Prelim Bits 31-10-2019

Vishwa Shanti Stupa

- The 50th anniversary of establishment of Vishwa Shanti Stupa (World Peace Pagoda) at Rajgir in Bihar was observed recently.
- A pagoda is a type of stupa which provides equality for worship and gathering at one place for common cause.
- It is one of the peace pagodas established around the world by Japanese Buddhist Monk NichidatsuFujii.
- It is made of white marble and is the tallest peace Pagoda in the world standing tall at 400 meters.
- It houses four statues of Lord Buddha on the four side-corners of the stupa depicting the 4 phases of life of Lord Buddha - birth, enlightenment, Teaching and Death.

LG of New UT

- The State of Jammu and Kashmir ceased to exist in line with "The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019".
- The two Union Territories – Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh came into existence following the August 5th decision of Parliament to bifurcate Jammu and Kashmir.
- R K Mathur was sworn-in as the first LieutenantGovernor of UT of Ladakh and administered oath by Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court.
- The powers a Governor has in the state they administer is equivalent to that of the President.
- They can appoint Chief Ministers, Ministers, the State Election Commissioner and judges of the District Courts.
- A Lieutenant Governor also has the same powersto ensure checks and balances for the state government and its functioning.
- Union Territories - Andaman and Nicobar, Delhi and Puducherry, Ladakh have Lieutenant Governors.
- In the case of Delhi, since portfolios like land, police and public order fall under the domain of the Centre, Lt. Governor holds more powers than a Governor.

Hygiea

- Space scientists have discovered a new celestial body Hygiea using Very Large Telescope in Chile.
- It might be the smallest such planet to exist in our solar system, sized at 430 kilometres (267 miles) in diameter.
- According to the criteria which defines celestial bodies as dwarf planets instead of asteroids, is that it needs to have sufficient mass for the gravity to pull it into a shape of a sphere.

Lymphatic Filariasis

- National Symposium on the theme 'United to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis' was organised recently by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- Call to Action to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2021 was signed.
- Lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis, is a painful and profoundly disfiguring disease.
- It is caused by three species of thread-like nematode(roundworms) of the family Filariodidea.Wuchereriabancrofti is responsible for 90% of the cases.
- Infection occurs when filarial parasites are transmitted to humans through mosquitoes.
- It is one of the Neglected Tropical Diseases.
- It impairs the lymphatic system and can lead to the abnormal enlargement of body parts, causing pain, severe disability and social stigma.
- It can be eliminated by stopping the spread of infection through preventive chemotherapy with safe medicine combinations repeated annually.
- Global Program to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF) was organised by the WHO in 2000.

National Pension Scheme

- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has now permitted Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) to enrol in National Pension Scheme (NPS) at par with Non-Resident Indians.
- Now, any Indian citizen, resident or non-resident and OCIs are eligible to join NPS till the age of 65 years.
- NPS was initially notified for central government employees joining service on or after 1st Jan 2004, adopted by State Governments.
- It was extended to all citizens of Indian on voluntary basis from 2009 and to corporates in 2011 and to Non-Resident Indians in 2015.
- PFRDA is the statutory Authority established by an enactment of the Parliament, to regulate, promote and ensure orderly growth of the National Pension System (NPS) and pension schemes.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express

