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### **Apsara – U Reactor Becomes Operational at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay**

(GS Prelims and Mains 3 – Energy.)

Apsara, the first research reactor in Asia that worked nearly five decades before shutting down in 2009, is now operational as 'Apsara-U' on Trombay campus of Maharashtra, said Department of Atomic Energy

"Nearly sixty-two years after Apsara came into existence, a swimming pool type research reactor "Apsara-upgraded", of higher capacity was born at Trombay on September 10,"

Ministry said the reactor can also be used for research and production of radioisotopes for medical application and would also be extensively used for research in nuclear physics, material science and radiation shielding.

Source: PIB

### **Web portal “Rail Sahyog”**

(GS Prelims and Mains 2 – Governance.)

A railway is taking various initiatives for upgrading its infrastructure, technology, hygiene among host of other things for an enhanced passenger experience.

Minister of Railways and Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal launched a web portal [www.railsahyog.in](http://www.railsahyog.in)

The web portal will provide a platform for the Corporate and PSUs to contribute to creation of amenities at/near Railway Stations through Corporate Social Responsibility funds.

“Rail Sahyog” portal is an example of changing times & speedy execution of projects in Railways. Salient feature of this portal is its simplicity & transparency. Portal will provide an opportunity for Industry/ Companies/ Associations to collaborate with Railways. This portal will not only be beneficial for passengers but also for neighbourhood of Railway vicinity.”

Source: PIB

### **Changes in ASI Act opposed**

(GS Prelims and Mains 1 – Heritage and Culture; Conservation of monuments.)

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, which proposes to allow the construction of Centre-approved public infrastructure within a 100 metre radius of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)-protected monuments at a Parliamentary panel’s meeting.

Committee headed by the Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, said this could open the way for denigration of ancient monuments in the name of development.

The three historians, quoting from various examples, built a case for not disturbing the present arrangement, where no construction is allowed within 100 metres of a protected structure even for infrastructure projects like metro trains.

Source: The Hindu.

### **Indo – Mongolian Joint Exercise: Nomadic Elephant**

(GS Prelims and Mains 2 – International Relations.)

Indo-Mongolia joint exercise Nomadic Elephant-2018, commenced today at Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF)

Exercise Nomadic Elephant is an annual, bilateral exercise since 2006 which is designed to strengthen the partnership between Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces.

The exercise will see them improve their tactical and technical skills in joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in rural and urban scenario under United Nations mandate.

Source: PIB

### **Casting capers: Maneka sees animals in wrong role**

(GS Prelims and Mains 3 – Ecology, Biodiversity)

The Women and child development Minister Maneka Gandhi accuses the Animal welfare Board of India for not enforcing rules that specify how animals can be depicted in films and television shows

#### *Important Facts*

Concerned raised by Minister: The Board did not seek details of the species status while giving approval to applicants. The Board allowed the depiction of wildlife in scenes which could promote cruelty to animals.

E.g. (a) the board allows the depiction of a Hoolock gibbon in documentary without enquiring from filmmaker about status of permission.

The board had granted request to many applicants for showing snakes and birds even the applicant did not specified the species information.

The Supreme Court's had ordered ban on a scene showing animal sacrifice. The prevention of cruelty to Animal Act, 1960, provides the power of search and seizure to police if she/he reason to believe that an offence has been committed on animal.

According to "The performing Animal (Registration) Rules, 2001 provide special guidelines for featuring animals in films and asked the owner of the film to ensure the following: Animal is not continuously used for excessive number of takes in shooting, The fight scene shall not be shot in any lives stock holding area, The owner shall inform the prescribed authority at least four weeks in advance regarding shoots of animals.

Source: The Hindu.

## Delhi launches doorstep delivery of government services

(GS Prelims and Mains 2 – Governance.)

Delhi government has launched an ambitious project to deliver public services at door steps.

### *Important Facts*

Residents can dial 1076 to place a request for doorstep delivery of services.

Request for delivery of services will be provided from 8 am to 10 pm but the call centre setup to facilitate the delivery will function round the clock. As of now 40 documents can be delivered under this scheme. Plan to extend it further to 100 documents.

