UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelimbits 09-07-2025

Woolah Green Tea

Prelims: Current Events of National and International Importance

Why in News?

Recently, Assam's first bagless tea brand, Woolah Tea, has been granted a 20-year patent (No. 567895).

Patent
• A patent is a form of intellectual property that gives its owner the legal right to exclude others from making, using, or selling an invention for a limited period, typically 20 years. • Essentially, a patent is granted for an invention. • Any product, design, or process that does something using a novel methodology or solves an existing technical problem is an invention.

- **Patent Name –** 'Compressed true whole leaf tea dips and method thereof'.
- **Founded by** - Upamanyu Borkotoky and Ansuman Bharali from Sibsagar district in Assam.
- **Working with -** Organic tea farmers in Assam, particularly in Sibsagar, Kaxhopothar, and Dibrugarh.
- Woolah's tea is made from a compressed bundle of eti koli duti paat ***(one bud and two leaves),*** bound by a natural string.



- **Taste** – It provides smooth, natural flavors without bitterness.
- **Variety** - Woolah offers different flavors, including Rare Assam Green Tea and Rare Green Tea with Lemon.
- **Benefits**

    - **Eliminating microplastics** - By eliminating the need for conventional tea bags, it is bound by a natural string.
    - It *retains more antioxidants and nutrients* compared to broken leaves or dust used in conventional teas.
    - **Organic and chemical-free** - The tea is grown organically without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers, promoting wellness and sustainability.
    - **Environment friendly** – This tea dip is fully compostable, reducing waste and environmental impact.
- **Advantages - Fair wages for workers** – Its price is a premium, noting its essentials compared to other packed green tea variants, offering its workers fair wages.
- It will increase rural employment and sustainable entrepreneurship.
- **Trade significance for India** - The brand is now preparing to export to the US, UK, UAE, Australia, and New Zealand.
- Woolah is also representing Assam in celebration of 200 years of Assam Tea at the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York.
- It will help surge in international recognition for Indian origin products.

Reference

The Hindu | India's first bagless tea

Nipah virus

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

Recently, Kerala launched antibody surveillance studies on the Nipah virus.

- **Novel pseudo virus neutralization test (PVNT) -** It is based on a Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) system.
- **Developed by -** Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV), Kerala.
- **Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) system** – It is a valuable tool to study entry, replication, and assembly of virus.
- **Pseudo virions -** IAV developed non -infectious Nipah virus-like particles (VLPs) in laboratory which mimic the wild type NiV.
- **Ghost viruses** – The engineered viruses carry most of the characteristics of the virus, including the NiV structural proteins G, F, and M, except their ability to replicate (because it lacks the viral genome).
- **Ephrin B2** - The main cell receptor used by NiV for infecting host cells.
- **Advantages**
    - **Effective platforms** - VLPs and pseudo virions are effective platforms for studying *cell binding and entry kinetics of the virus.*
    - **Safe to handle** – VLP and pseudo virions cannot replicate and reproduce infectious viruses (because it lacks the viral genome)
    - It makes them safe to handle in standard Biosafety Level 2 (BSL-2) facilities.

- **Other testing mechanism - Real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test** - Using body fluids like:
    - Nasal or throat swabs.
    - Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF).
    - Urine samples.
    - Blood samples.

Nipah virus (NiV)
• Nipah virus is a zoonotic virus. • **Host** - Fruit bats of the *Pteropodidae family* are the natural host of Nipah virus. • **Transmission** -It is transmitted from animals to humans and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly between people. • **Impacts** - Nipah virus infection in humans causes a range of clinical presentations, from asymptomatic infection (subclinical) to acute respiratory infection and fatal encephalitis. • **Fatality rate** - The case fatality rate is estimated at 40% to 75%. • **Vaccine** - No vaccine available for either people or animals. • **Treatment -** The primary treatment for humans is supportive care. *The recurrence of the spillover events/outbreaks in a specific geographic belt in northern Kerala is due to human behaviour, land use, and bat ecology interactions.*

Reference

The Hindu| Nipah virus infection

RailOne App

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Railway Minister launched a new app, RailOne, at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi on the 40th Foundation Day of Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).

