

### WHAT IS THE PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA (PCI)?

The Press Council of India (PCI) recently issued an advisory to the print media on 'paid news'.



#### About the Press Council of India (PCI):

- The PCI was first set up in 1966 by the parliament on the recommendations of the First Press Commission under the chairmanship of Justice J.R Mudholkar.
- The present council functions under the Press Council Act 1978.
- It is a statutory, quasi-judicial body that acts as a watchdog of the press in India.
- **Composition:**
  - It consists of a Chairman and 28 other members.
  - The Chairman is nominated by a committee consisting of Chairman of Rajya Sabha, the Speaker of Lok Sabha, and one representative of the council
  - The Chairman, by convention, has been a retired judge of the Supreme Court.
  - The term of the Chairman and the members of the Council is 3 years.
- **Primary Function:** To check the media practice and to keep an eye on the freedom of the press.
- **Other Functions:**
  - Helping newspapers to maintain their independence;
  - Building up a code of conduct for journalists and newspapers according to high professional standards;
  - Reviewing any development which is likely to restrict the supply and dissemination of news of public interest and importance;
  - Reviewing such cases where assistance has been received by any newspaper or news agency in India from foreign sources, as referred to it by the Central Government;
  - Providing facilities for the proper education and training of persons in the profession of journalism;

- Studying developments that may lead towards monopoly or concentration of ownership of newspapers and suggest remedies;

### **Powers:**

- It adjudicates the complaints either against the Press for violation of journalistic ethics or by the Press for interference with its freedom.
- The council shall have the same powers throughout India as are vested in a Civil court while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
- Every inquiry held by the council shall be deemed to be a judicial proceeding under sections 193 and 228 of the Indian Penal Code.
- The decision of the council is final and cannot be challenged in any court of law.

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### EXERCISE SHINYUU MAITRI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in Exercise Shinyuu Maitri with the Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF).



#### **About Exercise Shinyuu Maitri :**

- It is a bilateral military exercise between Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF).
- The exercise is being organized on the sidelines of the Indo-Japan Joint Army Exercise, Dharma Guardian.
- The IAF contingent is participating in the exercise with one C-17 Globemaster III
- The first phase of the exercise consists of discussions on transport operations and tactical manoeuvring, followed by the second phase of flying drills by IAF's C-17 and JASDF C-2 transport aircraft.
- The exercise will enhance mutual understanding and interoperability between the two air forces.

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### WHAT ARE MOAI STATUES?

Scientists have recently found a previously undiscovered moai statue on Easter Island.



### About Moai statues:

- They are **massive megalithic stone-carved human-shaped statues** found at **Easter Island**.
- They are **famous for their carved heads** and "Pukao," a **hat-like covering** made from a **soft red stone**.
- They were **built in** approximately 1400 - 1650 A.D. by the **natives of this island known as Rapa Nui**.
- There are **around 1000 Moai statues** which are **made up of volcanic tuff**, the tallest of them being 33 feet.
- **On average**, they weigh between **3 to 5 tons**, but the heaviest ones **can weigh up to 80**.
- The **tools used** for carving the moai statues are called **toki**, and are **simple handheld chisels**.

### What do moais represent?

- They were **built to honor chieftains** or other important people **who had passed away**.
- They were **placed on rectangular stone platforms** called **ahu**, which are **tombs for the people** that the statues represented.
- The moais were **intentionally made with different characteristics** since they were intended to **keep the appearance of the person they represented**.

### Easter Island:

- Easter Island, also called **Rapa Nui**, is a **remote Chilean territory** located in the **Pacific Ocean**, roughly 2,200 miles from mainland Chile.
- It is one of the **most remote inhabited places in the world**.
- Much of the island, which is home to some 8,000 residents, is **protected as a national park** and a **UNESCO World Heritage site**.

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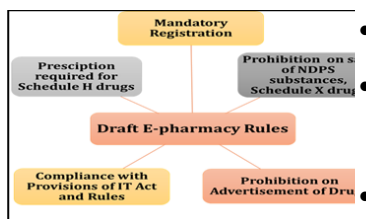
[E-PHARMACIES: ON REGULATING ONLINE SALE OF DRUGS IN INDIA](#)

## Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) **pulled up at least twenty companies** including Tata-1mg, Flipkart, Apollo, PharmEasy, **for selling medicines online.**
- This happened after the All-India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD), a powerful lobby of over 12 lakh pharmacists, threatened to launch a country-wide agitation if the government didn't act.