Some of the services include the delivery of:

- Driving license
- Marriage registration
- Ration card
- Birth certificate
- Water connection

A nominal fee of Rs 50 per service. Government has hired VFS global (a private firm), through which the services will be provided. Mobile Sahayaks will be recruited by the firm.

They will help in the functioning by:

- Visiting homes to help in filling forms, payment of fees and collection of document.
- Submitting the document at the government office concerned.

Source: The Hindu.

## EDITORIAL

### **COMCASA will help India track China's Indian Ocean moves better**

The foundational agreement Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) which India concluded with the U.S. at the 2+2 dialogue will enable Indian military to get a better picture of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) which is seeing increasing Chinese movements, officials said.

COMCASA:

“With CISMOA [COMCASA is an India-specific version of CISMOA], Indian armed forces will get to fully exploit the capability of the military platforms procured from the US. For instance, the P-8I reconnaissance aircraft of the Navy which have emerged as a major force multiplier are currently operating at limited capacity,” a defence official said on Friday.

As a consequence of CISMOA, India will get access to Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System or CENTRIXS for short which is the secure communication system network of the US.

Navy ships with CENTRIXS systems on board can communicate securely with the U.S. Navy when needed and can benefit from the wider situational picture of the region as they have a large number of ships and aircraft deployed.

“This will reduce the stress on our assets and allow us prioritise our deployments more efficiently,” one officer observed.

Even within the system there are also specific codes/keys which have to be verified by both sides to enable communication or access information, the officer said.

According to information on the U.S. Navy website, “CENTRIXS consists of a collection of coalition wide area networks (WAN) known as enclaves” and is a “great enabler, allowing ship-to-ship operational dialogue between the two nations in text and web-based formats.”

However, there are persistent concerns that this would allow U.S. Navy access to India’s own secure communication network and also that the information shared with the U.S. will be accessible by Pakistan. Officials brushed aside these fears as specific measures have been incorporated in the agreement to “have full access to the relevant equipment and there will be no disruptions.”

“Data acquired through such systems cannot be disclosed or transferred to any person or entity without India’s consent,” another official said, adding this is an enabling instrument and does not commit India to acquire U.S. platforms. So far in joint exercises, Indian Navy used to temporarily plug in portable CENTRIXS systems to communicate with U.S. assets.

### **MAINS QUESTION**

**Q: The Union Cabinet has approved the policy framework to permit exploration and exploitation of unconventional hydrocarbons. What are the implications to Economy? Discuss.**

### **PRELIMS QUESTIONS**

**1. Nomadic Elephant is joint Armed exercise between**

- a. Indo – China.
- b. Indo – Mongolian.
- c. Indo – Russia.
- d. None.

**Answer: B**

Explanation: Indo-Mongolia joint exercise Nomadic Elephant-2018, commenced today at Mongolian Armed Forces (MAF) Exercise Nomadic Elephant is an annual, bilateral exercise since 2006 which is designed to strengthen the partnership between Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces. The exercise will see them improve their tactical and technical skills in joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in rural and urban scenario under United Nations mandate.

## 2. Choose the wrong statement related to Apsara – U Reactor

- a. It is the first research reactor in Asia that worked nearly five decades before shutting down in 2009, is now operational as 'Apsara-U' on Trombay campus of Goa.
- b. The reactor can also be used for research and production of radioisotopes for medical application.
- c. Both.
- d. None.

**Answer: A**

Explanation: Apsara, the first research reactor in Asia that worked nearly five decades before shutting down in 2009, is now operational as 'Apsara-U' on Trombay campus of Maharashtra. NOT GOA.

## 3. "Rail Sahyog" portal is

- a. For upgrading its infrastructure, technology, hygiene among host of other things for an enhanced passenger experience.
- b. Portal is an example of changing times & speedy execution of projects in Railways. Salient feature of this portal is its simplicity & transparency.
- c. Both.
- d. None.

**Answer: C**

Explanation: A railway is taking various initiatives for upgrading its infrastructure, technology, hygiene among host of other things for an enhanced passenger experience. "Rail Sahyog" portal is an example of changing times & speedy execution of projects in Railways. Salient feature of this portal is its simplicity & transparency. Portal will provide an opportunity for Industry/ Companies/ Associations to collaborate with Railways. This portal will not only be beneficial for passengers but also for neighbourhood of Railway vicinity."