- **Railone app -** It is a comprehensive, all-in-one application with a user-friendly interface.
- **Functions**- This app fully integrates all the passenger services, such as:
    - Unreserved UTS Tickets via R-Wallet to Get 3% Discount
    - Live train tracking
    - Grievance redressal
    - E-catering, porter booking & last-mile taxi
- **Other fatures –** facilitates single-sign-on with login via mPIN or biometric.
- It supports existing RailConnect & UTS credentials.
- It is *space-saving*, as there is no need to install multiple apps.
- It focuses on improving passenger interface with railways.
- **Modern Passenger Reservation System (PRS) -** The modern PRS will be *agile, multilingual, and scalable to handle 10 times the current load*.

- It will be capable of 1.5 lakh ticket bookings and 40 lakh enquiries per minute.

Passenger Reservation System (PRS)
• It is the world's largest online railway reservation system, enabling users to book train tickets. • **Developed by-** Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS • *Examples of PRS in India* • India Post - Passenger Reservation System (PRS) • The IRCTC website

- **Inclusive -** It will have advanced functionalities for seat choice and fare calendar, and *integrated options for Divyangjan, students, and patients.*
- **Growth engine of India's Vikas Yatra –** Democratizing technology and delivering world-class mobility to every passenger is the commitment of Indian railways.
- **Availability -** The app is available for download on *Android Play Store and iOS App Store.*

• CRIS (Centre for Railway Information Systems)
• **Found in –** 01 july**,**1986 • **Headquarters** – New Delhi • **Ministry**-It is an organization under *Ministry of Railways*. • **Functions -** It performs the functions of ***developing and maintaining software*** for important functions of the Indian Railways such as *passenger ticketing, freight operations, train dispatching and control, crew management, e-procurement.* • **Structure** - CRIS is a unique combination of *competent IT professionals* and *experienced Railway personnel* enabling it to successfully deliver complex Railway IT systems in core areas.

Reference

PIB| Railone app

The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana

Prelims: Current events of National and International Importance.

Why in News?

Recently, the prime minister of India was conferred with The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana, in recognition of his "distinguished" statesmanship and influential global leadership.

- **Award** - It is the ***highest civilian award*** given by the president of Ghana.
- **Hierarchy -** It is one of three ranks within the Order of the Star of Ghana, with Companion being the highest, followed by Officer, and then Member.
- **Award Criteria -** The award recognizes significant contributions to the country's cause.
- For international figures, it strengthens bilateral relations and recognizes those who

have contributed to Ghana's development or enhanced its international standing.

- **Insignia** - The insignia includes a seven-pointed star medal, worn with a ribbon collar, sash, pendant, and rosette.
- The sash is worn over the left shoulder for the Officer class.
- The medal for the Officer class is made of silver with a gold center.



- **Bilateral Partnership-** India will establish a Skill Development Centre to train youth and support ***Ghana's 'Feed Ghana' programme***.
- India would expand cooperation with Ghana in key sectors including agriculture, education, defence, healthcare, and digital payments.
- India decided to double the ITEC and ICCR scholarships for Ghana.

ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) and ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) scholarships are both offered by the Indian government to foreign nationals for study and training in India.

Ghana
• **Location** - It is situated along the *Gulf of Guinea* and the Atlantic Ocean in the subregion of West Africa. • **Capital –** Accra. • **Bordering Countries**: **Burkina Faso** to the north, **Côte d'Ivoire** to the west, and **Togo to the east**. • **Mountains:** Mt. Afadjato, Mt. Torogbani, Mt. Djebobo. • **Uplands** - In Ghana *Kwahu Plateau* and *Gambaga Scarp* form major uplands and escarpments. • **Lakes –** Lake volta, Lake Bosomtwe. • **Economy:** *Gold*, *cocoa production* and *oil* form the basis of Ghana's economy. • **India's exports to Ghana** - pharmaceutical products, electrical goods, machinery, and automobiles. • **India's imports from Ghana -** gold and cocoa.

Reference

PIB | The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering