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Quality of Free Legal Aid

The National Law University, Delhi (NLUD) in a report titled **'Quality of Legal Representation: An Empirical Analysis of Free Legal Aid Services in India'** has revealed that people don't have faith over the services of legal aid counsel (LAC) under the free legal aid services.

> A majority of the people who are entitled to the free legal aid system see the service as an option only when they cannot afford a private lawyer.

Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act

- In 1987, the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act was enacted to give free and competent legal services to the poor and paved the way for constitution of **National Legal Service Authority (NALSA)** and other legal service institutions at the State, district and taluka level.
- Free legal services under LSA Act are available to a person belonging to **Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste, woman, child, victim of human trafficking, differently abled person, industrial workman,** and person in custody in a protective home and the poor.

Facts

- According to the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative's (CHRI) report:
    - India's per capita lawyer ratio is better than most countries in the world.
    - There are about 1.8 million lawyers in India which means there is one lawyer for every 736 people.
    - There are 61,593 panel lawyers in the country, which translates to just one legal aid lawyer per 18,609 population or five legal aid lawyers per 1,00,000 population.

- According to NALSA, about 8.22 lakh people across India benefited through legal aid services from April 2017 to June 2018.

Key Findings

- About **75%** of beneficiaries responded that they opted for free legal aid because they had no means and resources to hire a paid private practitioner.
    - They would never have approached for the legal aid services if they had the resources to engage private legal practitioners.
- **22.6%** of the beneficiaries responded that they won't opt for free legal aid services for the **second time**.
- **60% of women,** who were aware of the free legal aid services, chose to opt for the private legal practitioner because they could have better control over their lawyer and they lack faith and confidence over the quality of services offered under the legal aid system.
- **56% of LAC** (Legal Aid Counsel) spends an average of 1 to 10 hours per week on legal aid cases.
    - On the contrary, around 58% LAC spend on an average of **20 hours** and above per week on **private cases**.
- Around **33%** of the judicial officers claim that complaints were received against LACs for **demanding money** from beneficiaries.
- Majority of judicial officers (52%) rated the **overall skill** set of a private legal practitioner as of fairly good quality and that of LAC as of moderately low quality.

Constitutional Provision

- **Article 39A** of the **Constitution of India** provides that State shall secure that the operation of the **legal** system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity, and shall, in particular, provide **free legal aid,** by suitable legislation or schemes or in any other way, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disability.
- **Articles 14 and 22(1)** also make it obligatory for the State to ensure equality before the law and a **legal system** which promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity to all.

NALSA's Efforts

Front offices at the district level are being upgraded to make them one-stop centers for legal aid seekers.

- **Updating** the record of legal aided cases.
    - This way, the legal aid seekers are kept updated about the progress of their cases and better monitoring of cases takes place.

- NALSA's outreach programmes (like door to door campaigns) have made people aware of the legal advice and other forms of legal services such as drafting of applications etc.

Way Forward

- **Full-time empanelment:** Currently, the engagement of LAC is usually on an ad-hoc basis.
    - Around 45% of the regulators opined that making them full time will definitely improve the level of commitment among the LAC.
- **Honorarium:** Study recommended that making honorarium (a payment is given for professional services that are rendered nominally without charge) for a legal aided case at par with private cases, will compel LAC to not withdraw or deny aided cases in middle.
- **Remuneration:** Remuneration towards the empanelled lawyers should be increased every year.
    - This is important for those who are serving in juvenile courts as they are not allowed to have their own private practice.

G-20 Summit–2019

Recently the 14th G20 Summit was held in Osaka, Japan on 28th-29th June, 2019.

Highlights

- The G20 Summit 2019 was based on discussions on subjects like trade, energy, climate change etc.
- Indian PM (his sixth G-20 summit) held many plurilateral meetings with other world leaders like heads of Russia, USA, Japan, China etc.
- Along with that India also participated in two parallel tri-laterals i.e the Russia-India-China (RIC) and Japan-U.S.-India (JAI) and an informal BRICS summit.
    - **JAI Trilateral:** Three countries discussed issues of the Indo-Pacific region, connectivity and infrastructure development. It was the second Japan-America-India (JAI) meeting.
    - **Informal BRICS meet:** India stressed the need to stop all the mediums of support to terrorism and racism. Indian PM called terrorism "the biggest threat to humanity" which kills innocent and severely affects economic development and social stability.
- India and the US discussed various bilateral and global issues including Iran, 5G communications networks, trade and defence ahead of the G-20 Summit.

