

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

PROPOSED IMMIGRATION LAW

Significant Provisions of the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

- This Bill aims to streamline, modernize, and strengthen immigration regulations while enhancing national security and compliance mechanisms.
- **Comprehensive Consolidation of Immigration Laws**
 - The Bill merges multiple existing laws into a single framework.
 - Clearly defines the **roles and functions** of the **Immigration Officer** and the **Bureau of Immigration (BoI)**.
 - Provides **legal backing** for immigration functions, which were previously handled without a dedicated statutory basis.
- **Clear Guidelines on Passport, Visa, and Foreigner Registration**
 - Establishes legal provisions for **passport and visa requirements**.
 - Strengthens regulations for **registration and monitoring of foreigners** entering or residing in India.
- **Responsibilities of Educational and Medical Institutions**
 - Defines **obligations** for **universities, hospitals, nursing homes, and medical institutions** admitting foreign nationals.
 - Previously, foreigners had to register with the **Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO)**, but no formal rules governed institutions accepting them.
 - Existing rule requiring hotels and guest houses to report foreigners' passport details to the police remains in place.
- **Carrier Liability and Enforcement Provisions**
 - Strengthens provisions related to the **liability of carriers**, such as airlines and transport operators, in ensuring compliance with immigration laws.
- **Retention of the 'Burden of Proof' Clause**
 - Maintains the existing legal provision where the **burden of proof** lies on the individual to establish that they are **not a foreigner** if questioned by authorities.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

Provisions for Detection, Deportation, and Detention of Foreigners

- **States Empowered to Detect and Deport Undocumented Migrants**
 - The Central Government does not have a dedicated federal police force for detecting and deporting illegal foreigners. The responsibility for identifying and deporting undocumented migrants is entrusted to State police.
- **Provisions for ‘Supervised Residence’ Instead of Detention Centres**
 - The Bill does not use the term ‘detention centres’.
 - **Clause 13** mandates that foreigners **reside in designated areas under supervision**, subject to rules on:
 - Maintenance and discipline.
 - Punishment for breaches of discipline.
 - Restricted access to such areas as per government regulations.

Mechanisms to Track the Movement of Foreigners

- **Identification of Overstaying Foreigners:** The MHA has directed States to form two committees to identify foreigners who:
 - Entered before and after January 1, 2011.
 - Overstayed beyond their visa period.
 - **Tracking Through the e-FRRO Portal**
 - Details of foreigners violating visa rules are uploaded on **e-FRRO portal**, accessible to the **local police**.
 - **Foreigners Identification Portal:** The MHA has operationalized a dedicated portal for the State police to:
 - Upload biometrics and other details of illegal foreigners.
 - Track and identify migrants for deportation.
 - Prevent them from acquiring Indian identity documents like Aadhaar.
-

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

NAMASTE SCHEME



- The objective of the “National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem” (NAMASTE) scheme is to formalize and institutionalize the persons engaged in **hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks** and promoting safe and mechanized cleaning through trained sanitation workers.
- It is jointly supervised by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE)** and the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.
- **Implementing agency:** It is implemented by the National Safai Karmacharis Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE).
- **Duration:** It would be implemented for three years from **FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26**.
- **Target Groups:** Sewer and septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and waste pickers in urban areas of India

What are the Aims of NAMASTE Scheme?

- Zero fatalities in sanitation work in India
- All sanitation work is **performed by skilled workers**
- No sanitation workers come in direct contact with human fecal matter
- Sanitation workers are collectivized into SHGs and are empowered to run sanitation enterprises
- All Sewer and Septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) have access to alternative livelihoods

SAROJINI NAIDU

National Women's Day is observed annually in India on February 13th to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

- Sarojini Naidu was born on February 13, 1879 in



- She was a renowned Indian poet, freedom fighter and politician.
- She was famously known as the "**Nightingale of India**" for her lyrical poetry.
- She contributed significantly to India's independence movement.

- **Role in India's Independence Movement**

- She took part in the **Congress session in Bombay in 1904**.
 - She made associations with Gokhale, Tagore, Annie Besant, Gandhi and Nehru.
 - She went on to become the **first Indian women** to preside **Indian National Congress** in 1925 at its 40th session, **Kanpur**.
 - Naidu was involved in **Non-cooperation movement, Home Rule movement, Salt Satyagraha**.
 - In **1917** she headed the **All-India Women's Deputation** and championed women's suffrage before E. S. Montagu (Secretary of State for India).
 - In the same year, she **along with Annie Besant** and others set up the **Women's India Association**.
- **Contribution to Constitution Making:** She was appointed to the Constituent Assembly from **Bihar**. She spoke about the importance of adopting a national flag in the Assembly.
 - Naidu was **appointed as the Governor of Uttar Pradesh** from 15th August 1947.

NATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (NSDC)



- NSDC, established in 2009, is a **not – for - profit** company set up by the **Ministry of Finance**, under Section 25 of the **Companies Act, 1956**.
- It aims to **promote skill development** by catalyzing the creation of large, quality, and for-profit vocational institutions.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

- Its mandate is also to enable a support system which focuses on quality assurance, information systems, and train the trainer academies either directly or through partnerships.
- NSDC acts as a catalyst in skill development by providing **funding to enterprises, companies, and organizations that provide skill training.**
- It also **develops appropriate models** to enhance, support, and coordinate private sector initiatives.
- The present **equity base of NSDC is Rs. 10 Crore of which the government of India**, through the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), **holds 49%, while the private sector holds the balance 51%.**

WHAT ARE COLORECTAL DISEASES?



