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Draft Rules for Live-Streaming Court Proceedings

Why in News

Recently, the **Supreme Court** has released the **Draft Model Rules for Live-Streaming and Recording of Court Proceedings**.

- The Rules are **part of the National Policy and Action Plan for implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** in the judiciary.
- The Rules would cover live-streaming and recording of proceedings in **High Courts, lower courts and tribunals**.
- Earlier, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based portal '**SUPACE**' in the judicial system aimed at assisting judges with legal research.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - The Supreme Court in **Swapnil Tripathi v Supreme Court of India** (2018) had **ruled in favour of opening up the apex court through live-streaming**.
 - It held that the **live streaming proceedings are part of the right to access justice under Article 21** (Protection of Life and Personal Liberty) of the Constitution
 - **Gujarat High Court was the first high court to livestream court proceedings** followed by Karnataka high court.

- **Draft Rules:**

- **Telecast of Proceedings:** All proceedings in high courts can be telecast except for cases relating to **matrimonial disputes, gender-based violence**, those **involving minors** and “cases, which in the opinion of the Bench, may provoke **enmity amongst communities** likely to result in a breach of law and order”.
- **Deciding Authority:** The **final decision** as to **whether or not to allow the Live-streaming** of the Proceedings or any portion thereof **will be of the Bench**, however, the decision of the Bench will be guided by the principle of an open and transparent judicial process.

The **decision of the Bench shall not be justiciable.**

- **Allow Objections:** The rules allow for **objections to be filed against live streaming** in specific cases at the stage of filing of the case or at a later stage.
- **Record of Proceedings:** The draft rules allow for **archiving of court proceedings for six months.**

The **use of authorised recordings** in their original form **may be permitted by the court**, inter-alia **to disseminate news and for training, academic and educational purposes.**

- **Restrictions:**
 - **Discussion amongst judges**, notes made by judges during hearings or **communication between the advocate and her client** will neither be telecast live nor archived.
 - The rules also **prohibit recording or sharing the telecast on media platforms**, including social media and messaging platforms, unless authorised by the court.
 - Recordings will **not be used for commercial, promotional purposes or advertising** in any form.

- **Possible Benefits:**

- It can make the **justice delivery system affordable, transparent, speedy and accountable** by limiting the paper filings.
- It can be **time saving** and hence can **reduce the backlog of pending cases** and reduce the number of unscrupulous activities.

- **Concerns:**

- **Lack of technical manpower in courts** and awareness amongst litigants, advocates and their acceptance to the system change.
- A huge concern will be the **cyber security threat.**
- The live streaming of the Courts are **susceptible to abuses.** Thus, **issues of privacy** may arise.
- **Infrastructure**, especially the **internet connectivity is also a big challenge** in implementing the live proceedings of Courts.

e-Courts Project

- The e-Courts project was conceptualized on the basis of the “**National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary – 2005**” submitted by **e-Committee, Supreme Court** of India with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary by ICT enablement of Courts.
- The e-Courts Mission Mode Project, **is a Pan-India Project**, monitored and funded by the Ministry of Law and Justice for the District Courts across the country.
- **The project envisages:**
 - To provide efficient & time-bound citizen-centric services delivery as detailed in e-Court Project Litigant's Charter.
 - To develop, install & implement decision support systems in courts.
 - To automate the processes to provide transparency in the accessibility of information to its stakeholders.
 - To enhance judicial productivity, both qualitatively & quantitatively, to make the justice delivery system affordable, accessible, cost-effective, predictable, reliable and transparent.

Way Forward

- There is a need for the **deployment of a robust security system** that provides secure access to case information for appropriate parties.
- Further, the government **needs to identify and develop the infrastructure** that would be required to support the e-court project.
- Solutions that will address the challenges such as inordinate delays in disposal of cases in courts, facilitating access to speedy resolution of commercial disputes by economic operators, making the justice system user friendly and affordable to all and improving the quality of legal aid services in the country would be imperative to drive the functioning of e-courts.

Source: IE

QS World University Rankings 2022

Why in News

QS World University Rankings 2022 shows that **India's tally in the top 200 universities** hasn't changed for the **fifth straight year**.