- India targeted to become a five-trillion dollar economy in the next five years.
    - Further India pledged to make Social sector as its top priority and resolve to focus on infrastructure development, especially digital infrastructure.
    - However, Indian PM also highlighted the deficiency of resources, underlining that "there is a shortfall of almost $1.3 trillion investment in the infrastructure.
- On the sidelines of G-20 summit, India and Japan signed exchange of Letter of Intent on Ahmedabad - Kobe Sister City Partnership.
- India also invited the G20 countries to join a global coalition on disaster resilience, saying disasters require quick and effective remedial measures as they invariably affect the poor the most.
- India and Indonesia set an ambitious USD 50 billion targets for bilateral trade over the next six years.

Japanese Encephalitis (JE)

The Central government has sent a team to Assam to review the situation after Japanese Encephalitis (JE) cases were reported from the state.

Japanese Encephalitis (JE)

- Japanese encephalitis is a disease **caused by a flavi virus** that affects the membranes around the brain. Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) is also a major cause of **Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES)** in India.
- **Transmission:** The disease is transmitted to humans through bites from infected **mosquitoes of the Culex species**. These mosquitoes breed mainly in rice fields and large water bodies rich in aquatic vegetations. Migratory birds along with pigs in the community also play an important role in the transmission of JE from one area to other areas.
- **Symptoms:** Most people infected with JE do not have symptoms or have only mild symptoms. However, a small percentage of infected people develop inflammation of the brain (encephalitis), with symptoms including sudden onset of headache, high fever, disorientation, coma, tremors and convulsions.
- **Treatment:** There is **no antiviral treatment** for patients with JE. Treatment, available, is supportive to relieve symptoms and stabilize the patient.
- **Prevention:** Safe and effective **JE vaccines** are available to prevent the disease.
    - **In India,** mass vaccination with JE vaccine was started in a phased manner subsequent to the major outbreak in 2005.
    - JE vaccination is also **included under the Universal Immunization Program** of the Government of India.

Universal Immunization Program

- **Immunization** is the process whereby a person is made immune or resistant to an infectious disease, typically by the administration of a vaccine. Vaccines are substances that stimulate the body's own immune system to protect the person against subsequent infection or disease.
- Immunization Programme in India was **introduced in the year 1978** as 'Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI)' by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- In the year **1985**, the programme was modified as **'Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)'**.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India provides **several vaccines to infants, children and pregnant women** through the Universal Immunisation Programme.
- Through this programme, the government provides several vaccines to infants, children and pregnant women.
- Vaccines included in the programme are for diseases including **Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Hepatitis B, Pneumonia and Meningitis due to Haemophilus Influenzae type b (Hib), Measles, Rubella, Japanese Encephalitis (JE) and Rotavirus diarrhoea**.

Airplane Contrails and Global Warming

According to a recent study, the airplanes contrails contribute more to global warming than the CO_2 emitted by an aircraft.

- Moreover, the contrails' impact on climate change will triple by 2050 than it was in 2006 because of following reasons:
  - Modern planes flying slightly higher than their predecessors, which is likely to lead to more contrail cloud formation over the tropics.
  - Increase in air traffic.
  - Improvements in fuel efficiency.
- The study also suggested that the impact on the atmosphere due to contrail cirrus clouds will be stronger over Northern America and Europe which are the busiest air traffic areas on the globe.
    However, the impact will also increase in Asia as the air travel is also growing in the region.
- The warming effect of cirrus clouds is also short-lived, and because it occurs in the upper atmosphere, it's not clear how much of a difference it actually makes for temperatures at Earth's surface.

Contrails

- The hot, humid exhaust from jet engines mixes with the atmosphere, which at high altitude is of much lower vapor pressure and temperature than the exhaust gas.
- The water vapor contained in the jet exhaust condenses and may freeze, and this mixing process forms clouds.
- Most of these contrail cirrus clouds dissipate quickly, but under the right conditions they can remain for hours, and when that happens they warm the atmosphere by absorbing thermal radiation emitted by the Earth.

Impacts

- Jet engine exhaust contains carbon dioxide, oxides of sulfur and nitrogen, unburned fuel, soot and metal particles, as well as water vapor.
    - The soot provides condensation sites for water vapor. Any particles present in the air provide additional sites.
- Depending on a plane's altitude, and the temperature and humidity of the atmosphere, contrails may vary in their thickness, extent and duration.
- The nature and persistence of jet contrails can be used to predict the weather.
    - A thin, short-lived contrail indicates low-humidity air at high altitude, a sign of fair weather, whereas a thick, long-lasting contrail reflects humid air at high altitudes and can be an early indicator of a storm.

