



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

General Studies-2

Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana

Why in News?

After initial hiccups in implementing the maternity benefit programme Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), the government has finally made some headway and provided cash incentives to nearly 23.6 lakh beneficiaries out of an estimated 51.6 lakh a year.

About PMMVY:

Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), previously Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY), is a maternity benefit program run by the government of India.

It was introduced in 2010 and is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

It is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for first live birth.

It provides a partial wage compensation to women for wage-loss during childbirth and childcare and to provide conditions for safe delivery and good nutrition and feeding practices. In 2013, the scheme was brought under the National Food Security Act, 2013 to implement the provision of cash maternity benefit of ₹6,000 (US\$89) stated in the Act.

Presently, the scheme is implemented on a pilot basis in 53 selected districts and proposals are under consideration to scale it up to 200 additional 'high burden districts' in 2015-16.

Significance:

The announcement assumes significance as India accounts for 17% of all maternal deaths in the world.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

The country's maternal mortality rate is pegged at 167 per 100,000 live births, whereas infant mortality is estimated at 43 per 1,000 live births.

Among the primary causes of high maternal and infant mortality are poor nutrition and inadequate medical care during pregnancy and childbirth.

Objectives:

- Promoting appropriate practice, care and institutional service utilization during pregnancy, delivery and lactation
- Encouraging the women to follow (optimal) nutrition and feeding practices, including early and Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months; and
- Providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers

Smart India Hackathon:

The Ministry of HRD along with AICTE, Persistent Systems, i4C and IIT Kharagpur is all set to host the Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon 2018 – Hardware edition from Jun 18-22, 2018.

Smart India Hackathon 2018 is in line with the 'Make in India' initiative of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and is proving to be an important vehicle for scouting new ideas and help them convert them into products and businesses.

SIH2018 – Hardware edition is the first of its kind innovative initiative by Ministry of HRD to provide national platform to young technical minds of India to showcase their disruptive innovations and creative products which can bring out revolutionary changes in crucial sectors like agriculture, health, clean water, waste management, automotive, smart communication, and education. The Hardware edition is the sub-edition of SIH2018.

Grand Finale of the Hardware Hackathon will be a 5 days event and will take place simultaneously at 10 prestigious institutions (Nodal centers) across India



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

- IIT Kanpur (Drones theme), IIT Kharagpur (Agriculture theme), IIT Guwahati (Rural Technology theme), CEERI Pilani (Smart Communication theme), CSIO Chandigarh (Healthcare theme), IISc Bengaluru (Smart Vehicles theme), IIT Roorkee (Clean water theme), NIT Trichy (Waste Management theme), COEP Pune (Security theme), and Forge Coimbatore (Import Substitution theme).

Rail Madad – An App to expedite & streamline passenger grievance redressal.

In line with digital initiatives of Hon'ble PM, Indian Railways has for the first time completely digitized the Complaint management system. Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways & Coal today launched a new App "Rail Madad" – An App to expedite & streamline passenger grievance redressal.

It relays real time feedback to passengers on the status of redressal of their complaints- the passenger gets an instant ID through SMS on registration of complaint followed by a customized SMS communicating the action taken thereon by Railway.

How does It Work?

RPGRAMS integrates all the passenger complaints received from multiple modes (14 offline/online modes currently) on a single platform, analyzes them holistically and generates various types of management reports which enable the top management to continuously monitor the pace of grievance redressal as well as evaluate the performance of field units/ trains/ stations on various parameters viz cleanliness, catering, amenities etc.

It also identifies weak/deficient areas and laggard trains/stations for undertaking focussed corrective actions.

Salient features of Rail Madad application are-

- ❖ Rail **MADAD (M**obile **A**pplication for **D**esired **A**ssistance **D**uring travel) registers a complaint with minimum inputs from passenger(option of photo also available), issues unique ID instantly and relays the



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

complaint online to relevant field officials for immediate action. The action taken on complaint is also relayed to passenger through SMS, thus fast tracking the entire process of redressal of complaints through digitisation.

