Urkund Software

According to a **University Grants Commission (UGC)** notice, all universities in India will get final subscription to access the **Swedish anti-plagiarism software 'Urkund'** from September 1, 2019.

Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.

- The Urkund software was chosen through a **global tender process.**
- While **Turnitin** (US anti-plagiarism software) is more commonly used by global academics, it was found to be 10 times more expensive without a proportionate increase in features or reliability.
- The central government is following a **two-pronged approach** to prevent plagiarism.
    - As a part of this process, in the coming years the **software will be available free of cost** to all 900 universities, including teachers, students and researchers.
    - The Centre also notified the **University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018** to prescribe the graded punishment for plagiarism.

UGC Panel on Improving Research Culture

- A UGC **panel on improving research culture,** headed by **P. Balaram,** noted that Indian academics have contributed **35% of all articles published in about 11,000 fake journals** between 2010 and 2014.
- The panel found that most of these articles were in **fake engineering journals,** followed by articles in fake journals of biomedicine and social sciences.
- According to the panel report, primary responsibility to ensure high standards of academic research should lie with institutions themselves.
- Central rules and regulations can only complement the vigilant internal processes of institutions.

- The report submitted by the panel in July 2019 said that, **"Institutions must take the responsibility** for ensuring academic standards and for emphasising, to both students and faculty, the importance of **maintaining the highest standards of integrity** in academic research."

Source: TH