Prelim Bits 18-11-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Universal Service Obligation Fund

The Union Cabinet approves USOF scheme for provision of 4G based mobile services in uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts across five states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra & Odisha.

- The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) would fund the project.
- Created in 2002, the USOF is a non-lapsable fund that comes under the Department of Telecommunications.
- USOF was given statutory status by the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003.
- USOF ensures that there is universal access to quality ICT services, which are inclusive and non-discriminatory at economically efficient prices to people in rural and remote areas.
- USOF comes from the Universal Service Levy (USL) of 5% charged from all the telecom operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR).
- USOF are then deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India, and require prior parliamentary approval to be dispatched.
- **Objective**
    1. **Economic:** Network extension & stimulate uptake of ICT services
    2. **Social:** Mainstreaming the underserved & un-served areas/groups by bridging the Access Gap
    3. **Political:** Enable citizens exercise their political rights in an informed way and
    4. **Constitutional:** Equitable distribution of the fruits of telecom/ digital revolution and fair allocation of national resource (pooled USO levy) via targeted subsidies

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1772581
2. https://dot.gov.in/universal-service-obligation-fund-usof
3. http://www.usof.gov.in/usof-cms/usof-vision.jsp
4. http://www.usof.gov.in/usof-cms/usof-objective.jsp

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Indian researchers have developed a compound called "6BIO" that can provide a better method to treat Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) / Intellectual disability (ID).

- This compound has potential for improving daily activities like learning and recollecting new tasks in patients with ASD/ ID.
- ASD is the name for a group of developmental disorders thatincludes a wide range, "a spectrum" of symptoms, skills, and levels of disability.
    - Fragile X Syndrome (FXS) is the leading inherited cause of autism in 4% of the global population.
- ASD includes conditions that were previously considered separate - autism, Asperger's syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder and an unspecified form of pervasive

developmental disorder.

- People with ASD often have these characteristics:
    1. Ongoing social problems that include difficulty in communicating and interacting with others.
    2. Repetitive behaviours as well as limited interests or activities.
    3. Symptoms that typically are recognized in the first 2 years of life.
    4. Symptoms that hurt the individual's ability to function socially, at school or work, or in other areas of life.

- While there is no cure for autism spectrum disorder, intensive, early treatment can make a big difference in the lives of many children.

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1772641
2. https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism#:~:text=Autism%2C%20or%20autism%20spectrum%20disorder,in%20the%20United%20States%20today
3. https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/autism-spectrum-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20352928

Glasgow Climate Deal

The Glasgow Climate Deal has been made with a last-minute change.

- Under the Glasgow climate pact:
    1. Big carbon polluting Countries were asked to republish their climate action plans by the end of 2022, with stronger emissions reduction targets for 2030
    2. There is an emphasis on the need for developed countries to increase the money they give to those already suffering the effects of climate change - beyond the current $100bn annual target and
    3. A pledge in a previous draft to "phase out" coal was instead watered down to a commitment to "phase down" coal.
- The 'phase down' change will make it harder to achieve the international goal to limit warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F) since pre-industrial times.
- In addition to the revised coal language, the Glasgow Climate Pact included enough financial incentives to almost satisfy poorer nations and solved a long-standing problem to pave the way for carbon trading.
- UN's criteria - Ahead of the Glasgow talks, the United Nations had set 3 criteria for success, and none of them were achieved. They are,
    a. Pledges to cut carbon dioxide emissions in half by 2030,
    b. $100 billion in financial aid from rich nations to poor, and
    c. Ensuring that half of that money went to helping the developing world adapt to the worst effects of climate change.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/climate-deal-struck-at-cop26-with-coal-compromise/article37482280.ece
2. https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-59284505
3. https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/phase-down-coal-not-our-language-in-climate-deal-can-t-be-blamed-india-121111800183_1.html

Sabz Burj

Sabz Burj has been conserved and restored over the last 4 years using traditional materials and building-craft techniques favoured by 16th century craftsmen.

- Built in 1530, Sabz Burj is one of the earliest Mughal-era monuments in Delhi.
- The tomb does not have any markings pointing to the identity of those buried under it.
- However, it is of immense significance due to the ceiling on its double dome structure painted in pure gold and lapis, which is the earliest surviving painted ceiling for any monument in India.
- The painting on the ceiling that has floral motifs predates similar work that was seen in miniature paintings and textiles from the Mughal era.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/sabz-burj-restored-to-its-mughal-era-glory/article37552439.ece
2. https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/sabz-burj-restored-to-its-mughal-era-glory/article37551558.ece

Equal Property Rights to Women

The Vice President called for providing equal property rights to women.