- Colorectal disease is a general term used to describe many **digestive conditions that affect the colon and rectum.**
- These diseases can be **inflammatory, infectious, functional, or cancerous.**
- These conditions can range from **mild to severe.**
- Colorectal diseases **include colon and rectal cancer, diverticulitis, and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)**, such as **Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis**, among others.
- Colorectal diseases are very common. Some can cause recognizable symptoms such as abdominal pain or rectal bleeding. Others may progress silently, detectable only through screenings.
- **Common symptoms** of colorectal diseases include:
 - Abdominal pain
 - Blood in your stool
 - Diarrhea or constipation that doesn't go away
 - Rectal or anal pain
- **Prevention & Public Health Measures:**

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

- **Dietary Changes:** **High-fiber diet** (whole grains, fruits, vegetables), **reduced red meat consumption**.
- **Lifestyle Modifications:** Regular **physical activity**, **adequate hydration**, avoiding smoking, and alcohol.
- **Screening & Early Detection:**
 - **Colonoscopy** for individuals > 45 years.
 - **Fecal occult blood test (FOBT)** for detecting hidden blood in stool.
- **Public Health Initiatives:** Awareness programs on colorectal cancer screening and lifestyle modifications.

TRANSFORMING INDIA'S FRUITS & VEGETABLES SECTOR - LESSONS FROM DAIRY SUCCESS

Issues Faced by F&V Sector in India:

- Despite its nutritional and economic significance, F&V receives **less policy support** compared to cereals.
- **Lack of organized value chains, storage, and processing infrastructure** leads to seasonal gluts, price crashes, and post-harvest losses.
- **Post-harvest losses** amount to Rs 1.53 trillion annually, with 8.1% of fruits and 7.3% of vegetables lost.
- Also, farmers receive only about 30% of the consumer price.

Replicating the Milk Revolution in F&V:

- **Success of the milk sector:** Led by **Verghese Kurien**, India transformed from a milk-deficient country to the **world's largest producer** with 239 million tonnes in 2023-24.
- **Impact of dairy cooperatives:** AMUL ensures that farmers receive 75-80% of the consumer price.
- **F&V vs dairy sector:** Unlike dairy, F&V involves multiple commodities, seasonality, and regional concentration, making **price stabilization complex**.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) as a Solution:

- **Role of FPOs:** Integrating farmers into structured value chains can mitigate price volatility and post-harvest losses.
- **Case Study - Sahyadri Farmer Producer Company Ltd (SFPCL):**
 - Founded in 2004 in Nashik, Maharashtra, with 10 farmers.
 - Expanded to 26,500 farmers across 252 villages and 31,000 acres.
 - Revenue surged from Rs 13 crore (2011-12) to Rs 1,549 crore (2023-24).
 - 64.6% revenue from domestic markets, 35.4% from exports (41 countries).
- **Performance of SFPCL:**
 - **Export performance:** Dominated by grapes (63.9% of exports), followed by mango slices (18.2%) and banana (12.8%).
 - **Processing infrastructure:** 35% of domestic revenue from tomatoes processed into ketchup, puree, and sauces.
 - **Employment generation:** Over 6,000 jobs, 32% being women employees.
- **Key interventions needed:**
 - **Strengthening FPOs:** Providing working capital, infrastructure, and digital integration.
 - **Market linkages:** Platforms like Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and blockchain for transparency.
 - **Reviving and expanding:** Operation Greens and the National Horticulture Mission.
 - **Commodity-specific value chains:** Prioritizing processing of at least 10-20% of F&V produce to prevent distress sales.

Need for a National Fruit & Vegetable Board:

- A **centralized body**, similar to the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), is essential to streamline market linkages, promote value chains, and integrate retailers like SAFAL.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

MOUNT ETNA



Mount Etna, Europe's tallest and most active volcano, has erupted once again, sending lava flows and thick clouds of ash into the sky.

- Also known by its Latin name 'Aetna,' Mount Etna is an **active stratovolcano** situated in the Metropolitan City of Catania on the eastern coast of the **Italian island of Sicily**.
- It is located above the convergent plate boundary between the African and **Eurasian** Plates, and is one of the most active volcanoes in the world.
- It is one of Europe's tallest active volcanoes and Italy's highest peak, located south of the Alps.
- Etna covers an area of 1,190 sq km with a basal circumference of 140 km.
- Due to its recent volcanic activities and closeness to densely populated areas, the **United Nations** designated Mount Etna as a Decade Volcano.
- It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

SIMLIPAL TIGER RESERVE



- It is located within the Mayurbhanj District, in the Northern-most part of **Odisha**.
- It is spread over 2750 sq km and has some beautiful waterfalls like Joranda and Barehipani.

History and current status:

- It was formally designated a **tiger reserve under Project Tiger**.
- It was declared as a wildlife sanctuary in 1979.

Current Affairs - 16 February 2025

- Later in 1980, Government of Orissa proposed 303 sq. km of the sanctuary as National Park.
- UNESCO added this National Park to its **list of Biosphere Reserves** in May 2009.
- It comes under **Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve** that includes the adjacent Hadgarh and Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- It is surrounded by high plateaus and hills, the highest peak being the twin **peaks of Khairiburu and Meghashini** (1515m above mean sea level).
- The terrain is mostly undulating and hilly, interspersed with open grasslands and wooded areas.

Vegetation: It is a mix of different forest types and habitats, with **Northern tropical moist deciduous** dominating some semi-evergreen patches.

Fauna:

- It is known for the **tiger, elephant and hill mynah**.
- It holds the highest tiger population in the state of Orissa.
- 55 species of mammals, 304 species of birds, 60 species of reptiles, 21 species of frogs, 38 species of fish and 164 species of butterflies have been recorded from the reserve.

Fauna: An astounding 1078 species of plants, including 94 species of **orchids** are found here.