QS World University Rankings

- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) is a **leading global career and education network** for ambitious professionals looking to further their personal and professional development.
- **QS develops and successfully implements methods of comparative data collection and analysis** used to highlight institutions' strengths.

- The 'QS World University Rankings' is an **annual publication of university rankings** which comprises the global overall and subject rankings.
- **Six parameters** and their weightage for the evaluation:
 - Academic Reputation (40%)
 - Employer Reputation (10%)
 - Faculty/Student Ratio (20%)
 - Citations per faculty (20%)
 - International Faculty Ratio (5%)
 - International Student Ratio (5%)

Key Points

- **Global Rankings:**
 - **Top Ranks:**
 - **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** of the US is the top university for the **10th consecutive year**.
 - The **University of Oxford (UK)** has risen to **second rank for the first time since 2006**, while Stanford University (US) and the University of Cambridge (UK) share third spot.
 - **Asian Institutions:**
Singapore's **National University of Singapore** and **Nanyang Technological University**, and China's **Tsinghua University** and **Peking University**, are the **only Asian universities in the global top 20**.

Top varsities | JNU, featuring for the first time in the QS World Universities Ranking list, is among the top-600 in the world = indicates shared ranking

2022 global rank	Name
177=	Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
185	Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
186=	Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
255=	Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
277=	Indian Insititute of Technology, Kanpur
280	Indian Insititute of Technology, Kharagpur
395=	Indian Insititute of Technology, Guwahati
400=	Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
501-510 (ranking band)	University of Delhi
561-570 (ranking band)	Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

• **Indian Institutions:**

- Overall, there are **22 Indian institutions in the top 1,000 list** compared to **21 in the 2021 Rankings**, with the **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Madras making major strides in rankings.**
- **Jawaharlal Nehru University has entered the top 1,000 of the rankings for the first time**, as its new undergraduate engineering programme now makes it eligible for the rating.
- **IIT Bombay maintained its position as the top Indian institution for the fourth consecutive year**, although it fell five places in the global rankings to the joint 177th position.
- **IIT Delhi (185 rank) overtook the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (186 rank), giving India three institutions in the world's top 200.**

IISc was also declared the world's top research university by the indicator of most citations per faculty member, when adjusted for faculty size.

• **India's Performance:**

Indian universities have **improved their performance on academic reputation metric and research impact**, but continue to **struggle on the teaching capacity metric.**

- No Indian university ranks among the top 250 for faculty-student ratio.
- **Poor performance on teaching capacity** is not because of any drop in hiring, but rather **an increased student intake mandated by the government to implement reservations for economically weaker sections.**

- **Concerns:**
 - **No Objective Methodology:**
 - The rankings **do not accurately reflect the quality of education in India**, as they are largely dependent on international perception factors.
 - Half of the score comes from reputation indicators which are **based on perception, rather than any objective methodology**.
 - **Manipulation:**

It is being blamed that this year's improvement in scores was simply a **manipulation of numbers by the rankings agency, driven by commercial pressures**.
- **Related Indian Initiatives:**
 - **Institutions of Eminence (IoE) Scheme:**

It is a government's scheme to provide the **regulatory architecture for setting up or upgrading of 20 Institutions** (10 from public sector and 10 from the private sector) as world-class teaching and research institutions called 'Institutions of Eminence'.
 - **National Education Policy, 2020:**

It aims to introduce several changes in the Indian education system - from the school to college level and **make India a global knowledge superpower**.
 - **Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT):**

It is a first-of-its-kind Pan-IIT and IISc joint initiative to **develop a new education policy and a roadmap for research to solve major engineering and technology challenges** that India must address and champion to enable, empower and embolden the nation for inclusive growth and self-reliance.
 - **Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY):**

It was announced with a view to promote innovation of a higher order that directly impacts the needs of the Industry and thereby improves the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing.

Source:TH

Joint Statement on Multilateralism: BRICS

Why in News

The **BRICS** Foreign Ministers, in a recent meet, put out a joint statement on **multilateralism**.

BRICS is an acronym for the **grouping of** the world's leading emerging economies, namely **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa**.

