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**MADE EASY  
WEEKLY  
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**WEEK-1**

**01<sup>st</sup> April - 07<sup>th</sup> April, 2021**

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**Targeted Examinations:  
CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Exams,  
SSC and Banking Exams**

1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2021

## Article 244(A) of the Constitution

- Recently, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a video message promised to implement Article 244 (A) of the Constitution.
- This article works in order to safeguard the interests of the people in tribal-majority districts of Assam.

### Key Points:

- Article 244(A) allows for creation of an 'autonomous state' within Assam in certain tribal areas.
- It also envisages creation of a local legislature or Council of Ministers or both to carry out local administration.
- It was Inserted into the Constitution by the Twenty-second Constitution Amendment Act, 1969.
- Article 244(A) accounts for more autonomous powers to tribal areas than the Sixth Schedule. Among these the most important power is the control over law and order. In Autonomous Councils under the Sixth Schedule, they do not have jurisdiction of law and order.
- The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution — Articles 244(2) and 275(1) — is a special provision that allows decentralized governance and greater political autonomy in certain tribal areas of the Northeast through autonomous councils that are administered by elected representatives. If we talk about Assam, the hill districts of Karbi Anglong, West Karbi, Dima Hasao, and the Bodo Territorial Region are under the provision of the 6th schedule.

## Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve

- The state government of Odisha has suggested establishing a second biosphere reserve in the state's south, at Mahendragiri. It is a peak in the state's Gajapati district.
- It is located at an elevation of 1,501 meters. Mahendragiri is also the state's second-highest elevation.

### Key Points:

- It is around 470,955 hectares and is spread over Gajapati and Ganjam districts in the Eastern Ghats.
- The hill ecosystem acts as a transitional zone between the flora and fauna of southern India and the Himalayas, making the region an ecological estuary of genetic diversities.
- Mahendragiri is inhabited by the Soura people, a particularly vulnerable tribal group as well as the Kandha tribe
- Also, out of the 41 species of threatened medicinal plants found in Odisha (as per the International Union for the Conservation of Nature), 29 are found in the biosphere reserve area.

### ■ NOTE:

Similipal Biosphere Reserve is the first biosphere reserve of Odisha. It was notified on May 20, 1996. It has an area of 5,569-square kilometre.

## Carnivac-Cov Vaccine

- Carnivac-Cov, the world's first-ever COVID-19 vaccine for animals was registered recently by Russia.
- According to the country's agriculture safety watchdog Rosselkhoznadzor, the vaccine will provide immunity to animals from coronavirus for at least six months after vaccination.

### Key Points

- The world's first animal vaccine against the novel coronavirus has been named as Carnivac-Cov. The Carnivac-Cov vaccine for animals has been developed by a unit of Rosselkhoznadzor (Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance).
- The clinical trials of Carnivac-Cov began in October 2020 and the trials included cats, minks, dogs, foxes, Arctic foxes, and other animals.
- This vaccine is the world's first and only product for preventing Covid-19 in animals.

- The results of the trials showed that the vaccine is harmless and highly immunogenic as all the vaccinated animals developed antibodies to the coronavirus in 100% of cases.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2021

### Suez Canal Blockade

- Recently, the Suez Canal, one of the world's most critical transit routes, got blocked due to a large container vessel, the MV Ever Given. The blockage created huge impacts on global trade and is referred to as Suez Canal Crisis 2021 or Suez Canal Blockade.
- The Cargo ship was headed from China to the Netherlands. It had run aground in the canal and got stuck for a week. The global trade losses due to the blockage is estimated to be 9 billion USD.

#### About Suez Canal:

- The Suez Canal connects Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. The canal was officially opened in 1869.
- Until 1956, the canal was primarily owned by the European shareholders (mostly British and French) and partly by the Egyptian Government. In 1956, the then President of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the canal. This led to the Suez Canal Crisis.

