National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

❖ Context

➢ Days before a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court began a historic hearing in a clutch of petitions seeking legal recognition for same-sex marriage, **India's national child rights body (NCPCR) flagged concerns around adoption by same-sex couples.**

❖ Key Highlights:

- The NCPCR has submitted that laws such as the **Hindu Marriage Act, 1955**, and the J**uvenile Justice Act, 2015,** do not recognise adoption by same-sex couples.
- NCPCR has referred to the bar on a single man from adopting a female child under the JJ Act.
- It stated that "to allow a gay couple to adopt a female child would be against the scheme" of the Act.
- **Concerns around Adoption by Same-sex Couples : According to the NCPCR -**
  - Children raised by **heterosexual** couples are **emotionally more stable**, and it has argued that allowing same sex-couples to adopt is akin to "endangering the children.
  - Growing up in same-sex families have **higher probability of suffering from mental and psychological issues,** which could affect their growth and development.
  - Children raised by same-sex parents will have limited exposure to **"traditional gender roles"**, and this will impact their understanding of "gender roles and gender identity"
  - It will limit the overall growth of their personality.

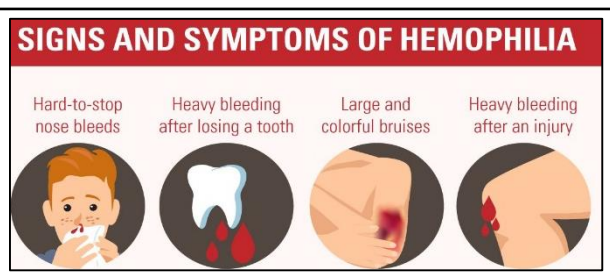
❖ NCPCR :

- It's a **statutory body.**
- Established by an Act of Parliament, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- The Commission **works under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoI.**
- **Mandate :** It ensures that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- As defined by the commission, a child includes a person **up to the age of 18 years**.
- It monitors the implementation of **POCSO Act**
- **Composition : A chairperson and six members** of which at least two should be women.
  - All of them are **appointed by the Central Government for three years.**
  - The maximum age to serve in commission is **65 years for Chairman and 60 years for members.**
- **Powers :** The Commission, while inquiring into any matter that **falls under of CPCR Act, 2005** has all the powers of a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
  - The commission can exercise the following power-
    - Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person
    - Discovery and production of any document
    - Receiving evidence on affidavits.
    - Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office; and
    - Issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents.
  - The Commission is authorized to forward any case to a Magistrate having jurisdiction to try the same

Hemophilia

❖ Context

➢ Every year, World Hemophilia Day is observed on April 17 to raise awareness about the rare blood disorder and help those suffering from it lead a better life.



❖ Key Highlights:

- The day was first commemorated by the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH) in 1989 in remembrance of **Frank Schnabel.**
- He was born on April 17, 1942, and spent his entire life working to make the lives of those who were affected by this ailment better.
- **Theme :** "**Access for All : Prevention of Bleeds as the Global Standard of Care**."

❖ About Hemophilia:

- Hemophilia is a **genetic disorder** that affects the body's ability to form **blood clots.**
- People with hemophilia have deficiencies or abnormalities in certain clotting factors, which are proteins that help the blood clot.
- As a result, they may experience prolonged bleeding or **spontaneous bleeding into muscles, joints, or organs.**
- **Symptoms :**
  - Prolonged bleeding after injury, surgery or dental procedures, frequent nosebleeds, bruising easily, joint pain and swelling, blood in urine or stool, headaches, blurred vision etc.
- **Treatment :**
  - It typically involves **replacement therapy**, which involves infusing clotting factor concentrates into the bloodstream to help the blood clot.
  - Other treatments may include medications to promote clotting or surgery to repair damage caused by bleeding.

Kerala Adopts Water Budget

❖ Context

- Kerala becomes the first state in India to adopt a water budget to tackle water scarcity in certain regions.
- Public Water Budget was released by Chief Minister of Kerala, along with the launch of the third phase of the **Ini Njan Ozhukatte project.**

❖ Key Highlights:

- The first phase of the project covers **94 gram panchayats and 15 block panchayats.**
- The budget was prepared by the **Centre for Water Resource Development Management** and the state water department.
- It gives data about the availability of water at a particular place and its consumption based on the population in the region.

❖ What is a Water Budget?

