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**MADE EASY  
WEEKLY  
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**WEEK-2**

08<sup>th</sup> May - 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021

**TARGETED EXAMINATIONS**

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

8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

## Global Methane Assessment

- Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has released a report titled "Global Methane Assessment: Benefits and Costs of Mitigating Methane Emissions".
- The Climate Clean Air Coalition is a global partnership of governments and non-state partners.
- Suggested that the world needs to dramatically cut methane emissions to avoid the worst of climate change. The report says that human caused methane emissions can be reduced by 45% in 2020-30.

### Key Findings

- Available targeted methane measures, together with additional measures that contribute to priority development goals, can simultaneously reduce human-caused methane emissions by as much as 45 per cent, or 180 million tonnes a year (Mt/yr) by 2030.
- This will avoid nearly 0.3°C of global warming by the 2040s and complement all long-term climate change mitigation efforts.
- It would also, each year, prevent 255 000 premature deaths, 775 000 asthma related hospital visits, 73 billion hours of lost labour from extreme heat, and 26 million tonnes of crop losses globally.

### NOTE:

Methane is gas that is found in small quantities in Earth's atmosphere. Methane is the simplest hydrocarbon, consisting of one carbon atom and four hydrogen atoms (CH<sub>4</sub>). Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas. It is flammable, and is used as a fuel worldwide.

## COVID Variant of Concern

- The World Health Organization classified a coronavirus variant first identified in India as a "global variant of concern".

- This variant called B.1.617 was classified as a variant under investigation (VUI) by authorities in the UK. The UK scientists recently declared the new COVID-19 strains found in India as the "Variant of Concern".

### Key Points:

- The WHO says that a variant of interest (VOI) becomes a variant of concern (VOC) if, through a comparative assessment, it has been demonstrated to be associated with increase in transmissibility or detrimental change in COVID-19 epidemiology, increase in virulence or change in clinical disease presentation or a decrease in effectiveness of public health and social measures or available diagnostics, vaccines, therapeutics.
- Alternatively, a variant may be classified as a VOC by the WHO in consultation with the WHO SARS-CoV-2 Virus Evolution Working Group.

### NOTE:

The COVID-19 variants such as B.1.617.3, B.1.617.2, B.1.617.1, B.1.617, that are circulating in the US were classified as "Variants of Interest".

## Regulatory Review Authority (RRA) 2.0

- Recently, the Reserve Bank Of India (RBI) has constituted an Advisory Group to assist the second Regulations Review Authority (RRA 2.0).
- It will submit reports periodically to RRA that will provide suggestions and recommendations.

### RRA 2.0

- It will focus on streamlining regulatory instructions, reducing compliance burden of the regulated entities by simplifying procedures and reducing reporting requirements, wherever possible. It will also obtain feedback from regulated entities.
- Regulated entities include commercial banks, urban co-operative banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies. It will make regulatory instruction more effective.

- Also, it will aid in streamlining the reporting mechanism, obviating paper-based submission of returns wherever possible and revoking necessary instructions.

### ■ NOTE:

In 1999, RBI set up the Regulatory Review Authority to review circulars, regulations, and reporting systems. The authority reviews these parameters based on feedback from banks, public and financial institutions.

9<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

## Special Long Term Repo Operations (SLTRO)

- The Reserve Bank of India will conduct the first auction for special long-term repo operations (SLTRO) of Rs 10,000 crore for Small Finance Banks (SFBs).
- The SLTRO will be valid for three years. All the Small Finance Banks shall participate in the SLTRO. However, these banks should make sure that the amount borrowed from RBI should be lent only to specific segments such as unorganised sectors and small business units.

### SLTRO for Small Finance Banks:

- RBI would conduct special three-year long-term repo operations (SLTRO) of Rs. 10,000 crore at repo rate for small finance banks (SFBs).
- Long Term Repo Operation is a tool under which the central bank provides one-year to three-year money to banks at the prevailing repo rate, accepting government securities with matching or higher tenure as the collateral.
- The SFBs would be able to deploy these funds for fresh lending of up to Rs. 10 lakh per borrower.
- This is to provide further support to small business units, micro and small industries, and other unorganised sector entities adversely affected during the current wave of the pandemic.