### 2021 Global Gender Gap Index

- The World Economic Forum has released the Global Gender Gap Report 2021. India has seen a decrease in its ranking on the index by 28 places.

#### Key Points:

- India has fallen 28 places- it is now ranked 140 among 156 countries. It is now one of the worst performers in South Asia, trailing behind neighbours Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

- India has declined on the political empowerment index as well by 13.5 percentage points
- The report highlighted that India's gender gap on this dimension widened by 3% this year, leading to a 32.6% gap closed till date.
- Most of the decrease has been seen on the political empowerment subindex, where India regressed 13.5 percentage points. The women ministers have declined to 9.1% in 2021 from 23.1% in 2019).

### Advanced Chaff Technology

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation recently developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships against missile attacks.
- The Chaff technology is used in Naval ships worldwide to self-defend against enemy radar and radio frequency missile seekers.

#### About Chaff:

- Chaff is a passive expendable electronic countermeasure technology used worldwide to protect naval ships from enemy's radar and Radio Frequency (RF) missile seekers.
- The importance of this development lies in the fact that very less quantity of chaff material deployed in the air acts as a decoy to deflect enemy's missiles for safety of the ships.
- Defence Laboratory Jodhpur, a DRDO laboratory, has indigenously developed three variants of this critical technology:
  - Short Range Chaff Rocket,
  - Medium Range Chaff Rocket and
  - Long Range Chaff Rocket

## 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2021

### HSN Code

- The Ministry of Finance announced that the businesses with annual turnover of more than Rs 5 crores will have to furnish six-digit HSN code on their tax invoices.

## About HSN Code

- The HSN Code is a six-digit identification code. The World Customs Organization (WCO) developed this code in 1988.
- It is an international nomenclature for the classification of products. It allows participating countries to classify traded goods on a common basis for customs purposes.
- The code, also called the universal economic language for goods, is a multipurpose international product nomenclature.
- The HSN code currently comprises around 5,000 commodity groups. Each Code is a unique six-digit code that has numbers arranged in a legal and logical structure. There are well-defined rules to achieve uniform classification.
- Of the six digits, the first two denote the HS Chapter, the next two give the HS heading, and the last two give the HS subheading.

### Significance:

- More than 200 countries are using the HSN codes to gather international trade statistics, make trade policies and to monitor goods. Thus, the HSN system helps to maintain a harmonized trade procedure all over the world. It also helps to reduce the costs in international trade.

## Thermal Power Plants Emission Standards

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change recently amended the rules of thermal power plants emission standards.

### Key highlights:

- The new law has extended the deadline for nuclear power plants within ten kilometers of the National Capital Region and in cities with a population of more than ten lakh to meet with the new pollution standards by the end of 2022.

- The CPCB intends to form a task force (Central Pollution Control Board). Based on their venue, the task force would divide thermal power plants into three groups.
- The deadline for “Non-Attainment Cities” thermal power plants to meet emission standards has been extended until December 31, 2023.
- The coal fired power plants in the rest of the areas have to comply with the new standards by December 2024.

### NOTE:

Sulfur Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxide, Carbon Monoxide, Ozone, Suspended Particulate Matter, non-methane hydrocarbons, and lead are among the contaminants emitted from a nuclear power plant. Sulphur Dioxide, on the other hand, is the most significant pollutant emitted from a thermal power plant.

## Biggest Floating Solar Power Plant of India

- India's largest floating solar power plant of 100 MW capacity, belonging to the National Thermal Power Corporation, is expected to be commissioned at Ramagundam in Telangana.

### Key Points:

- It refers to the deployment of photovoltaic panels on the surface of water bodies. They are a viable alternative to land-based solar arrays with applications in India.
- There are a large number of major reservoirs in the Southern Region which provides a huge opportunity to go for renewable energy in the floating solar method.
- The thermal plant at Ramagundam would be one of the renewable (solar) energy plants being developed by NTPC with an installed capacity of 447MW in the Southern Region and the entire capacity would be commissioned by March 2023.

