics Committee* for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices
- Set up a *dedicated UCPMP portal* on their website and with the detailed procedure for lodging of complaints.
- **Code for pharmaceutical companies** – It *disallows the companies in sponsored gifts*, monetary grants or foreign trips for healthcare professionals or their families.
- Additionally, no pecuniary advantage or benefit may be offered to any person qualified to prescribe or supply drugs.
- **Code for drug regulation** – A drug must *not be promoted prior to the receipt of its marketing approval* for its sale or distribution.
- Claims for the usefulness of a drug must be based on up-to-date evaluation of all available evidence.
- The *word 'safe' must not be used without qualification*, and it must not be stated categorically that a medicine has no side effects, toxic hazards, or risk of addiction.
- The *word 'new' must not be used* to describe any drug which has been generally available or any therapeutic intervention which has been generally promoted in India for more than a year.
- **CME** – *Continuing Medical Education* involving the pharmaceutical industry & healthcare professionals should only be allowed through a transparent and verifiable set of guidelines.
- Conduct of such events in foreign locations is prohibited.

**Reference**

The Hindu| Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices Code 2024

## Global Methane Tracker 2024

*The recent 'Global Methane Tracker 2024' reports that methane emissions from fossil fuels remain high despite progress.*

- It is annual report.
- **Released by** – International Energy Agency (IEA)
- **Aim** – To bring down methane emissions from across the energy sector and implement

the new Global Methane Pledge.

***Methane** is far more powerful than CO2 at trapping heat in the atmosphere but relatively short-lived. It is responsible for around 30% of the rise in global temperatures since the preindustrial era.*

- **2024 tracker** – For the 1st time, a complete set of country-level estimates for methane emissions from the energy sector is given.
- **Key findings** – Some 40% of methane is released from natural sources, mainly wetlands while *60% from human activities*.
- Among human activities, *agriculture is the main source* of methane emission followed by energy sector (oil, natural gas, coal and bioenergy) which contributes third of human origin emission.
- Methane emissions from fuel use in 2023 were close to being the highest ever at 120 million tonnes (Mt).



- Close to 70% of methane emissions from fossil fuels come from the top 10 emitting countries.

*The United States, being the largest emitter of methane from oil and gas operations, topped the list, followed by Russia.*

- Around 40% of methane emissions from fossil fuels recorded in 2023 could be avoided at no net cost.
- Cutting methane emissions from fossil fuels by 75% by 2030 is vital to limit warming to 1.5 °C
- Full implementation of COP28 and other pledges would cut fossil fuel methane emissions by 50%.

*More than 150 countries have promised a 30% reduction by 2030. Oil and gas firms have meanwhile pledged to slash methane emissions by 2050.*

- Delivering the 75% cut in methane emissions requires USD 170 billion in spending to 2030

**Quick Facts**

- **Oil and Gas Decarbonisation Charter** – It was launched more than 50 oil and gas companies, representing more than 40% of global oil production, to speed up

emissions reductions within the industry at COP28.

- **1st Global Stocktake (GST)** – It was released at COP28, called for countries to accelerate and substantially reduce non-carbon-dioxide emissions globally, including methane, by 2030.
- But it stopped short of providing a quantifiable target.

**References**


1. Down To Earth| Higher Methane Emission from Fossil Fuels usage
2. IEA| Global Methane Tracker 2024


## Other Important Topics

### Operation 'Rising Sun'

• It is a pan-India operation of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) against the ***smuggling of foreign-origin gold***.
• The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) is the apex anti-smuggling agency of India, working under the ***Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)***, Ministry of Finance.
• **Functions** -
- Detecting and curbing smuggling of contraband, including drug trafficking and illicit international trade in wildlife and environmentally sensitive items
- Combating commercial frauds related to international trade and evasion of Customs duty.

### PB-SHABD

*Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting has recently launched the Prasar Bharti - Shared Audio Visuals for Broadcast and Dissemination (PB-SHABD).*
• **Aim** - To provide daily news feeds in video, audio, text, photo and other formats to the subscribers from media landscape.
• **Launched by** - ***Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.***
• As an introductory offer, the services would be available free of cost and help the smaller newspapers, TV channels and digital portals immensely.

