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**MADE EASY  
WEEKLY CURRENT  
AFFAIRS**

WEEK-4

22<sup>nd</sup> June - 30<sup>th</sup> June

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Targeted Examinations:

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

# Current Affairs MADE EASY

*(22<sup>nd</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020)*

**22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020**

## Green Cards and Non-Migrant Work Visas

- The United States President Donald Trump signed an executive order to suspend 'Green Cards and Non-Migrant Work Visas' till the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 in an effort to protect jobs for the citizens of the United States. It was signed in the wake of global economic crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- As per estimates, the suspension of Green Card and Non-migrant work visas will create around 5,25,000 jobs in the United States. Besides, reports suggest that a record 47 million people could lose their jobs in the United States due to present economic crisis.
- The Suspended Work Visas are H-1B, H-4 for some H-1B spouses, H-2B for low skill workers, L-1 for Intra-Company Transfers and J Visas for Educational and Cultural Workers.
- **Impact on India:** Every year H-1B Visas are issued to 85,000 people only, out of these, more than 70 percent of the beneficiaries are from India.

## National Security Bureau (Hong Kong)

- China has passed a legislation that empowered the Chinese Parliament to draft security laws for Hong Kong. By establishing a National Security Bureau in Hong Kong, China will have the rights to deal with criminal cases and analyze intelligence that is related to the national security.
- Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China since 1997 when Britain returned its former colony to China. The matters related to foreign affairs and defence of Hong Kong are controlled by China, rest it has its own Executive, Legislative, and Independent Judicial Power.

## Ambubachi Mela

- For the first time, the 5-day Ambubachi Mela will not be organized at the centuries-old historic Kamakhya Temple at Guwahati, in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
- The festival marks the annual menstruation of the presiding Goddess in the Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam. Located at the Nilachal Hill, the temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the Yoni (female genital) symbolised by a rock.
- As per the legend, the temple was built by demon King Narakasura. The temple was rebuilt by Koch King Naranarayan.
- Kamakhya is one of 51 Shakti Peethas or holy sites for the followers of the Shakti cult, each representing a body part of the Sati, the companion of Lord Shiva.

## **Decarbonising Transport in India**

- NITI Aayog has launched 'Decarbonising Transport in India' project to reduce the carbon dioxide emission caused due to automobiles and other transport system in the country. The project is in collaboration with the International Transport Forum (ITF).
- Through this project, an assessment framework will be designed for transport emissions in India. Based on the outcomes from the project, a pathway towards a low carbon transport system in India will be created.
- India's Decarbonising Transport initiative is a part of the DTEE (Decarbonising Transport in Emerging Economies) project. DTEE is a project of ITF under which apart from India, currently Argentina, Morocco, and Azerbaijan are the participants.
- International Transport Forum (ITF) is a think-tank for transport policy issues, which is headquartered in Paris, France. It is an intergovernmental organization with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED).

## **Specialised High Altitude Warfare Forces**

- India has deployed its Specialised High Altitude Warfare Forces who are trained in guerrilla warfare and fighting along the 3,488 km Line of Actual Control (LAC) to safeguard Indian territories from any cross-border aggression from the People's Liberation Army of China.
- The decision was taken following the violent Galwan valley clash on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and a six-week-long border standoff with the China.
- Besides, Government has granted Rs 500 crore of funds for the Armed Forces under emergency requirement procurement. With consultation with the Department of Military Affairs, the Armed Forces will be allowed to make a purchase of any weapon under the sanctioned amount.

## **Ektu Khelo, Ektu Padho**

- The Tripura Government has started a scheme 'Ektu Khelo, Ektu Padho' - meaning 'Play Little, Study Little', for school students. The objective of the scheme is to make sure that students invest their time in studies during COVID-19 pandemic.
- As per the scheme name 'Play little', students apart from studies will also be provided with fun and games activities. The scheme will benefit students from 4,398 government-aided and 335 private schools across the state.
- For students, those who have access to smartphones of their parents will be able to access the scheme through WhatsApp. For students having feature phones, they will be able to access through SMS.

**23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020**

## **YUKTI 2.0**

- MHRD has launched YUKTI 2.0 web portal initiative which is a logical extension of the earlier version of YUKTI portal. The portal was launched for identifying solutions from higher education institutes as the thinking of the youngsters are more innovative.
- Through the YUKTI 2.0 portal, the objective will be to acquire technologies in a very holistic and comprehensive way from startup incubators that have commercial potential. The portal will help in establishing a market place where these young innovators will be connected with investors.
- YUKTI stands for Young India combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology, and Innovation.

