

# NEWS TODAY

## TWO YEARS ON, AYUSHMAN BHARAT (AB) SCHEME HAS GROUND TO COVER ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC)

- **AB was launched in 2018**, as recommended by National Health Policy 2017, to achieve UHC.
  - UHC is about ensuring that all people have access to needed health services (including prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliation) of sufficient quality without suffering financial hardship.
- AB comprises of **two inter-related components**:
  - **Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)**: for disease prevention and health promotion through creation of 1,50,000 HWCs by transforming existing Sub Centres and Primary Health Centres.
  - **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**
    - It provides a **cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization** across public and private empanelled hospitals.
    - **Benefits of scheme are portable across country.**
    - There is **no cap on the family size under the scheme.**
- **Issues with AB**: Number of procedures for reimbursement, leads to exclusion of ailments and people; rates set for different procedures are low making it non-viable for big hospitals, concentration of health services in urban areas etc.
- National Health Authority (attached office of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) is apex body responsible for implementing AB-PMJAY.



## UNION GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTED THE NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION (NMC)

- NMC, constituted under NMC Act, 2019. Act, would replace the Medical Council of India (MCI) as the country's medical education regulator.
  - **Issues with MCI**: poor regulation of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, Lack of accountability, alleged corruptions etc.
- **NMC consists of** a Chairperson; ten ex-officio members; and 22 part-time members who are appointed by the central government.
- **Functions of NMC**:
  - Framing policies for **regulating medical institutions and professionals.**
  - Assessing requirements of **healthcare related human resources and infrastructure.**
  - Ensuring **compliance by State Medical Councils** of the regulations made under the Bill.
  - Framing guidelines for **determination of fees for up to 50% of seats in private medical institutions and deemed universities** which are regulated under the Bill.
- NMC will work on **modalities of common final year exam after MBBS (NEXT- National Exit Test)**; prepare guidelines for **fee regulation by private medical colleges; and developing standards for Community Health Providers.**
- In addition to NMC, **four Autonomous Boards have also been constituted**- Under-Graduate Medical Education Board, Post-Graduate Medical Education Board, Medical Assessment and Rating Board and Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

## VODAFONE WINS INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION AGAINST INDIA IN RETROSPECTIVE TAX CASE

- International Arbitration Tribunal at The Hague ruled that the **tax liability on Vodafone is a breach of the Bilateral investment treaty (BIT) signed between India and Netherlands.**
  - BIT allows for **promotion and protection of investment by companies** of each country in the other's jurisdiction.
- Dispute stems from **Vodafone's buyout of Hutchison Whampoa's stake in Hutchison Essar in 2007.**
  - **India sought to tax this deal as the underlying asset was in India**, and asked Vodafone to pay capital gains tax.
- Vodafone challenged the demand notice and wins the case in Supreme court in 2012.
- Then, **Parliament amended the Finance Act 2012 to undo the SC judgment** and make Vodafone liable for taxes.
  - Government had introduced General Anti-Avoidance Rules (GAAR) to give more powers to the tax authorities.
  - It made a retrospective amendment to the IT Act to undo the SC judgment and make Vodafone liable for taxes.
- In 2014, Vodafone Group had **initiated arbitration against India** at the Court of Arbitration.
  - It had done so under Article 9 of the BIT between India and the Netherlands.

## PRADHAN MANTRI SAHAJ BIJLI HAR GHAR YOJANA - 'SAUBHAGYA' SCHEME COMPLETES THREE YEARS

- Scheme **aims to achieve universal household electrification** in the country by 31st March 2019.
  - Free electricity connections to **all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas** will be provided.
- **Key Highlights**
  - There is **no upfront fee or charges for obtaining electricity connection.**
    - Single point wiring along with an LED bulb, mobile charging points and switch etc. would also be provided and no cost on this account shall be charged by the DISCOM.
  - **Ministry of Power would be the implementing authority** of the scheme. Rural Electrification Corporation has been Designated as nodal agency for the scheme.
  - **Beneficiary households would be identified using SECC 2011 data.** However, un-electrified households not covered under SECC data would also be provided electricity connections on payment of Rs. 500.
- **Benefits**: Substitution to Kerosene; Improvement in Health Services; Improvement in Communications; Improvement in Public Safety; Increased Job Opportunities; Better Quality of Life, especially for Women, in Daily Chores
- **Issues faced in implementation** are lack of equipment and manpower shortage, deteriorating financial condition of DISCOMs etc.