Key Points

- **Multilateralism:**
 - **Meaning:**
 - It is the **process of organizing relations** between **groups of three or more states**.
 - It **generally comprises certain qualitative elements or principles that shape the character of the arrangement** or institution. These principles are:
 - **Indivisibility of interests** among participants.
 - Commitment to **diffuse reciprocity**, i.e. mutual exchange.
 - System of **dispute settlement** intended to enforce a particular mode of behaviour.
 - **Significance:**

Multilateral institutions have played a significant role in **post-war global governance** and are arguably **more stable** than other forms of organization because the **principles** underlying them appear to be more **durable and more able to adapt** to external changes.

- **Need:**

- **Increasing Incidences of Lawfare:**

- It means the misuse of **existing International and national laws** by several countries (via forced technology requirements, intellectual property rights violations, and subsidies), to gain an unfair advantage over other countries.

- The imposition of **extraterritorial sanction (under CAATSA) by the US** has affected development in developing economies like India and China.
 - Paralysis of the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**, due to the tussle between the developed and developing world.

- **Dual Use of Global Supply Chain:**

- Some of the developed countries have **jurisdiction and control over global supply chains**. Due to growing convergence between commercial interests and strategic goals, these supply chains enable them to have **vast extraterritorial influence** and have created **new power asymmetries**.

- **China through BRI** (Belt and Road Initiative) is enhancing its role in global economic governance.
 - There are fears pertaining to dual-use (commercial viability and military application) of **Industrial Revolution 4.0**.

- **Lack of Global Framework:**

- The global community has not been able to come on a single platform or frame a **Global Agenda** on issues related to **terrorism, Climate Change, cybersecurity etc.**
 - Also, due to the lack of any global public health framework, **Covid-19** has spread into a pandemic.

- **Six Principles laid out by BRICS for the task of Strengthening and Reforming the Multilateral System:**
 - First, it should make **global governance** more inclusive, representative and participatory to facilitate greater and more meaningful participation of developing and least developed countries.
 - Second, it should be **based on inclusive consultation** and **collaboration** for the benefit of all.
 - Third, it should make **multilateral organisations more responsive, action-oriented** and **solution-oriented** based on the norms and principles of international law and the spirit of mutual respect, justice, equality, and mutually beneficial cooperation.
 - Fourth, it should use **innovative and inclusive solutions**, including digital and technological tools.
 - Fifth, it should **strengthen the capacities of individual States and international organizations**.
 - Sixth, it should promote **people-centered international cooperation** at the core.

BRICS

- BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa**.
- In **2001**, the **British Economist Jim O'Neill** coined the term BRIC to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
- The grouping was **formalised** during the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers' in **2006**.
- **South Africa** was invited to **join BRIC in December 2010**, after which the group adopted the acronym **BRICS**.
- **India** has assumed the **BRICS Presidency from January 2021**.

Structure

- BRICS **does not exist in the form of organization**, but it is an **annual summit** between the **supreme leaders of five nations**.
- The **Chairmanship** of the forum is **rotated annually** among the members, in accordance with the acronym B-R-I-C-S.

Source: TH

Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyan: Aspirational Districts

Why in News

Recently, **NITI Aayog** and **Piramal Foundation** launched ‘**Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyan**’ in **112 aspirational districts**.

- This drive was launched **to assist the administration in providing home care support to Covid-19 patients**, who are either asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.
- **Most of these districts** are in **Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The campaign is under a special initiative – **Aspirational Districts Collaborative** – in which **local leaders, civil societies and volunteers will work with the district administrations to address emerging issues across key focus areas of the Aspirational Districts Programme**.
 - It will be **led by district magistrates** in partnership with **over 1000 local NGOs**, which will enlist and **train over 1 lakh volunteers** to connect with patients through inbound/outbound calls.
 - Volunteers will be trained **to support 20 affected families each** by educating caretakers to follow protocols, provide psycho-social support and timely updates about patients to the administration.
- **Objective:**
 - It is aimed **to reach every affected person in these 112 districts**.
 - The campaign is expected to play a key role in district preparedness for managing nearly 70% of **Covid-19** cases at home, **reducing pressure on the health system**, and stemming the spread of fear amongst the people.
 - It will provide **long-term support to India’s poorest communities in the Aspirational Districts** by addressing the lasting impact of Covid-19.