Significance

- Aviation already has a sizable influence on the climate.
    - In 2005, air traffic contributed about 5 percent of humans' influence on climate change.
- Air traffic roughly doubles every 15 years. And contrails are the aviation industry's biggest climate influencer, even more than CO_2 emissions from planes.
    - But policies to lower aviation's influence on climate change focus on CO_2 emissions, all but ignoring the impact of contrails.
- The study suggests that contrails are a major factor that climate policies should take into account.
    - It is important to recognise the significant impact of non-CO_2 emissions, such as contrail cirrus, on climate and to take those effects into consideration when setting up emission trading systems or schemes like the CORSIA Agreement.

Solution

- Cleaner aircraft emissions would solve the issue, as the reduction of the number of soot particles emitted by aircraft engines decreases the number of ice crystals in contrails and that means climate impact of contrail cirrus will also be reduced.
    - However, soot would have to be decreased a lot to have a significant effect–even if it was reduced by 90 percent, the contrail cirrus clouds will produce more warming in 2050 than they did in 2006.
- Therefore, the best option for reducing this effect and aviation's carbon footprint is to fly less.

WHO's Self Care Guidelines

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched its first guidelines on self-care interventions for health.

- Self-care intervention guidelines are based on **scientific evidence** for the health benefits of certain interventions that can be done outside the conventional sector.
- Self-care intervention guidelines are not intended to replace **high-quality health** services nor are they a shortcut to achieving universal health coverage.

Self-Care

- As per WHO "the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health-care provider".
- Self-care interventions have a unique potential in reducing **inefficiencies in health expenditure,** improving the **quality** of health coverage and increasing the **agency and autonomy** of even the most vulnerable populations to make informed decisions about their health.

    Self Care Intervention Guidelines: in its first volume, the guidelines focus on **sexual and reproductive health and rights**. some of the interventions include:
    - **Self-sampling** for human papillomavirus (HPV) and sexually transmitted infections.
    - **Self-injectable** contraceptives.
    - Home-based ovulation predictor kits.
    - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) **self-testing** and **self-management** of medical abortion.

Need

- Guidelines are a response to an estimate that by **2035** the world will face a shortage of nearly **13 million healthcare workers** and presently at least **400 million** people worldwide **lack access** to the most essential health services.
- According to WHO in the near future, 1 in 5 of the world's population will be living in settings that are experiencing humanitarian crises (series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well being of a community or large group of people) hence self care interventions guidelines will act as the first line of defense and will prevent health crisis.

Significance

- **Autonomy and timely intervention:** Self-care interventions represent a significant push towards new and greater self-efficacy, autonomy and engagement in health for self-carers and caregivers.
- **Accessibility:** It could expand access to health services, including for vulnerable populations.
- **Right to health:** People will be able to access, control, and have affordable options to manage their health and well-being.
- **Equality:** Self-care is also a means for people who are negatively affected by **gender, political, cultural and power dynamics,** including those who are forcibly displaced, to have access to sexual and reproductive health services, as many people are unable to make decisions around sexuality and reproduction.

Inheritance Tax

The Union government may re-introduce Inheritance Tax (Estate Duty) in the budget-2019. Inheritance tax is concerned with the taxation of value of property passing on death.

- India had Estate Duty from 1953 till it was abolished in 1985.
- The objective behind the reintroduction of an inheritance tax:
  - To address the problem of economic inequality. According to a survey conducted by Oxfam, 58 percent of India's total wealth is concentrated within one percent of its population – higher than the global average of about 50 percent.
  - To generate higher revenue, leading to higher public spending by the government.

History of Inheritance Tax in India

- It was introduced in 1953 under the Estate Duty Act, 1953 as an attempt to reduce economic disparity.
    - Estate duty rates were progressive and rose as far as 85 percent on estates exceeding Rs 20 lakh.
- Estate duty was levied on the market value of all immovable properties in India, as well as on all movable property (whether in India or outside) passed on to successors upon the death of an individual.
- The erstwhile law also had an anti-avoidance mechanism in place to curb certain transactions such as gifts made in 'contemplation of death' or gifts given within two years prior to death.
- Despite its noble objectives, the estate duty law was met with significant disapproval throughout its existence due to a number of factors:
    - The law was complex and led to higher litigation and higher administration costs,
    - Perceived double taxation on the same assets in the form of estate duty and wealth tax (later abolished w.e.f. from FY16),
    - Lower estate duty collections as a result of illegal concealment and the practice of holding benami properties.