- The largest solar power plant in the world is being set up by India on OmkarEshwar Dam on Narmada river in Madhya Pradesh. The cost of this project is estimated to be Rs 3,000 crores. The project is expected to start its power generation by 2022-23.

#### ■ NOTE:

Currently, the largest floating solar power plant of India is located in Banasura Sagar reservoir in Wayanad, Kerala. The capacity of this plant is 500 KW.

4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021

## Shantir Ogroshena, 2021

- The international military exercise "Shantir Ogroshena, 2021" has started in Bangabandhu, Bangladesh.
- The exercise is being held to celebrate Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary.

### Key Points:

- A detachment of thirty Indian Army troops are taking part in the drill.
- The exercise also includes the Sri Lankan Army, the Royal Bhutan Army, and the Bangladesh Army.
- The exercise will also have military observers from the United Kingdom, the United States, Turkey, Kuwait, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia.
- The exercise's theme is "Robust Peacekeeping Operations."

## Women and Men in India, 2020 Report

- The Women and Men in India report was recently issued by the National Statistical Office, which is part of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- The report compiles key socioeconomic indices that depict gender situations in the region.

## Population related Statistics

- India's estimated population in 2021 is 136.13 crore. The male-to-female ratio has risen from 933 in 2001 to 943 in 2011.
- The highest increase in sex ratio was reported in Delhi, followed by Chandigarh and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Daman and Diu, on the other hand, experienced the greatest fall in sex ratio.
- Health Statistics: The Age Specific Fertility Rate for the females belonging to the age group 25-29 years was the highest at 146.4. The Infant Mortality Rate decreased from 39 in 2014 to 32 in 2018. According to National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), almost 100% institutional delivery was observed in the states of Goa, Kerala, Lakshadweep.
- Education: The literacy rate of India increased from 73 in 2011 to 77.7 in 2017. The Gender gap in literacy rates was the highest in Rajasthan, Bihar, UP.

## Ingenuity Helicopter

- NASA's Ingenuity mini-helicopter has been dropped on the surface of Mars in preparation for its first flight. The helicopter had been fixed to the belly of the Perseverance rover, which touched down on the Red Planet.

### About Ingenuity Helicopter

- The ultra-light aircraft had been fixed to the belly of the Perseverance rover, which touched down on the Red Planet on February 18.
- It had been feeding off the Perseverance's power system but will now have to use its own battery to run a vital heater to protect its unshielded electrical components from freezing and cracking during the bitter Martian night.
- Ingenuity will be attempting to fly in an atmosphere that is one percent the density of Earth's, which makes achieving lift harder — but will be assisted by gravity that is one-third of our planet's.

- Ingenuity will be taking high-resolution photography as it flies. Up to five flights of gradual difficulty are planned over the month.

#### ■ NOTE:

Mars 2020 mission was launched in July 2020. It is a part of NASA's Mars Exploration Programme of NASA. Mars 2020 mission was launched from the Atlas V Launch vehicle.

5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021

## Chenab: World's Highest Bridge Arch

- The Indian Railways recently completed the arch closure of the world's highest railway bridge, Chenab bridge. The bridge is a part of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project. The Chenab bridge is located in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

### About The Arch Closure

- It is the world's highest railway bridge and is part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project (USBRL).
- The Project was declared as a Project of National Importance in March 2002.
- This bridge is 1,315-metre long and is the highest railway bridge in the world being 359 metres above the river bed level.
- The completion of the steel arch is a major leap towards the completion of the 111 km long winding stretch from Katra to Banihal.
- The Arch consists of steel boxes. To improve the stability of the arch, concrete is to be filled in the boxes. The two main benefits of using concrete filling are as follows:
  - The filled in concrete assists in controlling wind induced forces.
  - Also, using concrete filling removes the necessity of internal painting.

