

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (NAMS)



- It is a unique institution functioning as an **apex body** with the objective to foster and **utilize academic excellence** as its resource **to meet medical and social goals**.
- It was **registered** as the 'Indian Academy of Medical Sciences' on 21st April, 1961, under **Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860**.
- It was renamed NAMS on 16th November, 1976.
- The academy has been **recognised by the Government of India** as a **nodal agency for continuing education for medical and allied health professionals**.
- It also **advises the Government of India** in matters of **National Health Policy and Planning**.
- NAMS encourages and **sponsors nationwide Continuing Medical Education (CME) programmes, symposia, workshops**,
- It has made significant efforts to improve the reach of CME programmes by **establishing tele-linkages between medical colleges**, and it is also **connected with the National Knowledge Network**.
- The academy serves as a very important tool for dissemination of recent medical advances **via journals, monographs**,

NAMS Task Force Report on Breast Cancer in India:

- India is recording nearly **200,000 new cancer cases each year**.
- India **ranks third** in accounting for cancer cases, **following China and the United States of America**.
- **In India, breast cancer** is the **most common malignancy among women** and a leading cause of cancer-related deaths.

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- The proportion of **patients diagnosed with breast cancer at a younger age** is notably **higher in India** when compared with high-income countries.
- **More than 60%** of patients in India **present at Stage 3 or 4**, while around 60% of the patients in the U.S. are diagnosed in situ or at Stage 1.
- **In India the survival rate for patients with breast cancer is lower** compared to Western countries due to several factors, including the late-stage presentation, delayed initiation of definitive management, and inadequate or fragmented treatment.

WHAT IS THE SEVEN SUMMITS CHALLENGE?



- The 'Seven Summits' is a challenge **first proposed and then completed by Richard Bass in 1985**.
- It consists of **climbing to the highest point on each of the seven continents**, including
 - **Kilimanjaro: Africa** (5,892 m)
 - **Elbrus: Europe** (5,642 m)
 - **Aconcagua: South America** (6,962 m)
 - **Denali: North America** (6,194 m)
 - **Kosciuszko: Australia** (2,228 m) or **Puncak Jaya/Carstensz Pyramid: Oceania** (4,884 m)
 - **Mount Vinson: Antarctica** (4,892 m)
 - **Mount Everest: Asia** (8,848 m)
- The Seven Summits challenge has **two options** – the 'Bass' list or the 'Messner' list.
 - The difference between the two lists is that **one includes the highest peak in Australia (Kosciuszko)**, while the other includes the highest peak in **Oceania/Australasia instead (Puncak Jaya in Indonesia)**, respectively.
 - Most will attempt the Bass list, while others will then push on to complete the Messner list too.

WHAT IS THE DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD MEDAL?



- It is the **highest honour** awarded to **UN peacekeepers**.
- It was established in 1997 as a **posthumous award** given to **members of peacekeeping operations who lost their lives during service with a peacekeeping operation under the operational control and authority of the United Nations**.
- Each year on **Peacekeeper's Day (May 29)**, this medal is **awarded to any member state that has lost one or more military or police peacekeepers** at a ceremony at United Nations headquarters.
- It is named after the **second Secretary-General** of the United Nations, **Dag Hammarskjöld**.
- On 6 October **1998**, the **first Medal** was presented to the **family of Dag Hammarskjöld**.
- Dag Hammarskjöld was Secretary-General of the United Nations from April 10, 1953, until September 18, 1961, when he died in a plane crash while on a peace mission in the Congo.

Other UN Awards:

- **Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage:** It is awarded to those **military, police, civilian United Nations personnel** and associated personnel who **demonstrate exceptional courage** in the face of extreme danger while fulfilling the mandate of their missions or their functions in the service of humanity and the United Nations.
- **UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award:** It was started in 2016 to recognise the dedication and effort of an individual peacekeeper in **promoting the principles within the UN Security Council Resolution 1325**.

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India and UN Peacekeeping:

- Since the 1950s, India has sent over 290,000 peacekeepers to more than 50 missions worldwide, making it the **largest contributor** to UN peacekeeping efforts.
- Today, over 5,000 Indian troops serve in nine of the eleven active missions, often in dangerous and hostile regions, dedicated to upholding global peace and security.
- Beyond deployments, India actively strengthens UN missions through **training, capacity building, and technological support**.

WHAT ARE DARK PATTERNS?



otherwise take.

- It refers to any user interface that has been **deliberately crafted to mislead or manipulate users into actions they might not otherwise take**.
- The term "dark pattern" was **coined in 2010** by UK-based user experience designer **Harry Brignull**.
- Dark patterns **exploit cognitive biases and psychological principles to influence user behavior**.
- They can range from subtle and mildly misleading to overtly aggressive tactics.
- The practice is **seen across a wide range of sectors, from retail to travel, health to social media**.
- One example is the "sneak into basket" design, where an additional item is quietly added to a user's online shopping cart without explicit consent.
- Another common tactic is presenting a large, brightly coloured "Accept" button for cookies or subscriptions, while hiding or minimising the "Reject" option.
- These interface choices are **not accidental**, they are **calculated to guide users towards choices that benefit the company**, often at the consumer's expense.
- Dark patterns can also take the form of hidden costs that **only appear at the final stage of checkout**.

Regulation:

- In many countries, including India, there is **no dedicated law that explicitly outlaws the practice**.
- For instance, **under India's Consumer Protection Act, 2019, unfair trade practices are prohibited but enforcement depends on proving that a pattern is deceptive, intentional, and has caused harm**.
- This is **often difficult in digital contexts**, where user interaction is rapid.
- In November 2023, the **Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India, released guidelines for 13 dark patterns**.
- According to these guidelines, the **use of any of these prescribed dark patterns amounts to a misleading advertisement, an unfair trade practice, or a violation of consumer rights**.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

The Deputy Speaker's post has remained vacant for six years, raising concerns about constitutional compliance and democratic strength. In a parliamentary democracy, this role is not merely ceremonial but crucial for ensuring accountability, smooth functioning, and balanced power-sharing between the ruling party and the Opposition.

The prolonged vacancy, reportedly due to the ruling government's reluctance to offer the position to an Opposition member, undermines the principle of power-sharing and democratic conventions, which hold significance even in the absence of explicit legal provisions.

Election and Tenure of the Deputy Speaker

- Under **Article 93** of the Constitution, the Lok Sabha must elect a Speaker and Deputy Speaker from among its members “as soon as may be,” though no specific timeline is given.

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- **Article 94** ensures that the Deputy Speaker remains in office until resignation, removal, or disqualification, underlining the role's continuity.
- **Election Process**
 - The date of the Deputy Speaker's election is fixed by the Speaker and communicated to members through a parliamentary bulletin.
 - The election is conducted via a ballot paper vote.
- **Tenure and Removal**
 - The Deputy Speaker remains in office until the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, unless removed earlier by a resolution passed by a majority of members.
 - The position is also vacated if the Deputy Speaker ceases to be a Member of Parliament.
 - If the Deputy Speaker's seat falls vacant, the members of the House may elect a new Deputy Speaker.
- **Position in Order of Precedence**
 - In the official hierarchy, the Deputy Speaker ranks tenth, alongside the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers of State, and members of the Planning Commission.

Powers, Functions, and Privileges of the Deputy Speaker

- The Deputy Speaker assists the Speaker in managing the functioning of the Lok Sabha.
- In the Speaker's absence or when the post is vacant, the Deputy Speaker presides over proceedings and performs all associated duties.
- If nominated to any legislative committee, the Deputy Speaker automatically assumes the role of its chairman.
- **Participation in Debates and Voting**
 - Unlike the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker can participate in debates and vote on matters as an ordinary member when the Speaker is presiding.
 - When presiding over the House, the Deputy Speaker may only cast a vote in the event of a tie.

