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News: SAMRIDH Initiative

- Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Healthcare (SAMRIDH) initiative is launched by **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID).**

SAMRIDH Initiative

- The collaboration will **focus on innovations across the healthcare landscape** with the common goal to **mount an effective response to the ongoing third wave of Covid-19 and build health system preparedness for future infectious disease outbreaks and health emergencies.**
- In 2020 the Indian government, academia, and the private sector developed the innovative **SAMRIDH blended finance facility to combine public and philanthropic funds with commercial capital to create and rapidly scale market-based health solutions.**
- Blended finance is an **approach towards financing where catalytic funding (e.g grants and concessional capital) from public and philanthropic sources is**

utilized to mobilize additional private sector investment to realize social goals and outcomes.

- It will improve access to affordable and quality healthcare for vulnerable populations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and rural and tribal regions.
- This initiative is implemented by a Technical Support Unit managed by IPE Global (a company).

Objectives

- Bridge supply-side gaps in healthcare facilities to respond to health emergencies in the immediate, medium, and long term.
- Accelerate scale-up and adoption of innovative and market-based health solutions.
- Mobilize resources to support high impact health solutions and build sustainable healthcare systems.
- Promote local and comprehensive solutions at the community and facility level for vulnerable populations.

Significance

- AIM and SAMRIDH will leverage **philanthropic capital, and public sector resources to offset barriers for commercial investments in small and medium health enterprises** to invest in and scale healthcare solutions.
- The new partnership announced will enhance SAMRIDH's efforts to reach **vulnerable populations, leveraging AIM's expertise in innovation and entrepreneurship.**

News: White Cheeked Macaque

- Recently, the Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have found a **new mammal species in the country** — the White Cheeked Macaque (*Macaca leucogenys*).

White Cheeked Macaque

- While the **species was first discovered in China in 2015, its existence was not known in India before this.**
- It is only **now that Indian scientists have discovered its presence in the remote Anjaw district in central Arunachal Pradesh.**
- The latest discovery takes **India's mammal count from 437 to 438.**

About

- The White Cheeked Macaque has distinct white cheeks, long and thick hair on the neck and a longer tail than other Macaque species.
- It is the last mammal to have been discovered in Southeast Asia.
- Both the Arunachal macaque as well as the White Cheeked Macaque exists in the same biodiversity hotspot in the eastern Himalayas.
- Along with White-Cheeked Macaques and Arunachal Macaque (*Macaca munzala*) the other species of Macaques are Assamese Macaque (*Macaca assamensis*) and Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) reported from the same landscape.
- The potential threat to all species of macaques in the landscape is due to hunting by locals for consumption and habitat degradation due to urbanization and infrastructure development.
- This species is not covered by the Wildlife Protection Act of India, because till now it is not known that the species existed in India.

News: RBI holds rates to spur growth

- The Monetary Policy Committee of RBI on Thursday decided to keep the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 4% and reiterated its 'accommodative' policy stance in a bid to ensure the economy's recovery from the COVID19 pandemic becomes durable and broadbased.

Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

- Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is instituted under **Section 45ZB of RBI Act, 1934 constituted by Central government.**
- MPC is **tasked with framing monetary policy** using tools like repo rate, reverse repo rate, bank rate and CRR.
- The **recommendations of MPC are binding on RBI.**
- In India, Monetary policy is **based on Headline CPI Inflation.**
- RBI has to **organise at least four meetings of the MPC** in a year. (More meetings can be held if the RBI Governor is of that opinion).
- Usually, MPC meets 6 times a year. But in FY20, it had an extra meeting in view of pandemic and the urgent need to assess the current and evolving macroeconomic situation

- As per the provisions of the RBI Act, out of the six Members of Monetary Policy Committee, **three Members are from the RBI and the other three Members of MPC are appointed by the Central Government.**
- **Governor of RBI acts as the ex-officio chairman of MPC.**
- The Members of the Monetary Policy Committee, **ineligible for reappointment** is appointed by the Central Government shall hold office for a **period of four years**, with immediate effect or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- Quorum for the MPC is **4 members.**
- Decisions are based on majority with each one having a vote. **RBI governor will not have a VETO power, but will have a casting vote in case of a tie.**