

NEWS TODAY

UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (UPSC) RETURNS GOVT'S LIST FOR PROBABLE DGP, WANTS 2 MORE TO BE ADDED

- For the appointment of Maharashtra's director general of police (DGP) UPSC has returned the government's recommendations, asking it to add two more to the list.
- Also, the UPSC has asked the **annual confidential reports (ACR)** of all along with **details of any pending inquiries** against the officers.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court had **refrained State governments from appointing DGPs** without first consulting the UPSC through following guidelines.
 - The State governments concerned have to send UPSC the names of the **probables three months before** the incumbent DGPs are to retire.
 - The UPSC will prepare a **panel of three officers fit to be DGP** after giving due **weightage to merit and seniority** (minimum of six months tenure left in service) shall be considered for the post of DGP.
 - The State shall "immediately" appoint one of the persons shortlisted by the UPSC.
- **Objective** is to protect the police officials from political interference by **avoiding favouritism and nepotism**. It also builds upon the 2006 judgement(see infographics).

- Police is a state subject. The Supreme Court in **Prakash Singh vs UoL, 2006** laid down 7 major guidelines for reforms in State police force. Few of them are
 - Constitute a State Security Commission for policy making.
 - Appointing DGP based on merit with a minimum tenure of 2 years.
 - Separate police functions of investigation and maintaining law and order.



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION GLOBAL SODIUM BENCHMARKS FOR DIFFERENT FOOD CATEGORIES

- The WHO has established global benchmarks for sodium levels in foods across different food categories.
 - The WHO recommended daily intake of salt or sodium is **5 gm**, but most people around the world consume more than double this amount.
- **About Sodium**
 - Sodium is necessary to maintain normal cell metabolism, healthy plasma, and improves the health of the nervous system.
 - It is found naturally in a range of foods like meat and dairy.
 - However, it is present in very high amounts in processed foods, like snacks, bread, or condiments.
 - Excess dietary sodium intake increases **blood pressure** and consequently increases the risk of **cardiovascular diseases**.
 - It is estimated that 2.5 million deaths could be prevented globally if salt consumption is cut down to recommended levels.
- **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)**
 - It is an eating plan to lower or control high blood pressure.
 - The DASH diet emphasizes foods that are **lower in sodium** as well as foods that are **rich in potassium, magnesium and calcium** (nutrients that help lower blood pressure).

MANDATORY ONLINE CERTIFICATION OF DISABILITY THROUGH UDID PORTAL

- A notification under **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016** has made mandatory for all States/UTs to grant certificate of disability through online mode only using UDID (Unique Disability ID).
 - It will ensure **complete digitization of certification** of disability to achieve pan-India validity to ensure access to govt schemes.
 - It is in line with **Incheon Strategy** for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific.
- **Other Government Initiatives for Persons with Disabilities**
 - **Accessible India Campaign** to help make buildings and other infrastructure disabled friendly.
 - **Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP)** Scheme to provide for distribution of aids and assistive devices.
 - **Sugamya Pustakalaya:** Online library for persons with disabilities.
 - **Reservation** is provided to disabled in **higher education**.
 - **4 % reservation in Government jobs**.
- India is a signatory to
 - **United Nations Convention** on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
 - **Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality** of People with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region.
 - **Biwako Millennium Framework** working towards an inclusive, barrier free and rights-based society.

AGRICULTURE MINISTRY FORMULATES SPECIAL KHARIF STRATEGY TO ATTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN PRODUCTION OF PULSES

- **Key strategies formulated**
 - Utilising all the **high yielding varieties of seeds which will be distributed free of cost to increase area** through intercropping and sole crop.
 - Agricultural Technology Application Research Institutes (ATARIs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras will be roped in for effective implementation and training to the farmers.
- **About Pulses in India**
 - India is the **largest producer (25% of global production), consumer (27% of world consumption) and importer (14%) of pulses** in the world.
 - Pulses contribute to healthy soils and climate change mitigation through their **nitrogen-fixing properties**.
 - Pulses are part of the **legume family and contain vitamins, minerals, fibres and dietary protein**.
 - Pulses in India are considered a residual crop and grown under rain-fed conditions in marginal/ less fertile lands, with very little focus on pest and nutrient management.
 - The major pulses crops of the country are **red gram or pigeon pea (tur, arhar), chickpea or gram, black gram (urad bean), green gram (moong bean) and lentil (masur)**.
 - Minor pulses include rajmah and other beans, cowpea, horse gram, moth, khesari-dal, etc.