INDIA'S SODIUM-ION BATTERY PUSH: A STRATEGIC SHIFT BEYOND LITHIUM

- With global concerns mounting over the limited availability and rising cost of lithium, India is taking bold strides toward developing **sodium-ion battery (Na-ion)**
- These efforts are part of a broader strategy to reduce reliance on lithium-ion batteries, an area where China commands a dominant position.
- Recent innovations from Indian institutions like the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) and IIT Bombay are propelling sodium-ion technology into the spotlight as a feasible and scalable alternative.

Breakthrough Innovation by Indian Scientists

- In a major development, a team at Bengaluru-based JNCASR has developed a **NASICON-type sodium-ion battery with significantly enhanced charging performance and lifespan.**
- Unlike conventional Na-ion batteries that suffer from slow charge rates and shorter life cycles, this innovation enables up to 80% charge in just six minutes and supports over 3,000 charge cycles.
- The researchers achieved this performance by making critical modifications to the battery's anode material:
 - **Nanoparticle Engineering:** Reducing particle size to the nanoscale.
 - **Carbon Wrapping:** Encasing the particles in a thin carbon layer.
 - **Aluminum Doping:** Incorporating small amounts of aluminum to enhance conductivity and ion mobility.
- These improvements not only accelerate the charging process but also reduce degradation risks, offering a safer and more reliable battery.

Advantages and Limitations of Sodium-Ion Batteries

- **Advantages:**
 - **Resource Abundance:** Sodium is far more available than lithium and can be extracted more sustainably.

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- **Cost-Effective Materials:** Na-ion batteries use aluminium instead of copper, reducing production costs.
- **Safety:** Can be transported at zero volt, lowering fire hazards.
- **Thermal Stability:** Operate safely at a wider range of temperatures.
- **Limitations:**
 - **Lower Energy Density:** Sodium-ion batteries currently offer less energy storage per unit weight compared to lithium-ion batteries.
 - **Design Rigidity:** Cannot be moulded into various shapes like prismatic or cylindrical forms.
 - **Shorter Cycle Life:** While improving, they still lag behind the 8,000+ cycles of lithium iron phosphate batteries.
 - **High Initial Costs:** Limited commercial presence results in higher production costs at present.

A CASE OF PRACTICAL, PRAGMATIC AND INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** marks a **significant reform** in India's education sector.
- It aims to align academic pursuits with real-world needs, enhance global competitiveness, and cultivate a **robust ecosystem of innovation and sustainable employment**.
- As a strategic, **long-term overhaul**, the **NEP is designed to develop originality, empower students with practical skills**, and integrate Indian education into the global landscape.

Transformative Goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

- **Reimagining Employability through Education**
 - One of the most transformative goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is to **fundamentally reimagine how Indian education prepares students for the workforce**.

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- In an era where traditional degrees no longer guarantee meaningful employment, **the NEP aims to align academic curricula with the evolving demands** of the labour market.
- It does this by **embedding flexibility, vocational relevance, and industry integration** into the core of the education system.
- **Flexible Learning Pathways**
 - At the heart of this transformation is **the introduction of a four-year undergraduate programme** with multiple entry and exit options.
 - This **flexible structure allows students to earn a certificate after one year, a diploma after two, or a degree after three or four years**, depending on when they choose to exit.
 - Crucially, **students can rejoin the system later to complete or upgrade their qualifications.**
 - **This ensures that those who need to leave education temporarily, due to financial, personal, or professional reasons, are not penalised or left behind.**
- **Strengthening the Link Between Academia and Industry**
 - Another cornerstone of the NEP is its **emphasis on closing the gap between academic learning and real-world skills.**
 - Traditionally, **Indian education has been criticised for focusing too heavily on rote learning and theoretical knowledge**, with limited applicability in the job market.
 - The NEP addresses this by **promoting the vocationalisation of education, integrating skill-based courses, hands-on projects, and industry-relevant training** into curricula across disciplines.
- **Building Multi-Dimensional Career Readiness**
 - Employability in the 21st century **demands more than domain knowledge.**
- **Employers increasingly value a combination of cognitive, technical, and soft skills**, such as communication, adaptability, problem-solving, and digital literacy.