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**MADE EASY  
WEEKLY CURRENT  
AFFAIRS**

WEEK-2

08<sup>th</sup> August - 14<sup>th</sup> August

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Targeted Examinations:

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Exams,  
SSC and Banking Exams**

# Current Affairs MADE EASY

(8<sup>th</sup> August to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020)

**8<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## Electric Vehicle Policy

- Delhi Government has launched a new electric vehicle policy that aims to reduce air pollution and creating jobs amid the economic crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Under the policy, the government is aiming for registration of 5 lakh new electric vehicles in the next five years in Delhi.
- **Key Highlights**
  - There will be incentive up to Rs. 30000 for two-wheelers, autos and e-rickshaws. Also, an incentive of Rs. 1.5 lakhs will be provided for cars under the new policy.
  - The government will also waive registration fee and road tax.
  - The loans for electric vehicles will be provided in a lower interest rate for commercial vehicles.
  - The government plans to induct 35000 e-vehicles in the government fleet.
  - Around 200 public charging stations will be opened in the national capital.
  - It aims to have at least 25% e-vehicles by the year 2024, among all the vehicles in the national capital.
  - The policy is in line with the policy of the Central Government to have 30% e-vehicles in the country by the year 2030.

## K.V. Kamath Committee

- The Reserve Bank of India has formed a five-member committee under the chairmanship of KV Kamath, the former ICICI Bank CEO, to make recommendations regarding the financial parameters to be considered in the structuring of loans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The committee will recommend a list of financial parameters such as leverage, liquidity, debt serviceability, etc.
- It is a need of the hour as during this COVID-19 pandemic, most of the business activities have stopped and RBI has already granted moratorium for all loan accounts in the country.

## Priority Sector Lending

- Priority Sector Lending (PSL) is a special scheme of the Reserve Bank of India in order to promote some of the important sectors in the economy that do not get proper funding from the banking system.
- There are basically eight sectors under the PSL guidelines, viz. agriculture, MSMEs, export credit, education, housing, social infrastructure, renewable energy and others

such as personal loans to weaker sections, loans to state-sponsored organizations for SC/ST, etc.

- **Context:** The RBI has brought the start-ups in the country under the purview of priority sector lending guidelines, a move that will make easier for start-ups to raise funds from the banking sector.

## Quit India Movement

- India observed 78th anniversary of Quit India Movement on August 8th, 2020. Every year this day is celebrated as 'August Kranti Din'.
- **Quit India Movement**
  - The Quit India Movement was a movement launched at the Bombay Session of the Congress by Mahatma Gandhi on 8 August 1942, demanding an end to British Rule of India.
  - During the movement, Gandhiji gave the call "Do or Die" in his speech delivered at the Gowalia Tank Maidan, Mumbai.
  - The Movement had following objectives:
    - An immediate end to British rule over India.
    - Declaration of the commitment of free India to defend itself against all kinds of imperialism and fascism.
    - Formation of a provisional Government of India after British withdrawal.
    - Sanctioning a civil disobedience movement against British rule.

**9<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## Consumer Confidence Survey

- Consumer Confidence Survey is conducted every two months by RBI in order to find out how optimistic or pessimistic the consumers are regarding their financial situation.
- This index measures the change in consumer perception on the financial situation in the last year and the future expectations. The main parameters are economic situation, employment, price level, income and spending.
- **Context:**
  - According to the Consumer Confidence Survey carried out by the RBI, it has been observed that the consumer sentiment has been in the decline since March 2020 and a further collapse in July 2020 to reach 53.8, which is well below the 100-mark that demarcates the pessimism and optimism in the economy.
  - The employment scenario has degraded in the country along with income whereas the inflation expectations of households in the country are rising constantly making it difficult for the RBI to cut the policy rates in its bi-monthly monetary policy review.
  - This survey collects data from 13 Indian cities and covers more than 5000 households in the country.

## Chennai - Andaman and Nicobar Islands Submarine Cable System

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Chennai - Andaman and Nicobar Islands Submarine Cable System, which will provide better connectivity to the Island group.
- The project will ensure better connectivity from mainland India to Andaman and Nicobar Islands and its seven other major islands namely Swaraj Deep (Havelock Island), Long Island, Rangat, Hutbay (Little Andaman), Kamorta, Car Nicobar and Campbell Bay (Great Nicobar).
- The foundation stone for the project was laid by PM Modi in December 2018 at Port Blair.
- **Key Highlights**
  - Under the project, about 2,300 km of submarine optical fibre cable (OFC) has been laid at a cost of about Rs 1,224 crore.
  - The project is funded by the Government through the Universal Service Obligation Fund under the Ministry of Communications.
- **Do You Know?**
  - Submarine communications cable is laid on the sea bed between land-based stations to carry telecommunication signals across stretches of ocean and sea.
  - The total carrying capacity of submarine cables is in the terabits per second, while satellites typically offer only 1,000 megabits per second and display higher latency.

