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19 July 2024

National and International News

Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI)

Why in the news?

- The **Union Minister for Science & Technology** recently **inaugurated Asia's first "Pre-clinical Network Facility"** for health research in Faridabad.
- This facility is established under the **Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)**.

About CEPI:

- **Launch and Founders:**
 - Launched in **2017**.
 - An **innovative partnership** between public, private, philanthropic, and civil organisations.
- **Founded in Davos, Switzerland by:**
 - Governments of Norway and India
 - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
 - Wellcome Trust
 - World Economic Forum
- **Mission:**
 - **Accelerate the development of vaccines** and other **biologic countermeasures against epidemic** and pandemic threats.
 - Ensure accessibility to all people in need.
- **Achievements:**
 - Supported the development of over 50 vaccine candidates or platform technologies.
 - **Targets multiple known high-risk pathogens and potential future threats like Disease X.**
- **Pandemic-Beating Plan (2022-2026):**
 - **Central goal:** '100 Days Mission.'
 - **Aim:** Compress the time to develop safe, effective, globally accessible vaccines against new threats to just 100 days.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ind-CEPI Mission:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Implemented by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.○ Focus: Epidemic preparedness through rapid vaccine development.○ Program Management: Managed through a dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU) at Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).
MV Sea Change	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The MV Sea Change, the world's first commercial passenger ferry powered entirely by hydrogen fuel, was recently launched at the San Francisco Ferry Building. <p>About MV Sea Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● World's First Zero-Emission Hydrogen Fuel Cell Ferry:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The ferry is powered entirely by zero-emission hydrogen fuel cells.○ Built by All American Marine Shipyard for SWITCH Maritime.● Specifications and Performance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Capacity: 75 passengers.○ Hydrogen-powered fuel cells produce electricity for electric motors.○ Operational endurance: About 16 hours.○ Travel range: Around 300 nautical miles between refueling.○ Maximum speed: 20 knots.○ Service speed: 8-12 knots.● Technology and Environmental Impact:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Uses H2 fuel cells combining hydrogen from storage tanks and oxygen from the ambient air to generate electricity.○ Byproducts: Only heat and water vapor, no pollutants.



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<p>Srijan portal</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Defence Production (DDP), Ministry of Defence, has recently notified the fifth Positive Indigenisation List (PIL), which includes 346 items.• These items will be exclusively procured from the Indian industry following the indigenisation timelines specified on the Srijan portal. <p>About Srijan portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenization Portal:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Developed by the Department of Defence Production.○ Provides information on items suitable for indigenization by the private sector.○ Allows DPSUs/OFB/SHQs to display items currently imported or planned for import.○ Enables Indian Industry to design, develop, and manufacture these items.• Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Defence.
<p>Common Services Centres Special Purpose Vehicle</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Common Services Centres Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC SPV) recently celebrated its 15th anniversary. <p>About Common Services Centres Special Purpose Vehicle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiative of MeitY:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956.○ Monitored by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).• Mission Mode Project:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Part of the Digital India Programme.○ Ensures systemic viability and sustainability of the scheme.• Service Delivery:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Acts as front-end delivery points for government, private, and social sector services.○ Provides a centralized collaborative framework for service delivery through CSCs.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Access Points:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Delivers various electronic services to villages.○ Contributes to a digitally and financially inclusive society.○ Provides essential public utility services, social welfare schemes, healthcare, financial, education, and agriculture services.○ Offers a range of B2C services to rural and remote areas.
Late Blight Disease	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI) has issued an advisory to potato farmers nationwide, warning of a high risk of late blight disease in their crops due to changing weather conditions. <p>About Late Blight Disease:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Transmission:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Spread from infected transplants, volunteer potato/tomato plants, and related weeds.○ Airborne spores can travel long distances in storms.○ Rain deposits spores on plants, leading to infection.○ Favored by cool, wet weather and cycles repeatedly under favorable conditions.● Symptoms:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Leaves, Petioles, and Stems:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Lesions appear as round or irregular dark green to purplish-black areas, resembling frost injury.■ Whitish growth of spore-producing structures may be seen at lesion margins on under-leaf surfaces.○ Potato Tubers:<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Rot up to 15 mm (0.6 inch) deep.■ Secondary fungi and bacteria (particularly <i>Erwinia</i> species) often invade, causing significant rotting and losses during storage, transit, and marketing.● Management:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Timely application of fungicide is effective.○ Rapid epidemics can occur once crops are infected.



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