Prospects

- Today, many developed countries such as the US, UK, France, Japan and the Netherlands have inheritance tax laws in place.
- The US imposes Gift Tax and Estate Tax (both taxes levied on the donor) at 40 percent with a combined lifetime exemption threshold for both taxes amounting to approximately $11 million per person.
- Likewise, inheritance tax in the UK is levied at 40 percent, but with a far lower exemption threshold.
- The growing concern surrounding India's increasing economic disparity, the imposition of estate duty may seem desirable.

Concerns

- The inheritance tax is payable by the legal representative to whom the property may pass on death.
    - The recipient of the property may not have the money available to pay tax that could lead to situations of distress sale.
- Arguments against the levy of inheritance tax mainly revolve around fears regarding the outflow of entrepreneurial human capital and financial resources going abroad.
    - With India being a developing country, keeping capital intact in the hands of entrepreneurs may represent a more efficient investment for economic development.

- India needs to review the case for re-introducing an inheritance/estate tax with, ideally, relatively high thresholds, so it's targeted at the very rich.

National Film Heritage Mission

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (I&B), during his visit to the **National Film Archive of India (NFAI)**, said that the government is committed towards implementation of the **National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM)** in a time bound manner.

Background

- In February **1964**, the I&B Ministry established the **National Film Archive of India in Pune** with an aim to trace, acquire and preserve, for posterity, the heritage of national cinema and a representative collection of world cinema.
- By the turn of the century, the NFAI had collected as many as 1,32,000 film reels or around 22,500 films.
- However, there was a **lack of adequate funding** as well as **want of sufficient facilities** to preserve the films in an ideal manner.

National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM)

- Launched in the year **2017**, NFHM is the prestigious mission of Government of India, for **preservation, conservation, digitization and restoration of rich cinematic heritage** of the country.
- The broader **objectives** under NFHM are to undertake film condition assessment and preventive conservation of around 150,000 film reels, digitization of around 3500 films, picture & sound restoration of around 2000 landmark films of Indian cinema, construction of preservation and conservation facilities (vaults), training and workshops and creating a comprehensive web-based end to end IT solutions.
- National Film Archive of India **(NFAI) is the nodal organization** for the implementation of this project.
- Rs. 597.41 crore has been allotted towards implementation of the project.

Puducherry Water Rich Model

It is a model for desilting the urban drains and rural canals with the cooperation of the general public with the Puducherry administration.

- This model is fulfilling the need of water in rural areas for irrigation and preventing the overflowing of drains in urban areas.
  - Ensuring regular flow prevents the diseases like malaria and dengue.

- The practice of community involvement in desilting of canals and maintaining them goes back centuries in Puducherry, to the reign of the Pallavas.
    - The Cholas and French also adapted it seriously.
- All contributors under this model were awarded Swachta Hi Sewa Awards by administration.

Puducherry Water Rich Model

- It ensures mapping and bring under watch all water bodies and drains by using technology.
- To use MNREGA where machinery is not required and human contact is safe. It empowers people and provides livelihood.
- Linking the local community for shramdaan and monitoring water bodies. It encourages participation as they are the real stakeholders.
- Linking with the nearest donor support — any industry or institution.
- It let the supporter and the service provider decide on the contractual cost. Government officials should only be facilitators, not in any way negotiate or deal with their money.
- It allows farmers to take the silt away, as it is their soil which got washed away. It is rich in nutrients. The farmers are not to be charged for it.
- Accountability lies with the collectors and municipal commissioners.

Delhi Butterfly Corridors

As per Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) report, the creation of butterfly corridors in Delhi with close to 100 hotspots is underway.

At present, there are 17 hotspots where butterfly parks or gardens have been created in the last few years.
A variety of host plants will be grown at such parks and gardens in the green corridor to attract more butterflies.

BUTTERFLY COUNT

2017
69 species

2018
75

Third butterfly count in Sept 2019

100 hotspots to come up by September

17 already in place

1.Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary 2.Garden of Five Senses 3.Qutub area 4.Hauz Khas deer park 5.Aravalli Biodiversity Park (Gurgaon) 6.Aravalli Biodiversity Park (Vasant Kunj) 7.Najafgarh area 8.Nihal Vihar park 9.Okhla Bird Sanctuary 10.Lodhi Garden 11.National Zoological Park 12.Kamla Nehru Ridge 13.Yamuna floodplain 14.Indraprastha Park 15.Ashoka Garden 16.Yamuna Biodiversity Park 17.Swarn Jayanti Park (Rohini)

