Prelim Bits 23-02-2022 | Daily UPSC Current Affairs

Angadias

An FIR has been registered against three Mumbai Police officials for allegedly threatening Angadias and extorting money from them in south Mumbai.

- The Angadia system is a century-old parallel banking system in India.
- In this system, the traders send cash generally from one state to another through a person called Angadia that stands for courier.
- It is by and large used in the jewellery business with Mumbai - Surat being the most popular route as they are two ends of the diamond trade.
- As the cash involved is huge and it is the responsibility of the Angadia to transfer cash from one state to another, they charge a nominal fee.
- Generally, it is the Gujarati, Marwari and Malbari community that are involved in the business.
- **Working** - The Angadia system works completely on **trust** as large sums, at times in crores, are involved.
- Generally, traders have the same Angadias for decades together.
- Usually, to verify authenticity, the trader will give any Rupee note to the Angadia and provide the number of the note to the recipient.
- It is only after the recipient confirms the note number that the Angadia will hand over the money to the person.
- **Legality** - While the Angadia system per se is legal, there hangs a cloud over the activity as it is suspected that a lot of times it is used to transfer unaccounted money.
- Since the business deals in cash and there is no account maintained for the same, there have been suspicions that it is also used for transfer of black money.

Reference

1. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/2-city-police-officers-held-for-extortion-1-on-the-run/articleshow/8969396cms
2. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/who-are-angadias-7786519/

Panruti Cashews

Tamil Nadu Cashew Processors and Exporters Association (TNCPEA) has applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Panruti cashews.

- Panruti cashew is mainly found in Tamil Nadu.
- Though Panruti cashews are slightly small, they have a unique value in the market.
- Colloquially known as the ‘goldmine’ of Cuddalore, it has a huge demand across India and the world because of the unique taste and quality.
- It is commonly cultivated in laterite & red soils as well as coastal sands.
- Apart from Panruti Cashew, 'Panruti Jackfruit' and 'Panruti Cashew Apple' are also famous in Panruti town.
- The cashew apples from Panruti are also uniquely distinctive. They are round-shaped and

bright red in colour.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/gi-tag-sought-for-panruti-cashews/article65067915.ece
2. https://agritech.tnau.ac.in/horticulture/horti_plantation%20crops_cashewnut.html

National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship

The Government has approved the continuation of Central Sector National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS) over the 15th Finance Commission cycle for a period of five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

- This Scheme will now be implemented with minor modifications in eligibility criteria such as
    1. Increasing income ceiling from Rs.5 lakh per annum to Rs.3.5 lakh per annum and
    2. Revising the renewal criteria under the scheme.
- This Central Sector Scheme was launched in 2008 to provide scholarships for meritorious students of classes IX to XII.
- The scheme is on-boarded on the National Scholarship Portal (NSP) developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- This scheme has an objective to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop-out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage.
- One lakh fresh scholarships of Rs.12, 000 per annum (Rs.1000 per month) are awarded to selected students of class IX every year.
- This scholarship will ensure their continuation/renewal in classes X to XII for study in the State Government, Government-aided and Local body schools under the scheme.
- **Selection** - Students are selected for award of scholarships through the NMMSS selection test conducted by the State/ UT Governments.
- **Eligibility criteria** - Students whose parental income from all sources is not more than Rs. 3,50,000/- p.a.
- The student must have minimum of 55 % marks or equivalent grade in Class VII exam for appearing in selection test (relaxable by 5% for SC and ST students).
- The student should be studying as regular student in a Government, Government-aided and local body schools.
- Students of NVS, KVS and residential schools are not entitled for the scholarships.
- **Fund** - Scholarships are disbursed directly into the bank accounts of students by electronic transfer through Public Financial Management System (PFMS) following DBT mode.
- 100% funds under the scheme are provided by Central Government.

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1800307
2. https://dsel.education.gov.in/nmmss

One Class-One Channel

As part of the education sector initiative, the Union Finance Minister announced an expansion of the 'One Class, One TV channel' program under the PM eVIDYA scheme.

- The ‘One Class, One TV channel’ program will be expanded from current 12 channels to 200 channels.
- The expansion has been done in order to enable states to offer supplementary education in regional languages for Classes 1 to 12.
- The budget also detailed that high quality e-content in all spoken languages will be developed for delivery via internet, mobile phones, televisions, radio and through digital teachers.
- A competitive mechanism for development of quality e-content by the teachers will also be setup to empower and equip them with digital tools and facilitate better learning outcomes.

PM eVIDYA initiative

- In 2020, the PM eVIDYA initiative was launched by the Central government as part of the Aatma Nirbhar Apna Bharat program.
- PM e-VIDYA unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education.
- It will provide technology-driven education to students during the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a shutdown of schools.
- 12 DTH channels were introduced as part of the ‘One Class, One TV channel initiative’.
- Community and radio podcasts for visually and hearing-impaired students were also included under this initiative.
- Under the PM eVIDYA scheme, two portals were provided. They are,
    1. Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) and
    2. National Initiative for School Head’s and Teacher’s Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA).
- Under the DIKSHA portal, students from classes 1 to 12 were provided with portals which could be accessed with QR codes and contained NCERT, CBSE and NIOS related online books.
- NISHTHA portal was for teachers in order to help them in training for digital delivery of classes so that the learning outcomes of students could be improved.

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1800306
2. https://www.firstpost.com/business/budget-2022-centre-announces-expansion-of-one-class-one-tv-channel-programme-from-12-to-200-classes-10338471.html
3. https://pmevidya.education.gov.in/

National Overseas Scholarship Scheme

The Central government has said that students applying for the National Overseas Scholarships will no longer be able to avail the grant for courses on Indian culture, heritage, history, social studies on India-based research.

- The Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarships was initiated in 1952.
- This grant is given by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It provides an opportunity for low income students belonging to marginalised communities to obtain Masters or PhD degrees.
- Started only for STEM courses, the scholarships were extended to humanities students in 2012.
- In all, 100 scholarships are granted to students under the Scheduled Castes (90), Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (6), Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans categories (4).
- 30% of the awards for each year are earmarked for women candidates. In order to be eligible for scholarship, at least 60%of marks or equivalent grade in the qualifying examination would

be required.

- **Eligibility** - The age of candidate should not be more than 35 years, as on first day of April of the selection year.
- [In case of Ph. D courses, the qualifying exam would be Master's Degree and for Master's Degree courses, the qualifying exam would be Bachelor's Degree.]
- Total family income from all sources shall not exceed Rs. 8.00 lakh per annum in the preceding year.
- Not more than two children of the same parents/guardians will be eligible for scholarship under the scheme.
- **Implementation agency** - Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

Reference

1. https://www.deccanherald.com/national/centre-stops-national-overseas-scholarships-for-certain-courses-1084169.html
2. http://www.nosmsje.gov.in/
3. https://socialjustice.nic.in/SchemeList/Send/28?mid=24541
4. https://vikaspedia.in/schemesall/schemes-for-students/scholarship/national-overseas-scholarship-scheme-for-scheduled-castes

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