## NFT Marketplace

- The WazirX, one of the leading cryptocurrency exchanges launched the country's first marketplace for NFTs.
- The launch will now allow Indian creators to place their digital assets (such as images or videos, music, etc) for auction and earn royalty.

### What is Non-Fungible Token?

- Non-Fungible Token (NFT) is a cryptographic token that represents something unique, and has an individual characteristic that sets it apart.
- Owning an NFT is like owning a one-of-a-kind work of art or a collectible antique. NFTs are unique tokens or digital assets that generate value because of their uniqueness.
- For example, if two individuals hold a bitcoin each, they can exchange their bitcoins, which are replicas of each other and have the same value. However, NFTs are not interchangeable, as they are more like pieces of art where each and every token is unique in itself. While bitcoins are also digital assets, NFTs are unique digital assets with each token representing a unique value.

## Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code Amendment Ordinance, 2021

- The President of India promulgated the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021.
- The ordinance introduces a pre-packaged insolvency resolution process for corporate persons classified as MSMEs under the MSME Development Act, 2006.

### Key Features:

- Chapter III-A has been introduced to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 under the amendment. It explains the initiation of resolution, duties of resolution professionals and eligibility to take the benefits of pre-packaged insolvency resolution processes, etc.



- The ordinance aims to provide an efficient alternative insolvency resolution process for the corporate persons classified as MSMEs.
- The ordinance allows the corporate debtor to submit a “base resolution plan” to the resolution professional.
- The new pre-pack framework is applicable to MSMEs with a maximum default value of Rs 1 crore. A PIRP cannot run in parallel to a CIRP. CIRP is Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process.

#### ■ NOTE:

PIRP is applicable only to MSMEs. On the other hand, IBC is applicable to all the corporate debtors. PIRP has a default threshold of Rs 1 crore. IBC deals with a threshold greater than Rs 1 crore.

6<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021

## ADHD Drugs

- The ADHD medication was recently licensed by the FDA in the United States for the treatment of patients aged 6 to 17 years.
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is an abbreviation for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The ADHD medication is a stimulant, which is a kind of treatment.
- These drugs work by increasing the activity of the brain. Several controversies have arisen in the US as the FDA has approved the ADHD drug.

### About ADHD Drugs:

- ADHD medications are classified into two types. There are two types of stimulants: stimulants and non-stimulants. Stimulant drugs, according to the FDA, raise dopamine levels in the brain.
- Dopamine is a brain chemical linked to motivation and concentration. Stimulant drugs, on the other hand, can cause adverse effects such as elevated blood pressure, headaches, anxiety, and reduced appetite.

## Receivables Exchange of India

- RXIL (Receivables Exchange of India) has become the first TReDS platform that crossed the monthly transaction volumes of Rs 1,000 crore in March.
- This shows economic recovery in the country. Also, it shows that the MSME sector that was badly hit during COVID-19 is getting revived.
- RXIL was incorporated in 2016. It is a joint venture between Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and National Stock Exchange of India Limited. It operates TReDS.
- It was the first entity to receive approval from RBI to launch the first TreDS Exchange of India.

#### ■ NOTE:

- TReDS is an electronic platform that facilitates financing of MSMEs through multiple financiers.
- The main three participants in the TreDS are MSMEs (sellers), financiers and Corporate entities (buyers). According to RBI, only MSMEs can participate as sellers in TReDS.

## Justice Ramana to assume charge as CJ

- Justice N V Ramana, who was recently appointed as the Chief Justice of India is to assume charge on April 24, 2021. He has been recommended as the next top judge by the present Chief Justice of India (S A Bobde). Justice Ramana is to take over as the 48th Chief Justice of India.
- Justice Ramana was born in 1957 in Ponnayaram village of Andhra Pradesh. He was enrolled as an advocate in 1983. He became the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court in 2013. In 2014, he was appointed as the judge of the Supreme Court.

## Constitutional Provisions

- The Chief Justice of India and the Judges of the Supreme Court (SC) are appointed by the President under clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution.

