

NEWS TODAY

GOVERNMENT AMENDS THE NATIONAL LIST OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES (NLEM)

- **To bring down prices of widely used essential drugs**, government has revised NLEM adding 39 new drugs under the list for proposed price cap.
 - **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has been releasing NLEM since 1996, present being the NLEM 2015.
- The revised list, prepared by **expert committee under Indian Council of Medical Research** is submitted to **Health ministry** which notifies the final list.
 - The list is then forwarded to **Standing Committee on Affordable Medicines and Health Products (SCAMHP)** to assess which of the medicines require price capping.
 - The SCAMHP is a committee **formed in 2019 under NiTi Aayog** to recommend medicines for price control (**Suo-moto** also).
 - Earlier, all the medicines under NLEM were placed under price capping.
 - Now, it is selectively done **by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** based on recommendations of SCAMHP.
- Medicines and devices listed in the NLEM must be **sold at prices set by the NPPA**, while those in the non-scheduled list are allowed a **maximum annual price increase of 10%**.

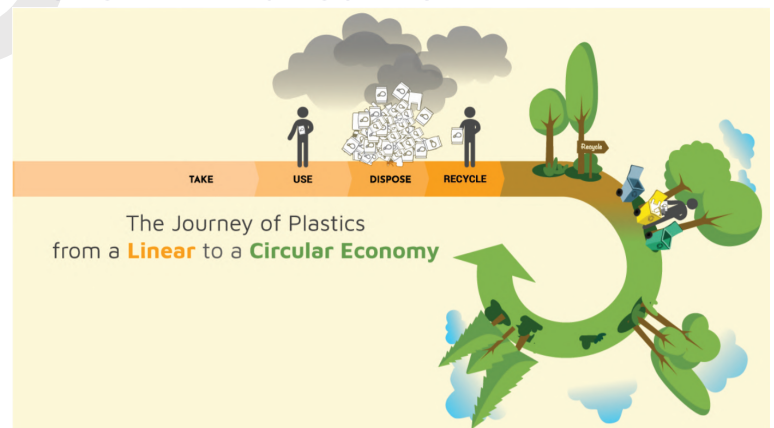


○ About NPPA

- **Constituted in August, 1997** as attached office of **Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP)**, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.
- It is **an independent regulator for pricing of drugs** and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.

INDIA TO BE THE FIRST ASIAN COUNTRY TO LAUNCH A PLASTICS PACT

- **India Plastics Pact (IPP)** was launched as collaboration between **World-Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF)** and **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** at 16th CII Annual Sustainability Summit.
- IPP is an ambitious, collaborative initiative that **brings together businesses, governments, researchers, NGOs** and other stakeholders.
 - IPP set time-bound target-based commitments to **transform the current linear plastics system into a circular plastics economy**.
 - IPP will **link globally with other Plastics Pacts**.
 - Its Vision, targets and ambition are aligned with **circular economy principles of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy**.
 - The **first Plastics Pact** was launched in the **U.K. in 2018**.



- **Need of IPP**
 - India **generates 9.46 million tonnes of plastic waste annually**, of which 40 percent is not collected.
 - By 2050, greenhouse gas emissions from plastic could reach over 56 gigatonnes, 10-13% of the remaining carbon budget.
- **Other Major Initiatives**
 - **GloLitter Partnerships Project** to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter from shipping and fisheries.
 - **Ban on Single-Use Plastics** to free India from single-use plastics by 2022.
 - **Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021** prohibit specific single-use plastic items.
 - Plastic Hackathon 2021 campaign.

'ABUSE OF PROCESS': SUPREME COURT REJECTS BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S PLEA ON DGP APPOINTMENT

- The Supreme Court refused to entertain application filed by West Bengal Government seeking permission to **appoint its own Director General of Police ("DGP") without Union Public Service Commission's (UPSC) involvement.**
 - The West Bengal government had challenged the order on the ground that **'police' belonged to the State list** and that the power granted to UPSC to prepare the panel was undermining **the federal structure of governance.**
- Earlier, SC in a landmark judgement on police reforms (Prakash Singh case Judgement, 2006 and modified in 2018) had ordered that **states need to send names of DGP candidates to UPSC, which picks three candidates from the eligible names based on seniority, experience, service record and other criteria.**
 - The state government then **selects any of the top three candidates, provided that the candidate has a minimum of six months of service left.**
- Prakash Singh and Ors v Union of India case**
 - Court gave **seven directives (refer infographic)** to put on record the deep rooted problems of **politicization, lack of accountability mechanisms and systemic weaknesses that resulted in poor all round performance and resulted in public dissatisfaction with policing.**