- ❖ Rail **MADAD** also displays various helpline numbers (e.g., Security, Child helpline etc) and provides direct calling facility for immediate assistance in one easy step
- ❖ All modes of filing complaints including offline and online modes are being integrated on a single platform, therefore the resultant management reports present a holistic picture of weak/deficient areas and enable focused corrective action by officials concerned.
- ❖ The data analysis would also generate trends on various performance parameters of a selected train/station like cleanliness, amenities etc thus making managerial decision more precise and effective.
- ❖ Hierarchy based dashboard/reports will be available for management at Division /Zonal/Railway board level and sent through auto email to every concerned officer weekly

General Studies-3

Artificial Intelligence:

Why in News?

The NITI Aayog has published an ambitious discussion paper on kickstarting the artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem in India.

About AI Ecosystem:

AI is the use of computers to mimic human cognitive processes for decision-making.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

The paper talks of powering five sectors — agriculture, education, health care, smart cities/infrastructure and transport — with AI.

It highlights the potential for India to become an AI 'garage', or solutions provider, for 40% of the world.

Need of hour?

To pull this off, India would have to develop AI tools for a range of applications: reading cancer pathology reports, rerouting traffic in smart cities, telling farmers where to store their produce, and picking students at high risk of dropping out from school, among them.

The U.S., Japan and China have published their AI strategy documents and, importantly, put their money where their aspirations are.

China, for example, plans to hand out a million dollars in subsidies to AI firms, as well as to run a five-year university programme for 500 teachers and 5,000 students.

The NITI Aayog does not talk about how India's ambitions will be funded, but proposes an institutional structure to get things going.

This structure includes a network of basic and applied research institutions, and a CERN-like multinational laboratory that would focus on global AI challenges.

Benefits for India:

India, with its acute shortage of specialist doctors in rural areas, could benefit greatly from such a tool.

Challenges:

These are lofty goals, but they beg the question: can India bring it to pass? In answer, the NITI Aayog offers a sombre note of caution.

India hardly has any AI expertise today.

The paper estimates that it has around 50 top-notch AI researchers, concentrated in elite institutions like the IITs.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

Further, only around 4% of Indian AI professionals are trained in emerging technologies such as deep learning.

And while India does publish a lot, these publications aren't very impactful;

India's H-index, a measure of how often its papers are cited, is behind 18 other countries. This is not encouraging, considering that returns on AI are not guaranteed.

The technology has tripped up as often as it has delivered. Among successes, a recent study found that a Google neural network correctly identified cancerous skin lesions more often than expert dermatologists did.

On the other hand, studies have found that AI image-recognition technologies do badly at identifying some races, because the data used to train them over-represent other races.

This highlights the importance of quality data in building smart AI tools; India lacks this in sectors such as agriculture and health.

Where data exist, this is poorly annotated, making it unusable by AI systems.

Conclusion:

Despite these formidable challenges, the scope of NITI Aayog's paper must be lauded.

The trick will be to follow it up with action, which will demand a strong buy-in from policymakers and substantial funds.

The coming years will show if the country can manage this.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-June-2018

Neutrino Observatory:

Why in News?

Researchers in Germany have started collecting data with a 60 million euro (\$71 million) machine designed to help determine the mass of the universe's lightest particle.

Physicists, engineers and technicians at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology hope the 200-metric tonne device will narrow down or even pinpoint the actual mass of neutrinos.

Those are sometimes called "ghost particles" because they're so difficult to detect.

Scientists with the Karlsruhe Tritium Neutrino experiment, or KATRIN, said on Monday they'll be taking measurements "well into the next decade" and hope to produce "high-impact results."

Objectives of Study:

Researchers say determining the mass of neutrinos is one of the most important open questions in particle physics and will help scientists better understand the history of the universe.