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CURRENT AFFAIRS

PRELIMS+MAINS QUICK REVISION



Two New Health Bills

- Recently, the **National Nursing and Midwifery Commission (NNMC) Bill, 2023** and the **National Dental Commission (NDC) Bill, 2023** have been introduced in the Lok Sabha.
- **They aim** to improve quality education in the paramedical (including nurses and midwifery) and dental sectors respectively.

MCI ACT VS NMC BILL

MCI | No power to **prescribe fees**

NMC | To **determine fees for up to 40% of seats** in private colleges/deemed universities

MCI | Colleges needed nod for **establishment/renewal/recognition/increase of intake for UG courses**

NMC | Permission required **only for establishment and recognition** in case of UG

courses. No annual renewal needed. **Automatic increase** in seats allowed

MCI | **Separate permission for PG courses** after UG recognition

NMC | Colleges can start PG courses **on their own**

MCI | Penalty for not meeting requirements includes **no renewal nod and no admission**

NMC | **Monetary penalty** — up to 10 times the annual tuition fee



- These bills have been brought along the lines of the **National Medical Commission (NMC) Act**. The act aims to improve access to quality and affordable medical education.
- The National Dental Commission Bill, 2023 will repeal the Dentists Act, 1948.
- It has been proposed to set up a **National Dental Commission (NMC)**. This commission will regulate dental education and profession in the country.
- In this, a provision has been made for an exit test for dentists on the lines of the National Exit Test.
- The NNMC Bill would repeal the Indian Nursing Council Act, of 1947.
- It provides for the establishment of a **National Nursing and Midwifery Commission (NNMC)**. The commission will frame policies for the administration of nursing and midwifery education and training. Also, will regulate the standards.

→ It will provide a uniform mechanism for admission to nursing and midwifery institutions.

→ **Why the need for Bills?**

- Health Ministry data shows that 40 per cent of districts in India do not have nursing colleges.
- Presently, the nurse-to-population ratio in India is only 2.06:1000, while the global norm is 3:1000.
- It is necessary to reorganize and revive the Dental Council of India.

WHAT THE BILL PROPOSES

On July 22, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan introduced the National Medical Commission (NMC) Bill in the Lok Sabha

The NMC is proposed to be **29-member** body, of which 20 would be nominated and the remaining 9 would be elected

The Bill proposes to introduce a new entrance exam called National Exit Test (NEXT) for **MBBS students**

As per the Bill, recognised **medical institutions** don't need the regulator's permission to add more seats or start PG course.

The Commission will replace the Medical Council of India (MCI), which has been sullied by corruption charges. The MCI regulations for **medical colleges** have also come under the scanner

Argentina (Capital: Buenos Aires)

- **India and Argentina** have agreed to a bilateral exchange of young researchers and startups, especially in the fields of biotechnology and agriculture.
- Bilateral trade between India and the Latin American nation accounts for about 80 per cent.
- India is the fourth largest trading partner with Argentina.
- India has the third largest startup ecosystem in the world and there is immense potential for joint studies and collaborations at various levels such as **institutional, university level** and **multilateral fora**.
- There is an inter-governmental agreement between **India and Argentina signed in 1985** to promote technical and scientific cooperation.
- The objective of the program is to strengthen and expand ties between the scientific communities, allowing for mutual exchange between Indian and Argentine research groups in the framework of joint scientific and technical projects selected by the various parties.

- Major items of India's exports to Argentina include petroleum oils, agricultural chemicals, yarn-textile products, organic chemicals, bulk drugs and two-wheelers.
- Major items of India's imports from Argentina include vegetable oils (soybean and sunflower), finished leather, cereals, residual chemicals and allied products and pulses.
- A bilateral business chamber, the **India-Argentina Business Council (IABC)**, was formally launched on 14 October 2020.
- **Political Boundaries**
 - It is the second largest country in South America after Brazil.
 - It is bordered by Chile to the south and west, Bolivia and Paraguay to the north, and Brazil, Uruguay and the Atlantic Ocean to the east.
- **Geographical Features**
 - Highest Peak: Mount Aconcagua or Cerro Aconcagua (the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere).

- Grasslands: Pampas.
- Major rivers: Paraná, Uruguay, Colorado, Pilcomayo etc.

➔ The country of Argentina remained under the country of Spain for many years, but the people of Argentina did not like this slavery, they started raising their voices against **Spain in 1810** for their independence and as a result, **on 9 July 1816, Argentina declared independence.**



- An important reason behind the subjugation of the Argentine region by the Spanish Empire was the gold and silver mines discovered in Peru and Bolivia. To loot this wealth, the **Spanish Empire took Argentina under its jurisdiction in 1776.**
- The name Argentina was formally adopted in 1860. It is a Latin word which means "**silver**" in Hindi and in 1862 the city of Buenos Aires was accepted as the capital of this country.



Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary

→ The Bombay High Court recently directed the Goa state government to notify the **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary** and other areas as tiger reserves under the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, within three months and “notifying tiger reserves Pulled up the government for “constant avoidance”.



- The recommendation was made in the wake of the death of four tigers, one tigress and three juvenile cubs in **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary in 2019.**
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority has recommended setting up a tiger reserve on several occasions in the past, most recently in 2020, at the **Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary in Goa.**
- **In a February 2020 report, the NTCA said:** “Goa’s protected areas (Mhadei and Molem) are part of the Western Ghats landscape complex, which has the unique distinction of having the world’s largest tiger population. The landscape consists of reserve forests as well as several interconnected tiger reserves and protected areas.
- Located in Goa, Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its rich biodiversity and stunning landscapes. Spread over an area of 208.5 square kilometres, this sanctuary is a precious gem in the Western Ghats of South India.
- It is located **near Valpoi town in Sattari taluka, North Goa district.** With its diverse range of flora and fauna, this sanctuary has gained recognition for its ecological importance.

- The sanctuary is located within the ecologically sensitive region of the **Western Ghats**.
- It is characterized by elevations ranging from 200 m in the west to 560 m in the centre, comprising the majestic **Vagheri Hills, including the 560 m Vagheri peak** – the highest point in North Goa.
- The Mhadei River, also known as the Mandovi River tributary, flows through this sanctuary, playing an important role as the lifeline of Goa. Originating in Karnataka, it passes through **9.4 km of the sanctuary area** before meeting the **Arabian Sea at Panaji** after a total journey of 81.2 km in Goa.



Rio Grande River Barrier

- The governor of Texas has been sued by the US government over the floating barrier Texas has put up in the Rio Grande River to stop migrants from crossing the US-Mexico border.
- The ban was announced in June by **Greg Abbott**, the Republican governor of Texas.
- Federal officials say the barriers in the river violate federal law. Along with this, humanitarian concerns have also come to the fore. The governor said he would deal with it in court.
- State officials have argued over the statement from federal officials that it will help secure the border. Immigrant advocates have said it could be ineffective and potentially dangerous for immigrants.
- **Rio Grande River Barrier -**
 - The 3,051 km long Rio Grande River serves as a natural border between the US and Mexico, mainly in Texas.

- In response to a significant influx of migrants attempting to cross the river into the US, Texas officials launched a controversial initiative - installing floating barriers to prevent illegal crossings.
- Governor Abbott's immigration policy is embodied in Operation Lone Star, a joint operation between **Texas and Mexico** aimed at securing the southern border.
- The operation has seen the fortification of the river banks with additional concertina wire and other stringent measures to prevent illegal crossings.

