

## 1. IAS coaching centres under scrutiny by the Central Consumer Protection Authority for false claims

### Why in news?

On October 23, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) said that it was probing 20 IAS coaching institutes for making misleading claims in their advertisements and for unfair trade practices. Four of the 20 institutions have been slapped with a penalty of ₹1 lakh.

### What has the CCPA observed?

Elaborating on the broader mechanism at play, Chief Commissioner at CCPA Nidhi Khare told DD News that every time the results of any competitive exam, including the UPSC Civil Services, are announced, coaching institutes would go on an advertising spree. Names and pictures of the top rankers are used in these ads to indicate their enrolment at the institute. However, they do not disclose the nature of the enrolment, that is, the course they might have pursued in the institute.

UPSC CSE exams are conducted at three stages — prelims, mains and interview. CCPA has observed that most rank holders showcased in the advertisements only took mock interviews from these institutes. In fact, coaching institutes have been found to provide mock interviews free of cost, since it serves their own interests. This information is not disclosed in the advertisements, which ideally must include the course they enrolled for. Thus, it would qualify as deliberate concealment of important information and can be categorised as a 'misleading advertisement' under Section 2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

### What is the ecosystem like?

UPSC recommended a total of 933 candidates post its CSE examinations in 2022. However, as observed by the CCPA, the total selections claimed by the institutes together being probed exceeded the recommendations— the cumulative count was over 3,500. This could also be because of multiple enrolments among students.

At present, four institutes have been fined — Chahal Academy, IQRA IAS, Rau's IAS Study Circle and IAS Baba. While IAS Baba has received a stay on the notice from the Karnataka High Court, Rau's IAS has appealed against the order in the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. Other coaching institutes currently being probed include Vajirao and Reddy Institute, KSG- Khan Study Group IAS, Apti Plus, Analog IAS, Shankar IAS, BYJU's IAS, Unacademy, Drishti IAS, Sriram's IAS, NEXT IAS, Yojana IAS, Plutus IAS, ALS IAS, Dhishti IAS and Vision IAS, among others.

During the probe, the institutes were given the opportunity to make their submissions against the allegations of exaggerated claims. Their submissions reveal some of the same concerns raised by the CCPA.

For example, Khan Study Group claimed that 682 of the 933 selected belonged to their institute. However, their submission indicated that 673 students took only mock interviews. Vajirao and Reddy also professed about 617 selections — all of whom took the interview guidance programme.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: The Hindu

## 2. Mount Etna and other Active volcanoes

### **How long has Mount Etna been an active volcano?**

Mount Etna is Europe's most active volcano and one of the largest in the world. Its recorded volcanic activity dates back to 1500 B.C. Since then, it has erupted more than 200 times.

The current eruptions at Etna have led to flight cancellations at nearby Catania airport. The use of cars and motorbikes has also been banned for 48 hours due to high amounts of ash on the roads. Ash can be slippery and increases the risk of accidents.