## 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG): Anti-Covid Drug

- The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved the emergency use of 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG) as additive therapy for moderate to severe COVID-19 patients.
- The 2-DG was developed by the Defence Research Development Organisation for Emergency Use. 2-DG is 2-Deoxy – D – Glucose. The anti-COVID-19 drug has been developed by the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), a lab of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL), Hyderabad.

### Key Points:

- The drug ensures faster recovery of hospitalised patients and will reduce supplemental oxygen dependence during clinical trials.
- The clinical trials have shown that 2-deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG) helps in faster recovery of hospitalised patients and reduces dependence on supplemental oxygen.
- Patients treated with the aforementioned drug showed RT-PCR negative conversion in COVID patients. As per the experts on the subject, the drug will be beneficial in treating patients suffering from COVID-19.

## Sputnik Light Single Dose

- Sputnik V vaccine of Russia shows that a single dose of Sputnik Light vaccine demonstrated 79.4 percent efficacy against COVID-19. It is also effective against all new strains of COVID-19.
- Sputnik V vaccine developed by Russia is a two-dose vaccine. The unique feature of the vaccine is that the first and second dose are different from each other. In Sputnik Light a single dose is sufficient.

### About Sputnik V:

- The Sputnik V vaccine has been developed by Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology in Moscow.

- It uses two different viruses that cause the common cold (adenovirus) in humans. The adenoviruses are weakened so they cannot replicate in humans and cannot cause disease.
- They are also modified so that the vaccine delivers a code for making the coronavirus spike protein. This aims to ensure that when the real virus tries to infect the body, it can mount an immune response in the form of antibodies.

10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

## Mucormycosis-Black Fungus Infection in COVID Patients

- Mucormycosis is increasing among the COVID patients. A number of Covid-19 patients are developing a serious fungal infection known as Mucormycosis also called black fungus.

### About Mucormycosis:

- Mucormycosis is a fungal infection recently in the news as it is being triggered by Covid-19.
- Sometimes also called zygomycosis, this disease is a serious and rare fungal infection caused by molds named mucormycetes.
- These fungi live throughout the environment. The places they are particularly found are Soil, Decaying organic matter, such as leaves, compost piles, or rotten wood.
- The lungs or sinuses of the recovering COVID patients get affected after they inhale fungal spores from the air.
- It is not a major threat to those with a healthy immune system.

### Symptoms

- It causes redness around the eyes, nose.
- Also, the person suffers from headache, fever, bloody vomits, shortness of breath, altered mental status.
- Mucormycosis is suspected when a person suffers from sinusitis, local pain on cheekbone, blackish

discoloration over bridge of nose, chest pain, thrombosis, pleural effusion, necrosis, blurred vision, etc.

## Sinopharm Vaccine

- The World Health Organization approved the Sinopharm Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use. It is the first Chinese jab to receive the WHO's green light.
- The UN health agency signed off on the two-dose vaccine, which is already being deployed in dozens of countries around the world.
- Recently, the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines developed by AstraZeneca, Pfizer, BioNTech, Johnson and Johnson as well. The other popular Chinese Vaccine is sinovac.

### About Sinopharm Vaccine

- The Sinopharm vaccine is an inactivated coronavirus vaccine, like Covaxin developed by Bharat Biotech India (BBIL) in collaboration with the National Institute of Virology (NIV).
- Inactivated vaccines take the disease-carrying virus (in this case SARS-CoV-2) and kill it using heat, chemicals or radiation.
- According to WHO, the efficacy of the Sinopharm vaccine is 79%.

## Ayush 64 to be distributed freely

- The Ministry of AYUSH announced that Poly herbal formulation 'AYUSH 64' will be available free-of-cost for asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID-19 patients at seven centres in Delhi.
- Patients or their representatives can visit these centres with a hard or soft copy of the patient's RT-PCR positive report and Aadhar card to get a free pack of 'AYUSH 64' tablets.

### About Ayush 64

- Ayush-64 is an Ayurvedic formulation developed by CCRAS.