SEVEN DIRECTIVES OF SUPREME COURT

- 1 **Constitute a State Security Commission**
- 2 **Fixed two-year tenure for DGP**
- 3 **Two-year term for SPs & SHOs**
- 4 **Separate Investigation and L&O functions**
- 5 **Set up Police Establishment Board**
- 6 **Set up Police Complaints Authorities at State & Dist levels**
- 7 **Set up National Security Commission at Centre level**



INDIA SET TO BECOME GLOBAL GREEN HYDROGEN HUB

- In the backdrop of **'International Climate Summit (ICS) 2021: powering India's Hydrogen Eco system'** organised by **Invest India and Environment Committee of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)**, the geographic advantage and potential of India in green hydrogen was highlighted.
 - India can have an **aspirational goal of 'Hydrogen 212'** where green hydrogen generation cost is of less than \$2 per kg.
 - Green Hydrogen** is produced by electrolysis of water using an electric current which is produced by a renewable source (e.g. Solar PV or a wind turbine).
- Hydrogen is one of the cleanest fuels**, which on being burnt in air produces only water as a by-product and no carbon-based emissions are released.
 - Possible applications include **transportation, stationary power like backup power units and portable applications like consumer electronics, recreational devices, etc.**
- Steps taken in India**
 - National Hydrogen energy Roadmap.**
 - In 2020, **Delhi became the first city in India** to operate buses with hydrogen-enriched CNG etc.
 - Ministry of New and Renewable energy to **launch a Hydrogen fuel cell-based bus project in Leh.**
 - National Hydrology portal.

○ **Challenges faced:** High production costs, difficulty in storage, Hydrogen is highly flammable, Low demand inhibits development of production capacity etc.

TYPES OF HYDROGEN

Green Hydrogen produced by electrolysis of water, using electricity from renewable sources like hydropower, wind, and solar. Zero carbon emissions are produced.	Turquoise Hydrogen produced by the thermal splitting of methane (methane pyrolysis). Instead of CO ₂ , solid carbon is produced.	Yellow Hydrogen produced by electrolysis using grid electricity.	Blue Grey or brown hydrogen with its CO ₂ sequestered or repurposed.
PINK/PURPLE/RED Hydrogen produced by electrolysis using nuclear power.	BLACK/GRAY Hydrogen extracted from natural gas using steam-methane reforming	WHITE Hydrogen produced as a byproduct of industrial processes.	BROWN Hydrogen extracted from fossil fuels, usually coal, using gasification.

INDIA AND USA SIGN PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR AIR-LAUNCHED UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE (ALUAV)

- The Project Agreement for ALUAV is under the umbrella **Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI).**
 - Under DTTI**, there are 2 categories of projects, **one, related to industry-to-industry projects facilitated by export licences and second done via Project Agreements (PA).**
 - The **PA for ALUAV** is a project of **second category undertaken under Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) Agreement** which was first signed in January 2006 and renewed in January 2015.
- India-US defence relationship**
 - In 2016, the United States designated India as a **Major Defense Partner** which was elevated to **Strategic Trade Authorisation Tier 1 status in 2018.**
 - 2+2 dialogue** between the defence and foreign ministers.
 - India **has signed four foundational defence agreement of USA.**
 - General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** in 2002 on military information exchange.
 - Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)** in 2016 to use each other's military base.
 - Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** in 2018 for interoperability between the two militaries and sale of high-end technology to India.
 - Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** in 2020 to share high-end military technology, logistics and geospatial maps.

