

## HIV Infections

### ❖ Context

- Bihar ranks **third** in the country, after **Maharashtra and UP**, in new HIV infections every year, despite a **27% reduction** in new infection rate from 2010.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- Bihar records around **8,000 new cases** of people living with HIV (PLHIV) annually.
- **Youngsters** accounted for a **higher incidence** of PLHIV (people living with HIV) in the state.
- The intravenous **drug user and gays** or men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for **most of the new HIV/AIDS cases** added every year.
  - The trend of reporting higher infection among female sex workers (FSW) has now changed to MSM.
- With 1.34 lakh infected, **Bihar accounted for nearly 5.77% of India's 23.19 lakh** people living with HIV/AIDS.

### ❖ About HIV

- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a **virus that attacks cells** that help the body fight infection, making a person more vulnerable to other infections and diseases.
- **Global Stats:**
  - Around **37 million people worldwide are living with HIV**. Of these, 1.8 million are children under 15 years of age.

### • Transmission:

- It spreads by **contact with certain bodily fluids of a person with HIV**.
- Most commonly during **unprotected sex**.
- Through **sharing injection drug equipment**.

### • AIDS:

- If left untreated, HIV can lead to the disease AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).
- AIDS is the **late stage of HIV infection** that occurs when the body's immune system is badly damaged because of the virus.

### • Cure:

- **No effective HIV cure exists**.
- However, by taking HIV medicine (called **antiretroviral therapy or ART**), people with HIV can live long and healthy lives and prevent transmitting HIV to their sexual partners.
- There are effective methods to prevent getting HIV through sex or drug use, including **pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)** and **post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)**.

## Parboiled Rice

### ❖ Context

- Recently, the Center has said it **will stop the purchase of excess parboiled rice**, of which **Telangana is a major producer**.
- The Center said **demand is low** and it cannot waste money on buying the excess quantity of parboiled rice.

### ❖ Parboiled Rice

- **About:**
  - The dictionary meaning of 'parboil' is '**partly cooked by boiling**'.
  - Thus, the expression parboiled rice refers to rice that has been **partially boiled at the paddy stage, before milling**.
  - Parboiling of rice is not a new practice, and has been followed in India since ancient times.
  - There is **no specific definition of parboiled rice** of the Food Corporation of India or the Food Ministry.
- **Process:**
  - There are **several processes for parboiling rice**.
  - For example, the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysuru, uses a method in which the **paddy is soaked in hot water for three hours**, in contrast to the more common method in which paddy is soaked for 8 hours.
  - The **water is then drained** and the paddy steamed for 20 minutes.
  - Also, the **paddy is dried in the shade** in the method used by the CFTRI, but is sun-dried in the common method.
- All processes generally involve **three stages—soaking, steaming and drying**.
- After passing through these stages, the paddy goes for milling.
- **Suitable Rice Varieties:**
  - Generally, **all varieties** can be processed into parboiled rice.
  - However, it is **ideal to use long slender varieties** to prevent breakage during milling.
  - **Aromatic varieties should not be parboiled** because the process can make it lose its aroma.
- **Benefits:**
  - Parboiling **makes rice tougher** so this reduces the chances of the rice kernel breaking during milling.
  - Parboiling also **increases the nutrient value** of the rice.
  - Parboiled rice has a **higher resistance to insects and fungi**.
- **Disadvantages:**
  - The **rice becomes darker and may smell unpleasant** due to prolonged soaking.
  - Setting up a parboiling rice milling unit **requires a higher investment** than a raw rice milling unit.

## Face to Face Centres



## Treasury Single Account

### ❖ Context

- The **Department of Expenditure**, Ministry of Finance, had directed all the Ministries and Departments to follow the new mechanism, titled '**Revised Procedure for flow of Funds under Central Sector Schemes**', from **April 1, 2022**.
- However, Central Ministries and Departments are not able to spend under various Central Sector Schemes (CS) in the current fiscal till date as the new mechanism for flow of funds is yet to be operationalised.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- The new mechanism is known as Treasury Single Account.
- A TSA is a **unified structure of government bank accounts** that gives a **consolidated view of government cash resources**.
- The government will transact all its receipts and payments through TSA.
- Under it, there are two models:
  - **Model 1 (M1):**
    - Applicable for central sector schemes with annual outlay of **more than Rs. 500 crores**.
    - Money will be routed in M1 to the vendor/supplier **through the RBI**.
    - Schemes under this model are implemented **without the involvement of State agencies**.
  - **Model 2 (M2):**
    - Applicable for central sector schemes with annual outlay of **less than Rs. 500 crores**.
    - Involves payment to vendors through **scheduled commercial banks**.
    - Schemes under this are **implemented by agencies of the State governments** exclusively or in **addition to the central agencies**.
- A Central Nodal Agency will be designated for each of the Central sector scheme which will have to open account with RBI/SCB.

