

Why are there concerns over WhatsApp usernames?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

Mains: General Studies - 2
Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

1. What is the issue?

- The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has asked **Meta** to stop the rollout of **WhatsApp's username feature**.
- The government fears that the feature could increase **online fraud, phishing, digital arrest scams**, and **identity impersonation**.

2. What is the WhatsApp username feature?

- It is an **optional feature** that allows users to **chat without sharing their mobile phone numbers**.
- Instead of sharing a **phone number**, users can share a **unique username** to start a conversation.
- To contact a user, one must know their **exact username**, as **WhatsApp does not provide a searchable username directory**.
- Users can set a **Personal Identification Number (PIN)**, ensuring that **only people who know both the username and the PIN can initiate a conversation**.
- When a user receives a message from someone using a **username**, **WhatsApp** will display the **sender's country of origin** and indicate whether the sender is an **existing contact** or a **new contact**.

3. Why is the government concerned?

- The government believes the feature could facilitate **identity spoofing** and **impersonation of individuals**,

government agencies, and **financial institutions**.

- It may make **phishing, online fraud**, and **digital arrest scams** easier for cybercriminals.
- Similar notices have also been issued to **Telegram, Signal**, and **Arattai**, which already offer **username-based communication**.

4. What is the legal issue?

- The government argues that **WhatsApp**, as a **Significant Social Media Intermediary (SSMI)** under the **Information Technology Act, 2000** and the **IT Rules, 2021**, must comply with **due diligence obligations**.
- Digital rights groups argue that the **IT Act** does **not** give the government the power to **approve or prohibit app features** before their launch.
- The issue has raised questions about the balance between **user privacy, platform regulation**, and **government oversight**.

A **significant social media intermediary** is defined as a platform that **has more than 50 lakh registered users in India**.

A **social media intermediary** is an **online platform** that enables users to **communicate, share**, and **access information**.

What are ICC's 'Return to Play Post-Pregnancy' guidelines?

Prelims: General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies - 2
Role of women and women's organization, population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues, urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

1. What does the ICC policy say?

- The International Cricket Council released guidelines on **June 22, 2026** to help women return after pregnancy.
- It is **advisory**, so countries can design their own policies.
- Focus on **physical, mental, and practical support**.
- Recommends a **case manager (doctor/physio)**.
- Suggests **stopping competitive play after the first trimester**.
- Introduces the **6 Rs framework**: Ready, Review, Restore, Recondition, Return, Refine.
- Provides **childcare, breastfeeding spaces, and travel support**.

2. Which countries have maternity policies?

- **Australia** has the most comprehensive policy (paid leave, contract protection, support up to 4 years).
- Others: **New Zealand, England, South Africa, Pakistan, West Indies**.
- **India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh** lack dedicated policies.
- In **Afghanistan**, women are **barred from cricket**.

3. Have mothers played international cricket?

- Players who returned after motherhood:
 - ➡ Bismah Maroof (Pakistan)
 - ➡ Amy Satterthwaite (New Zealand)
 - ➡ Megan Schutt (Australia)
- **2022 Women's ODI (One Day International) World Cup** had **8 mothers**, some captains.
- In India, Sneha Deepthi (India) returned to domestic/WPL (Women's Premier League) after childbirth.

4. Why is this policy necessary?

- Women face the **"motherhood penalty"** and early retirement.
- Comeback is **physically and mentally demanding**.
- Lack of **support systems and research** worsens the issue.

- Helps in:
 - ➡ **Retaining talent**
 - ➡ **Ensuring gender equality**
 - ➡ **Providing career security**
- ICC Chairman Jay Shah said players should not choose between **motherhood and career**.
- Countries should adopt **binding, well-funded maternity policies with medical, financial, and childcare support** to ensure long-term participation of women in sports.

KEYWORDS

National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)

- The NLEM is a **curated list of medications** compiled by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- It contains **essential medicines** that address the **priority healthcare needs** of the country's population.
- At present, the **NLEM** includes **384 medicines**, which are generally provided **free of cost** in **government hospitals**.
- The **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** uses the **NLEM** to **fix ceiling prices** for these medicines, making them **affordable**.
- The **NLEM** was last **revised in 2022**.

