

CCPA PROBING IAS COACHING CENTRES FOR MISLEADING ADS

Why in news?

- The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) is probing 20 IAS coaching institutes for making misleading claims in their advertisements and for unfair trade practices.
- Four of the twenty institutions have already been slapped with a penalty of Rs 1 lakh.

Consumer Protection Act, 2019:

1986	VS	2019
No separate regulator.	REGULATOR	Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to be formed.
District: up to Rs. 20 Lac State: Rs. 20 Lac - Rs. 1 Cr National: above Rs. 20 Lac	Pecuniary Jurisdiction	District: up to Rs. 1 Cr State: Rs. 1 Cr - Rs. 10 Cr National: above Rs. 10 Cr
Case could be filed where the defendant resides or suits for personal gain.	Territorial Jurisdiction	Case can be filed where the complainant resides or sues for personal gain.
No provision. Consumer can approach the civil courts but not consumer courts.	Product Liability	Consumer can also claim compensation for harm caused by the product or service.
No provision.	E-commerce	All rules of direct selling extended to e-commerce.
No legal provision.	Mediation cells	Court can refer settlement through mediation.
Within 30 days, retaining the power to condone the delay.	Appeal to State Commission	Within 45 day, retaining the power to condone the delay.

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 replaced the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, and seeks to widen its scope in addressing consumer concerns.
- The new Act recognises offences such as providing false information regarding the quality or quantity of a good or service, and misleading advertisements.
- It also specifies action to be taken if goods and services are found “dangerous, hazardous or unsafe”.
- The Act came into force in July 2020 and it will empower consumers and help them in protecting their rights through its various notified rules and provisions.

Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA):

- **About:** The CCPA is a **statutory body** constituted under Section 10 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.
- **Mandate:** To protect the rights of the consumer by cracking down on unfair trade practices, and false and misleading advertisements that are detrimental to the interests of the public and consumers.
- **Concerned Ministry:** Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- **Powers & Functions of CCPA:** It is empowered to:
 - conduct investigations into violation of consumer rights and institute complaints / prosecution,
 - order recall of unsafe goods and services,

- order discontinuation of unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements,
- impose penalties on manufacturers/endorsers/publishers of misleading advertisements.

Observations made by CCPA

- Every time the results of any competitive exam, including the UPSC Civil Services, are announced, coaching institutes would go an advertising spree.
- Names and pictures of the top rankers are used in these ads to indicate their enrolment at the institute.
- However, they do not disclose the nature of the enrolment, that is, the course they might have pursued in the institute.
- Ideally, the advertisements must include the course they enrolled for (which could be a test series, learning course or a revision course).
- Thus, it would qualify as deliberate concealment of important information and categorisation as a 'misleading advertisement' under Section 2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.
- First time violations may invite penalties up to Rs 10 lakh.
- Subsequent violations may attract penalties up to Rs 50 lakh, with other potential legal action should the non-compliance continue.

WHAT IS THE INDIAN COMPUTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT-IN)

India's cyber security watchdog CERT-In recently found "multiple vulnerabilities" in the popular Google Chrome operating system (OS), which can even bypass security on the targeted system.



About CERT-In:

- It is the **national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents** as and when they occur.
- It is a functional **organisation of the Ministry of Information & Electronics Technology**.
- **Objective: Securing Indian cyberspace.**
- CERT-In has been **operational since January 2004.**

- **Objectives:**
 - Preventing cyber attacks against the country's cyberspace.
 - Responding to cyber attacks and minimising damage and recovery time
 - Reducing national vulnerability to cyber attacks
 - Enhancing security awareness among common citizens
- The Information Technology Act of 2000 designated **CERT-In** to serve as the national agency to perform the following functions in the area of cyber security:
 - Collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on cyber incidents;
 - Forecast and alerts of cyber security incidents;
 - Emergency measures for handling cyber security incidents;
 - Coordination of cyber incident response activities;
 - Issue guidelines, advisories, vulnerability notes, and whitepapers relating to information security practises, procedures, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents;
- **Constituency:** The constituency of CERT-In is the Indian cyber community and Indian cyberspace.
- CERT-In provides services to organisations in the Government, Public, and Private sectors. In addition, CERT-In provides services to individuals and home users as well.
- Disclosure of information will be followed in accordance with Indian Constitutional laws.
- **CERT-In collaborates with:**
 - Organisations within and outside the country engaged in specialised areas in protecting and responding to cyber security incidents;
 - Organisations engaged in the collection of intelligence in general, law enforcement, investigation, and forensics;
 - Academia, industry, service providers, and research and development institutions;
 - Individuals or groups of individuals;

[ONE PORTAL FOR DRUG CONTROL: UPCOMING IT PLATFORM TO TRACK MEDICINES END-TO-END](#)

Why in News?

