

**06 – 11 – 2021**

**News:** All India Judicial Service (AIJS)

- The central government is preparing to give a fresh push to the establishment of an All India Judicial Service (AIJS) on the lines of the central civil services.
- The AIJS is a reform push to centralise the recruitment of judges at the level of additional district judges and district judges for all states.
- In the same way that the Union Public Service Commission conducts a central recruitment process and assigns successful candidates to cadres, judges of the lower judiciary are proposed to be recruited centrally and assigned to states.

**Previous Proposals**

- The All India Judicial Service (AIJS) was first proposed by the 14<sup>th</sup> report of the Law Commission in 1958.
- A statutory or constitutional body such as the UPSC to conduct a standard, centralised exam to recruit and train judges was discussed.
- The idea was proposed again in the Law Commission Report of 1978, which discussed delays and arrears of cases in the lower courts.

- In 2006, the **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice** in its 15<sup>th</sup> Report backed the idea of a pan Indian **judicial service** and also prepared a draft Bill.

### **Supreme Court's Stand**

- In 1992, the **Supreme Court (SC) in All India Judges' Association v. The Union of India** directed the Centre to set up an AIJS.
- In a 1993 review of the judgment, however, the court left the Centre at liberty to take the initiative on the issue.
- In 2017, the **SC took suo motu cognizance of the issue of appointment of district judges, and mooted a Central Selection Mechanism.**
- Senior advocate Arvind Datar, who was appointed amicus curiae (friend of the court) by the court, circulated a concept note to all states in which he recommended conducting a common examination instead of separate state exams.
- Based on the merit list, High Courts would then hold interviews and appoint judges. Datar submitted that this would not change the constitutional framework or take away the powers of the states or High Courts.

## Benefits of AIJS

- **Efficient Judiciary:** It will **ensure an efficient subordinate judiciary**, to address structural issues such as varying pay and remuneration across states to fill vacancies faster and to ensure standard training across states.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** The government has targeted the reform of lower judiciary in its effort to improve India's Ease of Doing Business ranking, as efficient dispute resolution is one of the key indices in determining the rank.
- **Addressing Judges To Population Ratio:** A **Law Commission report (1987)** recommended that India should have 50 judges per million population as against 10.50 judges (then).
- Now, the figure has crossed 20 judges in terms of the sanctioned strength, but it's nothing compared to the US or the UK — 107 and 51 judges per million people, respectively.
- **Higher Representation of Marginalised Sections of Society:** According to the Government, the AIJS to be an ideal solution for equal representation of the marginalised and deprived sections of society.
- **Attracting Talent Pool:** The government believes that if such a service comes up, it would help create a pool of talented people who could later become a part of the higher judiciary

- **Bottoms-Up Approach:** The bottoms-up approach in the recruitment would also address issues like corruption and nepotism in the lower judiciary.

News: Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use

## **Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use**

- Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use **initiated by UK in the CoP 26 to UNFCCC to halt deforestation and land degradation by 2030.**
- The declaration recognise that to meet our land use, climate, biodiversity and sustainable development goals, both globally and nationally.

Focus of the declaration is on:

- **Sustainable production and consumption.**
- **Infrastructure development; trade; finance and investment.**
- Support for **smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities**, who depend on forests for their livelihoods and have a key role in their stewardship.
- To **help achieve a balance between anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and removal by sinks; to adapt to climate change; and to maintain other ecosystem services.**

- Signatories: The declaration has over 105 signatories including the UK, US, Russia and China.
- These countries represent 75% of global trade and 85% of global forests in key commodities that can threaten forests – such as palm oil, cocoa and soya.
- They have also committed USD 12 billion in public funds from 2021-25.
- India did not sign this, as it objected to “trade” being interlinked to climate change and forest issues in the agreement.
- The declaration reaffirmed respective commitments to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement; the Convention on Biological Diversity; the UN Convention to Combat Desertification; the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant initiatives.

**News:** National Sports Awards 2021

- Recently, the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2021.
- The National Sports Awards of India comprise six different awards given to sportspersons of India by the Central Government.

# The National Sports Awards of India

## Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award

- Formerly known as the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, it is the highest award bestowed to a sports person in India and was instituted in the year 1991-1992.
- It is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over a period of the previous four years.
- It comprises a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh.
- 12 players across 9 sports items bagged the prestigious award this year.

## Arjuna Award

- Arjuna Award was instituted in 1961 by the Government of India to recognise outstanding achievement in national sports events.
- It is given for good performance over a period of previous four years and showing qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline.
- The award carries a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh, a bronze statue of Arjuna and a scroll of honour.

## **Dronacharya Award**

- Dronacharya Award was instituted in 1985 by the Government of India to recognise excellence in sports coaching.
- It is given to coaches for doing outstanding and meritorious work on a consistent basis and enabling sportspersons to excel in International events.
- It carries a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh, a bronze statue of Dronacharya and a scroll of honour.

## **Dhyan Chand Award**

- Dhyan Chand Award was instituted in the year 2002 and comprises a Dhyan Chand statuette, a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh, a certificate and a ceremonial dress.
- It is given to honour sportspersons who have contributed to sports by their performance and continue to contribute to promotion of sports events after their retirement.

## **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy**

- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy was instituted in the year 1956-1957.
- It is for university-level sports performances.
- It is given to a university for "top performance in the inter-university tournaments" over the period of the last one year.

## **Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar**

- Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar was instituted in the year 2009.
- It is given to corporate entities (both in private and public sector), sports control boards, NGOs including sports bodies at the State and National level who have played a visible role in the area of sports promotion and development.

## **News: Goa Maritime Conclave to discuss security challenges**

- At the third edition of the Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) next week, Navy chiefs and the heads of maritime agencies of the Indian Navy and 12 other littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) will deliberate on the significance of interoperability to effectively deal with emerging and future maritime security challenges in the region.
- The biennial GMC under the aegis of the Naval War College, Goa is scheduled to be held on November 7 and 9 on the theme “Maritime security and emerging nontraditional threats: a case for proactive role for IOR Navies”.



## Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- Indian Ocean Rim Association is an **international organization** consisting of **23 states bordering Indian Ocean**.
- Established in 07<sup>th</sup> March 1997, IORA has its Headquarters in **Ebene, Mauritius**.
- Members are: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, **France**, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Somalia, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE and Yemen.
- Dialogue Partners are: China, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US, Turkey and South Korea.
- France became the 23<sup>rd</sup> member in December 2020 to join. This is **probably the first time that a country whose mainland is not on the Indian Ocean has been brought into the fold of the IORA**. France applied for membership citing its **overseas territory of Réunion Island in the western Indian Ocean**.
- France first joined IORA as a dialogue partner in 2001, just four years after the association was formed.
- Since **all decisions in IORA are taken by consensus**, objection from even a single country stops a process.

- The membership is open to “sovereign states of the Indian Ocean Rim willing to subscribe to the principles and objectives of the Charter”.

**News:** 30 more test positive for Zika virus in Kanpur

## Zika Virus

- Zika virus is a mosquito-borne flavivirus that was first identified in Uganda in 1947 in monkeys. It was later identified in humans in 1952 in Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- ZVD is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes (AM), mainly Aedes aegypti. This is the same mosquito that transmits dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.
- Zika virus is also transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy, through sexual contact, transfusion of blood and blood products, and organ transplantation.