### Pi Day

• ***March 14*** is celebrated as Pi Day worldwide as an ode to the most well-known approximation (3.14) of the mathematical constant Pi.
• UNESCO's 40th General Conference in 2019 designated Pi Day as the ***International Day of Mathematics.***
• On the day, mathematicians try to raise awareness on their subject among laypersons, through lectures, museum exhibitions and pie (sic)-eating competitions.
**Pi**
• Pi (π) represents the ratio of a circle's circumference (boundary) to its diameter.
• Pi is an irrational number, it is a decimal with no end and no repeating pattern which is most often approximated to the 3.14, or the fraction 22/7.

### Devin AI

• Devin is the ***world's '1st fully autonomous' AI software engineer***,
• It can write codes, create websites, and software with just a single prompt.
• It is created by the ***US-based applied AI lab, Cognition***.
• Other popular AI-powered tools that help with coding are OpenAI Codex, GitHub Copilot, Polycoder, CodeT5, Tabnine, etc.

## Banning of food colouring

*The Karnataka government recently banned the use of harmful colouring agent including Rhodamine B in gobhi manchurian and cotton candy.*
• According to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), only colors permitted in the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulation, 2011, can be added to food.
• Even permissible food colourings are not allowed in all food items.
• Some permitted **synthetic colors** include:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Red** | Ponceau 4R, Carmoisine, and Erythrosine |
| **Yellow** | Tartrazine and Sunset Yellow FCF |
| **Blue** | Indigo Carmine and Brilliant Blue FCF |
| **Green** | Fast Green FCF |

• The FSSAI also approves the following colors, which are safe for consumption in any food article- Caramel, Riboflavin (Lactoflavin), Saffron, Annatto, Curcumin (Turmeric).
• **Allowed natural food colours**
• Carotene and carotenoids (yellow, orange),
• Chlorophyll (green),
• Riboflavin (yellow),
• Caramel, Annatto (orange-red, derived from the seed of an American tree).
• Saffron, and curcumin (yellow, from turmeric).

## Coral Superhighway

*Scientists have discovered that remote coral reefs around the Seychelles are closely related through ocean currents creating a coral superhighway.*
• Coral superhighway is a network of ocean currents that transports huge quantities of coral larvae between these scattered islands.
• A key factor in reef recovery is larval supply, making the discovery important in future coral restoration projects.

## Kairos

*Kairos, Japan's 1st privately built rocket, explodes after its launch from the Kii peninsula, Japan.*
• Kairos is a ***small, 3-stage solid-fuel*** rocket.
• It is built by Japanese private company ***Space One***.

## Mumps virus

• Mumps is a ***viral illness*** caused by ***a paramyxovirus*** that spreads through airborne droplets from the Parotid Gland.

• **Symptoms -** Fever, malaise, body aches, muscle aches, loss of appetite and a general sense of listlessness.
• **Transmission -** Humans are the only known host for mumps virus which is transmitted from person to person through direct contact with saliva or droplets of the infected person.
• There is ***currently no cure*** for mumps.
• **Prevention –** It can be easily prevented with the ***MMR (mumps, measles, rubella) vaccine.***

## Aghanashini Estuary

*A group of conservationists along with the IISc.'s Energy and Wetlands Research Group have called for setting up the Aghanashini Wetland Conservation Authority.*
• The Aghanashini estuary located in Karnataka where the ***Aghanashini River*** flows into the Arabian Sea.
• It is a highly productive and biologically rich waterscape of coastal Karnataka.
• It was recently designated as ***Ramsar sites*** under the Ramsar Convention.

## Sabroom Land Port

*Prime Minister has recently inaugurate the 3rd land port in Sabroom, Tripura*
• Land Port Sabroom is strategically located in Tripura along the international border between ***India and Bangladesh***.
• It will be constructed by the ***Land ports authority of India.***
• Sabroom is directly connected to ***Chittagong port of Bangladesh*** through ***Maitree bridge on River Feni*** .
• **Land ports** is an area on an international border that includes parts of highways, railways, and other roads.

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