UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 29-09-2020

Health in India Report

- Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the report of a survey titled 'Health in India'.
- The objective of the report is to gather basic quantitative information on India's health sector.
- The survey defines ailment as any deviation from a person's state of physical and mental well-being.
- The 'Proportion of Persons who Responded as Ailing', or PPRA, in a 15-day period when they were approached by the surveyors, were registered as those suffering from ailments.
- Findings of the report are as follows

1. Around 7.5 % of Indians reported that they were suffering from ailments.
2. While in rural India only 6.8 % said that they were suffering from an ailment, this number in urban India was 9.1 %
3. The Zoroastrian community remains the most susceptible to ailments (31.1 % of them were suffering from an ailment)
4. The survey shows that women remain more susceptible to suffering from ailments than men.
5. In rural India 6.1 % of males said that they were suffering from ailments, while 7.6 % of rural women said the same.
6. While 8.2 % of urban males said that they were sick, 10 % urban females said the same.

World Tourism Day

- World Tourism Day is celebrated every year on 27th September.
- On this day in 1970, Statutes of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) were adopted, a milestone in global tourism.
- The UNWTO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.
- The World Tourism Day highlights the unique role of the tourism sector in preserving cultural and natural heritage all around the world.
- It acts as an auxiliary in safeguarding habitat and endangered species.
- It addresses the importance of the tourism sector in providing jobs and

opportunities, mostly for women and youth, in rural as well as big cities.
- In the history of 40 years, the recent celebration of World Tourism Day will not be hosted by a single member state of the UNWTO.
- Nations from the MERCOSUR bloc (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, with Chile joining as member associate status) will also be the joint hosts.

Andean Community (CAN)

- The Andean Community is a trade bloc of four countries - Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.
- The Headquarters of CAN are located in Lima, Peru.
- The regional integration in the Andean countries began with the signing of the Cartagena Agreement by Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) in 1969.
- This created the Andean Pact with the objective of creating a Customs Union and a Common Market.
- Chile withdrew in 1976 claiming economic incompatibilities.

Mercosur

- Mercosur was established in 1991 by the Treaty of Asunción, which was later amended and updated by the 1994 Treaty of Ouro Preto.
- Its full members are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay. Venezuela's membership was suspended in 2016.
- Mercosur and CAN signed a Framework Agreement for the creation of a Free Trade Area between each other in April 1998.
- CAN and Mercosur, along with nations like Chile, have been spearheading deeper integration of all South America through the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) patterned on the European Union.

User Depot Module (UDM)

- Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) has developed User Depot Module (UDM).
- This system will be implemented shortly across all Zones of Indian Railways.
- Railway's supply chain up to Stores Depots has already been digitized, however activities at user end are being done manually.
- Implementation of this system will bring in transformational changes from manual working to digital working with real time transactions and online information exchange among all stakeholders.

- This will ensure digitization of complete supply chain, including user depots.
- The system will facilitate economy, efficiency and transparency besides improved asset management.
- It will ensure improved service level and satisfaction to customers.

Beaching/Stranding Events

- Beaching refers to the phenomenon of dolphins and whales stranding themselves on beaches.
- There are around 2,000 stranding each year worldwide, with most resulting in the death of the animal.
- Whales strand themselves on beaches either singularly or in groups. While individual stranding are mostly attributed to injury or sickness, it is not clear why exactly whales beach themselves in groups.
- Possible Reasons behind Whale Mass Stranding are as follows

1. Some whales follow schooling fish or other prey into shallow waters, which causes the whales to become disoriented, as a result of which they get stranded.
2. Another reason could be panic from being trapped by a predator such as killer whales or sharks.
3. Another possibility is that whales might be drawn to land by prey-rich currents.
4. Some scientists believe that sonar signals and other man-made loud underwater noises may contribute to beaching events.
5. Further, the shape of the beach and the coastline could also have a role to play.

- To protect stranding scientists and workers try to drag the whales away from the shore and guide them back into the water.
- Recently over 450 long-finned pilot whales have died in Australia's largest recorded mass-stranding event.

Long-finned pilot whales

- Globicephala melas are one of two species of pilot whale, along with short-finned pilot whales.
- These prefer deep temperate to subpolar oceanic waters, but they have been known to occur in coastal waters in some areas.
- They have been documented near the Antarctic sea ice and associated with the colder Benguela and Humboldt Currents, which may extend their

normal range.
- It is protected under CITES: Appendix II and listed Least Concern under IUCN.

Source: PIB, Indian Express

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering