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National and International News

Graphene Innovation Center



Context:

- Recently, S Krishnan, Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), inaugurated two significant initiatives in Kerala: a **Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Intelligent Internet of Things (IIoT) Sensors** and **India's first graphene center - the India Innovation Centre for Graphene (IICG)**.

About India Innovation Centre for Graphene (IICG):

- **Collaborative Initiative:** Funded by MeitY, the Government of India, the State Government of Kerala, and Tata Steel Limited, along with various industries.
- **Implementing Partners:** Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), Digital University Kerala (DUK), and Tata Steel Limited.
- **Objective:** To explore the science and technology of graphene and other 2D materials, fostering partnerships between industry and academia for innovative research with practical applications.
- **International Collaboration:** Aims to attract leading international research on graphene to India and bridge the gap between scientific advancements and industrial applications.
- **Facilities:** Plans to establish facilities and acquire sophisticated equipment to support research aligned with industry needs.

Main Research Areas Include:

- Large-scale and large area single/few-layer graphene production in collaboration with Indian graphene industries.
- Nanoscale carbon and other 2D material composite technology.
- Research and development of graphene optoelectronic products such as graphene intelligent windows and touch screens.
- Development of graphene-based smart integrated devices on flexible/transparent substrates with energy storage capabilities.
- Exploration of graphene energy conversion devices like supercapacitors, fuel cells, and batteries.
- Advanced lithographic techniques for device fabrication.

Read about Graphene and its Properties



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SC: No Immunity for MPs & MLAs Who Accept Bribe for Vote or Speech in the House

Context:

- The Supreme Court overturned the **1998 PV Narasimha Rao judgment, which granted immunity to MPs and MLAs under Articles 105(2) and 194(2)** of the Constitution for accepting bribes related to voting or speeches in the legislature.

Key points:

- Articles 105 and 194 of the Constitution grant powers and privileges to MPs and MLAs in the Parliament and legislative assemblies.
- These articles **provide legal protection to lawmakers, ensuring their freedom of speech and protecting them from prosecution for their remarks or votes in the House.**

1998 Judgment Overturned:

- The recent verdict overturns the 1998 judgment in the PV Narasimha Rao case.
- This case involved allegations that legislators of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha accepted bribes during a no-confidence motion in 1993.
- The Supreme Court, **in a 3:2 majority ruling, had granted immunity to MPs and MLAs** from prosecution in bribery cases if they fulfilled their end of the bargain. However, the recent decision nullifies this immunity.

Significance of the Verdict:

- This decision is **crucial in combating cash-for-votes practices and preserving the integrity of electoral processes.**
- Previously, MPs and MLAs could not be prosecuted for accepting bribes related to voting or speeches.
- Now, they can be prosecuted as soon as they accept a bribe, with no immunity provided by the House in such cases.



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Vaccine Preventing Six Cancers



Context:

- March 4: International HPV Awareness Day
- January: Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Key points:

- Cervical cancer affects the cervix, the lower part of the uterus.
- HPV vaccination prevents cervical cancers.
- Cervical cancer is the **fourth most common cancer among women globally**.
- Over 300,000 women die from cervical cancer annually, about one every two minutes.
- Nine out of 10 women who die from cervical cancer live in lower- and middle-income countries.
- In India, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer after breast cancer.
- Around 500 million women above 15 in India are at risk of cervical cancer.
- Without action, cases and deaths from cervical cancer are expected to rise significantly by 2040.
- **By 2040, India is estimated to have 191,347 new cases of cervical cancer, a 54% increase from 2020.**

Prevention Strategies:

- Cervical cancer is caused by certain types of **papillomaviruses (HPV)**.
- Two major prevention strategies: **HPV vaccination and screening for precancerous lesions.**

WHO's Strategy by 2030:

Targets:

- **90% of girls** to be fully vaccinated with HPV vaccine by age 15.
- **70% of women** screened for precancerous lesions by ages 35 and 45.
- **90% of women** with detected pre-cancer or cancer lesions receive treatment.
- Emphasizes high-quality and equitable healthcare services.



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International Centre for Audit of Local Governance (iCAL)

Context:

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), Girish Chandra Murmu, has announced the establishment of the Supreme Audit Institution India's International **Centre for Audit of Local Governance (iCAL) in Rajkot, Gujarat.**

Significance:

- To enhance **auditing of local governments**, capacity building of auditors and local government employees is crucial to improve financial management practices and internal controls.
- **Open communication with local government officials** can facilitate the audit process, **improve data accessibility, and foster cooperation in addressing audit findings.**
- The establishment of iCAL aims to achieve these objectives.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG):

- The CAG is India's supreme audit institution, established in 1858 under Article 148 of the Constitution of India.
- It is known as the "Guardian of the Public Purse" and operates independently.
- The duties and powers of the CAG are outlined in Article 149 and 150 of the Constitution.

Appointment:

The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India is appointed by the President of India.

Removal:

The CAG can only be removed by an address from both houses of parliament on the ground of proved misbehavior or incapacity.



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Digital Intelligence Platform

Context:

- Recently, Minister Chauhan launched the Department of Telecommunications (DoT)'s '**Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP)**' and '**Chakshu facility on Sanchar Saathi portal**.

About Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP):

- Developed by DoT, it's a **secure platform for real-time intelligence sharing among stakeholders like Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), law enforcement agencies (LEAs), banks, social media platforms, etc.**
- Contains information on detected misuse of telecom resources.
- Provides useful information to stakeholders.
- Acts as a **repository for citizen-initiated requests on the Sanchar Saathi portal**.

Chakshu - Citizen Centric Facility:

- Newest addition to **Sanchar Saathi portal**.
- **Allows reporting of suspected fraud communications.**
- Reports can include KYC expiry, updates to bank accounts/payment wallets/SIM cards/gas/electricity connections, sextortion, impersonation scams, disconnection of mobile numbers by DoT, etc.
- Victims of cyber-crime or financial fraud should report to the cyber-crime helpline 1930 or the Government of India's cybercrime website.

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