### ❖ Purpose for bringing in new mechanism

- The new mechanism aims to help the Centre manage the finance and cash better.
- Earlier, after approval, funds were allocated and disbursed to various ministries, departments, autonomous bodies and States.
- **Funds were not being utilised and sitting idle in bank accounts**.
- Given the **borrowing cost**, such a system puts further strain on the exchequer.
- While it is necessary to distinguish individual cash transactions for control and reporting purposes, this purpose is achieved through the accounting system and not by holding/depositing cash in transaction-specific bank accounts.
- TSA enables the treasury to **delink management of cash from control at a transaction level**.

### ❖ Issues in Implementation

- Capacity of the bank to manage these transactions.
- Alignment of the mandated agencies with the banks which has not yet taken place.

## Priority to MSMEs in Solvency Process

### ❖ Context

- The new MSME policy draft proposes priority payment of dues of small business over all other unsecured payments during a solvency process.

- **Currently, MSMEs are categorised as operational creditors, the lowest on the priority list** when creditors' dues are settled under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
- Thus, very little is left for operational creditors, including MSMEs, in any IBC resolution, as settlements occur at a huge haircut and all financial creditors get priority.
- The change would be a major relief for MSMEs, as the **sector waits for dues totalling several hundreds of crores of rupees** in companies undergoing bankruptcy resolution.
- The proposed MSME policy is also likely to redraft the MSME Development Act, 2006 for a comprehensive and holistic **MSME Code**.

### ❖ How MSMEs are Defined

- Defined by the Centre in exercise of the powers under **Section 7 of the MSME Act 2006**.

### ❖ Current Order of Priority Under Sec 178 of IBC

- a) Costs and expenses incurred by the **bankruptcy trustee** for the bankruptcy process in full;
- b) Secondly:
  - I. The **workmen's** dues for the period of 24<sup>th</sup> months preceding the bankruptcy commencement date; and
  - II. Debts owed to **secured creditors**;
- c) Thirdly, wages and any unpaid dues owed to **employees**, other than workmen, of the bankrupt for the period of twelve months preceding the bankruptcy commencement date;
- d) Fourthly, any amount due to the **Central Government** and the **State Government** including the amount to be received on account of Consolidated Fund of India and the Consolidated Fund of a State, if any, in respect of the whole or any part of the period of two years preceding the bankruptcy commencement date;
- e) Lastly, all other debts and dues owed by the bankrupt including **unsecured debts**.

## Face to Face Centres



❖ **Significance of MSMEs**

- Over **60 million MSMEs** in India employ **110 million people (next only to agriculture)**.
- The sector contributes nearly **30% to the country's GDP** and **accounts for 40% of the exports**.

Type	Investment	Turnover
Micro	Upto Rs. 1 crore	Upto Rs. 5 crore
Small	Rs. 1 -10 crore	Rs. 5 - 50 crore
Medium	Rs. 10 - 50 crore	Rs. 50 - 250 crore

## News in Between the Lines

### L-Root Server

❖ **Context**

- **Rajasthan** has become the **first State** in the country to get the **L-root server** at the state level.



❖ **Key Highlights**

- The new server has been installed at the **Bhamashah State Data Centre** in association with the **Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)**. The new facility will strengthen internet infrastructure and help improve security and resilience of internet-based operations.
- There are at present **three J-root servers** in **New Delhi, Mumbai and Gorakhpur** and **two L-root servers** in **Mumbai and Kolkata**.

❖ **About Root Name Servers**

- The **root name servers** are a critical part of the Internet infrastructure because they are the **first step in resolving human-readable host names into IP addresses** that are used in communication between Internet hosts.
- There are **13 logical root name servers** specified, with logical names in the form *letter.root-servers.net*, where letter ranges from a to m.
- This does not mean that there are only 13 physical servers. All operate in multiple geographical locations using a routing technique called anycast addressing.

List of Root Servers

HOSTNAME	IP ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
a.root-servers.net	198.41.0.4, 2001:503:ba3e:2:30	Verisign, Inc.
b.root-servers.net	199.9.14.201, 2001:500:200:cb	University of Southern California, Information Sciences Institute
c.root-servers.net	192.33.4.12, 2001:500:2:c:c	Cogent Communications
d.root-servers.net	199.7.91.13, 2001:500:2:d:d	University of Maryland
e.root-servers.net	192.203.230.10, 2001:500:a8:b:e	NASA (Ames Research Center)
f.root-servers.net	192.5.5.241, 2001:500:2:f:f	Internet Systems Consortium, Inc.
g.root-servers.net	192.112.36.4, 2001:500:12:c:d:d	US Department of Defense (NIC)
h.root-servers.net	198.97.190.53, 2001:500:1:1:5:3	US Army (Research Lab)
i.root-servers.net	192.36.148.17, 2001:7fe:5:3	Netnod
j.root-servers.net	192.58.128.30, 2001:503:c27:2:30	Verisign, Inc.
k.root-servers.net	193.0.14.129, 2001:7fd:1	RIPE NCC
l.root-servers.net	199.7.83.42, 2001:500:9f:42	ICANN
m.root-servers.net	202.12.27.33, 2001:dic:3:35	WIDE Project

### Dudh Vani

❖ **Context**

- A **community radio station** is going to be inaugurated soon in Gujarat.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- This will become the **country's first community radio station dedicated to the cattle-breeders**.
- Set up by the **Banaskantha District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union** or Banas Dairy.
- Will connect over five lakh dairy farmers across 1,700 villages in the State.
- To provide farmers key scientific information related to agriculture and animal husbandry.



