UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 15-09-2020

National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill

- National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill, 2020 has been passed in the parliament.
- It seeks to repeal the Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973 and to set up a National Commission for Homoeopathy.
- The Commission will consist of 20 members which will include
    1. Chairperson,
    2. President of the Homoeopathy Education Board,
    3. Director General of National Institute of Homoeopathy,
    4. President of the Medical Assessment and Rating Board for Homoeopathy in addition to other members.

National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill

- The bill has been recently passed by the Parliament.
- It seeks to repeal the Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970 and set up a National Commission for Indian System of Medicine.
- The Commission will consist of 29 members including
    1. Chairperson,
    2. President of the Board of Ayurveda,
    3. President of the Board of Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa, in addition to other members.
- The two bills also propose constitution of Advisory Councils for Homoeopathy as well as for Indian System of Medicine.
- These Councils will be the primary platform through which the states and union territories will put forth their views and concerns before the two Commissions.
- The Advisory Councils will also suggest measures to the Commission to determine and maintain standards of medical education in the country.
- The bills also envisage a National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to both UG and PG courses of Homoeopathy and for various disciplines of Indian System of Medicine.

Tourism related facilities at Buddhist Sites

- The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken development of tourism related infrastructure and facilities at various Buddhist Sites.
- **Swadesh Darshan Scheme -** It has included Buddhist circuit and Spiritual circuit among its 13 thematic circuits under which Buddhist sites are being promoted.
- **PRASHAD Scheme -** 30 projects for development of infrastructure have also been undertaken under the PRASHAD Scheme.
- **Iconic Tourist Sites -** Buddhist Sites at Bodhgaya, Ajanta & Ellora have been identified to be developed as Iconic Tourist Sites.
- **Buddhist Conclave -** Buddhist Conclave is organized every alternate year with the objective of promoting India as a Buddhist Destination and major markets around the globe.
- **Diversity of Languages -** Signages have been installed in Chinese language at buddhist monuments in Uttar Pradesh and in Sinhala language (official language of Sri Lanka) at Sanchi monuments in Madhya Pradesh.

List of Buddhist monuments state wise

- **Bihar -** The name of Bihar is derived from vihara meaning monastery, such was the association of the area with Buddhism.
    1. Patna - It was the seat of the Mauryan empire and a significant Buddhist centre
    2. Rajgir - Formerly known as Rajagaha, it was the capital of Magadha, ruled by King Bimbisara, one of the most prominent monarchs and supporters during the lifetime of the Buddha
    3. Nalanda - Site of an ancient Buddhist university, destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khalji during Islamic attacks.
- **Haryana**
    1. Kumashpur in Sonipat – in the site of Kamashpura Aastha Pugdal Pagoda Buddha gave Mahasatipatthana sutta).
- **Uttar Pradesh**
    1. **Sravasti -** It was the capital of Kosala, ruled by King Pasenadi, who was prominent supporter during the lifetime of the Buddha

Buddhist Council and its Locations

- **First Buddhist Council at Rajgir** – It is said to have been held just after Buddha's Parinirvana.
    - It was over by Mahākāśyapa, one of most senior disciples of Buddha.
    - The council was supported by king Ajāthaśatru.

    - Its objective was to preserve the Buddha's sayings (suttas) and the monastic discipline or rules (Vinaya).
    - The Suttas were recited by Ananda, and the Vinaya was recited by Upali.
- **Second Buddhist Council at Vaishali** - It took place at Vaishali approximately one hundred years after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa.
    - The main issue of the council seems to have been related to Vinaya or monastic discipline related to several loose practices by monks at Vaisali.
    - After unsuccessfully trying to modify the Vinaya, a small group of "elderly members", i.e. sthaviras, broke away from the majority Mahāsāṃghika during the Second Buddhist council, giving rise to the Sthavira sect.
    - There is no agreement however on the dating of the event or if it was pre or post Ashoka (304–232 BCE).
- **Third Buddhist council at Patna -** It was convened in about 250 BCE, supposedly under the patronage of Emperor Ashoka.
    - The traditional reason for convening the Third Buddhist Council is reported to have been to rid the Sangha of corruption.
    - It was presided over by the elder monk Moggaliputta-Tissa.
    - The council is recognized and known to both the Theravada and Mahayana schools, though its importance is central only to the Theravada.
- **Fourth Buddhist Council, Kashmir -** It is related to two separate Buddhist council meetings.
    - The first one was held in Sri Lanka and is traditionally attributed to the 1st century BCE.
    - The second one was held by the Sarvastivada school, in Kashmir around the 1st century CE.
    - It is said to have been convened by the Kushan emperor Kanishka (r. CE 127-151), perhaps at Harwan, near Srinagar, Kashmir.
    - The Fourth Council of Kashmir is not recognized as authoritative for the Theravadins.
    - The council was presided by Vasumitra, the outcome of this council was the vast commentary known as the Mahāvibhāṣā ("Great Exegesis.

Singapore Convention

- United Nations (UN) Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, is the first UN treaty to be named after Singapore.
- It applies to international settlement agreements resulting from mediation, concluded by parties to resolve a commercial dispute.

- It will allow businesses to seek enforcement of a mediated settlement agreement across borders by applying directly to courts of countries that have signed and ratified the treaty.
- Currently, Convention has 53 signatories, Inducing India, China, and US.
- Businesses will benefit from mediation as an additional dispute resolution (ADR) option to litigation and arbitration in settling cross-border disputes.

UN's Commission on Status of Women (UNCSW)

- The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- It was established by ECOSOC resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946.
- It promotes women's rights, highlights the reality of women's lives throughout the world and helps in shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- 45 member states of the United Nations serve as members of the Commission at any one time.
- Recently India has been elected as the member of the Commission for four years from 2021 - 2025.

Phosphine Gas in Venus

- International team of astronomers has discovered phosphine gas in the atmosphere of Venus.
- According to findings Venus has traces of phosphine in a concentration of approximately 20 parts per billion, thousands to millions of times more than what could otherwise be expected.
- Phosphine, a colorless but smelly gas, is known to be made only by some species of bacteria that survive in the absence of oxygen.
- This discovery has triggered global excitement about the possibility of the presence of lifeforms on the neighboring planet.
- ISRO is also planning a mission to Venus, tentatively called Shukrayaan, in the near future.

Source: PIB, AIR, Indian Express

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