### **Other volcanoes erupt for much longer than Etna**

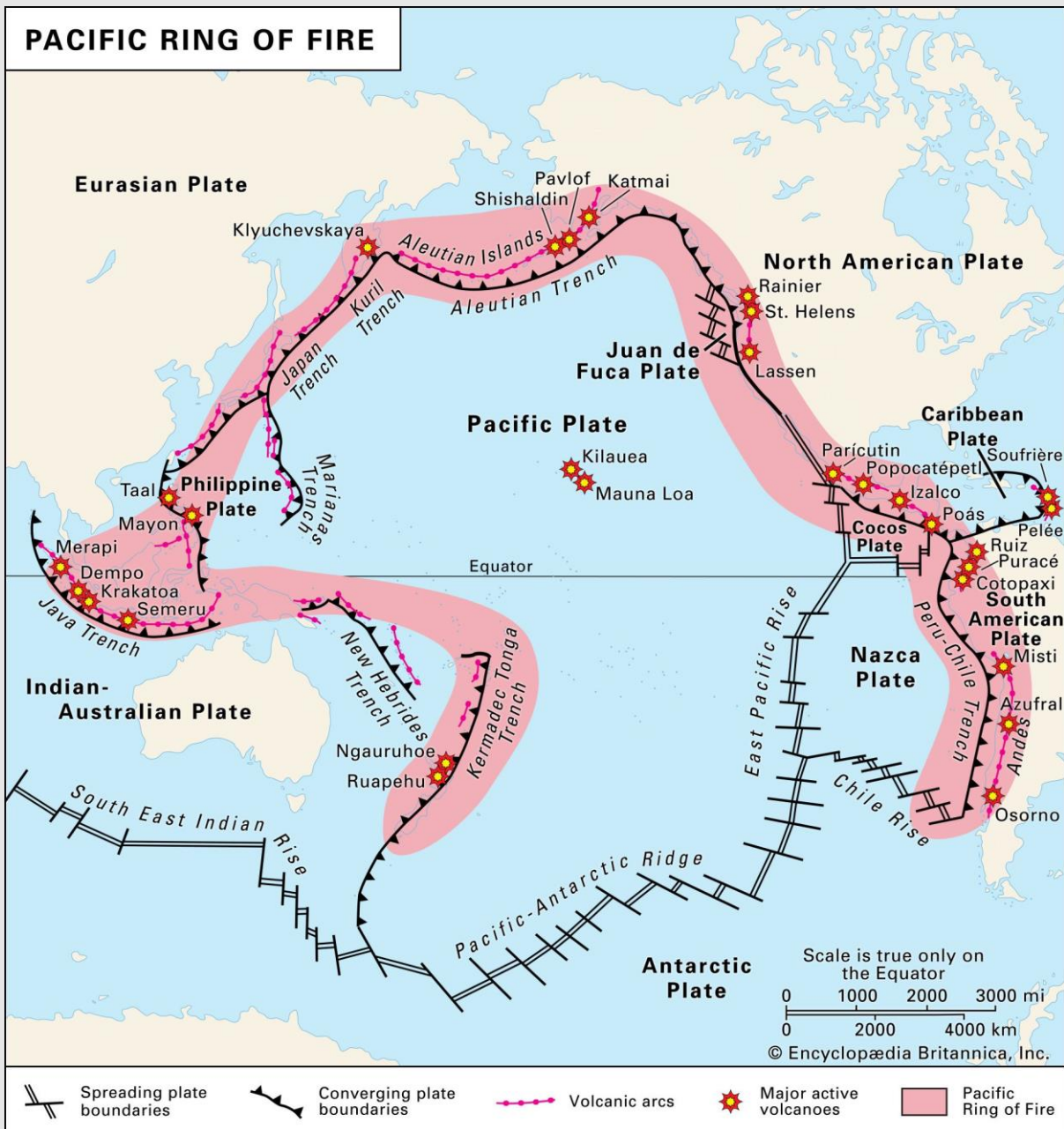
One of the most famous long-term eruptions was Kilauea volcano on Hawaii. Its spewing spree in 1983 continued — almost nonstop — for 35 years until 2018, only to start again in 2021. The eruption is still ongoing.

Dukono in Indonesia started erupting in August 1933 and is still continuing. Santa Maria in Guatemala began erupting in June 1922 and continues to this day.

And Yasur in Vanuatu first rumbled to life in about 1270 ( $\pm$  110 years) and as of June 9, 2023, was still erupting.

### **Volcanoes particularly active in Pacific Ring of Fire**

Some of the most active volcanoes are located in the Pacific Ring of Fire, which includes New Zealand, Southeast Asia, Japan and the western coast of the Americas. About 90% of all earthquakes worldwide strike within this region.



**Can scientists predict volcanic eruptions?**

Scientists are capable of predicting volcanic eruptions hours, or sometimes several days, in advance. This isn't the case with earthquakes, which are much harder to predict.

Scientists use seismographic data from earthquakes and other tremors, because those can be a precursor to volcanic eruptions.

They monitor the ground for signs of deformation, which may be caused by the movement of magma. They also take readings of volcanic gas emissions, and changes in gravity and magnetic fields.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper I; Geography  
Source: The Indian express

### 3. Kozhikode is India's first City of Literature

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

Kozhikode is India's first City of Literature. Edinburgh in Scotland was the first City of Literature.

#### **UNESCO launched the Creative Cities Network**

It was in 2004 that UNESCO launched the Creative Cities Network to promote cooperation among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

Besides literature, the UN agency also recognises cities for their association with other creative fields like film, crafts, folk arts and design. This year, Gwalior has been named a City of Music, an honour that was achieved before by two other Indian cities, Varanasi (2015) and Chennai (2017). A city has to submit a bid explaining why it deserves to be considered.

Relevance: GS Prelims; International Organisations  
Source: The Indian express & The Hindu