## UPSC

- **Context:** Professor Pradeep Kumar Joshi has been appointed as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). He succeeded Arvind Saxena as the Chairman.
- **Constitutional Provisions**
  - Article 316 of the Constitution of India says “The Chairman and other members of a Public Service Commission shall be appointed, in the case of the Union Commission or a Joint Commission, by the President, and in the case of a State Commission, by the Governor of the State”.
  - A member of a Public Service Commission shall hold office for a term of six years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains, in the case of the Union Commission, the age of sixty-five years, and in the case of a State Commission or a Joint Commission, the age of sixty-two years, whichever is earlier.
  - A person who holds office as a member of a Public Service Commission shall, on the expiration of his term of office, be ineligible for reappointment to that office. But, a member other than the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission, or as the Chairman of a State Public Service Commission, but not for any other employment either under the Government of India or under the

Government of a State. Also, the Chairman of a State Public Service Commission shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairman or any other member of the Union Public Service Commission.

- Article 317 says “Chairman or any other member of a Public Service Commission shall only be removed from his office by order of the President on the ground of misbehaviour after the Supreme Court, on reference being made to it by the President, has, on inquiry held in accordance with the procedure prescribed in that behalf under article 145, reported that the Chairman or such other member, as the case may be, ought on any such ground to be removed.
- Besides, the President may by order remove the Chairman or any other member of a Public Service Commission if the Chairman or such other member, as the case may be,
  - (a) is adjudged an insolvent; or
  - (b) engages during his term of office in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
  - (c) is, in the opinion of the President, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body.

### **Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra**

- Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra (RSK) which aims to impart information, awareness and education on sanitation and related aspects, was inaugurated recently.
- It was first announced by the Prime Minister on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017, on the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Gandhiji’s Champaran Satyagraha. It is an interactive experience centre on the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- The installations at RSK will include audio visual immersive shows, interactive LED panels, hologram boxes, interactive games etc.

**10<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

### **eSanjeevani OPD**

- The eSanjeevani Scheme is being implemented under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre Program. The program seeks to connect all 1.50 lakh health and wellness centres at a platform.
- The platform has two types of teleconsultation facilities – doctor-to-doctor (eSanjeevani) and patient-to-doctor (eSanjeevani OPD).
- As of now, around 12000 health professionals, including 2800 doctors have been imparted training to offer consultations on the national e-platform through over 3000 Health and Wellness Centres across 10 states. 250 doctors as specialists are available on a daily basis on this platform, even during the lockdown situation.
- **Context:** Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has informed that eSanjeevani OPD has registered 1.58 lakh online consultations within nine months of its inception.

## Cleanliness Week

- Indian Railways is observing 'Cleanliness Week' starting from August 10 till August 15 in order to give the message of the importance and significance of cleanliness.
- During this week, the Indian Railways has decided to launch a special cleanliness drive and also special focus will be provided to clean the tracks, station offices, colonies, worksites, the edge of stations and other areas near the premises of the railway stations, across the country. It has decided to focus mainly on the plastic waste collection from the tracks along with other waste products.
- An awareness drive has also been launched during this period in which Railways urge the passengers and the general public to keep the trains, stations and tracks clean from any kind of wastes.

## Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched 'Agriculture Infrastructure Fund' as a part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat package.
- Rs 1128 crores of new loans have been disbursed to over 2200 cooperative societies in the country as part of the inaugural meet of this scheme.
- Under the scheme, the financial support of up to Rs. 1 lakh crore will be provided as loans through the banks and financial institutions to the agricultural sectors such as Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Start-ups, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, etc.
- **Key Highlights:**
  - The duration of the scheme is for 10 years, i.e. from the financial year 2020-21 to 2029-30.
  - Management Information System (MIS) platform will be used for managing and monitoring the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.
  - Out of Rs. 1 lakh crore loan, amount of Rs 10,000 crore will be sanctioned and disbursed in the current 2020-21 financial year while Rs 30,000 crore will be granted in each of next three upcoming financial year.
  - The rate of interest will be 3 percent per annum. This rate of interest will be applicable for a loan of up to Rs 2 crore.
  - The moratorium for repayment of the loan will vary from a maximum of 2 years to a minimum of 6 months.
  - Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) will provide credit guarantee coverage to eligible borrowers. The credit guarantee coverage will be provided for loans of up to Rs 2 crore.