## **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**

- China has decided to join the multilateral Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), under which the international sales and transfer of conventional arms are regulated as per the global standards. The treaty was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013. It came into force from 24<sup>th</sup> December 2014.
- The Arms Trade Treaty was launched with the aim of maintaining international and regional peace. The global standards that have been set under the treaty are in line for promoting transparency and co-operation among the countries.
- Till date, about 130 countries have ratified the treaty.
- India has not signed the treaty yet.
- Earlier, U.S. President Donald Trump had announced that the U.S. will never ratify the Arms Trade Treaty under his administration.

## **PM CARES**

- Prime Ministers Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) is a dedicated national fund that was created on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020. It was created for raising funds for providing help to the affected during any sort of distress situation or emergency such as COVID-19 pandemic in the country.
- **Context:**
  - The Government of India has allocated Rs 2000 crore under PM CARES Fund Trust to procure 50,000 Made-in-India ventilators. These ventilators will be supplied to various government-run COVID-19 hospitals based on priority across the country.
  - From PM CARES, a sum of Rs 1000 crore was also released for the welfare (arranging food, accommodation, medical treatment, etc) of migrant labourers in the country.

## Indira Rasoi Yojna

- Rajasthan Government has launched Indira Rasoi Yojna which aims to provide pure and nutritious food to the economically weaker sections of the society. Under the scheme, food will be available at a concessional rate twice a day.
- For the successful implementation of the scheme, the State government will rope in local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in every district of the state. In every district, a committee headed by the District Collector will also be set up for monitoring the scheme. For the scheme, Rs 100 crore will be spent every year by the State Government.

## International Olympic Day

- Every year on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the International Olympic Day is celebrated to commemorate the foundation day of the International Olympic Committee. International Olympic Day was first celebrated in the year 1948.
- International Olympic Committees across the world conduct creative events on this day that are based on three pillars 'Move, Learn, and Discover'.
- International Olympic Committee (IOC) is a non-governmental sports organization headquartered at Lausanne, Switzerland. It was founded by Pierre de Coubertin and Demetrios Vikelas on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1894 in Paris. It organises Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## Recent Union Cabinet Decisions

- In order to boost Infrastructure projects across all the sectors at a time of COVID-19 pandemic, several decisions were taken by the Union Cabinet under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- **Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) and Multi-State Cooperative Banks (MSCBs):**
  - Union Cabinet has approved an ordinance to bring Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) and Multi-State Cooperative Banks (MSCBs) under the supervision of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
  - The decision was taken by the Government following the financial irregularities of the Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank that was unearthed in the month of September 2019.
  - RBI's supervision means that the 8.6 crore depositors of these 1482 UCBs and 58 MSCBs around the country will be able to get the added protection and comfort that are at present applicable for the scheduled commercial banks in the country, such as Bank Deposit Insurance to per depositor of up to Rs 5 lakh, etc.

- **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF):**
  - The aim of setting up AHIDF is to unlock private sector investments in the animal husbandry sector. Through the fund, infrastructural developments will be promoted in dairy, animal feed, and meat processing plants.
  - The total budget for the fund is Rs 15,000 crores.
  - Beneficiaries of the fund will be MSMEs, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), Individual Entrepreneurs, among others.
  - Beneficiaries will be provided with a 3 percent interest subvention by the Government.
- Uttar Pradesh's Khushinagar Airport declared as an International Airport. The move will provide a much-needed boost to the tourism sector of the country in the post-COVID-19 world, as International connectivity will increase number of foreign and as well as domestic tourists.  
Khushinagar is a Buddhist pilgrimage town where Gautama Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana.
- ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) was given approval by the Government with an additional Rs 909 crore for further development of the Shwe Oil & Gas project. The Shwe Oil & Gas Project is located in Myanmar.  
Apart from India, companies from Myanmar and South Korea are also a part of the Shwe project. From India, state-owned company GAIL is also a co-investor in the project.