## What is the Legislative Framework for e-Pharmacies in India?

- As of now, **no exact rules are in place for E-drug stores in India**, and this is a significant inhibitor to the online drug store market in India.
- At present, E-pharmacies in India follow the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940, the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules 1945, the Pharmacy Act 1948 and the Indian Medical Act 1956.
- However, the electronic sale of physician-prescribed drugs from online drug store sites is expressed under the **IT Act, 2000.**
- E-pharmacies are managed by state drug controllers and approvals for E-pharmacies should be given by the **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).**
- The MoH&FW in **2018** came out with **draft rules** to control the online offer of medications and availability of genuine drugs from certifiable online sites.



- But, after being sent to a group of ministers, the proposal was immediately put on hold.
- Since then, **multiple court orders** and the 172nd Parliamentary Standing Committee report have called for regulating e-pharmacies.
- **An administrative structure** to oversee/regulate the e-pharmacy sector is necessary when antimicrobial resistance (AMR), criminal and risky movement of drugs, is on the rise.

## How are e-Pharmacies Competing with Chemist Shops?

- Flushed with billions of dollars of private equity, e-pharmacies started offering hefty discounts on medicines in a bid to garner more market share.

- e-Pharmacies call themselves facilitate doorstep delivery.
  - Companies like PharmEasy are building a supply chain from the ground up by buying out big and small wholesale drug distributors like Ascent Health, Desai Pharma, etc.
  - **But this aggressive growth is coming at a cost.** Since 2015, e-pharmacies have recorded losses year-on-year. For example, Tata-1 Mg posted a loss of ₹146 crore in FY22.
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## SOCIAL STOCK EXCHANGE

### Why in news?

- Recently, the National Stock Exchange of India received the final approval from the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to set up a Social Stock Exchange (SSE).

### Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) Instruments

- ZCZP are financial instruments that do not pay periodic interest, but are issued at a discount to their face value and mature at par.
- With its zero-coupon, zero-principal structure, it resembles a debt security like a bond.
- When an entity takes a loan by issuing regular debt security like a bond, it has to make interest payments and the principal when the bond matures.
- But with ZCZP instrument, when an entity issues these securities and raises money, it is not a loan but a donation.
- So, the **borrowing entity does not have to pay interest**—therefore zero coupon—and **it does not have to pay the principal (zero principal) either.**

### What is a Social Stock Exchange?

- **Background:**
  - Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, presenting the Union Budget back in 2019, had proposed to initiate steps for creating a stock exchange under the market regulator's ambit.
  - She had argued that it was time to take our capital markets closer to the masses and meet various social welfare objectives to inclusive growth and financial inclusion.

- The proposal was cleared in September 2021.

- **About:**

- The SSE would function as a **separate segment within the existing stock exchange** and help social enterprises raise funds from the public through its mechanism.
- It would serve as a medium for enterprises to seek finance for their social initiatives, acquire visibility and provide increased transparency about fund mobilisation and utilisation.
- Retail investors can only invest in securities offered by **for-profit social enterprises** (SEs) under the Main Board.
- In all other cases, only institutional investors and non-institutional investors can invest in securities issued by SEs.

**Who will be eligible to be registered or listed on the SSE?**

- Any **non-profit organisation** (NPO) or for-profit social enterprise (FPSEs) that establishes the primacy of social intent would be recognised as a social enterprise (SE).
- Recognition of social enterprise would make the entity eligible to be registered or listed on the SSE.
- As per the SEBI's regulation, the enterprises must be serving to:
  - eradicate either hunger, poverty, malnutrition and inequality;
  - promoting education, employability, equality, empowerment of women and LGBTQIA+ communities; working towards environmental sustainability;
  - protection of national heritage and art or bridging the digital divide, among other things.
- At least 67% of their activities must be directed towards attaining the stated objective.
- This is to be established by enumerating that, in the immediately preceding three-year period:
  - either 67% of its average revenue came from the eligible activities;
  - expenditure (in the same proportion) was incurred towards attaining the objective; or
  - the target population constitute 67% of the overall beneficiary base.
- Corporate foundations, political or religious organisations or activities, professional or trade associations, infrastructure and housing companies (except affordable housing) would **not be identified as an SE**.