Hindu Law

- Daughters have equal right of inheritance as sons to their father's property. Daughters also have a share in the mother's property.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court expanded on a Hindu woman’s right to be a joint legal heir and inherit ancestral property on terms equal to male heirs.
- It says that the rights do not depend on whether her father was alive or not when the law was enacted in 2005.
- The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 gave Hindu women the right to be coparceners or joint legal heirs like a male heir does.
- The ruling said that since the coparcenary is by birth, it is not necessary that the father coparcener should be living as on 9.9.2005.
- **Wife** - "Wife" includes a woman who has been divorced by, or has obtained a divorce from, her husband and has not remarried.
- Unless she gifts it to anyone, she is the sole owner and has exclusive right over her assets whether earned, inherited or gifted to her.
- Entitled to maintenance, support and shelter from her husband, or if her husband belongs to a joint family, then from the family.
- Upon partition of a joint family estate, between her husband and his sons, she is entitled to a share equal to as any other person.
- Similarly, upon the death of her husband, she is entitled to an equal share of his portion, together with her children and his mother.
- **Mother** is entitled to maintenance from children who aren’t dependents. She is also a Class I heir.
- A widowed mother has a right to take a share equal to the share of a son if a partition of joint family estate takes place among the sons.
- All property owned by her may be disposed by sale, will or gift as she chooses. In case she dies

intestate, her children inherit equally.

- **Maintenance -** Section 125 of Criminal procedure code prescribes for maintenance of wives, children and parents.
- Magistrate of the first class can also during the pendency of the proceeding order monthly allowance for the interim maintenance
- **Related Links** - Hindu Woman's Inheritance Right

Muslim Law

- **Daughters** - In inheritance, the daughter's share is equal to one half of the son's in keeping with the concept that a woman is worth half a man.
- But, she has always had full control over this property. It is legally hers to manage, control, and to dispose of as she wishes in life or death.
- Though she may receive gifts from those whom she would inherit from, there should be no doubt that the gift is a means of circumventing the inheritance laws of one third of a man's share, since, under Muslim law.
- Daughters have rights of residence in parent's houses, as well as right to maintenance, until they are married.
- In case of divorce, charge for maintenance reverts to her parental family after the iddat period (approximately 3 months). In case she has children capable of supporting her. The charge falls upon them.
- **Wife** retains control over her goods and properties.
- She has a right to the same maintenance he gives to his other wives, if any, and may take action against him if he discriminates against her.
- The Supreme Court has held that in the case of divorce, a Muslim husband is liable to make reasonable and fair provision for the future of the divorced wife which obviously includes her maintenance as well.
- Such a provision extending beyond the iddat period must be made by the husband within the iddat period in terms of Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986.
    - Liability of Muslim husband to pay maintenance is not consigned to iddat period.
- Right to mehr' according to the terms of the contract agreed to at the time of marriage.
- She will inherit from him to the extent of $1/8^{th}$ if there are children or $1/4^{th}$ if there are none.
- If there is more than one wife, the share may diminish to $1/16^{th}$.
- In circumstances, where there are no sharers in the estate as prescribed by law, the wife may inherit a greater amount by will.
- A Muslim may dispose of $1/3^{th}$ of his property by will, though not to a sharer in the inheritance.
- **Mothers** - In case of divorce or widowhood, she is entitled to maintenance from her children. Her property is to be divided as per Muslim law. She is entitled to inherit $1/6^{th}$ of her deceased child's estate.

Christian Law

- **Daughter** inherits equally with any brothers and sisters to her father's estate or her mothers'.
- Entitled to shelter, maintenance before marriage, but not after from her parents. Full rights over her personal property, upon attaining majority. Until then, her natural guardian is her father.
- **Wife** is entitled to maintenance, from her husband, but his failure to provide the same is note by itself ground for divorce.
- Upon death of her husband, she is entitled to a one third share of his property, the rest being divided among the children equally.
- If the husband's estate is more than a minimum of Rs.5000/-, she may inherit it. In case it is

not, she may inherit the whole.
- **Mother** is not entitled to maintenance from her children. If her children dies without spouse or living children, she may inherit 1/4th of the assets.

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1771680
2. https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/women-and-child-development/women-development-1/meera-didi-se-poocho/property-richts-of-women-in-india-and-maintenance