### **Devika and Puneja Bridges**

- Constructed by Border Roads Organisation (BRO), the bridges Devika and Puneja located in Jammu and Kashmir have been inaugurated.
- **Devika Bridge:** It is located in Udhampur district of Jammu & Kashmir. Apart from solving traffic issues, the bridge will provide a smooth passage for the vehicles and convoys of the Indian army as the headquarters of the Indian Army Northern Command is situated at Udhampur. The bridge is 10 meters long.
- **Puneja Bridge:** It is located in Bhaderwah town in Doda district of Jammu & Kashmir. The bridge is 50 meters long.

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

### **Navigating the New Normal**

- NITI Aayog has launched a behavioural change campaign named 'Navigating the New Normal' with the partnership of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- The behaviour change campaign has been designed under the guidance of the Empowered Group-6 (this Group addresses issues related to COVID-19 response activities through effective solutions and formulation of plans).

- The behaviour change campaign has two parts:
  - **A Web Portal** (<http://www.covidthenewnormal.com/>): It contains behavioral norms required for being COVID-safe.
  - **Media Campaign:** The aim of the behaviour change campaign will reach millions across the country through advertisements, animation for children, virtual awareness campaigns on social networking sites, etc.

## **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**

- FATF was founded in 1989 as per the initiative taken by the G7 countries for developing global policies that can combat money laundering and financing for terrorism activities. It is headquartered in Paris, France.
- FATF plenary year begins in the month of July every year and ends in the month of June next year. Every year a total of 3 Plenary and Working group meetings of the FATF are conducted in the months of October, February, and June.
- **Context:** Pakistan managed to escape from entering Blacklist of FATF during its last meet of current FATF plenary year, despite its continuing failure to act against terrorist organizations.

## **eBloodServices**

- Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched a mobile application named 'eBloodServices' for the people of the national capital New Delhi. The mobile application is an initiative of the Indian Red Cross Society.
- It is developed by the ERaktkosh team of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
- Under this, Mobile blood collection units will be sent across all localities of Delhi by the Indian Red Cross Society for conducting blood donation camps. This will help in ensuring no shortage of blood in the city.
- Through the app, the government aims to end the worries of those who require regular blood by bringing transparency in the blood donation program. The mobile application will provide information about the availability of blood in blood banks in the city. A person will be able to place orders for four units of blood at a time.

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## **ACT Accelerator**

- The ACT-Accelerator was launched in April 2020 as a global initiative by the World Health Organization (WHO). Under the coalition, many public and private organizations involved in drug-development to funding and distribution are involved.
- ACT stands for Access to COVID-19 Tools.

- Under the initiative, the coalition intends to develop 2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of 2021. Out of the 2 billion, the coalition expects that the 1 billion will be bought by low and middle-income countries.
- At present, under the initiative, the aim is to scale up the development and delivery of 500 million COVID-19 test Kits.
- **Context:** A coalition led by the World Health Organization (WHO) to combat the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has informed that it would require USD 31.3 billion in the next 12 months for continuing its fight against the pandemic.

### **Kohala Hydro Power Project**

- Kohala Hydropower project is located near the villages of Siran and Barsala in Muzaffarabad district of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The Project is located on the river Jhelum.
- The project is part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The estimated cost of the project is USD 2,364 million and is expected to be completed by 2026.
- **Context:** A Tripartite Power Purchase Agreement (TPPA) was signed for the construction of the 1124 MW Kohala Hydro Power Project. The agreement was signed in between the Government of Pakistan, China Three Gorges Corporation (State-owned company of Chinese Government), and Government of Azad Kashmir (Part of Pakistan occupied Kashmir).

### **Maareech**

- Indian Navy has inducted an indigenously developed Anti-torpedo decoy system Maareech. The induction has provided a huge boost to the Indian Navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare Capabilities.
- A Torpedo is a self-propelled underwater missile that can be launched from a surface vessel, submarine, and aeroplane.
- Naval Science & Technology Laboratory (NSTL) and Naval Physical & Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL) are two laboratories of the DRDO where Anti-Torpedo Decoy System has been designed and developed.

### **Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar**

- Tripura Government to launch an ambitious scheme named Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar under which nutrition kits will be provided to pregnant and lactating women.
- The objective of the scheme by the State Government is to combat infant and maternal mortality in the state. The nutrition kit provided under the scheme will further help the state government in its efforts against malnutrition.
- A pregnant woman will be eligible for four such nutrition kits. These Kits will be provided after periodical check-ups. It would contain food items and grocery supplies such as jaggery, ghee, soyabeans, mixed pulses, etc.

