



# INNOVATIVE IAS

## Daily News Analysis

6th January 2020

### General studies-2

#### Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS)

##### **Why in news?**

- The Union Cabinet has approved the organizational restructuring of the railways through the unification of the existing eight Group A services into one central service — the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).
- The move was required as there was huge “departmentalism” that delayed many projects.

##### **Key points:**

- The Indian Railways is governed by a pool of officers, among whom engineers are recruited through the Indian Engineering Services Examination and civil servants through the Civil Services Examination.
- The engineers are in five technical service cadres — Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE), Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers (IRSME), Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE), Indian Railway Service of Signal Engineers (IRSSE) and the Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS).
- The Civil Servants are in the Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS), Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) and Indian Railway Personnel Service (IRPS).

##### **Why was the reform needed?**

- The government wants to end inter-departmental rivalries, which it says have been hindering growth for decades.
- Several committees including the Bibek Debroy Committee in 2015 have noted that “departmentalism” is a major problem in the system.
- Most committees have said the merger of the services in some form would be a solution.
- The Debroy panel had recommended the merging of the eight services into two — the Indian Railway Technical Service (IRTechS) comprising five engineering services (IRSE, IRSSE, IRSEE, IRSME and IRSS), and the Indian Railway Logistics Service (IRLogS), comprising non-technical services (IRAS, IRPS and IRTS). The government has now collapsed all services into one.
- The government has followed the PrakashTandon Committee's recommendations of 1994 as it was apprehensive that even if there are two services, there would be infighting.

##### **What will change with the restructure?**

- The Chairman along with four members responsible for
  - Infrastructure,
  - Operations and Business development,
  - Rolling stock and
  - Finance respectively will form the Railway Board.



# INNOVATIVE IAS

## Daily News Analysis

- The Chairman shall be the cadre controlling officer responsible for Human Resources (HR) with assistance from a DG (HR).
- Three apex level posts shall be surrendered from Railway Board and all its remaining posts shall be open to all officers regardless of the service to which they belonged.
- The Board will also have some independent non-executive members, who will be highly distinguished professionals with deep knowledge and 30 years of experience including at the top levels in industry, finance, economics and management fields.

### Lamu Region

#### Why in News?

- Somalia's Al-Shabaab group has attacked a military base used by the United States of America (USA), and Kenyan forces in Kenya's coastal Lamu region.

#### Lamu Region

- Lamu Island is located on the eastern coast of Kenya.
- Lamu is one of the oldest and the best-preserved living settlements among the Swahili towns (in Arabic Swahili means "of the coast") on the East African coast.
- The old town is thus a unique and rare historical living heritage with more than 700 years of continuous settlement.
- It is built on coral stone and mangrove timber and is characterized by structural forms such as inner courtyards, verandas, and elaborately carved wooden doors.
- It was one of the most important trade centres in East Africa before other towns such as Zanzibar and Mombasa took over.
- Lamu represents the Swahili culture, resulting from the interaction between the Bantu, Arabs, Persians, Indians, and Europeans.
- Lamu has hosted major Muslim religious festivals since the 19th century and has become a significant centre for the study of Islamic and Swahili cultures.
- It is recognised as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

### General studies-3

#### Challakere to be ISRO's astronaut training hub

#### Why in news?

- According to an update from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), a world-class facility for the training of astronauts will come up in Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka.



# INNOVATIVE IAS

## Daily News Analysis

### Key points:

Challakere, about 200 km from Bengaluru, is also where premier scientific establishments have set up adjoining and interactive campuses.

- Called the Science City, it houses facilities of the ISRO, the Defence Research & Development Organisation's Advanced Aeronautical Test Range, the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the Indian Institute of Science.
- ISRO has proposed a ₹ 2,700-crore master plan to create top infrastructure that will house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC).
- Currently, HSP [Human Spaceflight Programme] work is split across various centres such as the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru. The Institute of Aerospace Medicine of the Air Force has been roped in for the astronauts' selection, basic and final training in Bengaluru.

### Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5)

#### Why in news?

- The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) is organizing the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5).
- It is being organized in the country for the first time.

#### About the conference:

- This biennial conference aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with their peers in the rest of the world.
- It will bring together scientists from all over the world who use the fruit fly, Drosophila, as a model organism to address basic and applied questions.

#### Drosophila

- Drosophila is one of the most widely used and preferred model organisms in biological research. They are ideal for the study of genetics and development.
- The relationship between fruit fly and human genes is so close that often the sequences of newly discovered human genes, including disease genes, can be matched with equivalent genes in the fly.

### AK-203 Assault Rifles

#### Why in News?

- The Army is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles, which are to be manufactured locally by an India-Russia Joint Venture (JV).



### Key details:

- The rifles will be manufactured by the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Korwa, in the Amethi district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The facility is being set up by the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB) from the Indian side, and Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov from the Russian side.
- 5 percent of its stakes will belong to the Indian Ordnance Factory Board, and the remainder to Russian entities: Rosoboron Exports (7.5 percent) and Kalashnikov Concern (42 percent; the concern, in turn, belongs to the Russian defense giant Rostec).
- The JV was formed following an inter-governmental agreement between India and Russia in 2019.

### Significance

- Its introduction will allow New Delhi to phase out its own rifle, the INSAS (Indian National Small Arms System) rifles.
- INSAS was found to be an unreliable firearm, and in 2017 it was decided that it needs to be withdrawn.

### SIG716

- The assault rifle will be supplied by US arms maker Sig Sauer.
- The SIG716 uses the powerful 7.62×51 mm cartridge.
- The Sig Sauer rifles will be used by soldiers deployed along the border with China.

### Republic day Tableaux

#### Why in News?

- The government has selected 22 tableaux proposals — 6 by central government departments and ministries and 16 by states and Union Territories (UTs) — for the Republic Day parade in 2020.
- A total of 32 states and UTs, and 24 ministries and departments had sent their tableau proposals for the Republic Day 2020 parade.

#### Selection Process of Tableaux

- The Ministry of Defence carries out the selection process of tableaux for the Republic day parade.
- The Ministry sets up an expert committee with distinguished people from various fields of arts to shortlist the tableaux proposals received from various states and organizations.
- The expert committee consists of prominent persons in the field of art, culture, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, choreography, etc.
- In order for all states to get representation, states are given representation on a rotational basis.



# INNOVATIVE IAS

## Daily News Analysis

- It needs to be noted that writing or use of logos on tableaux is not allowed except the name of states or Union Territories that are presenting it on the day of the parade. There is also a pattern to where the names of the states should be written — in Hindi in the front, in English on the back and in regional language on the sides of the tableau

### PMFBY

#### Why in news?

- Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to integrate its land records with the web portal of the pradhan mantri Fasal bhima yojana
- This will help in checking the cases of “over-insurance” — insurance of more land than in possession — as well as insurance of ineligible people.
- Maharashtra also counts itself among the top five states in the country in terms of payment of claims under the PMFBY.
- During the financial year 2018-19, the state had 1.39 crore farmers opting for the scheme and the total premium collected was Rs 4,778.30 crore.

#### **PradhanMantriFasalBimaYojana (PMFBY)**

- The PradhanMantriFasalBimaYojana was launched in 2016 and is being administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers.
- Scope: All food & oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.
- Premium: The prescribed premium is 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all rabi crops. In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium is 5%.
- The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmers availing Crop Loan /Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops and voluntary for others.
- The scheme is implemented by empanelled general insurance companies. The selection of the Implementing Agency (IA) is done by the concerned State Govt through bidding.

#### **BibiKaMaqbara**

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will undertake scientific conservation of BibiKaMaqbara located in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- It is a famous 17th century Mughal-era monument in the city of Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- It was commissioned by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1660 in the memory of his wife DilrasBanu Begum.
- The structure is known as the 'Taj of the Deccan' because of its striking resemblance to the TajMahal.
- The domes, minarets and the marble screens inside are built in marble.