

BrainBuzz Academy

SSC Current Affairs - 18-Dec-24

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Polity and Governance

Scientists develop 'kisan kavach' to shield farmers from pesticide sprays



◆◆ Akin to the protective PPE kits that health workers don, scientists affiliated to the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) have developed an 'anti-pesticide' suit called **Kisan Kavach**.

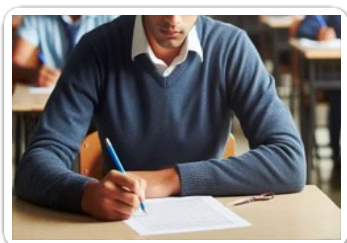
◆◆ The suit is intended to protect farm labourers from imbibing the pesticides they spray. Several of the common pesticides are potential neurotoxins and detrimental to health.

◆◆ The kit consists of a trouser, pullover, and a face-cover made of 'oxime fabric' that can chemically breakdown any of the common pesticides that get sprayed onto cloth or body during spraying operations. This prevents chemicals from leaching into the skin.

◆◆ The price per kit is ₹4,000.

National

National Testing Agency



Why in the news?

A high-level committee of experts, headed by the former Chairperson of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) K. Radhakrishnan, has recommended restructuring of the National Testing Agency (NTA).

Reason to form a panel:

Recently, the National Testing Agency (NTA) released the NEET UG results, drawing attention to the unusually high number of candidates scoring a perfect 720/720 and the controversial near-perfect scores of 718 or 719.

The National Medical Commission (NMC) is responsible for laying down policies for maintaining high quality and high standards in medical education and making necessary regulations on this behalf.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, former Chairman of ISRO and Chairman of the Board of Governors at IIT Kanpur, has been appointed as the Chairman of the committee. The other members include Dr. Randeep Guleria, former Director of AIIMS Delhi; Prof. B J Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Hyderabad; Prof. Ramamurthy K, Professor Emeritus at the Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras; Pankaj Bansal, Co-Founder of People Strong and Board Member of Karmayogi Bharat; Prof. Aditya Mittal, Dean of Student Affairs at IIT Delhi; and Govind Jaiswal, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Education, who will serve as the Member Secretary.

Key Recommendations:

❖❖ The panel has recommended Digi-Exam, on the lines of Digi-Yatra, to make the examination process foolproof. The report said such a system will ensure that the candidate writing the exam is the one who joined the programme. “Essentially, authentication at the stages of application, test, admission/induction and study/ work...”.

❖❖ The panel recommended that an empowered and accountable governing body with three designated sub-committees should be set up to oversee test audit, ethics and transparency, nomination and staff conditions and stakeholder relationships.

❖❖ “NTA needs to be manned with internal domain-specific human resources and a leadership team with domain expertise, proven experience and skill sets who should take charge of the testing process in the future,”.

❖❖ The NTA should primarily conduct entrance examinations.

❖❖ The Director-General should be an officer not below the rank of Additional Secretary to the Union government under the Central Staffing Scheme, and recommended 10 specific verticals for NTA, headed at the director level.

❖❖ To address the complaints from the States, the panel said the NTA should develop institutional linkage with State/District authorities for providing a secure test administration apparatus. “The Committee recommends that coordination committees at State and District levels may be set up with specified roles and responsibilities,”.

❖❖ The panel recommended three policy interventions: multi-session testing and multi-stage testing for NEET-UG and multitude subject streams for CUET.

❖❖ “The parameters and methodology of normalisation process that is integral to multi-session testing, should be well-defined, established, documented, and communicated transparently for each test,”.

❖❖ The panel has also recommended a coherent series of measures to prevent breaches and malpractices while conducting the tests.

❖❖ It has also provided detailed precautions while setting question papers, printing press,

transportation, selection of centres, seat allotment, frisking, steps to prevent impersonation, handling of unused OMR sheets and question papers, back transportation of OMR sheets and declaration of results.

What is the National Testing Agency?

About:

The National Testing Agency (NTA) was established as a Society registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act, of 1860.

It is an autonomous and self-sustained testing organisation to conduct entrance examinations for admission in higher educational institutions.

Governance:

NTA is chaired by an eminent educationist appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will be the Director-General to be appointed by the Government.

There will be a Board of Governors comprising members from user institutions.

Functions:

Conducting entrance examinations for admission to higher educational institutions

Creating a question bank using modern techniques

Establishing a strong research and development culture

Collaborating with international organizations like ETS (Educational Testing Services)

Undertaking any other examination entrusted to it by the Ministries/Departments of Government of India/State Governments

NEET:

The NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) is an entrance examination for students who wish to pursue undergraduate medical courses (MBBS/BDS) and postgraduate courses (MD/MS) in government or private medical colleges.

Objective: To standardize the admission process for medical and dental courses across India, ensuring a uniform evaluation of candidates' eligibility.

National Medical Commission (NMC):

NMC is the apex regulatory body for medical education and practice in India.

NMC was established in 2020 by the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI).

NMC consists of four autonomous boards: the Undergraduate Medical Education Board, the Post-Graduate Medical Education Board, the Medical Assessment and Rating Board, and the Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

NMC also has a Medical Advisory Council, which advises the commission on matters related to medical education and practice.

NMC also regulates the standards and quality of medical education and training, the registration and ethics of medical practitioners, and the assessment and rating of medical institutions.

