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Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)

- Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) has requested companies to abide by Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP).
- It is a voluntary code issued by the Department Of Pharmaceuticals relating to marketing practices for Indian Pharmaceutical Companies and as well medical devices industry.
- At present, the UCPMP Code is applicable on Pharmaceutical Companies, Medical Representatives, Agents of Pharmaceutical Companies such as Distributors, Wholesalers, Retailers, and Pharmaceutical Manufacturer's Associations.
- No gifts, pecuniary advantages or benefits in kind may be supplied, offered or promised, to persons qualified to prescribe or supply drugs, by a pharmaceutical company or any of its agents.
- As regards travel facilities, the UCPMP Code prohibits extending travel facility inside the country or outside, including rail, air, ship, cruise tickets, paid vacations, etc., to HealthCare Professionals and their family members for vacation or for attending conference, seminars, workshops, CME programme etc. as a delegate.
- The Code also provides that free samples of drugs shall not be supplied to any person who is not qualified to prescribe such product.
- Meaning thereby that free samples can only be supplied to persons qualified to prescribe such product.
- It also prescribes additional conditions that are to be observed while providing samples.
- Further, as per the UCPMP Code, in order to appoint Medical Practitioners/HCPs as Affiliates there should be written contract, legitimate need for the services must be documented, and criteria for selecting affiliates must be directly related to the identified need.
- The UCPMP Code also provides that the number of affiliates retained must not be greater than the number reasonably necessary to achieve the identified need and that the compensation must be reasonable and reflect the fair market value of the services provided.

Solar Orbiter

- Solar Orbiter is a collaborative mission between the European Space Agency and NASA to study the Sun, took off from Cape Canaveral in Florida.
- The mission, which will take the first pictures of the top and bottom of the sun, was launched on an Atlas V rocket.
- It carries four in situ instruments to measure the space environment immediately around the spacecraft like the sense of touch and Six remote-sensing imagers, which see the sun from afar.
- The Solar Orbiter (called SolO) will face the sun at approximately 42 million kilometers from its surface.
- The new spacecraft will use the gravity of Venus and Earth to swing itself out of the ecliptic plane, passing inside the orbit of Mercury, and will be able to get a bird's eye view of the sun's poles for the first time.
- In 1990, NASA and ESA had sent the Ulysses mission, which also passed over the sun's poles but at much farther distances, and did not carry a camera.
- Orbiter will take pictures using telescopes through a heat shield that is partly made of baked animal bones, to help it withstand temperatures of up to 600 degree Celsius.
- The Orbiter will help scientists understand the sun's dynamic behavior, and solve mysteries such as the sunspot cycle, or why the star spews out high velocity charged particles through the solar system.
- With more data on the global magnetic field of the star, scientists would be able to forecast space weather events.

Super Cam

- NASA will sending a new laser-toting robot as one of seven instruments aboard the Mars 2020 rover.
- SuperCam, the robot is used for studying mineralogy and chemistry from up to about 7 meters away.
- It might help scientists find signs of fossilized microbial life on Mars.
- It fires a pulsed laser beam out of the rover's mast to vaporize small portions of rock from a distance, providing information that will be essential to the mission's success.
- From more than 7 m away, SuperCam can fire a laser to study rock targets smaller than a pencil point, that lets the rover study spots it can't reach with its arm.
- SuperCam looks at rock textures and chemicals to find those that formed or changed in water on Mars long ago.
- SuperCam looks at different rock and "soil" types to find ones that could

preserve signs of past microbial life on Mars — if any ever existed.
- For the benefit of future explorers, SuperCam identifies which elements in the Martian dust may be harmful to humans.
- Scientists can learn about how atmospheric molecules, water ice, and dust absorb or reflect solar radiation, this helps predict Martian weather better.

Other Missions to Mars

- Mars Missions by NASA

1. Mariner
2. Mars Resonance Orbiter
3. Phoenix
4. MAVEN
5. In-Sights Lander
6. Curiosity Rover

- Mars Missions by ISRO

1. Mangalyaan (Mars Orbiter Mission)

Biological Safety Level

- A biosafety level (BSL) is a set of biocontainment precautions required to isolate dangerous biological agents in an enclosed laboratory facility.
- The levels of containment range from the lowest biosafety level 1 (BSL-1) to the highest at level 4 (BSL-4).
- In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have specified these levels.
- At the lowest level of biosafety, precautions may consist of regular hand-washing and minimal protective equipment.
- At higher biosafety levels, precautions may include airflow systems, multiple containment rooms, sealed containers, positive pressure personnel suits, established protocols for all procedures, extensive personnel training, and high levels of security to control access to the facility.

- In India high risk pathogens can be tested only in BSL4 lab with highest level of biological safety, a BSL4 lab consists of work with highly dangerous and exotic microbes.
- Infections caused by microbes, including Ebola, Nipha and Marburg viruses, are frequently fatal, and come without treatment or vaccines are

tested in BSL4 lab.

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

- The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, also known as the Convention on Migratory Species or the Bonn Convention.
- It is an international agreement that aims to conserve migratory species within their migratory ranges
- Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is scheduled to be organized from February 17 to 22 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- CMS is an environment treaty under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- There are 130 parties to the convention and India has been a member since 1983.
- India has been designated the President of the COP for the next three years.
- India is home to several migratory species of wildlife, including the snow leopard, Amur falcons, bar- headed geese, black-necked cranes, marine turtles, dugongs and hump-backed whales.
- The government of India has been taking necessary actions to protect and conserve migratory marine species.
- Seven species that include Dugong, Whale Shark, Marine Turtle (two species), have been identified for preparation of Conservation and Recovery Action Plan.

Appendix 1 of CITES

- CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the Washington Convention) is a multilateral treaty to protect endangered plants and animals.
- It was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The convention was opened for signature in 1973 and CITES entered into force on 1 July 1975.
- Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species in the wild, and it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 35,000 species of animals and plants.

- Appendix I of CITES, has about 1200 species, are species that are threatened with extinction and are or may be affected by trade.
- Commercial trade in wild-caught specimens of these species is illegal (permitted only in exceptional licensed circumstances).
- India has planned to include the Asian Elephant and the Great Indian Bustard in the list of species that merit heightened conservation measures.
- The Union Environment Ministry reports India as having 29,964 elephants according to the Project Elephant Census in 2017.
- The pachyderm merits the highest level of protection, or Schedule 1, under the Wildlife Protection Act.

Kota Rani

- Kota Rani is a mediaeval queen of Kashmir, the last ruler of the Hindu Lohara dynasty that ruled Kashmir.
- Kota Rani was the daughter of Ramachandra, the commander-in-chief of Suhadeva, the king of Lohara dynasty in Kashmir.
- She was regent during the minority of her son, and ruled as monarch between 1300- 1339.
- Shah Mir, who became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir, deposed her.
- She was very intelligent and a great thinker. She saved the city of Srinagar from frequent floods by getting a canal constructed, named after her and called "Kute Kol".
- This canal gets water from Jhelum River at the entry point of city and again merges with Jhelum River beyond the city limits.

Source: PIB, the Hindu, Indian Express

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