**11<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

### **National Food Security Act**

- National Food Security Act which was passed in 2013, provides coverage of up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population in the country, for receiving the subsidized food grains in the country, under the Targeted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS).
- The eligible beneficiaries are entitled to receive five kg of food grains per person per month at subsidized prices of Rs 3/2/1 per kg for rice/wheat/coarse grains.
- **Context:** The Rajasthan Government to provide free food grains to the beneficiaries under the National Food Security Mission till November 2020. The beneficiaries will be provided five kg of wheat per person and one kg of gram per family under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana as well as the National Food Security Act.

### **National Infrastructure Pipeline**

- National Infrastructure Pipeline has been launched in order to provide real-time status of the ongoing projects and also for the investors to get updates regarding the progress of the projects without any hassle.
- The share of investment between the centre, states and the private sector to share the capital expenditure is in the ratio of 39:39:22 basis.
- Under the NIP, investment will be distributed between energy sector (24 per cent), Roads (19 per cent), Urban (16 per cent) and Railways (13 per cent), amounting to over 70 per cent of the total estimated capital expenditure in the next five years. The remaining 30 per cent will be earmarked for irrigation, agriculture, rural and social infrastructure development in the country.
- **Context:** The Union Ministry of Finance has launched the dashboard of the National Infrastructure Pipeline in order to manage and integrate all the details regarding the projects at one place. The online portal is now showcasing 6800 live projects being implemented in the country.

### **Student Entrepreneurship Programme 2.0**

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog, in collaboration with Dell Technologies has launched Student Entrepreneurship Programme 2.0 (SEP 2.0) for young innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs). It will allow innovators to work closely with Dell volunteers.
- They will receive mentor support; prototyping and testing support; end-user feedback; intellectual property registration and patenting of ideas, processes, and products; manufacturing support; as well as the launch support of the product in the market.
- SEP 1.0 began in January 2019 in which a nationwide contest was held where students identified community challenges and created grassroots innovations and solutions within their ATLs.



**12<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## **Kamala Harris**

- Indian-origin US Senator Kamala Harris has been nominated as the Vice-Presidential candidate in the US Presidential Elections coming up in 2020. She has been nominated by the Democratic Presidential candidate, Joe Biden.
- She is a senator from California and also only the third woman to be nominated as the VP candidate on a major party ticket in the country. Her mother is of Indian origin. She began career as an attorney.
- **Significance:** Around 1.3 million Indian-Americans are expected to cast their votes in the Presidential elections this year with nearly 2 lakhs in battleground states like Pennsylvania and 1.25 lakhs in Michigan.



## **Hindu Succession Act, 1956**

- Hindu Succession Act, 1956 is an Act of Parliament which meant to amend and codify the law relating to intestate or unwilled succession, among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs. It underlines a uniform and comprehensive system of inheritance and succession into one act.
- This Act was amended in 2005 and also the women's rights have been recognized with respect to their rights over the ancestral property. Section 6 has been inserted into this Act through the 2005 amendment.
- **Context:**
  - The Supreme Court has recently ruled that the daughters in the Hindu families have equal rights in the family property even if the father died before the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005. This has been done in order to ensure the equality of women in the property rights of the family.
  - The apex court pronounced that the provisions contained in substituted Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, confer the status of coparcener on the daughter born before or after amendment in the same manner as a son with the same rights and liabilities. The verdict makes it clear the amendments to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, granting equal rights to daughters to inherit ancestral property would have retrospective effect.
- **Note:** Coparcener is a term used for a person who assumes a legal right in the parental property by birth only. Now, daughters are also coparceners after the new judgment of the Supreme Court.



## **Sputnik V**

- Russia has named its first COVID-19 vaccine as 'Sputnik V' for the foreign markets since this name is a reference to the first artificial satellite of the world built by the then USSR.
- Russia is the first country to register a vaccine for the COVID 19 disease. The vaccine was registered on August 12 and developed by Gamaleya Institute and Defence Ministry of Russia. However, it is not clear whether the country has complied with all the guidelines of testing the vaccine, including all three phases of vaccine trails.
- Sputnik V was the first-ever artificial satellite launched by Russia.

