

1. AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre (AYUSH HWC)

Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the inclusion of AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre (AYUSH HWC) component of National AYUSH Mission (NAM).

About AYUSH HWC:

- It will be operationalizing within a period of five years that is from financial years 2019-20 to 2023-24.
- The Ministry of AYUSH has proposed following two models for operationalization of AYUSH Health & Wellness Centres throughout the country by Upgradation of existing AYUSH dispensaries and Sub Health Centres (SHCs)

Significance of AYUSH HWC:

- It will Enhanced accessibility to achieve universal health coverage for affordable treatment.
- It will Reduced burden on secondary and tertiary health care facilities
- It will Reduced out of pocket expenditure due to "self-care" model.
- It will Integration of AYUSH in implementation of SDG 3, as mandated by NITI Aayog
- It will Validated holistic wellness model in Target Areas.

2. Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices

Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved promotion of the Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices in country.

About Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices:

- It aims to boost the domestic manufacturing of medical devices in the country.
- It includes setting up of medical device parks in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Every park is to receive Rs 100 crores.
- The grants are to be provided to the state and the projects are to be implemented by respective State Governments.
- The **Production Linked Incentive** (PLI) Scheme for promoting domestic manufacturing of medical devices by a Project Management Agency(PMA) to be nominated by **Department of Pharmaceuticals**.

- The expenditure to be incurred for the above schemes will be for the next five years i.e. from 2020-21 to 2024-25.
- The parks will help to reduce imports and also increase standard of medical testing. Also, the scheme will help to reduce cost of production.
- India is the fourth largest market for medical devices in Asia, but the domestic medical devices industry in India is very small. India's domestic medical devices stand at 2% of the Global Industry.

3. Fish Fossil

Why in News?

- Recently, researchers have revealed new insights into how the human hand evolved from fish fins based on their analysis of an ancient fossil found in Miguasha, Canada.



About:

- The evolution of fishes into four-legged vertebrates was one of the most significant events in the history of life.
- It is happened during the Late Devonian period, millions of years ago, as fish began to foray in habitats such as shallow water and land.
- The 1.57 m long fossil shows the complete arm (pectoral fin), skeleton for the first time in any elpistostegian fish published in the Journal Nature.
- It is the first time researchers have unequivocally discovered fingers locked in a fin with fin-rays in any known fish.
- The origin of digits relates to developing the capability for the fish to support its weight in shallow water or for short trips out on land.
- The increased number of small bones in the fin allows more planes of flexibility to spread out its weight through the fin
- The articulating digits in the fin are like the finger bones found in the hands of most Animals.

4. Digital e-Learning Platforms

Why in News?

- Union Human Resource Development Minister has asked students to continue their learning by making full use of the available digital e-Learning platforms during the period the educational institutions are closed as a precautionary measure against COVID-19.

Highlights:

- Educational institutions have been urged to promote digital learning and make students aware of the various digital/e-learning platforms which are provided by MHRD for online education.
- **DIKSHA:** Diksha has more than 80000 e-Books for class 12th created by CBSE, NCERT and States/UTs which are available in multiple languages.
- **e- PATHSHALA:** In this web portal NCERT has deployed 1886 audios, 2000 videos, 696 e-books (e-Pubs) and 504 Flip Books for classes 1st to 12th in different languages.
- **National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER):** It is an initiative to bring together all digital and digitizable resources across all stages of school education and teacher education.
- The e-platforms of Ministry of HRD for school education & Higher Education are as under:
- **SWAYAM:** SWAYAM is the national online education platform hosting 1900 courses covering both school (class IX to XII) and Higher Education (undergraduate, post graduate programs) in all subjects.
 - ✓ A unique feature of SWAYAM is that it is integrated with conventional education.
 - ✓ Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses
- **SWAYAM PRABHA:** It has 32 D2H TV channels transmitting educational content on a 24/7 basis.
- The channels cover both school education (class IX to XII) and Higher Education (undergraduate, post graduate, engineering, out of school children, vocational courses and teacher training) in arts, Science, commerce, performing arts, Social Sciences and Humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, and agriculture.

5. Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved financial assistance to the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC2.0) Scheme which would support setting up of both Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs) and Common Facility Centres (CFCs).

Highlights:

- The EMCs will aid the growth of the Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sector, help the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, drive innovation and catalyse the economic growth of the region by attracting investments in the sector.
- EMCs would be set up in geographical areas of certain minimum extent, preferably contiguous, where the focus is on development of basic infrastructure, amenities and other common facilities for the ESDM units.
- For the CFC, there should be a significant number of existing ESDM units located in the area and the focus is on upgrading common technical infrastructure and providing common facilities.

Significance:

- The Scheme will create a robust infrastructure base for the electronic industry to attract flow of investment in the ESDM sector and lead to greater employment opportunities.

Following are the expected outputs/outcomes for the Scheme:

- ✓ Availability of ready infrastructure and Plug & Play facility for attracting investment in electronics sector.
- ✓ New investment in electronics sector
- ✓ Jobs created by the manufacturing units;
- ✓ Revenue in the form of taxes paid by the manufacturing units

6. Wild Berry of Assam

Why in News?

- A multi-utility wild berry, whose thorny plant the British had used to build a barrier through India in the 1870s, has a unknown wilder cousin in Assam, a new study has revealed.

Highlights:

- Unlike the abundant *Carissa carandas*, better known as karonda in Hindi, kalakkai in Tamil, koromcha in Bengali and karja tenga in Assamese, the *Carissa kopilii* is threatened by the very river it is named after.
- The Kopili hydroelectric project on the river and water turned acidic because of coal mining in Meghalaya upstream.
- The “sun-loving” plant is distributed sparsely, rooted in rocky crevices along the Kopili riverbed at altitudes ranging from 85-600 metres above sea level.
- Karja tenga has been used as a traditional herbal medicine for a number of ailments such as diarrhoea, anaemia, constipation, indigestion, skin infections and urinary disorders.
- The leaves have been used as fodder for silkworms while a paste of its pounded roots serves as a fly repellent.
- The *Carissa carandas* was also among several thorny plants the British had grown 140 years ago for a 1,100-mile barrier apparently to enforce taxes and stop the smuggling of salt.
- *Carissa kopilii*, yielding white flowers from August-October and fruits from November January, should have all the medicinal and utilitarian properties of its better-known cousin.

7. World Water Day

Prelims Tag: Environment, Ecology / Ecosystem, World Water Day.

Why in News?

- World Water Day is observed on 22 March every year. It focuses on the importance of freshwater.
- **Theme for 2020:** ‘Water and Climate Change’ which aims to explore interrelation between water and climate change.

Key Points:

- The World Water Day has been observed since 1993 and intends to raise awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- In addition to it, the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development (2018-2028) is being observed.

