

## Prelim Bits 18-02-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Leprosy Disease

*India accounts for 52% of world's new leprosy patients after COVID pandemic.*

#### Hansen's disease

- Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*.
- The disease affects the skin, peripheral nerves, mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tract and the eyes.
- Leprosy is known to occur at all ages and it is curable.
- Treatment during early stages can prevent disability.
- Leprosy is transmitted via droplets, from the nose and mouth, during close and frequent contact with untreated cases.

#### Leprosy in India

- India was declared as "Leprosy Eliminated" in 2005.
- But it still accounts for over half (52%) of world's new leprosy patients.
- This increase in numbers was mainly attributed towards COVID-19.
- After COVID pandemic the case detections are dropped by 43% in 2020-22 and by 34% in 2021-22.
- A decline in detection has led to increase in patients with grade 2 disabilities.

#### Steps Taken to eliminate leprosy

*India has achieved the prevalence rate of 1 case per 10,000 population at national level in 2005.*

- **National Leprosy Eradication Programme (1954-55)** - Leprosy-free India is the vision of the NLEP.
- **ABSULS (ASHA-based Surveillance for Leprosy Suspects)** - where grassroot level workers constantly engaged in examining and reporting suspects.
- **Focused Leprosy Campaign (FLC)** - Special emphasis under the FLC was given to areas that were difficult to access or had child cases and cases with disabilities.
- *India has set the target of Leprosy Mukt Bharat by 2027, 3 years ahead of the SDG.*
- **National Strategic Plan & Roadmap for Leprosy (2023-27)** - It will aid in advancing the campaign against leprosy, to stop transmission, by speeding case detection efforts and maintaining a robust surveillance infrastructure.
- **Nikusth 2.0** - It is an integrated portal for leprosy case management under National

Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP).

## References

1. [The Hindu|India accounts for 52% of world's new leprosy](#)
2. [PIB | Leprosy Mukht Bharat by 2027](#)

## Ohio Chemical Spill

*A freight train carrying hazardous substances derailed near the village of East Palestine in Ohio, U.S recently.*

- The toxic chemicals carried in the train involves vinyl chloride, butyl acrylate, ethylhexyl acrylate, and ethylene glycol monobutyl ether.
- Officials was reported to be burned the toxic vinyl chloride by releasing it into a trench, sending black smoke high in the air.

## Vinyl chloride (VC)

- It is a colourless industrial gas that burns easily.
- **Uses** - It is used in the manufacturing of Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), a form used to make variety of plastic products.
- It is also produced as a combustion product in tobacco smoke.
- **Effects** - Exposure to VC may leads to a rare form of liver cancer, brain and lung cancers, lymphoma, and leukemia.
- VC in the air breaks down and forms other harmful compounds, including hydrochloric acid, formaldehyde, and carbon dioxide.
- Burning vinyl chloride, releases phosgene and hydrogen chloride into the air.
- Phosgene is extremely toxic and it was used as a chemical weapon by the Germany army during World War I.
- Hydrogen chloride is an irritant that affects the skin, the nose, the mouth, and the eyes.

## References

1. [The Hindu|Toxic chemical spill in Ohio](#)
2. [The NewYork Times | Health Fears Remain After Ohio Derailment](#)

## REAIM 2023

*The world's first international summit on the responsible use of artificial intelligence in the military was recently held in Netherlands.*

## Responsible AI in Military Domain Summit (REAIM) 2023

- **Host** - The World Forum, Hague, Netherlands

- **Co-host** - Republics of Korea
- **Objective** - It acts as a platform for all stakeholders to forge a common understanding of the opportunities, dilemmas and vulnerabilities associated with military AI.
- It brings together governments, corporations, academia, startups, and civil societies.
- Themes of REAIM 2023:
  - Mythbusting the characteristics of AI
  - Responsible deployment and use of AI
  - Governance frameworks for responsible AI

*Hague was often referred as the International city of Peace and Justice*

## References

1. [The Hindu | REAIM 2023](#)
2. [REAIM 2023 | About REAIM 2023](#)

## Mehrauli

*Recently, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) is undertaking a drive to clear unauthorized encroachments in the Mehrauli Archaeological Park.*

Mehrauli is considered to be the oldest 'city' of Delhi and is the oldest area of the metropolis to be continuously inhabited.

## Evolution of Mehrauli

- It was founded as Lalkot in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by Anangpal II, a ruler of the Rajput Tomar dynasty.
- This was later christened *Quila Rai Pithora* by Mughal court historian Abu'l Fazl in his epic hagiography, 'Ain-i-Akbari'.
- This city then passed hands from the Tomars to the Chauhans, who are credited to have further fortified the complex.
- The city then fell into the hands of the Mamluk dynasty (Slave dynasty) in 1192.
- Later, Qutubudin Aibak, the first ruler of the Slave dynasty, began construction of Qutub Minar as well as the Quwwat-al-Islam Mosque, the oldest known mosque in north India.

*India's oldest mosque, Cheraman Juma, was built by Arab merchants in Kerala*

- Mehrauli is also a spiritual centre, home to both Hindu and Muslim shrines.
- The annual community celebration of 'Phool Walon ki Sair' or Sair-e-Gulfaroshan (walk of the flowers) is a witness to Mehrauli's cosmopolitanism.
- This 19th-century Mughal-era festival has become the symbol of the city's communal

harmony since 1962.

## References

1. [The Indian Express | Mehrauli-The oldest 'city' of Delhi](#)
2. [The Indian Express | Anti-encroachment drive](#)

## Lavani Dance

*Recently a noted Lavani dancer Megha Ghadge raised the issue of obscenity and vulgarity in dance performances under the name of Lavani programmes.*

## Lavani Dance

- It is traditional folk-art form of Maharashtra with an aesthetical combination of singing, enactment and dance.
- The word Lavani comes from 'lavanya' or beauty.
- Lavani has attained particular popularity in the Peshwa era in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Traditionally, performances were held in front of kings, and for the entertainment of tired soldiers resting during breaks in fighting.
- There are several sub-genres of Lavani, of which the most popular is the Shringarik (erotic) kind.

## References

1. [The Indian Express | What is Lavani](#)
2. [The Indian Express | When Lavani hit the wrong note](#)