Green corridor

Urban cluster

SOME RARE BUTTERFLIES SEEN IN DELHI

Psyche | Indian red flash | Red pierrot | Chocolate pansy | African babul blue | Painted lady

AIM To increase butterfly numbers

HOW Host plants of different butterfly species to attract them from one hotspot to another

SOME SPECIES AND THEIR HOST PLANTS

LARGE SALMON ARAB (*Colotis fausta*)
Host plant | *Cadaba fruticosa*

SMALL SALMON ARAB
Host plants | *Salvadora persica, Salvadora oledoides*

WHITE ORANGE TIP (*Ixias marianne*)
Host plants | *Capparis decidua, Capparis sepiaria*

YELLOW ORANGE TIP (*Ixias pyrene*)
Host plants | *Capparis decidua, Capparis sepiaria*

SMALL ORANGE TIP (*Colotis etrida*)
Host plants | *Salvadora persica, Salvadora oledoides, Cadaba fruticosa*

- At most locations there are already some native trees and plant species that are hosts to butterflies, but additional plantation is being undertaken to ensure a diversity of species arrive there.
- The closer the green areas, the easier it will be for butterflies to move from one location to another.
- A large butterfly garden exists at Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary and Garden of Five Senses.
    There are many parks in the surrounding of these locations attracting more butterflies.
- In September, 2017, the first butterfly month was observed in Delhi by BNHS and Delhi forest department, culminating in a record species count.
- In 2018, 75 species were recorded in urban and forested locations.
    Among the rare species recorded were the common redeye, common short silverline, dingy swift, common blue line, Balkan pierrot and spotted pierrot, among others.

- The survey over the past two years has shown that diversity of butterfly species was very low at new parks that have ornamental and exotic plants.
- The diversity is higher at places like the Ridge, which has native species of plants and trees.

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)

- The BNHS, a pan-India wildlife research organization, has been promoting the cause of nature conservation since 1883.
- BNHS Mission: Conservation of nature, primarily biological diversity through action based on research, education and public awareness
- BNHS Vision: Premier independent scientific organization with a broad based constituency, excelling in the conservation of threatened species and habitats.

Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN)

Nagaland's Home Commissioner has issued a notification for setting up of the Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN).

- The aim is to prepare a **master list of all indigenous peoples** and check the issuance of fake indigenous inhabitant certificates.
- The exercise to prepare the RIIN will begin on 10th July, 2019 and will be completed within 60 days.
- The RIIN will be prepared after an extensive survey with the help of a village-wise and ward-wise list of indigenous inhabitants based on official records. Also, It will be prepared under the supervision of each district administration.
- **No fresh indigenous inhabitant certificate will be issued after the RIIN is completed** except for children born to the State's indigenous inhabitants who will be issued indigenous certificates along with birth certificates. The RIIN database will be updated accordingly.
- The RIIN will also be **integrated** with the online system for **Inner-Line Permit**, a temporary document non-inhabitants are required to possess for entry into and travel in Nagaland.
- RIIN has been called as a **variant of the National Register of Citizens (NRC)** that the state of Assam is updating to identify and weed out illegal immigrants in the state.

INS 'Shivalik' and 'Sindhukirti'

Defence Minister visited the Indian Navy's indigenously designed stealth frigate, INS 'Shivalik' and INS 'Sindhukirti'.

INS 'Shivalik'

- INS 'Shivalik' is India's **first stealth frigate** in the shivalik series under project 17 with 80% indigenous content.
    - Stealth frigates can escape detection by normal radars and surveillance equipment.
- INS 'Shivalik' is armed with missiles, helicopter support, mounted guns and a combat management system that can effectively coordinate all weapons and sensors onboard, giving it the ability to deal with **multiple threats**.
- Special aerodynamics, equipment, and materials used in designing and building INS 'Shivalik' makes it very difficult to monitor their movements.
- Apart from India, only the US, Russia, UK, France, Sweden, Japan, Italy, and China have the capability to build stealth warships of this size and class.

Project 17 – Shivalik class Frigate

- The Shivalik class or Project 17 class is a class of multi-role frigates in service with the Indian Navy.
- Stealth Frigates under Shivalik class series namely INS Shivalik, INS Sahyadri, and INS Satpura are first stealth warships built in India (by Mazagon Dock Limited).

INS Sindhukirti

- The INS Sindhukirti, among the **oldest operational submarines** in the Navy, is **diesel-electric class submarine** that can launch torpedoes, missiles, and even mines.
- Acquired in 1990, the submarine still forms a part of the Navy's cutting edge as it's been refitted - virtually rebuilt with **modern sensors weapons** and systems.