- Water budget is a tool that gives data on the availability and consumption of water in a region.
- It helps regulate **water usage according** to its availability in an area.
- It aims to **create awareness** among people about proper use of water and avoid its wastage.

❖ Ini Njan Ozhukatte Project:

- The project aims to rehabilitate irrigation networks **in the Western Ghats.**
- It has recovered hundreds of water bodies & satellite data will be used to assess the status of water bodies in **230 gram panchayats** in the 3rd phase. The project is aligned with the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 6.**

❖ Significance:

- Kerala's adoption of the water budget is an important step **towards sustainable water management** and conservation in India.
- It is a pioneering project that can serve as an example for other states to emulate.

Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM)

❖ Context

- The Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) has flagged the issue of illegal transportation of manganese ore leading to a **massive loss of revenue in Odisha.**

❖ Key Highlights:

- It had recommended the State Government come up with **Standard Operating Procedure** for preventing loss of revenue due to declaration of higher-grade ores as lower grade.
- Odisha is a mineral-rich State having **96.12% of the country's chrome ore,** 51.15% bauxite reserve of India, 33.61% of hematite iron ore and 43.64% of manganese.
- As per Section **23C of MMDR Act**, State Governments are empowered to make rules for preventing **illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals.**
- It is the responsibility of the State Govts. to establish the correct grade of mineral being dispatched and change action premium, royalty and other payments on the correct grade of mineral.

❖ About Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM):

- The IBM is a government agency in India responsible for the regulation and development of the mineral resources of the country.
- It was established in 1948 and operates **under the Ministry of Mines.**
- In addition to its regulatory and developmental roles, the IBM also provides technical assistance to the mining industry and offers training programs for mining personnel.
- The agency is **headquartered in Nagpur, Maharashtra**, and has regional offices throughout the country.

Blastomyces

❖ Context

- Recently, a rare fungal infection in humans made headlines last week, in the United States.

❖ About Blastomyces:

- The fungus of the genus blastomycosis is endemic to **Michigan**.
- Instances of it infecting people are extremely rare - in the last five years, the state has recorded only 26 cases a year.
- The fungus is found in the moist soil and decomposing wood and leaves in the midwestern, south-central and southeastern states of the US.
- In these places, only 1-2 cases of blastomycosis is reported per 100,000 people.
- **Route of Transmission :** If disturbed, microscopic spores from the fungus can get dispersed in air and travel freely.
  - Human beings can contract **blastomycosis** by inhaling the spores.
- **Symptoms :** The disease causes **fever, cough, breathing difficulty and muscle aches.**
  - During severe infection, which is rare, the disease can spread from the lungs to other organs, like the skin, bones and brain.
  - Symptoms appear between three weeks to three months after exposure.
- **Treatment :** There are **antifungal medications** that work on blastomyces but the course of the treatment is long – lasting between six months and a year.

Stablecoins

❖ Context

➢ Recently, the United States Congress has made an attempt to create a **legislative framework for the increasingly popular stablecoins.**

❖ Key Highlights:

- Stablecoins are cryptocurrencies that attempt to **peg their market value to some external reference.**
- Stablecoins are more useful than more-volatile cryptocurrencies as a medium of exchange.
- Stablecoins may be **pegged to a currency like the U.S. dollar or to the price of a commodity such as gold.**
- Stablecoins pursue price stability by maintaining reserve assets as collateral or through algorithmic formulas that are supposed to control supply.
- Stablecoins continue to come under scrutiny by regulators, given the rapid growth of the $153 billion market and its potential to affect the broader financial system.

❖ About Crypto Currency:

- A cryptocurrency is an **encrypted data string** that denotes a unit of currency.
- It is monitored and **organized by a peer-to-peer network called a blockchain,** which also serves as a secure ledger of transactions, e.g., buying, selling, and transferring.
- Unlike physical money, **cryptocurrencies are decentralized,** which means they are not issued by governments or other financial institutions.
- Cryptocurrencies are created (and secured) through **cryptographic algorithms** that are maintained and confirmed in a process called **mining**, where a network of computers or specialized hardware such as application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) process and validate the transactions.
- The process **incentivizes the miners** who run the network with the cryptocurrency.
- Cryptocurrencies can be mined or purchased from **cryptocurrency exchanges.**
- The **advantages** of cryptocurrencies include cheaper and faster money transfers and decentralized systems that do not collapse at a single point of failure.
- The **disadvantages** of cryptocurrencies include their price volatility, high energy consumption for mining activities, and use in criminal activities.

