

GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICES (GMP) STANDARDS

Recently, the government of India has set a deadline for mandatory implementation of the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for pharmaceutical companies which were revised in 2018, bringing them on par with World Health Organisation (WHO) standards.



About GMP:

- Good manufacturing practice (GMP) is a system for **ensuring that products are consistently produced and controlled** according to quality standards.
- It is designed to **minimize the risks involved** in any pharmaceutical production that cannot be eliminated through testing the final product.
- It covers all aspects of production; from the starting materials, premises and equipment to the training and personal hygiene of staff.
- The GMP system was **first incorporated in India in 1988** in **Schedule M** of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, and the last amendment was done in June 2005. WHO-GMP standards are now part of the revised Schedule M.
- There are around 10,500 manufacturing units in India out of which around 8,500 falls under Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) category.
- The country has about 2,000 units in MSME category in the country having WHO-GMP certification.

What are the new regulations?

- Companies with a turnover of **over Rs 250 crore** will have to implement the revised GMP within six months,
- Medium and small-scale enterprises with turnover of **less than Rs 250 crore** will have to **implement it within a year**

WHAT IS NEERAKSHI?

India recently launched 'Neerakshi'- Autonomous Underwater Vehicle for mine detection.

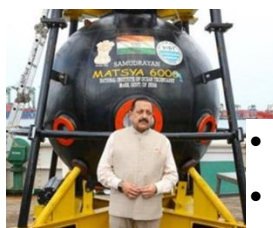


About Neerakshi:

- It is an **autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV)** designed to detect mines.
- Named “Neerakshi” meaning “Eyes in the Water” is **first of its kind in the country** and is expected to undergo user trials by the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, and Army before a commercial launch.
- It is a **collaboration of Kolkata-based warship maker Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd and MSME entity Aerospace Engineering Private Ltd (AEPL).**
- The AUV, **currently capable of mine detection**, is part of GRSE's **broader ambitions to create autonomous sea surface vehicles, sea-based drones, and explore green propulsion technologies.**
- **Features:**
 - It can be used for a **variety of functions ranging from mine detection to mine disposal to underwater survey,**
 - It is a **2.1-metre long cylindrical unmanned vehicle about a foot in diameter and weighing around 45 kg.**
 - It has an **endurance of nearly 4 hours, and is capable of operating up to a depth of 300m.**

WHAT IS SAMUDRAYAAN PROJECT?

Union Minister of Earth Sciences recently said that India's ambitious Samudrayaan project is set to send three personnel to a depth of 6000 meters in a submersible vehicle.



About Samudrayaan Project:

- It is **India's first manned mission to explore the deep ocean.**
- It is designed to **study the deep ocean resources and conduct biodiversity assessments as well.**

- The mission **will not disturb the ecosystem** as the submersible is **used solely for exploration purposes.**
- The project is part of the larger Deep Ocean Mission, which **supports the Central Government's Blue Economy policy.**
- The **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) is the nodal ministry** to implement this multi-institutional ambitious mission.

What is MATSYA 6000?

- It is a **manned submersible vehicle** developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai.
- It was developed under the Samudrayaan mission to **facilitate humans in the deep ocean in exploring mineral resources.**
- It is designed with the **capability of operating in the deep sea for 12 hours** while in case of emergency, it can also operate up to **96 hours** with all the necessary measures for human safety.
- **Expected to be launched in 2024-25, it would make India only one among six countries** (US, Russia, Japan, France, and China) to have piloted a crewed under-sea expedition beyond 5,000 metres.

Key Facts about Deep Ocean Mission:

- It is a mission-mode project to **support the Blue Economy Initiatives** of the Government of India.
- It is a **high-level multi-ministerial, multi-disciplinary programme** for a better **understanding of the deep sea living and non-living resources of the Indian Ocean.**
- It will **aid in India's efforts to attain the Blue Economy status.**
- It aims to **develop technologies to harness living and non-living resources** from the deep oceans.
- The **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry** implementing this multi-institutional Mission.

- The estimated cost of the Mission will be 4077 crores for a period of 5 years (2021-26) to be implemented in a phase-wise manner.
- The Mission consists of six major components:
 - Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining and Manned Submersible and Underwater Robotics;
 - Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services;
 - Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity;
 - Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration;
 - Energy and freshwater from the Ocean;
 - Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology;

[ANUSANDHAN NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION BILL-2023](#)

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation Bill, 2023 was recently introduced in the Lok Sabha.



About Anusandhan National Research Foundation Bill-2023:

- It aims to set up the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF).
- It will be an apex body to provide high-level strategic direction of scientific research in the country as per recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP).
- It seeks to set up a Rs 50,000-crore fund, with a sizeable contribution from the private sector, to "seed, grow and promote" research and development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories.

It seeks to set up different funds:

- **Anusandhan National Research Foundation Fund:** For the financing of activities under the Act.
- **Innovation Fund:** For supporting outstanding creativity in the areas supported by the foundation

- **Science and Engineering Research Fund:** For the continuation of the projects and programmes initiated under the Science and Engineering Research Board Act, 2008.
- **One or more special-purpose funds** for any specific project or research.
- **Functions of NRF:**
 - NRF will forge collaborations among the industry, academia, and government departments and research institutions and create an interface mechanism for the participation and contribution of industries and state governments in addition to the scientific and line ministries.
 - It will focus on creating a policy framework and putting in place regulatory processes that can encourage collaboration and increased spending by the industry on R&D.
- **Structure of NRF:**
 - It will have a governing board consisting of 15 to 25 eminent researchers and professionals headed by the prime minister, who will be the ex-officio president.
 - The education minister and the science and technology Minister will be the vice presidents of the NRF.
 - The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will be the administrative department of NRF,
 - The proposed foundation will also have an executive council under the principal scientific adviser.

