



Important Facts for Prelims (10th September 2018)

INS Karanj readies for Trials

- Mazagon Dock limited is preparing for sea trials of submarine INS Karanj.
- 'Karanj' is the third in a series of six Scorpene submarines being built at the state-run Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders in collaboration with DCNS, France under Project-75.

Project-75

- 'Project-75' is a programme by the Indian Navy that entails building six Scorpene Class attack submarines.
- The first submarine 'INS Kalvari' under this project was commissioned into the Navy on December 14, 2017.
- The second 'Khanderi' will be commissioned by the end of the year 2018.
- The fourth Scorpene 'Vela' is yet to be launched.

Scorpene Class Submarines

- The submarines in the P75 Scorpene Class are powered by conventional diesel-electric propulsion system.
- Scorpene is one of the most sophisticated submarines, capable of undertaking multifarious missions including anti-surface ship warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying, and area surveillance.
- However, few submarines are expected to be equipped with air-independent propulsion (AIP) technology, which is developed by DRDO to provide long-range and extended endurance capabilities under sea.

Mazagon Docks Shipbuilders

- MDL is one of the leading shipbuilding yard and only submarine builder in India.
- It was incorporated as a Public Limited Company in 1934.
- It was nationalised in 1960 and is now a Public Sector Undertaking of the Government of India.
- It manufactures warships and submarines for the Indian Navy and offshore platforms and associated support vessels for offshore oil drilling. It also builds tankers, cargo bulk carriers, passenger ships and ferries.

Pondicherry Shark

- Recently it was spotted in the East Godavari River Estuarine Ecosystem.
- It is a **small shark** with size not longer than about 3 feet.
- It is protected under **Schedule-I** of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- It is listed as **critically endangered** in IUCN Red list.
- It was once found throughout Indo-Pacific coastal waters and is known to enter fresh water.
- Zoologists have been trying to trace it in the other parts of the country since 1979.

eCourts Mission Mode Project

- Establishment of Wide Area Network (WAN) connecting all District and Subordinate court complexes has become one of the important components of eCourts Mission Mode Project Phase-II.
- The eCourts Mission Mode Project (Phase I 2010-15; Phase II 2015-19) is a national **e-Governance project** for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enablement of **district and subordinate courts** of the country.
- The objectives of the project is to provide designated services to litigants, lawyers and Judiciary through universal computerisation of district and subordinate courts, as well as the upgradation of ICT infrastructure of the Supreme Court and the High Courts.

Sukanya Samriddhi Account

- The government recently amended the rules for Sukanya Samriddhi account to lower the amount required for opening the account under the scheme.
- A minimum of ₹250 (earlier Rs. 1000) and maximum of ₹1.5 lakh can be invested in a financial year in one account.
- The minimum annual deposit requirement, or the minimum amount required to be deposited in Sukanya Samriddhi account every year, has also been lowered to Rs 250, from Rs 1,000 earlier.
- (SSA) is a social welfare scheme launched in 2014 to promote the welfare of girl child and facilitate the interests of a girl child such as her education and marriage.
- Parents (legal guardians) can open only one account in the name of one girl child and maximum two accounts in the name of two different girl children.
- The account can be opened up to the age of 10 years only from the date of birth of the girl child, whereas investment can be made till the child attains the age of 15 years.
- The interest rate on Sukanya Samriddhi account is revised every quarter, like other small savings instrument such as public provident fund (PPF), and Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS).
- Sukanya Samriddhi account will mature on completion of 21 years from the date of opening of account.
- Partial withdrawal will be allowed on the account holder attaining the age of 18 to meet educational or marriage expenses. Withdrawal will be limited to 50% of the balance standing at the end of the preceding financial year.
- Normal premature closure will be allowed for the purpose of the account holder's marriage, if she has attained the age of 18.
- Contribution to SSA qualifies for tax deduction under Section 80C.

Leptospirosis

- **Kerala** is going through an outbreak of infectious diseases in the aftermath of the floods, and the State is battling a disease called leptospirosis, commonly known as '**rat fever**'.
- Leptospirosis outbreaks have frequently been reported in Kerala since the 1980s and are linked to flooding.
- It is a zoonotic, or **animal-borne**, disease, caused by the **bacteria** of the genus *Leptospira*.
- It is most commonly spread through **water contaminated by urine from infected animals**, but contaminated food or soil can also act as vehicles for the disease.
- Symptoms of the disease include fever, body pain, pain in leg muscles, yellowish hue in the eyes, variation in the amount and colour of urine.
- Like dengue, it can manifest itself as mild flu and progress to a severe form that can cause **kidney** damage, **liver** failure, respiratory distress, meningitis, and **even death**.
- The Health Ministry has a protocol called the 'Programme for Prevention and Control of Leptospirosis' since 2015.

