Prelim Bits 26-05-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

National Creche Scheme

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) said that no funds were released by the Centre in FY 2021-22 for the functioning of creches under the National Creche Scheme.

- Launched in **2006**, the scheme was previously known as the Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for The Children of Working Mothers.
- It was launched to primarily nurture children from mothers belonging to low-income groups who go to work at least 15 days in a month.

Funding Pattern			
Category	**Centre**	**State**	**NGOs**
All states, except the Himalayan & North Eastern states	60%	30%	10%
Himalayan & North Eastern states	80%	10%	10%
UTs	90%	0%	10%

- While BPL families pay Rs. 20 per child per month, the fee ranges from Rs.100 to Rs. 200 for others.
- **Implementation** - This **centrally sponsored scheme** is being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD).
- **Features of the National Creche Scheme**
    1. Daycare Facilities including Sleeping Facilities.
    2. Early Stimulation for children below 3 years and pre-school Education for 3 to 6 years old children.
    3. Supplementary Nutrition (to be locally sourced)
    4. Growth Monitoring
    5. Health Check-up and Immunization
- The guidelines provide that
    1. The Crèches shall be open for 26 days in a month and for seven and half (7-1/2) hours per day.
    2. The number of children in the crèche should not be more than 25 per crèche.
    3. User charges will be levied to bring in an element of community ownership.
- **Target Group** - The scheme focuses on children of 6 months to 6 years, of working women in rural and urban areas who are employed for a **minimum period of 15 days** in a month, or **six months in a year.**

Reference

1. https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/data-stories/data-focus/why-funds-were-not-released-for-national-creche-scheme-in-fy22/article65459854.ece
2. https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/National%20Creche%20Scheme%20For%20The%20Children%20of%20Working%20Mothers_0.pdf
3. https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1697421

4. https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/women-and-child-development/ministry-of-women-and-child-development#:~:text=Ministry%20of%20Women%20and%20Child%20Development%20implements%20the%20National%20Cr%C3%A8che,6%20years)%20of%20working%20mothers.

Sex Work as a 'Profession'

Invoking its special powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court of India recognizes sex work as a 'profession' under Article 21.

- The Supreme Court has recognized sex work as a "profession" whose practitioners are entitled to **dignity and equal protection under law**.
- So, criminal law must apply equally in all cases, on the **basis of 'age' and 'consent'**.
- The apex court observed that when it is clear that the sex worker is an adult and is participating with consent, the police should neither interfere nor take criminal action against them.
- It also observed that notwithstanding the profession, every individual in India this country has a **right to a dignified life under Article 21** of the Constitution.
- **Other provisions** - The court held that a sex worker's child shouldn't be separated from the mother merely on the ground of her 'profession'.
- Further, if a minor is found living in a brothel or with sex workers, it should not be presumed that the child was trafficked.
- The court ordered, "In case the sex worker claims that s/he is her daughter/ son, tests can be done to determine if the claim is correct and if so, the minor should not be forcibly separated."
- The court reminded that voyeurism is a criminal offence.

Article 21

No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law, nor shall any person be denied equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

Article 142

- Article 142 of the Constitution titled 'Enforcement of decrees and orders of the Supreme Court and orders as to discovery, etc.' has two clauses - Article 142 (1) and Article 142 (2).
- Article 142(1) reads the Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it.
- Any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India in such manner as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament.
- Until provision in that behalf is so made by the Parliament, it shall be enforceable in such manner as the President may by order prescribe.
- Article 142(2) reads that, subject to the provisions of any law made in this behalf by Parliament, the Supreme Court shall have all and every power to make any order for the purpose of
    1. Securing the attendance of any person,
    2. Discovery or production of any documents, or
    3. Investigation or punishment of any contempt of itself.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/supreme-court-recognises-sex-work-as-a-profession/article6546133ece#:~:text=In%20a%20significant%20order%20recognising,adult%20and%20consenting%20sex%20workers
2. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-article-142-of-the-constitution-under-which-supreme-court-ordered-release-of-perarivalan/article65426654.ece
3. https://www.constitutionofindia.net/constitution_of_india/fundamental_rights/articles/Article%2021#:~:text=Draft%20Constitution%2C%201948-,No%20person%20shall%20be%20deprived%20of%20his%20life%20or%20personal,within%20the%20territory%20of%20India.