ALSO IN NEWS

 <p>Eastern Economic Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaking at 6th Eastern Economic Forum summit, India highlighted the time tested friendship between India and Russia. About Eastern Economic Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in 2015, Eastern Economic Forum is an international forum held each year in Vladivostok (Russia). It works towards the economic development of Russia's Far East and expand international cooperation in the Asia Pacific region by encouraging foreign investment. In 2019, India launched its Act Far East Policy at the forum, providing a US\$1 billion line of credit for development of the resource-rich region.
 <p>Hansa New Generation (NG) aircraft</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hansa NG aircraft designed and developed by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bengaluru has successfully made its maiden flight. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The all-composite HANSA-NG is certified in 2000 by the DGCA under Joint Aviation Requirements—Very Light Aircraft (JAR-VLA) category. Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) signed MoU with CSIR-NAL as a launch customer of HANSA-NG for pilot training.
 <p>Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent PMI has highlighted fastest rebound in services activity in 18 months. PMI is a survey-based measure that asks the respondents about changes in their perception of some key business variables from the month before. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is calculated separately for manufacturing and services sectors and then composite index is constructed. PMI is a number from 0 to 100. PMI above 50 represents an expansion, under 50 represents a contraction, and reading at 50 indicates no change. PMI Data is published by Japanese firm Nikkei but compiled and constructed by IHS Markit (Markit Economics).
 <p>Scheme for Harnessing and Allocating Koyala (Coal) Transparently in India (Shakti scheme)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union power ministry has allowed generating stations to procure fuel under SHAKTI scheme through three different auction windows instead of one. Significance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide flexibility to developers to plan their fuel purchase and electricity sales About Shakti scheme - It was launched in 2018 to provide coal to stressed power units which lack coal supply thus helping power plants to come out of stress.
 <p>New Bio-methanation Technologies introduced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biomethanation is a process by which organic material is microbiologically converted under anaerobic conditions to biogas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significance - better waste management and can be used for energy production. New technologies introduced - Anaerobic gas lift reactor (easier to set up and higher biogas yield); Nanofiltration setup (Efficient in producing good quality water free of contaminants).
 <p>World Social Protection Report 2020-22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ILO report has the theme "Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future". Key Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, only 47 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed and exacerbated the social protection gap between countries with high and low income levels. There are significant regional inequalities in social protection.



Dinosaur species footprints in Thar Desert

- Footprints of **3 dinosaur species** found in Thar Desert, Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district.
 - All the three species, belonging to the **early Jurassic period**, were **carnivorous**.
- Thar Desert is the **18th largest subtropical desert land** and also one of the **most populated ones** as 40 percent of the human population of Rajasthan lives in Thar Desert.
 - It extends from Sutlej river and is enclosed by the Great Rann of Kutch, the Aravalli Mountains and the Indus River.



Places in News

- **Japan**
 - Recently, Japanese PM announced to not run for party leadership election, ending his term as PM in a year.
 - Japan is also known as **Nippon** or **land of rising Sun**.
 - **Major Water bodies-** Sea of Japan, Sea of Okhotsk, East China Sea etc.
 - **Major Islands-** Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu as **four main Islands** (Honshu as the biggest Island and main economic centre of Japan).
- **Syria**
 - Recently, **Israel launched air strikes over Syria** to target the Iran-backed rebels operating from its territory.
 - **Major Water Bodies-** Syria is situated at the **eastern end of Mediterranean Sea**.
 - **Euphrates River (originating in the mountains of Turkey)** is the main River of Syria with Balikh and Khabur as its main tributaries.
 - **Bordering Countries-** Turkey (in North), Iraq (in east), Jordan (in South) and Israel and Lebanon (in West).
- **Sri Lanka**
 - Due to worsening forex crisis and rising food prices, Sri Lanka has declared an economic emergency.
 - **Major Water Bodies-** Adam's Bridge (also known as Ram Setu) separating the **Gulf of Mannar and Palk Strait**.
 - Except for its longest river **Mahaweli Ganga**, all other major rivers **flow radially** from the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka.
 - **Unique Feature-** The latitudes passing from Sri Lanka also pass through Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar and Maldives group of Islands.



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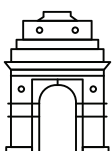


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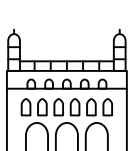
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DELHI



LUCKNOW



JAIPUR



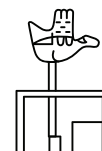
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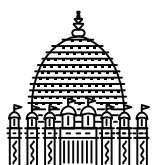
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