PRIVILEGE MOTION: HOW DOES THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES IN PARLIAMENT EXAMINE IT?

Why in News?

- Rajya Sabha Chairman referred complaints related to the privilege of the House against two MPs (TMC's Derek O'Brien and AAP's Raghav Chadha) to the privileges committee.
- This comes amid differences between the ruling party and some opposition parties that have plagued the ongoing Monsoon Session of its sittings.

What is a Privilege Motion?

- **The parliamentary privilege** are certain rights conferred to the Members of Parliament (MPs) for conducting the business of the Parliament.
- **There is no codified list of the exact privileges**, but it includes the **right of free expression** in the course of Parliamentary debates and MPs **will not be liable for court proceedings** for this.
- **If such a privilege is breached**, a motion can be raised by any member and can be admitted by the Chairman.
- They can then refer it to the **Privileges Committee** under Rule 203 of **Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business** in the Council of States/RS.

What is the Committee of Privileges in Parliament?

- **This committee consists** of 15 members in Lok Sabha (10 in case of RS) **nominated** by the Speaker (Chairman in case of RS) from time to time.
- In the RS, the **deputy chairperson** is appointed (by the RS Chairman) as the head of the committee of privileges.
 - In the Lok Sabha, the Speaker nominates the head of the committee of privileges.
- **The committee examines** every question involving a breach of privilege of the House or of the members or of any Committee referred to it by the Speaker/Chairman and **makes suitable recommendations in its report**.
 - If the House has not fixed any time for the presentation of the report, it shall be presented **within 1 month** of the date on which reference to the Committee was made.
 - Once presented, a motion has to be passed for the consideration of the report and amendments can be suggested.
- The right to raise a question of privilege is **based on satisfying two conditions** - the question shall be restricted to a specific matter of recent occurrence and the matter requires the intervention of the Council.
- **The Speaker/RS Chairman is the first level of scrutiny of a privilege motion**. Therefore, the Speaker/Chairman can decide on the privilege motion himself or herself or refer it to the privileges committee of Parliament.

ISSUE OF HATE SPEECH IN INDIA

Why in News?

- Two-judge bench of the Supreme Court observed that defining hate speech is complex but the real problem in tackling hate speech lies in the implementation and execution of law and judicial pronouncements.

About Hate Speech:

- Hate speech covers **many forms of expressions which advocate, incite, promote or justify hatred, violence and discrimination** against a person or group of persons for a variety of reasons.
- It poses grave dangers for the cohesion of a democratic society, the protection of human rights and the rule of law.
- If left unaddressed, it can lead to acts of violence and conflict on a wider scale.
- In this sense, hate speech is an extreme form of intolerance which contributes to **hate crime**.

Article 19 and Hate Speech:

- **Article 19(1)(a)** of the Constitution **guarantees freedom of speech and expression to all citizens of India**.
- This article is subjected to certain restrictions [**Article 19(2)**], namely, sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

Legal Provisions for Hate Speech:

- **Hate speech has not been defined in any law in India**. However, legal provisions in certain legislations prohibit select forms of speech, which are in contravention to freedom of speech.
- **Indian Penal Code (IPC) Provisions –**
 - Under **Section 153A** of IPC, ‘**promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., is an offence punishable with three years imprisonment**.’

- Under Section 505 of IPC, making “statements leading to public mischief” is an offence.
 - **Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951 –**
 - Section 8 disqualifies a person from contesting election if s/he is convicted for indulging in acts amounting to illegitimate use of freedom of speech and expression.
 - **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 –**
 - Section 7 penalizes incitement to, and encouragement of untouchability through words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise.
 - **Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1988 –**
 - It prohibits religious institution or its manager to allow the use of any premises belonging to, or under the control of, the institution for promoting or attempting to promote disharmony.
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RESTRICTIONS ON LAPTOP IMPORTS & ITS IMPLICATIONS

Why in News?

- The Union Government’s decision to restrict import of laptops has now been suspended till 1st November, 2023.
- On 3rd August, the Union Government imposed restrictions on import of laptops, tablets, all-in-one personal computers and ultra-small computers and servers with immediate effect.
- **Any entity or company planning to bring laptops and computers for sale in India will now have to seek permission or license from the government for their inbound shipments.**
- The notification in this regard was issued by the **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)**.
- The DGFT is the agency of the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, responsible for administering laws regarding foreign trade.

Why did the DGFT Impose Ban on Import of Laptops & Similar Electronic Goods?

- Although the DGFT notice did not specify any reason behind the change in policy, the move is largely being seen as a push for the Centre’s ‘**Aatmanirbhar Bharat**’ mission and a bid to **reduce dependencies on China**.

- Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is the mission started by the Government of India in May 2020, towards making India Self-reliant.

- **China Factor –**



- Given this fact, a rise in indigenous manufacturing would not only help India reduce its dependence on its diplomatic and business rival but would also help indigenous manufacturers expand their footprint globally.

- **Security Factor –**

- The restrictions may have been brought in to **guard against electronic hardware coming in with “in-built security loopholes that may potentially endanger sensitive personal and enterprise data”**.
- Across the world, many red flags have been raised about cybersecurity with regard to Chinese-manufactured electronics.

Implications of Import Ban on Laptops & Similar Electronic Goods:

- Shortly after the announcement, **shares of local electronics contract manufacturers have gone up.**
- Further, the government's announcement is expected to impact companies that import bulk of their products from outside India.
- Big Corporations like **Apple will have to either start manufacturing their laptops in India or stop importing their gadgets to India.**
- The same rule will also apply to other PC manufacturers like Lenovo, HP, Asus, Acer, Samsung.
- This will likely lead to an increase in the price of current laptops, computers, MacBooks, and Mac Minis in the Indian market.