DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

23 JULY 2025

1 - Electronic Cigarettes:

GS II

Health related issues:

- **About e-cigarettes:**

- Battery-operated e-cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid, which the user inhales and exhales.
- Typically, the liquid used in e-cigarettes includes flavourings, propylene glycol, glycerin, and nicotine.
- Electronic cigarettes, commonly referred to as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENNDS), come in a wide variety of forms.

- **What worries the WHO about electronic cigarettes?**

- **Ineffectiveness in Quitting Smoking:**

- There is no evidence that e-cigarettes, as consumer items, are helpful in helping the general public stop using tobacco. Rather, concerning data on detrimental impacts on public health has surfaced.
- Electronic cigarettes are now legally available for purchase and are heavily promoted to youth.
- Thirty-four nations forbid the sale of e-cigarettes, 88 do not set a minimum age for purchasing e-cigarettes, and 74 do not have any laws governing these dangerous goods.

- **Effect on Young People:**

- The recruiting and potential entrapment of children and young people at an early age into smoking e-cigarettes, potentially leading to nicotine addiction.

- This problem is exacerbated by the aggressive marketing of e-cigarettes and the lax restrictions in many nations.

- **Growing Use Among Young People:**

- In all WHO regions, the rate of e-cigarette use among children aged 13 to 15 is higher than that of adults.
- Between 2017 and 2022, the rate of e-cigarette usage among 16 to 19-year-olds in Canada doubled, and in the last three years, the number of teenage users in England (the United Kingdom) has tripled.

- **Health Hazards:**

- While the long-term health implications of electronic cigarettes are still poorly understood, these devices produce harmful compounds, some of which have been linked to cancer and increased risk of lung and heart problems.
- In addition, e-cigarette usage has been linked to negative effects on foetal development in pregnant women, learning difficulties in youth, and altered brain development.

- **The Addictive Nature of Nicotine Addiction:**

- Nicotine-containing e-cigarettes are known to be extremely addictive and dangerous for users' and onlookers' health. Concerns with preventing nicotine addiction are raised by the addictive nature of nicotine in e-cigarettes, particularly in young users.
- Take note
- The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarette Act (PECA) 2019 prohibits the possession of e-cigarettes and related devices in India.

- **What Justifications Exist for e-cigarettes?**

- **Minimising Damage:**

- E-cigarette proponents contend that, in comparison to conventional tobacco products, they offer a harm reduction technique.

- While they still contain nicotine, they don't have as many of the dangerous toxins as in regular cigarettes. They are therefore frequently viewed as a safer substitute for adult smokers who are unable or unable to completely give up nicotine.

- **Financial Gains:**

- There is an economic case to be made for the legalisation and regulation of e-cigarettes, which would likely result in significant tax income for governments. Authorities may restrict and monitor the use of e-cigarettes while simultaneously earning cash from their taxation.

- **Customer Selection:**

- Proponents stress the value of giving consumers options and access to substitutes. They think that in the event that adult smokers are unable to quit using conventional approaches, they ought to have the choice of less hazardous nicotine delivery systems.

- **Nicotine: What is it?**

- Nitrogen is a component of nicotine, a plant alkaloid that can be synthesised and present in a variety of plants, including tobacco plants.
- Nicotine functions as a stimulant and a sedative.
- E-cigarettes use direct nicotine, with a maximum concentration of 36 mg/mL. While normal cigarettes also contain nicotine, the amount varies from 1.2 to 1.4 mg/mL.
- Nicotine has been classified as a Class A toxin by Karnataka.

- **What Are the Government Tobacco Consumption Initiatives?**

- **The National Programme for Tobacco Control:**

- Amendment Rules, 2023, for Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply, and Distribution).

- **National Tobacco Quitlines Services (NTQLS):**

- on the Budget 2023–24, the Indian Union Finance Minister declared a 16% rise on the National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD) on cigarettes.
- New rules mandated by the Indian Union Health Ministry call for Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms to show health warnings about tobacco use while streaming content.

- **Way Ahead:**

- Urgent action is required to stop the spread of e-cigarettes, combat nicotine addiction, and advance a comprehensive strategy for tobacco control while taking into account national circumstances.
- Proponents recommend taxing and regulating e-cigarettes in the same way as other "sin goods" like alcohol and cigarettes. With this strategy, smokers will have access to a possibly less dangerous substitute while also discouraging excessive use.

- *Source → The Hindu*

2 - Initiatives for Waste Management:

GS III

Environmental Conservation:

- **Which Waste Management Initiatives Are the Focused On?**

- **Mechanism for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):**

- Producers are held accountable for the complete lifecycle of their goods, including collection, recycling, and disposal, under the EPR waste management policy approach.
- By transferring the financial and logistical burden of waste management from governments and taxpayers to producers, it seeks to lessen the environmental impact of products.

- EPR programmes using market processes were put into place for spent oil, plastic packaging, e-waste, and battery trash in 2022. It is hoped that this calculated action will spur expansion in the waste management industry.