### CROP & PQMS

❖ **Context**

- Union **Agriculture Ministry** launches two redeveloped online portals on export/import of agricultural commodities and pesticides registration.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- **CROP: Comprehensive Registration of Pesticides.**
- **PQMS: Plant Quarantine Management System.**
- Needed for: Quick disposal of applications, A more coordinated integration with external systems & stakeholders, and To bring in greater transparency and ease of doing business.



### Oil Bonds

❖ **Context**

- The Finance Minister has said the government cannot bring down taxes - and thus oil prices - because it has to **pay for oil bonds issued by the UPA**.

❖ **Fuel Price**

- There are **two components to the domestic retail price** - the **price of crude oil itself**, and the **taxes levied on this basic price**. Together they make up the retail price.

## Face to Face Centres

## SHARES OF TAX/DUTY ON CRUDE OIL & PETROLEUM

	Centre's share	States' share
2016-17	2,73,225	1,89,587
2017-18	2,76,168	2,06,601
2018-19	2,79,847	2,27,396
2019-20	2,87,540	2,20,841
2020-21 (P)	4,18,637	2,17,271

Figures in Rs crore; Source: PPAC, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

## OIL BONDS

	Outstanding amount	Interest paid
2016-17	1,30,923.17	9,989.96
2017-18	1,30,923.17	9,989.96
2018-19	1,30,923.17	9,989.96
2019-20	1,30,923.17	9,989.96
2020-21	1,30,923.17	9,989.96

Figures in Rs crore; Source: Ministry of Finance

- The taxes vary from one product to another.
- For instance, as of now, taxes account for 50% of the total retail price for a liter of petrol, and 44% for a liter of diesel.

### ❖ Oil Bonds

- When **fuel prices were too high** for domestic consumers, governments in the past often asked **oil marketing companies to avoid charging consumers the full price**. But if oil companies don't get paid, they would become unprofitable. To address this, the **government said it would pay the difference**.
- If the government paid that amount in cash then the government would have had to tax the same people to collect the money to pay the OMCs.
- An oil bond is an IOU, or a **promissory note issued by the government to the OMCs, in lieu of cash that the government would have given them** so that these companies don't charge the public the full price of fuel.

## Vagsheer



### ❖ Context

- The **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL)** here will launch 'Vagsheer', the sixth submarine under the **P75 Scorpene project, on April 20**.
- After being launched, it will undergo sea trials and is **expected to be commissioned by March 2024**.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- The Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL) was given the task of building **six submarines under the P75 programme**.
- Vagsheer will be the **last of the scorpene class submarines**.
- The **INS Kalvari** (September 2017), **INS Khanderi** (September, 2019), **INS Karanj** (February, 2021) and **INS Vela** (November 9, 2021) have already been commissioned while sea trials of the Vagir are underway.

### ❖ About INS Vagsheer

- This submarine is primarily an attack submarine or '**hunter-killer**' type which means it is designed to target and sink adversary naval vessels.
- It has a state of the art **SONAR** and sensor suite permitting outstanding operational capabilities.
- **Length:** It is a diesel-electric submarine, measuring about 221-feet-long and 40-feet high.
- **Speed:**
  - **When submerged-** Maximum 20 knots (37 km/h).
  - **When surfaced-** Maximum 11 knots (20 km/h).

## Iridium Satellite Phones



### ❖ Context

- Recently, **Fifteen signatures of Iridium satellite phones**, used by the U.S.-led allied forces in Afghanistan, and Wi-Fi-enabled thermal imagery have been **found in the militancy-hit Kashmir Valley**.
- These devices help terrorists to escape security cordons.

### ❖ Key Highlights

- In the **aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks**, the Directorate General of Shipping (**DGS**) first restricted the use of Iridium and Thuraya satellite phones and infrastructure.
- In **2012 they completely banned them** under the provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act.
- **Satellite Phones:** Satellite phones **can connect from anywhere** as they are **directly connected to satellites** around the world and **do not depend on terrestrial mobile cellular networks**.

### ❖ Iridium Satellite Phones

- **Iridium is a global satellite communications company**, providing access to voice and data services anywhere on Earth.
- Iridium operates the **Iridium satellite constellation, a system of 66 active satellites** (and 9 spares in space) used for worldwide voice and data communication from hand-held satellite phones and other transceiver units.

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## Face to Face Centres

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