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Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation (ART) bill 2020

- ART help couples unable to conceive naturally, with the aid of state-of-the-art technology, to achieve pregnancy.
- ART Bill was passed in Lok Sabha recently.
- It aims to monitor medical procedures used to assist people to achieve pregnancy.
- It is intended to regulate ART clinics and banks, prevention of misuse, safe and ethical practice of ART services.
- The bill can protect the affected women and children from exploitation as India has one of the highest growths in ART centers.
- Key provisions of the bill are as follows

1. A national Board to lay down a code of conduct to be observed by those operating clinics.
2. Set the minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory and diagnostic equipment and expert manpower.
3. A national registry and registration authority to maintain a database to assist the national Board.
4. States and UTs shall constitute State Boards and State Authorities to follow policies and plans laid by National Board.
5. To ensure confidentiality of intending couples and protect the rights of the child.

Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda bill 2020

- The Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill 2020 has been passed by Rajya Sabha.
- The bill aims to establish an Ayurveda institution called the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) at Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- It will also confer the status of Institution of National Importance (INI) to it.
- ITRA will be the first institution with INI status in the AYUSH Sector.
- The ITRA is sought to be established by conglomerating the presently existing Ayurveda institutes at Gujarat Ayurveda University campus

Jamnagar.

- This is a cluster of highly reputed institutions, namely,

1. Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda,
2. Shree GulabKunverba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya,
3. Institute of Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical sciences,
4. Maharshi Patanjali Institute for Yoga Naturopathy Education & Research (to be made part of the Department of Swasthvritta of the proposed ITRA).

Report on Startups

- Recently, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance tabled a report related to startups in Parliament.
- Recommendations of the scheme are as follows

1. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) Fund-of-Funds vehicle should be expanded and fully operationalized to play an investment role.
2. Foreign development finance institutions may also be encouraged to participate with local asset management companies to set up fund-of-funds structures.
3. The companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) should be allowed to invest in start-ups without being classified as Non-banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to expand capital sources for start-ups.
4. Abolition of Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) tax on Collective Investment Vehicles (CIVs) for at least the next two years to encourage investment in start-ups and to drive a sharp post-pandemic revival.
5. After a two-year period, the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) may be applied to CIVs so that revenue neutrality is maintained.

Terminologies

- **Fund-of-Funds -** A fund-of-funds also known as a multi-manager investment—is a pooled investment fund that invests in other types of funds.

- **Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) -** Capital gains mean the profit earned by an individual on the sale of his investment in assets such as stocks, real estate, bonds, commodities, etc.
- While a holding period of one year is considered 'long-term' for equities, the same is two years for real estate.
- At present, LTCG earned by foreign investors in private companies

attracts taxation at a rate of 10%.
- Domestic venture capital investments which are taxed at 20% (for LTCG) with an enhanced surcharge of 37%.

- **Collective Investment Vehicles (CIVs) -** A CIV is any entity that allows investors to pool their money and invest the pooled funds, rather than buying securities directly as individuals.
- It is usually managed by a fund management company which is paid a fee for doing so.
- Examples of CIV: angel funds, alternate investment funds and investment LLP.
- **Securities Transaction Tax -** It is a tax levied at the time of purchase and sale of securities listed on stock exchanges in India.
- Both purchaser and seller both need to pay 0.1% of share value as STT.

Djibouti Code of Conduct

- DCOC aims to concern the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.
- It is also known as Code of Conduct or Jeddah Amendment
- It was adopted on 29th January 2009.
- It was established under the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- Under the code, the signatories agreed to co-operate to the fullest possible extent in the repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships.
- It has been signed by 20 countries including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Seychelles, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Comoros, Egypt, Eritrea, Jordan, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates.
- The member states are located in areas adjoining the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and the east coast of Africa and include island nations in the Indian Ocean.
- Recently India joined the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCOC) as an observer.
- Other observer nation includes Japan, Norway, the UK and the USA.

Initiatives Launched on G20 EMM

- G20 Environment Ministers Meeting (EMM) was held under the Presidency of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recently.

- Following Initiatives has been launched

1. **Global initiatives to reduce Land Degradation -** It aims to strengthen the implementation of existing frameworks to prevent, halt, and reverse land degradation within G20 member states.
2. **Coral Reef Programme -** It is an innovative action-oriented initiative aimed at creating a global research and development programme to advance research in all facets of coral reef conservation, restoration and adaptation.
3. Documents on managing emissions and climate change adaptations

G20

- It is an informal group of 19 countries and the European Union (EU), with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- It operates as a forum and not as an organization.
- Therefore, it does not have any permanent secretariat or management and administrative structure.
- Members of G20 includes Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the USA, and the EU.

Solar Cycle 25

- Sun’s surface is a very active space, electrically charged gases on its surface generate areas of powerful magnetic forces, which are called magnetic fields.
- Gases on the Sun’s surface are constantly moving, these magnetic fields can get stretched, twisted and tangled creating motion on the surface, which is referred to as solar activity.
- Solar activity varied with the stages of the solar cycle, which lasts on average for a period of 11 years.
- Solar cycles have implications for life and technology on Earth as well as astronauts in space.
- Recently Scientists from NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced their predictions about the new solar cycle.
- It is named as Solar Cycle 25, which has begun already.

Source: PIB, AIR, the Hindu, Indian Express



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