- Additionally, non-profit organisations (NPOs) would be deemed ineligible should it be dependent on corporates for more than 50% of its funding.
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## VAIBHAV FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Recently, on the occasion of "National Science Day", Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology launched the VAIBHAV Fellowship scheme for the Indian Diaspora abroad.



### About the VAIBHAV Fellowship scheme:

- The fellowship offers Non-Resident Indian (NRI) researchers an opportunity to work for a **minimum of one month to a maximum of two months a year** with a research institution or an academic institution in India.
  - **Duration:** Three years with the government offering the researchers an amount of up to Rs 37 lakh for the entire period.
  - **Aim:** Improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.
  - This is done through the mobility of faculty/researchers from overseas institutions to India.
  - **Eligibility:** Researchers from institutions featuring in the top **500 QS World University Rankings** will be eligible for the fellowship.
  - The applicant should be a Non-Resident Indian (NRI), Person of Indian Origin (PIO) or Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) and she or he must have obtained Ph.D/M.D/M.S degree from a recognized University.
  - **Significance:** The best of Diaspora minds will collaborate with domestic Minds to deliver world-class projects and products.
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## FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION REGULATION ACT

Recently, the Central government of India suspended the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licence of the Centre for Policy Research (CPR).



### About Foreign Contribution Regulation Act:

- This act was enacted **during the Emergency in 1976** amid apprehensions that foreign powers were interfering in India's affairs by pumping money into the country through independent organisations.
- The FCRA requires **every person or NGO seeking** to receive foreign donations to be
  - Registered under the Act
  - To open a bank account for the receipt of foreign funds in the State Bank of India, Delhi.
  - To **utilise those funds** only for the purpose for which **they have been received** and as stipulated in the Act.

### Eligibility criteria for the registration

- These registrations are **granted to individuals or associations** that have definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, and social programmes.
- The applicant should not be fictitious or benami; and should not have been **prosecuted or convicted for indulging in activities** aimed at **conversion** through **inducement or force**, either directly or indirectly, from one religious faith to another.
- Once granted, FCRA registration is **valid for five years**. NGOs are expected to apply for renewal within six months of the date of expiry of registration.
- Registration can be cancelled if an inquiry finds a false statement in the application
- Once the **registration** of an NGO is **cancelled**, it is not eligible for re-registration for **three years**.
- The ministry also has the power to suspend an NGO's registration **for 180 days** pending inquiry and can freeze its funds.
- All orders of the government **can be challenged in the High Court**.

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[PANNA TIGER RESERVE \(PTR\)](#)



Recently, as part of the Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP), a comprehensive Integrated Landscape Management Plan (ILMP) has been prepared for the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity in the Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) & surrounding areas.



### Why in news?

- To ensure systematic and time-bound implementation of the Greater Panna Landscape Management plan, the **Greater Panna Landscape Council (GPLC)** has been constituted under the **chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh** with members from all the stakeholders.

### Key facts about the Panna Tiger Reserve

- Panna Tiger Reserve is a critical tiger habitat located in **Vindhya Hill in northern Madhya Pradesh**.
- The dominating vegetation type is **dry deciduous forest interspread with grassland**
- In the north, it is surrounded by **teak forest** & in the east, it is surrounded by Teak-Kardhai mixed forest.
- The North East-South West, running Vindhya Hill ranges link the eastern and western populations of wild animals.
- Fauna:** Leopard, Wild dog, wolf, Hyaena, Sloth bear etc.

### What is Ken-Betwa Link Project?

- Under this, the transfer of excess water **from the River Ken to the Betwa basin** through the use of a concrete canal is proposed.
- It is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for the interlinking of rivers.
- It aims to provide irrigation to the **Bundelkhand region**, which is one of the worst drought-affected areas in India.
- A Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Centre and the governments of UP and MP for the project.
- Implementing Agency:** A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA) will be set up to implement the project.