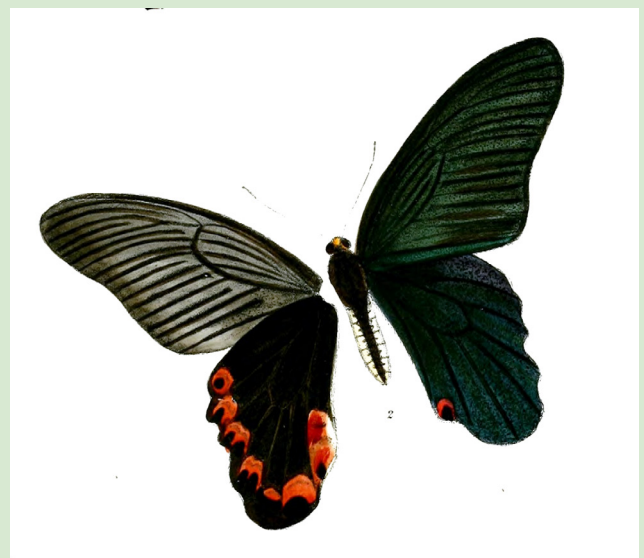
National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)

- The **NPPA** was established in **1997** as an **independent regulator** under the **Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers**.
- It is responsible for **fixing and revising the prices** of medicines and ensuring their **availability and affordability**.
- **NPPA** implements the **Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 2013**, issued by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals**.
- It aims to maintain a **balance** between **consumer interests** and the **pharmaceutical industry** while regulating drug prices.

CERN

- **CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research)** is the **world's largest particle physics laboratory**, headquartered near **Geneva, Switzerland**, on the **France-Switzerland border**.
- It conducts research on the **fundamental particles** and **forces** that make up the **universe**.
- CERN operates the **Large Hadron Collider (LHC)**, the **world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator**.
- The **Large Hadron Collider (LHC)** became operational in **2008** and led to the discovery of the **Higgs boson** in **2012**.
 - ➔ **Particle accelerators** are machines that **accelerate charged particles** such as **electrons, protons, and ions** to **very high speeds**.
 - ➔ They are used in **scientific research** and in fields such as **medicine, environmental monitoring, food safety, energy, and aerospace**.

- Geographically, it acts as a **critical ecological corridor** linking the **Eastern Himalayas, Indo-Malayan region, and Indo-Gangetic plains**.
- The region has a **diverse ecological mosaic** including **tropical evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist mixed-deciduous forests, and alluvial grasslands**.
- It reflects a strong **biodiversity-culture link**, seen in the **Bodo community's Bagurumba dance**, inspired by **butterflies' mud-puddling behaviour**.

Species in news**Yellow-crested Spangle (Papilio elephenor)**

- Once feared extinct, this rare swallowtail was **rediscovered in Assam's Ripu-Chirang forests in 2009**, marking its **first confirmed sighting since 1907** by naturalist **C.T. Bingham**.
- It belongs to the **family Papilionidae** and is **endemic to the Eastern Himalayas**, mainly found in **moist deciduous and semi-evergreen forests of Northeast India**.
- It is considered a **rare and threatened species** (listed in the **IUCN Red Data Book of Threatened Swallowtails**) and receives **highest legal protection under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**.

Places in news**Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)**

- The **Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)** is in the news following the **Assam Forest Department's release of a booklet** highlighting its rich **butterfly diversity** and importance as a **conservation landscape**.
- It is an **autonomous region in Assam** constituted under the **Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution**, governed by the **Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)** for **tribal self-governance**.

- It has **dull-black wings with blue-green scales, claret-red hindwing patches, and a reddish-pink head**, and shows **mud-puddling behaviour** to absorb minerals for reproduction.

Great Windmill (Byasa dasarada)

- It is a **large woodland swallowtail butterfly** belonging to the **family Papilionidae**, found in the **Eastern Himalayas and Indo-China**, typically in **forested river valleys at 1,200-2,700 m elevation**.
- It has a **wingspan of 100-140 mm** and is identified by **black wings with white spots, red crescents on hindwings, a red-tipped body, and broad swallowtails**.
- For defense, adults release **foul-smelling odors**, while caterpillars use an **osmeterium (orange scent organ)** to deter predators.
- It is classified as **Least Concern (IUCN Red List)** due to its wide distribution, though **deforestation remains a concern**.