- **Capacity for Processing Waste:**

- Roughly 76% of the 1.5 lakh metric tonnes per day (MT/D) of waste produced in metropolitan areas is treated.
- The ability to process several kinds of garbage, such as solid waste, hazardous waste, biomedical waste, e-waste, plastic waste, and waste from building and demolition, has significantly increased since 2014.
- Over the previous eight years, there has been an increase in the capacity to process solid waste of about 1.05 lakh MT/D, especially under the Urban Swachh Bharat Mission.
- The Swachh Bharat Mission for the Management of Solid Waste:
- According to plan rules, central aid is given under the Swachh Bharat Mission for solid waste management, including plastic waste management in urban and rural regions.
- With the overall goal of creating "Garbage Free Cities," the Central Government launched Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0) in 2021. This would entail meeting the target that all Urban Local Bodies become at least 3-star certified (in accordance with the Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free Cities), which would cover door-to-door collection, source segregation, and scientific processing of municipal solid waste.
- The goal is to manage garbage from construction and demolition projects, reduce the use of single-use plastic, segregate sources, and bioremediate former landfills.
- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation has released operational instructions to the States and Union Territories under Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen Phase II. These guidelines cover solid waste management activities at the village level.

- **Rules and Guidelines for Waste Management:**

- **In order to maintain environmentally sound practices, the Ministry has enacted a number of waste management laws and recommendations under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Among them are:**

- Rules for Solid Waste Management, 2016.
- The 2016 Plastic Waste Management Rules

- The 2016 Biomedical Waste Management Rules
- Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2016.
- Hazardous and other wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016.
- E-waste Management Rules, 2022.
- Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022.
- Additionally, guidelines for environmentally responsible trash management have been released.
- Guidelines for the levying of environmental damages and environmental compensation charges for plastic, e-waste, and hazardous waste have been produced. These guidelines are based on the polluter pays principle.

- *Source → The Hindu*

3 - Advocates Amendment Bill:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions:

- **Which aspects of the Advocates Amendment Bill stand out the most?**

- **Touts:**

- According to the Bill, lists of touts may be compiled and published by any High Court, district judge, sessions judge, district magistrate, or tax officer.

- **Tout describes an individual who:**

- either offers to obtain or actually obtains, for a fee, the employment of a lawyer in a legal firm.
- frequently visits locations to find such work, such as revenue offices, train terminals, or the courtrooms of civil or criminal cases.

- Anybody whose name appears on the list of touts may be barred by the court or judge from the courtroom.

- **Making lists:**

- Subordinate courts may be ordered to conduct an investigation into the behaviour of individuals who are suspected or known to be touts by the authorities who have the authority to compile and publish the list of touts.
- The authority may add such a person's name to the list of touts if it has been established that he is one.
- No one will be added to these lists unless they are given the chance to object to their inclusion.

- **Penalties:**

- If an individual's name appears on the list of touts, they will be subject to a maximum three-month jail sentence, a fine of up to Rs 500, or both.

- **What is the 1961 Advocate Act?**

- The Advocates Act, 1961 was passed in order to create an All-India Bar and Bar Councils, as well as to alter and combine the laws pertaining to legal practitioners.
- The Legal Practitioners Act, 1879 was largely repealed by this Act, although certain definitions, rights to create and disseminate lists of touts, and other measures remained in place.

- *Source → The Hindu*

4 - Covid Vaccine's Effect on Mental Health:

GS II

Health related issues:

- **How Severe was the Issue of Mental Health after Covid-19?**

- **Depression and Anxiety:**

- After recovering for at least a year, those who had survived the Covid-19 hospitalisation experienced ongoing mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression.
- The burden is increased by the overlap with Long Covid, which affects approximately 5% of people regardless of severity, and these mental health disorders.

- **Increasing Demand on Medical Systems:**

- Following COVID-19, the prevalence of mental health problems put additional demand on healthcare systems, necessitating the need for more resources for diagnosis, treatment, and support for those who are struggling.

- **Affected Children and Vulnerable Groups:**

- Children's mental health was impacted by school closings, altered schedules, and reduced social interaction, which resulted in a rise in anxiety and other psychological issues.
- Socioeconomic gaps created additional problems for marginalised groups, making them more vulnerable to mental health issues.

- **Grief and Isolation Increasing Mental Health Problems:**

- Mental health issues were exacerbated by social isolation, restricted access to communication devices, home stress, and sadness over friends' and family's deaths due to COVID-19, particularly in vulnerable populations like the elderly.

- **What connection exists between vaccinations and mental health?**

- **Diminished Mental Health Difficulties:**

- Those who received vaccinations showed a decrease in mental health problems regardless of whether they had previously experienced mental illness.
- This shows that the effect of vaccination on outcomes related to mental health was unaffected by pre-existing conditions.

- **Diminished Fear:**

- Those who received vaccinations felt less anxious and more secure.
- Reducing levels of stress and anxiety related to the pandemic was facilitated by the perception of protection against serious disease or death from Covid-19.

- **What is India's current state of mental health illness?**

- **About:**

- A person's entire emotional and mental state is referred to as their mental health, which also includes their psychological, social, and emotional well-being.
- It includes a person's capacity to handle stress, control their emotions, uphold wholesome relationships, work efficiently, and make thoughtful decisions.
- Just as physical health is vital to general health and well-being, so too is mental health.

- **India's current situation:**

- Over 80% of Indians do not use health services for a variety of reasons, including stigma, lack of understanding, and high costs of care, according to data from the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences.

- The World Health Organisation estimates that between 2012 and 2030, mental health disorders will cost the economy USD 1.03 trillion.

- *Source → The Hindu*