## **Mukhya Mantri Kisan Sahay Yojana**

- The Gujarat Government has launched the 'Mukhya Mantri Kisan Sahay Yojana' as a temporary replacement of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for a year. The main reason has been cited as the high premiums quoted by insurance firms in the state.
- The state government has clarified that the scheme will be valid for this year only.
- **Key Highlights**
  - The scheme will cover all the 56 lakh farmers in the state, unlike the PMFBY in which, on an average, 15-17 lakh farmers who applied for crop insurance, used to be covered.
  - The new scheme will be restricted to crop losses taking place during the ongoing Kharif season. It will cover only drought, flooding and unseasonal rainfall and the insurance coverage will be up to a maximum of four hectares.
  - Farmers who suffer crop loss of less than 33% will not get any compensation whereas the farmers suffering damage of 33-60% will get an assistance of Rs 20000 per hectare. For crop loss above 60 per cent, the compensation amount will be Rs 25000 per hectare.
- **PMFBY**
  - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana provides comprehensive insurance coverage against crop failure and all kinds of oilseed and annual commercial/horticulture crops. The farmers will have to pay 2% premium for Kharif crops and 1.5% for the rabi crops.
  - It was launched in 2016 and is being administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

## **Krishi Megh**

- Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has launched the Krishi Megh (NARES - Cloud Infrastructure and Services). NARES is an acronym for National Agricultural Research & Education System.
- It has been built to mitigate the risk, enhance the quality, availability and accessibility of e-governance, research, extension and education in the field of agriculture in India.

- Krishi Megh is equipped with the latest artificial intelligence and deep learning software for building and deploying of deep learning-based applications through image analysis, disease identification in livestock, etc.
- The data recovery centre has been set up at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), Hyderabad.
- Krishi Megh has been set up under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) which is funded by both the Government of India and the World Bank. The overall objective of NAHEP is to provide more relevant and high-quality education to the agricultural university students in tune with the New Education Policy 2020.

**13<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

### **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**

- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) aims to provide basic civic amenities like water supply, sewerage, urban transport, parks as to improve the quality of life for all especially the poor and the disadvantaged people.
- The main thrust areas of the Mission are water supply, sewerage and septage management, storm water drainage to reduce flooding, non-motorized urban transport and green space / parks.
- **Context:** States across India have completed 2854 projects worth Rs 11110 crores under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), as per the data provided.

### **Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Programme**

- Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Programme was launched by the Government of India in 2015 on the occasion of the 140th anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The main objective of this programme is to enhance the understanding and bonding between the states so that the integrity and unity of the country can be ensured.
- Under this programme, every State and UT in the country to be paired with another State/UT for a year, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.
- **Context:**
  - The Press Information Bureau (PIB) held a webinar in order to recognize the incredible journey of the handlooms and weavers in the country, especially about the weaves of Maharashtra and the Textiles of Odisha.
  - This session focused on different handlooms and fabrics belonging to Maharashtra and Odisha which are also the 'paired states' under 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat' Programme.

## **Empowering Tribals, Transforming India**

- NITI Aayog has launched the online performance dashboard named as 'Empowering Tribals, Transforming India', developed by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- This is an interactive and dynamic online platform that showcases updated and real-time data and status of the schemes and initiatives of the Ministry meant for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.
- It also helps in administering the schemes and details of the tribal students from one State to different States and also to different countries.

## **'Transparent Taxation-Honouring the Honest' Platform**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched 'Transparent Taxation-Honouring the Honest' platform in order to honour and appreciate the honest taxpayers in the country. The government aims to change the way in which taxes are being paid in India now, through this platform.
- The platform will introduce reforms such as faceless assessment, faceless appeals and taxpayers' charter. Faceless assessment and taxpayers' charter will be made live from the inception whereas the feature of faceless appeal will be made available on the platform from September 25, 2020.
- The platform is meant to make life simpler for the taxpayers since they are involved in nation-building and also contributing to the welfare of society.

**14<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## **Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)**

- The NIIO is a three-tiered organisation, which consists of:
  - (i) **Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC)**: It will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation and provide apex level directives.
  - (ii) A working group under the N-TAC will implement the projects.
  - (iii) A Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC) has also been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.
- The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence in keeping with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

## **African Swine Fever**

- The African Swine Fever (ASF) is a highly contagious and fatal animal disease that infects domestic and wild pigs, typically resulting in an acute form of haemorrhagic fever. It was first detected in Africa in the 1920s.

- The mortality is close to 100 per cent, and since the fever has no cure, the only way to stop it spreading is by culling the animals. ASF is not a threat to human beings since it only spreads from animals to other animals.
- **Context:** African Swine Fever (ASF) has spread to Meghalaya whereas more than 17,000 pigs have died due to the highly-contagious disease in adjoining Assam.

### **Sarthak**

- Sarthak is an Indian Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), which was launched recently. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> in the series of five OPVs.
- It has been designed & built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).

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