- The integrated IT platform that apex drug regulator (CDSCO) has been working on will be able to track products right from the stage of procuring raw material, to supply chain, and finally patterns of consumption.

Drug Regulation in India:

- **The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945:** These have entrusted various responsibilities to central and state regulators for regulation of drugs and cosmetics.
- **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO):** The CDSCO under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, is the **National Regulatory Authority (NRA)** of India.
 - Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, **CDSCO is responsible** for -
 - Approval of Drugs.
 - Conduct of **Clinical Trials**.
 - Laying down the **standards** for Drugs.
 - **Control** over the quality of imported Drugs in the country.
 - **Coordination** of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations.
 - Further CDSCO along with state regulators, is **jointly responsible** for grant of licences of certain specialised categories of critical Drugs such as vaccine and sera, etc.
 - The Indian government has announced plans to subject all medical devices, including implants and contraception, to CDSCO scrutiny.
- **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI):** DCGI is the head of department of the CDSCO of the Government of India responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines and sera in India.
 - DCGI also sets standards for manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India.

Significance of the Drug Portal:

- The integrated IT platform will bring in **transparency and uniformity** in all the processes (of drug manufacture and distribution) and **create confidence in domestic and international markets**.

- The platform will bring online activities that are still done physically like periodic safety updates, show cause notices, adverse event reporting and post approval changes.
- **The portal will help improve inspections** by assigning inspectors at random to various sites in a masked manner, randomised allocation of work such as
 - Processing applications for licences and approvals, and
 - Assigning QR codes to samples collected and reports to allow verification at every stage of the process.
- **It will also automatically generate officials' performance reports.**
- **The portal will create searchable registries** of manufacturers, marketeers, retailers, pharmacies, and even subject matter experts.

WORLDWIDE GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

Recently the Chief Economic Adviser of India raised concern over the use of the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators in rating assessments by credit rating agencies, especially for emerging economies.



About Worldwide Governance Indicators:

- It is released by the **World Bank**.
- It provides a ranking of 215 countries and territories.
- It is based **on six dimensions** of governance:
 - Voice and Accountability
 - Political Stability and Absence of Violence
 - Government Effectiveness
 - Regulatory Quality
 - Rule of Law
 - Control of Corruption
- These indicators are designed to help researchers and analysts assess broad patterns in perceptions of governance across countries and over time.

- The World Bank compiles the Worldwide Governance Indicators using data from more than 30 think tanks, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, and private firms deemed credible.
- The WGI was developed in 1999 by two World Bank researchers, Daniel Kaufmann and Aart Kraay.
- The data are **updated annually in September.**

Key Facts about the World Bank

- It is an **international financial institution** that provides loans and grants to the governments of low and middle-income/developing countries to pursue capital projects.
- It was established along with the IMF at **the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference.**
- **The WB Group Includes**
 - **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD):** It provides loans, credits, and grants.
 - **International Development Association (IDA):** It provides low or no-interest loans to low-income countries.
 - **International Finance Corporation (IFC):** It provides investment, advice, and asset management to private companies and governments.
 - **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA):** It ensures lenders and investors against political risks such as war.
 - International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID): It settles investment disputes between investors and countries.
- **India is not a member of ICSID.**

COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Recently, the Coconut Development Board (CDB) launched the ‘Hello Naariyal’ Friends of



Coconut Trees (FoCT) call centre facility to help farmers with coconut harvesting and plant management operations.