STEPS TAKEN TO INCREASE PULSE PRODUCTION

- **Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM)** from 2004-05 to 2013-14.
- **NFSM-Pulses** (subsumed ISOPOM) is one of the components of the centrally sponsored scheme of National Food Security Mission.
- **Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P)** for pulse development under the NFSM-Pulses.
- **Providing quality seeds** to the farmers through creation of pulses seed hubs, Breeder Seed Production Centres infrastructure for increasing Varietal Replacement and Seed Replacement.



INDIA'S FISCAL RESPONSE TO COVID CONSERVATIVE, NEED LARGE STIMULUS: REPORT

• The report, 'State of Working India 2021: One Year of Covid-19,' released by Azim Premji University.

• Key findings

- The impacts of the 2nd wave may be larger than the first one **on work, incomes, food security, health and education.**
- **Failure to take action now** will cause short-term hardship to continue and may compound the long-term effects leading to **years of lost welfare gains, and increased poverty** as well as loss of savings and productive resources can lead to **poverty traps.**

• Recommendations

- Rs 5.5 lakh crore stimulus package to deal with the crisis which would comprise.
- Extend **free rations** under the PDS atleast **till the end of 2021.**
- **Cash transfer of Rs 5,000 for three months** to as many vulnerable households as can be reached.
- **Expansion of MGNREGA entitlement to 150 days** and revising programme wages upwards.
- Launch a **pilot urban employment programme in the worst-hit districts.**
- **Increasing the central contribution in old-age pensions** to at least Rs 500.
- **A Covid hardship allowance** of Rs. 5,000 per month for six months to Anganwadi and ASHA workers.

ALSO IN NEWS

Door step Banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To tackle challenges posed by pandemic, Public sector banks (PSBs) have come together to form a new company in an attempt to take banking services to the doorsteps of their customers. • The new company will engage Banking Correspondents (BCs) under a common standard operating procedure (SoP) to provide financial and non-financial services directly to customer homes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Cash withdrawal is the only financial service currently provided. • Non Financial services like cheque pickup, account statements etc are also offered.
Lumpy skin disease (LSD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSD is caused by the pox virus which affects cattle and buffalo and is spreading through blood transmission by mosquitoes, houseflies, and lice. • Humans are not at risk of developing LSD. • The disease has various implications like decreased milk production causing significant economic loss to farmers. • The disease, currently, has no treatment. Hence, prevention by vaccination is the only effective means to control the spread. • The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has declared it as a notifiable disease.
Millisecond pulsars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of astronomers has discovered 8 millisecond pulsars located within dense clusters of stars, known as "globular clusters". Millisecond pulsars remain the most rapidly rotating neutron star (refer to the infographics) presently known to man. <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>LIFE CYCLE OF A STAR</p> <p>The diagram illustrates the life cycle of a star through several stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average Star: A small yellow star. Red Giant: A large red star. Planetary Nebula: A colorful nebula. White Dwarf: A small white star. Stellar Nebula: A blue nebula. Massive Star: A large blue star. Red Supergiant: A large orange-red star. Supernova: A bright star. Neutron Star: A small white star. Black Hole: A black hole with a accretion disk. </div>
High-Resolution Computed Tomography (HRCT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRCT is a widely used technique to image various lung pathology. • Compared to helical CT, HRCT uses a narrow beam collimation to take thin slice images of the lung parenchyma. • This protocol produces extremely high definition images of lung alveoli, airways, interstitium, and pulmonary vasculature. • Expiration images may assist in identifying air-trapping in patients with lung disease.
Anamalai Tiger Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anamalai Tiger Reserve is carved out of the Tamil Nadu portion of the Anamalais. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ It lies South of the Palakkad gap in the Southern Western Ghats. ➢ The Reserve falls within the Western Ghats mountain chain. • Anamalais is a home for six different indigenous people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Malai Malasars ➢ Kadar ➢ Malasar ➢ Muduvan ➢ Pulayar ➢ Eravallar
Animals in news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Abalone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ These are unique sea snail. Their flesh is a delicacy and the polished shell is prized as "mother of pearl". ➢ They are threatened with extinction. Historically, they were found in the Pacific Ocean. • Hoolock gibbon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ A study led by Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad scientists states that India has only western hoolock gibbon (another species known as eastern hoolock gibbon is not found in India). ➢ Hoolock gibbons are small apes and the only apes present in India. ➢ They are found in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. ➢ IUCN Red List: Endangered