## **Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a 125-day campaign that will provide employment to migrant and daily wage workers in Uttar Pradesh. The campaign is called Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan.
- It was also announced that 5000 tool kits will also be distributed under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Initiative in the state.
- The Campaign launched will focus on providing employment to migrant workers who have returned in Uttar Pradesh following the loss of employment in urban cities of the country after the nationwide lockdown was implemented in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**27<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## **Five-year Completion of AMRUT, Smart Cities Mission and PMAY-U**

- A webinar was conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to mark the 5 years of successful completion of the AMRUT, Smart Cities Mission and PMAY-U schemes.
- **Review of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**
  - The Mission covers more than 60 percent of the urban population of the country.
  - Online Building Permission System (OBPS) implemented.
  - Rs 77, 640 crores has been approved for projects under the State Annual Action Plans out of which Rs 75, 829 has been sanctioned to date.
  - Rs 39,011 crore allocated for providing drinking water to 1.39 crore households.
  - Rs 32,546 crore allocated for providing the Sewerage and Septage service to 1.45 crore households.
  - Energy-efficient LED Streetlights have replaced 76 lakh conventional streetlights (reduction in 13 lakh tonnes of Carbon Dioxide emission per annum).
- **Review of Smart Cities Mission (SCM)**
  - Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCC) developed.
  - Start-up culture in Smart Cities under Smart Cities Mission started with joint efforts from Invest India and AGNI.
  - Urban Learning Internship Program (TULIP) developed.
  - Rs 1,66,000 crores of tender for projects have been issued to date out of which Rs 1,25,000 crores of work orders have been issued.
- **Review of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Urban (PMAY-U)**
  - Validated demand for 1.12 Crore houses in 5 years of the scheme.
  - 35 lakh houses have been delivered to beneficiaries.
  - 65 lakh houses are under construction at the moment, this will generate 3.65 crore jobs as the Government has set a target to deliver 1.12 Crore houses under the scheme by 2022.

## **At One Click**

- Gujarat Government has launched an online cash aid initiative, named as 'At One Click' for 12,247 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and bigger industrial units in the State.
- Under this, Gujarat Government has committed Rs 1,369 crore of financial aid to such entities. The online initiative is to encourage these sectors for taking up the challenge that the COVID-19 crisis has brought and convert this into an opportunity.

## **MSME Day**

- As per United Nations' resolution, every year 27<sup>th</sup> June is observed as the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Day. The day was first observed in 2017.
- Globally, the MSME sector is the largest employment provider and also the backbone of major economies.
- As per the International Council for Small Business data, MSMEs on average contribute 50 percent in the GDP and generate 70 percent employment in an economy.

## **Sero Survey**

- The Delhi Government jointly with National Centre for Disease Control is conducting the Sero Survey across Delhi as part of revised COVID-19 response plan.
- The Survey will help in determining the extent of spread of the COVID-19 in Delhi. Under this, 20,000 residents will be covered from all the 11 districts of Delhi.
- ELISA (Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) based antibody kit developed by the National Institute of Virology (NIV) to be used for the Survey. The antibody kit of NIV is known by the name 'COVID Kavach ELISA'.
- A Sero Survey is for determining the presence of antibodies in the blood sample of an individual. The presence of the COVID-19 Immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibody in the blood sample of an individual will suggest past exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

**28<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## **Sankalp Parva**

- The Union Ministry of Culture has decided to celebrate a 2-week long tree plantation campaign called 'Sankalp Parva' from 28<sup>th</sup> June to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- Under the Sankalp Parva, the Ministry of Culture has recommended planting five trees: Bargad, Awla, Pepal, Ashok and Bel. These 5 trees represent the herbal heritage of the country.
- The Ministry has asked for the participation of all and has urged the organization to ensure that each employee must plant at least one sapling of his/her choice.

- Sankalp Parva will be celebrated across all the Subordinate Offices, Institutions affiliated & attached to the Ministry and academies. For the success of the campaign, the Ministry has urged institutions to ensure that employees must take care of the sapling that they have planted until it survives and flourishes.

## **Constitutional Reforms in Russia**

- Voting for Constitutional Reforms in Russia had begun amid the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic. There are amendments to 14 articles under the 1993 Constitution of Russia.
- As per the amendments, the term of the current President (Vladimir Putin) and former President (Dmitry Medvedev, from 2008-2012), will be reset or counted from 0 from 2024 so that either of them can be elected as the President again in 2024.
- Vladimir Putin's current term as the President of Russia ends in 2024.
- At present, a person can serve as the President of Russia for a maximum of two consecutive terms. A term of the President of Russia is of 6 years.