Buffalopox

The recent spread of monkeypox to non-endemic countries has put spotlight on reemerging viruses such as buffalopox, which was first isolated in India.

- Buffalopox is recognized by the FAO/WHO Joint Expert Committee on Zoonosis as an important viral zoonotic disease.
- It is an emerging contagious **viral zoonotic disease** infecting **milkers with high morbidity** among affected domestic buffalo and cattle.
- It is caused by the Buffalopox virus (BPXV), which is a member of the genus *Orthopoxvirus* and a close variant of the vaccinia virus (VACV).
- BPXV shares a most recent common ancestor of VACV Lister strain, which is used to inoculate buffalo calves to produce a Smallpox vaccine.
- Over time, **VACV evolved into BPXV** by establishing itself in buffaloes to be increasingly pathogenic to this host and to make infections in cattle and humans.
- **Distribution** - Buffalopox is **endemic in India** and has been reported from many other areas where buffaloes are farmed for milk or draught, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Egypt.

Reference

1. https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/india-s-buffalopox-infections-underline-need-to-understand-evolutionary-biology-83004
2. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7558879/
3. https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/90813

Obesogens

A study has found that the toxic levels of a class of chemicals called obesogens in the environment may be accelerating the worldwide obesity pandemic.

- Obesity has nearly tripled across the world since 1975.
- It is found that obesogens can alter the balance between energy intake and energy expenditure.
- Obesogens are a subset of **environmental chemicals** that disrupt the body's normal homeostatic controls in such a way as to promote adipogenesis and lipid accumulation.
- These are **endocrine-disrupting chemicals** (EDCs), which influence the development and progression of obesity.
- These chemicals are in every single place - water, dirt, food packaging, private hygiene products, house cleaners, furnishings and electronics.
- These include bisphenol A, phthalates, which are broadly added to plastics.

- Other obesogens are pesticides, perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs) which are present in meals packaging, cookware and furnishings.
- **Working** - Obesogen upsets the body's metabolic thermostat.
- The body's balance of energy intake and expenditure through activity relies on the interplay of various hormones from fat tissue, gut, pancreas, liver and brain.
- **Impacts** - The pollutants can directly affect the number and size of fat cells, alter the signals that make people feel full, change thyroid function and the dopamine reward system.
- They can also affect the microbiome in the gut and cause weight gain by making the uptake of calories from the intestines more efficient.
- The most sensitive time for obesogen action is in utero and early childhood, in part via epigenetic programming that can be transmitted to future generations.

Reference

1. https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/pollution/study-blames-chemical-pollution-for-obesity-pandemic-82968
2. https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/neuroscience/obesogen#:~:text=Obesogens%20are%20chemicals%20that%20disrupt,and%20the%20products%20they%20use.

Indian Grey Wolves

- The Indian grey wolves are a **subspecies** of grey wolf.
- They are one of the oldest wolf lineages in the world.
- They are smaller and leaner compared to their European and American counterparts.
- They are highly **adapted to the hot, arid plains** of the subcontinent.
- They live in open grasslands, thorn forests, and scrublands.
- They inhabit the dry grassland regions of **Deccan Plateau** in pockets and prey on blackbucks and other herbivores.
- In India, wolves are in the same category of endangerment as tigers.

Protection Status	
IUCN Status	Least Concern
Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972	Schedule I Part I

- **Threats** - **Habitat loss** is a primary threat to this species.
- Wolves' native habitat is barren wastelands that are now actively prioritised for development activities.
- Also, there is no wildlife sanctuary dedicated to the preservation of Indian wolves.
- Wolves are under threat from another unlikely source: dogs. Wolves and dogs have an uneasy love-hate relationship.
- If a wolf is unable to find a partner, then it may mate with a dog, resulting in wolf-dog hybrids. This genetic dilution of wild genes may eventually result in an evolutionary disadvantage for the wolf.
- It could be robbed of its ability to hunt prey. In turn, dogs may also pass on deadly diseases to wolves.
- **Solution** - The survival of the Indian wolf depends on nomadic pastoralist communities.
- Wolves can be saved by protecting their natural habitat and by recognizing the connection between humans and these animals.
- **Related Links** - Bankapur Wolf Sanctuary

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/watch-why-are-wolves-endangered-in-india/article65457946.ece
2. https://animalia.bio/indian-wolf