About the Coconut Development Board:

- It is a **statutory body** established by the Government of India.
- It was established for the **integrated development of coconut production** and utilisation in the country, with a focus on productivity increases and product diversification.
- The board came into existence on January 12, **1981**.
- It functions under the **administrative control** of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India**.
- **Headquarters:** Kochi in Kerala
 - It has regional offices in Bangalore in Karnataka, Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Guwahati in Assam, and Patna in Bihar.
- **Functions**
 - Adopting measures for the **development of the coconut industry**.
 - Imparting **technical advice** to those engaged in coconut cultivation and industry.
 - Providing **financial and other assistance** for the expansion of the area under coconut.
 - Encouraging adoption of modern technologies for processing of coconut and its products.
 - Adopting measures **to get incentive prices for coconut** and its products.
 - Recommending measures for improving the marketing of coconut and its products.
 - Recommending measures for regulating imports and exports of coconut and its products.
 - **Fixing grades, specifications and standards** for coconut and its products.

What is Hello Naariyal?

- It is a call centre in Kerala that functions from the **headquarters of the Board in Kochi**.
- The initiative will benefit coconut **growers and extend its services** to traditional coconut-growing States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka through the respective unit offices of the Board.
- The services will be available **at block and gram panchayat levels** in respective districts for carrying out activities related to coconut cultivation, including coconut tree climbing, plant protection, harvesting, seed nut procurement, and nursery management.

LEONID METEOR SHOWER

Many skywatchers in India and around the globe are poised for a cosmic treat—the Leonid Meteor Shower, which has already been underway since November 6, is set to reach its peak in the pre-dawn hours of November 17–18, 2023.



About the Leonid meteor shower:

- It is brought about by the dust and debris abandoned by the comet **Tempel-Tuttle**.

- It is commonly **peaking in mid-November**.
- The shower is called after the Leo constellation, from which the meteors appear to radiate.
- This Tempel-Tuttle comet circles the sun at **regular intervals of 33 years**.
- When the comet passes near the sun, it warms up and delivers a tonne of material, shaping a dense cloud of dust and gas around it.
- This cloud follows the comet's circle and fans out over the long run.
- Every year, the Earth crosses the **orbit of Tempel-Tuttle in mid-November** and, in some cases, experiences the comet's dust cloud.
- When this occurs, the dust particles enter the earth's atmosphere at high speed (around 70 km/s) and catch fire, creating bright streaks of light in the sky.
- These are what we see as the meteors, the Leonid meteor shower.
- The Leonids are noted for sometimes causing meteor storms, as described by a higher influx of meteors.

WHAT IS WASP-107B?

NASA's James Webb Telescope recently discovered a new exoplanet named 'Wasp-107b', which is the size of Jupiter.



About Wasp-107b:

- It is a newly discovered exoplanet situated **200 light-years**

away in the **Virgo constellation**.

- The mass of WASP-107b is **30.5 Earths**, and it takes **only six days** to orbit its home star, which is slightly cooler and less massive than our sun.
- It shares **Jupiter's size but possesses the mass of Neptune**, making it **less dense than other gas giants**.
- The planet's low density allowed astronomers to look 50 times deeper into the atmosphere of the planet compared to observations achieved for more dense planets, like Jupiter.
- The **exoplanet is scorching hot** (with an outer atmosphere that's more than 900 degrees Fahrenheit).

Sand Rain:

- Wasp-107b exhibits a **water cycle akin to Earth's**, but with one peculiar difference: **instead of water droplets, the planet experiences 'sand rain'**.
- The **falling grains are, in fact, silicate vapours rising from lower atmospheric levels**.
- Similar to Earth's water cycle, **these sand clouds precipitate back to lower planetary atmospheric levels**.
- In addition to the silicate clouds, scientists have **identified water vapour and sulphur dioxide** in the atmosphere of WASP-107b.

What are gas giants?

- Gas giants are **large planets composed mostly of gases, such as hydrogen and helium**, with a **relatively small rocky core**.
- The **gas giants of our solar system- Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune-** together make up a group known as the **Jovian planets (Jupiter-like)**.
- The solar system's four gas giants **reside farthest from the sun, past the orbits of Mars and the asteroid belt**. So they are **also called outer planets**.
- All of the outer planets **have numerous moons**. They all also **have planetary rings, composed of dust and other small particles** that encircle the planet in a thin plane.