- As far as the CJI is concerned, the outgoing CJI recommends his successor. The Union Law Minister forwards the recommendation to the Prime Minister who, in turn, advises the President.
- SC in the Second Judges Case (1993), ruled that the senior most judge of the Supreme Court should alone be appointed to the office of the CJI.
- The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the Chief Justice of India and comprises four other senior most judges of the court.
- The collegium system is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court (Judges Cases), and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution.

7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021

## India H2 Alliance (IH2A)

- Global energy and industrial majors have come together to form a new energy transition coalition, the India H2 Alliance (IH2A), focussed on commercialising hydrogen technologies and systems to build net-zero carbon pathways in India.

### Key points:

- IH2A has been established with the objective of building the hydrogen economy and supply chain in India and to help develop blue and green hydrogen production and storage as well as build hydrogen-use industrial clusters and transport use-cases with hydrogen-powered fuel cells.
- The alliance will focus on industrial clusters, specifically steel, refineries, fertiliser, cement, ports and logistics; as well as heavy-duty transport use cases and the establishment of standards for storage and transport hydrogen in pressurised and liquified form.

### Major works of India H2 Alliance:

- The India H2 Alliance will work with the government on five areas:

- Develop a National Hydrogen Policy and Roadmap 2021-2030,
- Creation of a National H2 Task-force and Mission in a public-private partnership format,
- Identify National Large H2 Demonstration-Stage Projects,
- Help create a national India H2 Fund and
- Create hydrogen-linked capacity covering hydrogen production, storage and distribution, industrial use-cases, transport use-cases and standards.

### NOTE:

- Blue Hydrogen is produced from the splitting of natural gas into carbon dioxide and hydrogen. This is achieved by Steam Methane Reforming or Auto thermal Reforming.
- Green Hydrogen is made from non-fossil sources.

## Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

- Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) has seen a sanction of more than 28.68 crore loans for an amount of Rs 14.96 lakh crore have been sanctioned since launch of the scheme.
- A total of 4.20 crore PMMY loans have been sanctioned in 2020-21 and Rs. 2.66 lakh Crore sanctioned in FY 2020-21 (As on 19.03.2021).
- The Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana has helped to generate 1 crore 12 lakh net additional employment between 2015 and 2018. Of this, women accounted for 62%.

### About Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana

- The PMMY was launched in 2015. The full form of MUDRA is Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Limited.
- The main objective of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana was to refinance collateral free loans given by the lenders to small borrowers.
- The scheme shall lend between Rs 50,000 and Rs 10 lakhs.



- The PMMY loans are available to non-agricultural activities up to Rs 10 lakhs.
- PMMY loans are available for agricultural activities as well. This includes Poultry, Dairy, Beekeeping and farming.

## World Economic Outlook

- The International Monetary Fund released the World Economic Outlook titled “Managing Divergent Recoveries”.

### Key Findings of the report

- The report has predicted GDP growth of India for the current fiscal year 2022 to be 12.5%. This is 1% higher than the previous projection of 11.5% in January 2021. This is the very best among the emerging economies and also among the elite of advanced economies.
- Also, the growth projection of India for the year 2023 has been increased from 6.8% to 6.9%. Earlier the IMF had predicted the expansion rate of India to be 6.8%.

- The global economy is to grow at 6% in 2021 and is expected to moderate to 4.4% in 2022. In 2020, the global economy contracted by 3.3%.
- According to the report, China has returned to pre-COVID GDP in 2020. However, many others are not expected to return till 2023.
- The Hotel and Restaurant sector has suffered huge production and employment losses due to COVID-19.

### About International Monetary Fund

- The International Monetary Fund was set up at a conference in Bretton Woods in the US along with the World Bank after World War II so as to assist the reconstruction of war-ravaged countries.
- They are known as the Bretton Woods twins. It was created in 1945 and is accountable to the 189 countries that make up its near-global membership. India joined on December 27, 1945.