Aspirational Districts Programme

- **About:**
 - It was launched in **January 2018**, the ‘**Transformation of Aspirational Districts**’ Programme (TADP).
 - Aspirational Districts are **those districts in India that are affected by poor socio-economic indicators**.
 - These are aspirational in the context, that improvement in these districts can lead to the overall improvement in **human development** in India.
- **Ministry:**

At the Government of India level, the programme is **anchored by NITI Aayog**. In addition, individual Ministries have assumed responsibility to drive the progress of districts.
- **Objective:**

To monitor the **real-time progress** of aspirational districts.

- **Focus Areas:**
 - ADP is based on **49 indicators** from the **5 identified thematic areas**, which focuses closely on improving people's **Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure**.
 - With States as the main drivers, ADP seeks to focus on the strength of each district, identify low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement, measure progress, and rank districts.
- **Broad Contours of the Programme (Triple-C):**
 - **Convergence** (of Central & State Schemes) which brings together the horizontal and vertical tiers of the government.
 - **Collaboration** (of Central, State level 'Prabhari' Officers & District Collectors) which enables impactful partnerships between government, market and civil society.
 - **Competition** among districts driven by a spirit of the mass movement fosters accountability on district governments.

Source: TH

Supersonic Commercial Plane

Why in News

The **US airline United** has announced plans to buy **15 new supersonic airliners** and "return supersonic speeds to aviation" in the year 2029.

- The Airline has agreed to **purchase the Overture aircraft from Boom Supersonic** (a Denver-based start-up), with the **planes able to fly at Mach 1.7 faster than the speed of sound**.
- The new supersonic "Overture" aircraft will **become the world's fastest commercial airliner**, reducing travel time by about half of today's planes.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - **Concorde**, the British-French turbojet-powered commercial airliner, **was the first aircraft to carry passengers at supersonic speed**. Supersonic planes flew passengers **from 1976 until 2003**.
 - But eventually **had to discontinue**, due to cost and other concerns.

- **Supersonic Plane:**

- Supersonic aircraft are planes that **can fly faster than the speed of sound.**
Usually, supersonic planes can travel at the **speed of around 900 kmph, twice the speed of normal aircraft.**
- The **technology for supersonic flights is actually over 70 years old**, but only recently has been used for commercial flying.
Before 1976, when the first commercial supersonic flight took off, the planes were **used entirely for military purposes.**

- **Boom's Overture Supersonic Aircraft:**

- The Overture aircraft would **travel at the speed of Mach 1.7 or 1,805 kmph with a range of 4,250 nautical miles.**
- In a single flight, it could **carry 65 to 88 passengers** and reach **an altitude of 60,000 ft.**
- Trial flights are scheduled to begin in 2026, with commercial use coming three year later.
- It will **build upon Concorde's legacy** through faster, more efficient and sustainable technology.
- The company has claimed to produce an eco-friendly aircraft with "**net-zero carbon emissions**", set to fly with 100% **sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).**
Sustainable aviation fuels include **biofuels** and synthetic kerosine that are manufactured using renewable and sustainable materials.
- It aims for "**zero overland noise.**"
 - This essentially means that it will cruise at supersonic speeds only over water, ensuring that no **sonic boom** or excessive noise reaches the surfaces where people live.
 - It will be equipped with **advanced aerodynamics** and **carbon composite materials.**
 - This will be able to **cut significant development and maintenance costs** in ways which the Concorde planes could not.

- **Challenges with Supersonic Planes:**

- **High Manufacturing Cost:** The costs of making “sustainable” supersonic planes are extremely high.
- **Environmental Cost:** The very nature of its flying using excessive amounts of fuel and energy is likely to have high environmental costs.
 - Despite the use of sustainable fuels, the **greenhouse gas emissions** are not nullified.
 - The plane consumes high amounts of fuel in order to take off, that too in a market where sustainable fuels aren’t readily available.
- **Excessive Noise Pollution:** The speed of the planes result in producing excessive amounts of noise pollution in the environment.
 - The “Sonic Boom” created by these planes feels like an explosion to the human ear.
 - This, thus, limits where and when the supersonic planes can fly. They can only reach their actual speed until they are far enough from people and completely over the ocean.
- **Regulatory Approvals:** To fly such planes can be unsuccessful, especially for transatlantic flights. Getting clearance from regulators around the world would be a challenging task, since the supersonic planes in the past have already been flagged for these hurdles.
- **Too Costly:** It would not be economically feasible for everyone. Only the very rich can afford supersonic planes, as a ticket is likely to be way more costlier than a first class ticket of a regular plane.