NMC has also achieved the prestigious World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) recognition, which means that the medical degrees awarded by the NMC are recognized globally.





Taiwanese laptop maker MSI announced the commencement of its manufacturing operations in India with its first facility in Chennai.

In line with the objective of “Make in India”, MSI will unveil locally-made versions of two laptop models — the MSI Modern 14 and MSI Thin 15.

To enhance the accessibility of products, MSI is raising number of touchpoints, including more laptop brand stores and availability at Croma and Reliance Retail.

Useful information for all competitive exams:

Micro-Star International (msi):

Founded: 4 August 1986

Founders: Joseph Hsu, Jeans Huang, Frank Lin, Kenny Yu, Henry Lu

Headquarters: Zhonghe, New Taipei, Taiwan

President: Jeans Huang

Sports

Vinicius and Bonmati win the FIFA Best awards



Real Madrid attacker Vinicius Junior won the FIFA Best men’s Player-of-the Year award at a ceremony, while Barcelona midfielder Aitana Bonmati picked up the women’s prize for the second time.

The award comes two months after 24-year-old Vinicius was second in the Ballon d’Or, with Real electing to snub the ceremony when it found out beforehand that Manchester City midfielder Rodri was set to win the trophy.

But the Brazilian was, this time, on hand to collect the prize in person as he was in Qatar with his club ahead of its Intercontinental Cup final clash with Mexico’s Pachuca.

The Best:

Men’s Player: Vinicius Jr;

Women’s Player: Aitana Bonmati;

Men’s Coach: Carlo Ancelotti;

Women’s Coach: Emma Hayes;

Men’s Goalkeeper: Emiliano Martinez;

Women's Goalkeeper: Alyssa Naeher;
Puskas Award: Alejandro Garnacho;
Marta Award: Marta;
FIFA Fair Play Award: Thiago Maia;
FIFA Fan Award: Guilherme Gandra Moura.

Useful information for all competitive exams:

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association[a] ('International Federation of Association Football') (FIFA):

Founded: 21 May 1904

Founder: Robert Guérin

Founded at: Paris, France

Headquarters: Zürich, Switzerland

Jakarta, Indonesia (AFC)

President (9th): Gianni Infantino

Secretary general: Mattias Grafström

Deaths

Environmentalist Tulsi Gowda, revered as 'tree goddess', dies at 86



Padma Shri awardee Tulsi Gowda, an environmentalist from Karnataka who is revered as the **"tree goddess" by the Halakki tribal community**, died from age-related ailments at her residence in Honnali village of Ankola taluk in Uttara Kannada district Monday evening. She was 86.

About Tulsi Gowda:

Known as the **'encyclopedia of forest'**, Gowda was born in Honnali village in Ankola taluk in Uttara Kannada district in 1944. But tragedy struck early. Gowda was only two years old when she lost her father. Raised in penury, she began working as a day labourer alongside her mother at a local forest nursery, forgoing any opportunity for formal education.

At the nursery, Gowda was entrusted with caring for seeds meant for the Agasur seedbed, a project of the Karnataka Forest Department. Overcoming the hurdle of lacking any formal education, Gowda became an autodidact, demonstrating extraordinary knowledge of forests, and particularly her ability to identify mother trees.

For 35 years, she worked as a daily wage worker at the nursery until her dedication and knowledge earned her a permanent position at the forest department, where for the next 15 years, she directly supported afforestation efforts, preventing poaching, and mitigating forest fires that threatened local wildlife.

Gowda has been credited with planting and nurturing over 1 lakh trees across Karnataka. Her contributions have strengthened one community reserve, five tiger reserves, 15 conservation reserves and 30 wildlife sanctuaries, ensuring the preservation of diverse ecosystems.

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In 2021, she was conferred the Padma Shri for her exceptional contributions to environmental conservation.

Important Days

International Migrants Day 2024: Theme, History and Significance



International Migrants Day is celebrated every year on December 18 to bring attention to the difficulties they encounter around the world. This day offers a chance to promote the defence of immigrant rights and draw attention to their vital role in forming international societies. Migration has played a significant role in human history, as the day also honours the social, cultural, and economic changes brought about by migrants.

International Migrants Day 2024: Theme

According to the World Health Organization, this year's International Migrants Day theme is **"Honouring the Contributions of Migrants and Respecting Their Rights"**.

The theme serves as a helpful reminder of the benefits that migrants bring to the nations and societies in which they reside, the obstacles that they must overcome to reach their full potential, and the pressing need for cooperation to make migration as safe as possible.

International Migrants Day 2024: History

The UN General Assembly established a set of obligations to improve migrant safety in 1960, at its first-ever conference on massive refugee migrations.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed December 18 to be International Migrants Day on December 4, 2000.

It has since been observed to honour the UN General Assembly's 1990 approval of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

International Migrants Day 2024: Significance

As per The World Health Organisation, the number of migrant deaths is increasing despite media attention and political pledges as 2023 had the greatest yearly death toll ever, with more than 8500 deaths.

It is impossible to prevent or stop migration, it is a natural process and a phenomenon that keeps changing the world as more and more people relocate in pursuit of better possibilities.

The aftermath of natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis also forces some people to migrate. WHO claims that this global occasion not only honours migrants but also serves as a catalyst for the promotion of human rights and the unification of the international community in utilising the transformative potential of migration.