Prelim Bits 25-04-2019

PPV&FR Act

- The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act, was enacted in 2001, in conformity with International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV), 1978.
- The legislation recognizes the contributions of both commercial plant breeders and farmers in plant breeding activity.
- It aims to establish an effective system for the protection of plant varieties, the rights of farmers and plant breeders and to encourage the development of new varieties of plants.
- Under the act, a farmer who has evolved or developed a new variety is entitled for registration and protection in like manner as a breeder of a variety.
- Farmer's variety can also be registered as an extant variety.
- A farmer can save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act.
- Farmers are eligible for recognition and rewards for the conservation of Plant Genetic Resources of land races and wild relatives of economic plants;
- There is also a provision for compensation to the farmers for non-performance of variety.
- The farmer shall not be liable to pay any fee in any proceeding before the Authority or Registrar or the Tribunal or the High Court under the Act.

Startup Ecosystem Ranking

- India has ranked 17 among 100 countries, based on the strength of its startup ecosystem.
- The top three spots remained unchanged with the United States, United Kingdom and Canada.
- Startup Ecosystem Ranking has been released by Startup Blink.
- The report aims to feature and rank hundreds of startup hubs and considers other critical players of the startup ecosystem like co-working spaces, accelerators, investors, leaders, and more.

Women PBOR

- Indian Army has begun online registration of women for recruitment as soldiers into the military police.
- Government has decided to induct women in the “Personnel Below Officer Rank” (PBOR) category in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20 per cent of total Corps of Military Police.
- So far, women were allowed in select areas such as medical, legal, educational, signals and engineering wings of the Army.
- Those appointed under Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR) are given the responsibilities to investigate offences such as rape, molestation and theft.
- These officers will also serve in military operations where the Army needs police assistance, assistance in evacuation of villages during cross-border hostilities and ceremonial as well as policing duties.

Military Police

- The Military Police is responsible for preserving “good order and discipline and to prevent breaches of the same by persons serving in or attached to the regular Army”.
- The role of the military police includes policing cantonments and Army establishments, preventing the breach of rules and regulations by soldiers, maintaining movement of soldiers as well as logistics during peace and war, handling prisoners of war and extending aid to civil police when required.

Melamine

- Melamine is an organic base chemical most commonly found in the form of white crystals rich in nitrogen.
- Melamine is widely used in plastics, adhesives, countertops, dishware, and whiteboards.
- Companies using the milk for further production (e.g. of powdered infant formula) normally check the protein level through a test measuring nitrogen content.
- The addition of melamine increases the nitrogen content of the milk and therefore its apparent protein content.
- Melamine contamination is found in a number of different brands of powdered infant formula, in one brand of a frozen yoghurt dessert and in one brand of canned coffee drink.
- Addition of melamine into food is not approved by the FAO/WHO, or by any national authorities.

Source: PIB, the Hindu, Times of India