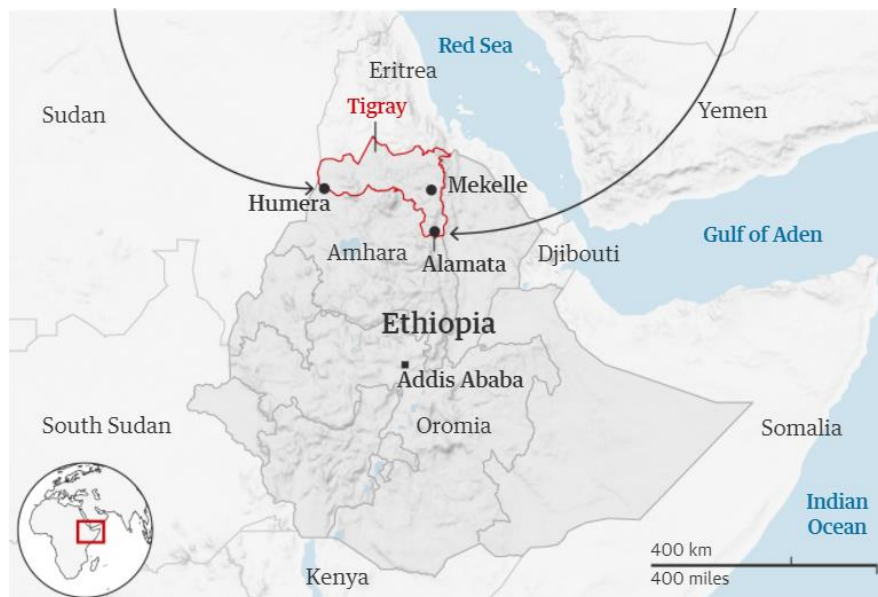
### Symptoms

- Symptoms are generally mild and include fever, rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise or headache. Most people with Zika virus infection do not develop symptoms.

- Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause infants to be born with microcephaly (smaller than normal head size) and other congenital malformations, known as congenital Zika syndrome.
- There is **no vaccine or medicine for Zika**. Instead, the focus is on relieving symptoms and includes rest, rehydration and acetaminophen for fever and pain.
- Recently, **Zika Virus Disease (ZVD) was reported for the first time in Kerala**.
- The **Kerala Health Department has formulated an action plan** for coordinated efforts to check the spread of Zika infection in the State.

**News: State of Emergency in Ethiopia.**

- The government of Ethiopia has declared a state of emergency in Tigray region.



## Background

- After becoming Ethiopia's Prime Minister in April 2018, Abiy Ahmed reached out to the political opposition, ushered democratic reforms, lifted curbs on the media and made peace with Eritrea – moves that won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019.
- Eritrea is a sworn enemy of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which shares a long border with the Tigray region.
- He also removed TPLF from senior government positions. His push to concentrate more power in the hands of the government alienated the TPLF further.
- Abiy has formed a new political coalition, the Prosperity Party, all constituents of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), except the TPLF, joined the new platform.
- When the federal government postponed the general elections in August to 2021 citing the coronavirus pandemic, Tigray politicians accused him of a power grab and held elections, in September, in the region, in defiance of the government.
- Rising tensions led to an attack on the military base.

## Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)

- Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is a militia-turned-party, which was part of the coalition that brought an end to the military dictatorship in 1991.
- TPLF leader Meles Zenawi took over as the interim President in 1991 and became the first elected Prime Minister in 1995.
- He is largely seen as the architect of the country's ethno-federal system and remained in power till 2012.
- It had played a dominant role in the country's ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF - put together by Zenawi).
- Though the EPRDF contains regional political parties such as the Amhara Democratic Party, the Oromo Democratic Party and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement, the TPLF remained the dominant political force.
- The Tigray people make up roughly 6% of the population, while the Oromos have a 34% share and the Amharas 27%. The Oromos have alleged marginalisation and called for better representation.
- Over the years, the government led by the EPRDF, was accused of being increasingly authoritarian and there were frequent mass protests in the regions.
- In 2018, the EPRDF chose Abiy, a former military intelligence officer, to lead the government amid growing protests and a political deadlock.

- **Abiy's Stand:** Abiy, the country's first Oromo leader, claimed that his actions are not driven by ethnic calculations but rather aimed at addressing the historic power imbalance in the country and making peace with the neighbours.