### RETROSPECTIVE TAXATION

- It allows a country to pass a rule on taxing certain products, items or services and deals and **charge companies from a time behind the date on which the law is passed.**
  - **Countries use this route to correct any anomalies in their taxation policies** that have, in the past, allowed companies to take advantage of such loopholes.
- Apart from India, many countries including US, UK, Netherlands etc have retrospectively taxed companies.

# DOMESTIC SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT INSURERS (DSIIS)

- **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has identified Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) and The New India Assurance Co. as **D-SIIs for 2020-21**.
- **D-SIIs** refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global interconnectedness **whose distress or failure would cause a significant dislocation in the domestic financial system**. Thus, they are perceived as insurers that are **too big or too important to fail**.
  - Size in terms of total revenue, including premium underwritten and the value of assets under management are among the parameters on which the insurers are identified.
- IRDAI will list D-SIIs on annual basis.
- **Conditionality's imposed on D-SIIs:** Raising their level of corporate governance, identifying all relevant risks and promoting a sound risk management culture.
  - They will also be subjected to **enhanced regulatory supervision by IRDAI**.
- Similar to DSII, **RBI announce domestic systemically important bank (D-SIBs)**.
  - SBI, ICICI Bank, and HDFC Bank identified as D-SIBs.

## ALSO IN NEWS

<p><b>Steps taken by Election Commission (EC) to ensure safe elections in Bihar</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC announced a series of extraordinary measures for the Bihar Assembly elections, which will be held in the midst of the global coronavirus pandemic.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <b>Maximum number of voters per polling station reduced</b> from 1,500 to 1,000.</li> <li>➢ <b>Postal ballots to all those over the age of 80</b>, to those voters who are Covid-positive and those who have been quarantined due to the infection.</li> <li>➢ <b>Specific rules for candidates/Parties for Door-to-door campaign</b>, road shows etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Faceless Appeals launched by Central Board of Direct Taxation (CBDT)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under Faceless Appeals, <b>all Income Tax appeals will be finalised in a faceless manner</b> barring cases of major tax evasion, serious frauds, international tax and black money act.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ It will give great convenience to the taxpayer while <b>ensuring just appeal orders and minimise litigations</b>.</li> <li>➢ It will also <b>ensure greater transparency and accountability</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Allocation of cases will be <b>done through Data Analytics and AI</b>.</li> <li>• It has been launched as <b>part of "Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest"</b> initiative that was launched recently.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Flash Floods</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently, few villages in Assam were submerged by a flash flood.</li> <li>• Flash floods are <b>characterized by very fast rise and recession of flow of small volume and high discharge</b>, which causes high damages because of suddenness.</li> <li>• This occurs in hilly and not too hilly regions and sloping lands <b>where heavy rainfall and thunderstorms or cloudbursts are common</b>.</li> <li>• Other reasons are sudden release of waters from upstream reservoirs, breaches in landslide dams and embankments on the banks of the rivers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &amp; Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government has sanctioned 670 Electric buses and 241 Charging Stations in various states/UTs under Phase-II of FAME India Scheme.</li> <li>• As <b>part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020</b>, Department of Heavy Industry formulated FAME India Scheme in the year 2015.</li> <li>• FAME aims <b>to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology</b> and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.</li> <li>• Phase-I of the scheme ended on 31st March 2019 and <b>Phase-II has commenced from 1st April 2019</b> with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore for a period of 3 years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RRTS is a new, dedicated, high speed, high capacity, <b>comfortable commuter service connecting regional nodes in National Capital Region (NCR)</b>.</li> <li>• RRTS is different from conventional Railway as it <b>will provide reliable, high frequency, point to point regional travel at high speed</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Implemented by National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)</b> – a joint venture company of Govt of India and States of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and U.P, under the administrative control of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.</li> <li>• Once in operation, <b>it will run on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>JIMEX 20</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a bilateral exercise which is <b>conducted biennially between the Indian Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force</b>. It will be held in North Arabian Sea.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <b>JIMEX commenced in 2012</b> with special focus on maritime security cooperation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Other military exercise between India and Japan:</b> Ex DHARMA GUARDIAN.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prithvi-II missile</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently India conducted a successful night test fire of its <b>indigenously developed nuclear capable surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile</b>.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Prithvi-II is <b>capable of carrying 500 to 1,000 kg of warheads</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prithvi missile have been <b>developed by DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP)</b>.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Other missile systems developed under IGMDP: <b>Agni, Akash, Trishul and Nag</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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