News in Between the Lines

Civil Union

❖ Context

➢ Recently, **A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court**, headed by Chief Justice of India began hearing a batch of petitions seeking legal recognition of same sex marriage.

➢ The CJI clarified that the hearing's scope would be limited to developing a notion of a **"civil union"** that finds legal recognition under the **Special Marriage Act.**

❖ About Civil Union:

- A "civil union" refers to the **legal status that allows same-sex couples specific rights and responsibilities** normally conferred upon married couples.
- Although a civil union resembles a marriage and brings with it employment, inheritance, property, and parental rights, there are some differences between the two.
- A big difference between civil unions and marriages was that the **former was recognised solely by issuing states and not by federal law.**
- This created a situation where such couples could not enjoy the benefits of being in a civil union, uniformly, across all states. Since the US had a system where states had to determine their own marriage laws, this disparity of recognition existed.
- In the wake of the legalisation of same sex marriages, several civil unions were converted into marriages.

Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023

❖ Context

➢ Utsa Patnaik, a renowned economist of national and international repute, has been selected for the Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The award is given every year by the Malcolm & Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust.
- The Malcolm Adiseshiah Award for Development and Social Justice is an annual award given in India to individuals who have made significant contributions to the development and **empowerment of marginalized communities in the country.**
- The award is open to individuals from any field or discipline, including social work, activism, research, and academia. The criteria for the award include the individual's contribution to promoting social justice, promoting sustainable development, and empowering marginalized communities, among other factors.

Kuki Independent Army (KIA)

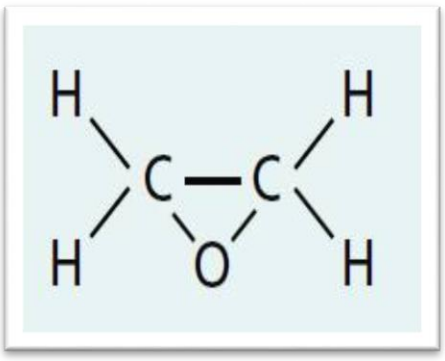
❖ **Context**

- At least five militants of the **proscribed Kuki Independent Army (KIA)** and one innocent civilian were wounded in the heavy exchange of fire with combined forces at **Henglep in the Churachandpur district recently.**

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- The Kuki Independent Army (KIA) is a militant group that operates in the northeastern Indian state of Manipur.
- The group was formed in the late 1990s with the stated objective of securing greater **autonomy for the Kuki people**, who are one of the ethnic groups in the region.

Ethylene Oxide



❖ **Context**

- European Commission brings ethylene oxide under **pesticide residue classification.**
- It has classified ethylene oxide as carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic for reproduction.

❖ **About Ethylene Oxide:**

- Ethylene oxide is **a colourless, flammable gas** that is commonly used in the production of a variety of chemicals and products, including plastics, detergents, and textiles.
- It is also used as a **sterilizing agent** for medical equipment and as a fumigant for food and agricultural products.
- Ethylene oxide is highly reactive and can be toxic to humans and animals.
- Long-term exposure to ethylene oxide has been linked to an increased risk of **leukemia and other cancers.**

Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam

❖ **Context**

- The Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam, aimed at fostering cultural ties between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, recently began in **Somnath, Gujarat.**

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- The event is being organized under the **Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat initiative**, which aims to promote cultural exchange between different parts of India.
- As part of the Sangamam, delegates will visit various heritage and tourist sites such as **Somnath, Dwarka, and the Statue of Unity**, and participate in cultural programs.
- The Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam is an excellent **opportunity to showcase the rich** cultural diversity of India and strengthen the cultural bond between different regions.
- It is a step towards promoting **national integration and building a harmonious** society.

Sangathan Se Samriddhi

❖ **Context**

- Rural Development Minister recently launched '**Sangathan Se Samriddhi'** campaign.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- The campaign aims to bring all eligible rural women into the fold of Self Help Groups (SHGs).
- The government targets to bring 10 crore women under the purview of SHGs from the existing nine crore.
- The number of SHG members, which was just 2.35 crore in May 2014, has now crossed nine crore.
- The government has set a target that every woman associated with SHGs should be able to earn one lakh rupees per annum.
- The Minister urged women to produce millets.

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