**29<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## **Platina**

- The Maharashtra Government has launched the World's largest Convalescent Plasma Therapy Trial project named 'Platina'. For this trial project, the Indian Council of Medical Research has given the approval to conduct plasma therapy in COVID-19 positive patients admitted in the 21 COVID-19 hospitals of the Maharashtra State Government.
- Costs of Plasma Therapy trials under the project will be borne by the State Government. For this, Rs 16.85 crores have been sanctioned for the project from Chief Minister's Relief Fund.
- A person who has recovered successfully from the COVID-19 infection can donate his/her plasma. In the case of COVID-19, Convalescent Plasma is used to transfer antibodies to the patient suffering from the COVID-19 virus. This helps the patient's body to develop similar antibodies for fighting the COVID-19 virus.

## **PM FME Scheme**

- As a part of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, Govt. has launched the Prime Minister Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) scheme which aims to generate 9 lakh skilled and semi-skilled employments.
- The objective of the scheme is to support local unorganized food processing units in the country.
- **Key Highlights:**
  - The total expenditure of the scheme will be Rs 10,000 crore. The scheme will be implemented over the next five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

- Central and State Governments will share the expenditure in the ratio of 60:40. With the Himalayan and North Eastern States, the share will be in the ratio 90 percent by Central Government, 10 percent by the States.
- In Union Territories, the scheme will be 100 percent funded by the Central Government.

## STARS Programme

- The STARS programme builds on the long partnership between India and the World Bank (since 1994), for strengthening public school education and to support the country's goal of providing 'Education for All'.
- The Government of India has made significant strides in its vision over the years as the number of students going to school has increased to 248 million from 219 million between the 2004-05 to 2018-19 period.
- STARS stands for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States programme.
- **Context:**
  - The World Bank Group has announced that a loan of USD 500 million (approx Rs 3700 crore) has been approved by its Board of Executives for improving the quality and governance of school education system in India. The loan was approved as a part of the STARS Programme.
  - The loan approved will benefit 10 million teachers and 250 million school students across 1.5 million schools in 6 states of India. The 6 Indian States are Rajasthan, Odisha, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

## National Statistics Day

- To acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in establishing the National Statistical System, every year 29<sup>th</sup> June is celebrated as the National Statistics Day in India. 29th June is the birth anniversary of P.C Mahalanobis.
- National Statistics Day was celebrated first in the year 2007. The day is being celebrated to sensitize the citizens of the country as to how Statistics helps in shaping and framing policies.
- The Theme of National Statistics Day 2020 is *Good Health & Well Being and Gender Equality*.
- In 1931, P.C. Mahalanobis founded the Indian Statistical Institute. He also served as the Chairman of the United Nations Sub Commission on Statistical Sampling from 1947 to 1951. He is considered as Father of Statistics in India.

### Do You Know?

World Statistics Day is celebrated on October 20<sup>th</sup> every year.

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

## **GoI-World Bank Agreement**

- An agreement was signed between the World Bank Group and the Government of India for providing access to affordable housing to urban poor in the State of Tamil Nadu. The agreement has been signed for two projects: Tamil Nadu Housing Sector Strengthening Program, and Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project.
- The loans for both the project are from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) [the lending arm of the World Bank Group]. The maturity of both the loans including 3.5 years grace period is 20 years.
- **Tamil Nadu Housing Sector Strengthening Programme**
  - The aim of the program is to support the on-going efforts made by the Government in the state for increasing affordable housing for low-income families.
  - As per the agreement, a loan of USD 200 million has been sanctioned under the Programme.
- **Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project**
  - The aim of this project is to strengthen the housing sector policies, regulations, and institutions of the state. Through the project, innovations in housing finance will also be supported.
  - For this project, a loan agreement of USD 50 million has been sanctioned as per the agreement.

## **COVAXIN**

- India's first COVID-19 vaccine candidate COVAXIN has received the approval of drug regulator DCGI for phase I and II of human clinical trials. The drug has been developed by Bharat Biotech.
- Human clinical trials are scheduled to start across India in July 2020.
- It has been developed in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV). The SARS-CoV-2 strain was isolated in NIV, Pune and transferred to Bharat Biotech.