Source: IE

YUVA Scheme for Young Writers

Why in News

Recently, the Indian Prime Minister announced the ‘**Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors’ (YUVA) scheme** - a mentorship programme to train young authors.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The scheme is **aimed at training 75 aspiring writers below 30 years**, who are ready to express themselves and project India and its culture and literature globally.

A total of 75 authors **will be selected through an All India Contest at MyGov** (Government of India's Citizen Engagement Platform).
 - A **consolidated scholarship of Rs. 50,000 per month for a period of six months per author** will be paid under the mentorship scheme.
- **Aim:**
 - To **bring reading and authorship as a preferred profession at par** with other job options.
 - To **impart a positive psychological push** to the young minds amidst the impact of the **Covid-19 pandemic** on the mental health of children.
- **Implementation & Execution:**
 - **Implementing Agency:** The **National Book Trust** (under Ministry of Education) will ensure phase-wise execution of the Scheme.
 - **Phase-I (Training):**

NBT will organise **training for three months** for the selected candidates.
 - **Phase-II (Promotion):**
 - The selected candidates will **get to expand their understanding and hone their skills** through interaction at various international events such as literary festivals, book fairs, virtual book fairs, cultural exchange programmes, etc.
 - A **book or a series of books written by these young authors** will be **published by NBT** and a **royalty of 10% will be paid** to the authors.
 - Their published books will **also be translated into other Indian languages** to ensure the exchange of culture and literature between different states, thereby promoting **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**.

Source: IE

Operation Pangea XIV: Interpol

Why in News

Recently, the **International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol)** through its **Operation Pangea XIV** targeted the **sale of fake medicines and products online**.

More than **1.10 lakh web links**, including websites and online marketplaces, were **taken down** in the operation.

Key Points

- **About:**

- Operation Pangea, is a well-established **international effort of Interpol to disrupt the online sale of counterfeit and illicit health products**. Just as importantly, Pangea works to **raise awareness of the risks associated with buying medicines from unregulated websites**.

The first Operation Pangea was **conducted in 2008**.

- The current operation (14th) involved the **police, customs and health regulatory authorities of 92 countries**. It was **coordinated by Interpol**. Indian agencies also participated in the operation.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) that is the nodal body for the Interpol in the country.

- **Significance:**

- The **online sale of illicit medicines continues to pose a threat to public safety**, which is why operations such as **Pangea remain vital in combating this global health menace**.
- Criminals were continuing to cash in on the huge demand for personal protection and hygiene products due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

Source: TH

Saral Jeevan Bima: IRDAI

Why in News

Saral Jeevan Bima, **launched by IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) in 2020**, has become a popular **term life insurance product** among masses.

IRDAI is an **autonomous body** that was established **in 1999** to regulate and develop the insurance industry.

Term Life Insurance

- Term life insurance guarantees payment of a stated death benefit to the insured's beneficiaries if the insured person dies during a specified term.
- These policies have no value other than the guaranteed death benefit and feature no savings component as found in a whole life insurance product.
- Term life premiums are based on a person's age, health, and life expectancy.

Key Points

- IRDAI in October 2020 **had mandated all life insurers to launch the Saral Jeevan Bima** plans from 1st January 2021.

- Saral Jeevan Bima is a **regulator-mandated standard term life insurance plan** offering basic **protection to people who are self-employed or belong to a lower income category**.
- It is a pure term life insurance product that **can be purchased by people in the age group of 18 to 65 years** and will have a **policy term of 5 to 40 years**.
- The **sum assured** for the term life insurance policy ranges from **Rs 5 lakh to Rs 25 lakh** (in multiples of Rs 50,000).
However, the insurer will have the **option of providing a sum assured beyond Rs 25 lakh**.
- It **provides for payment of sum assured in lump sum to the nominee** in case of the life assured's unfortunate death during the policy term.
- There are **no exclusions, other than suicides**.

Source: IE