- Originally developed in 1980 for the management of Malaria, this drug has now been repurposed for Covid-19 as its ingredients showed notable antiviral, immune-modulator and antipyretic properties.
- The in-silico study done on Ayush 64 showed that 35 out of 36 of its Phyto-constituents have high binding affinity against the COVID-19 virus.
- The formulation has also shown very promising results in Influenza like illnesses.
- With scientific evidence generated from six clinical studies across India, Ayush 64 has been identified as a potential adjunct to standard care in the management of asymptomatic, mild and moderate COVID-19 to improve the clinical recovery and quality of life.
- Ayush-64 is found to significantly enhance the speed of clinical recovery in terms of disease symptoms and severity. It also has significant beneficial effects on general health, fatigue, anxiety, stress, appetite, general wellbeing and sleep.
- On crypto data tracker CoinGecko.com, dogecoin has leaped more than 800% over the last month and is now the fourth-largest digital currency, with a market capitalization of \$73 billion.

### ■ NOTE:

Dogecoin is a cryptocurrency. It was launched in 2013 and is based on the Litecoin algorithm.

## Asperger's Syndrome

- SpaceX announced that he had Asperger's Syndrome. It is a disorder where people have trouble in social relationships. The Asperger Syndrome is named after the German doctor Hans Asperger who first described the disorder in 1944.
- It is a kind of autism disorder. It severely inhibits the mental and social development of a person.

## Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Asperger syndrome is one of the autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and is a developmental disorder affecting how the brain processes information.. However, Asperger's Syndrome is different from other Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder refers to a range of conditions characterised by some degree of impaired social behaviour, communication and language, and a narrow range of interests and activities that are both unique to the individual and carried out repetitively.
- It is a complex brain development disability which makes itself visible during the first 3 years of a person's life.

11<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

## SpaceX: DOGE-1 Mission to the Moon

- SpaceX will launch the "DOGE-1 Mission to the Moon" in the first quarter of 2022 which will be the dogecoin-funded mission.
- The mission will be funded entirely with Dogecoin Cryptocurrency.

### About DOGE-1

- It is the first ever commercial payload to be paid with Dogecoin. The satellite weighs 40 kilograms.
- Dogecoin is a cryptocurrency with a fun and friendly brand picture that aims to be a kind introduction to cryptocurrency.
- Geometric Energy Corporation announced the dogecoin-funded mission on 9th May, 2021. This mission will exhibit the application of cryptocurrency beyond Earth orbit and set the base for interplanetary commerce.

## OSIRIS-REx: NASA Spacecraft starts journey to Earth

- NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft will depart asteroid Bennu, and start its two-year long journey back to Earth.
- OSIRIS-REx is NASA's first mission to visit a near-Earth asteroid, survey its surface and collect a sample from it.

### About the OSIRIS-Rex:

- OSIRIS-REx is NASA's first mission to visit a near-Earth asteroid, survey its surface and collect a sample from it.
- The mission was launched in 2016, it reached its target in 2018 and since then, the spacecraft has been trying to match the velocity of the asteroid using small rocket thrusters.
- It also utilised this time to survey the surface and identify potential sites to take samples.
- In October 2020, the spacecraft briefly touched asteroid Bennu, from where it collected samples of dust and pebbles.
- Once the surface was disturbed, the spacecraft's robotic arm captured some samples.

#### ■ NOTE:

Bennu is an ancient asteroid, currently more than 200 million miles from Earth. It is about as tall as the Empire State Building (US) and is named after an Egyptian deity.

12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

### Commodity Super Cycle

- Globally, the prices of commodities are rising or expected to rise. This is seen as a sign of a likely commodities supercycle.
- The steel prices have increased by 265% in 2020-21 as compared to that of 2019-20. The prices of copper have hit an all-time high since 2011. Also, the prices of palm oil, coffee, and soybean oil have been increasing. Which is indicating that there is a new commodity super cycle is prevailing.

#### About Commodity Super Cycle

- Commodity super cycles are decade-long periods in which commodities trade above their long-term price trend.

- Some market analysts are seeing signs that a new super cycle is beginning in 2021 pointing to a weakening dollar and supportive central banks and fiscal stimulus geared towards infrastructure spending as well as renewable energy.
- A commodity super cycle is a sustained period of abnormally strong demand growth that producers struggle to match, sparking an increase in prices that can last years or in some cases a decade or more.

#### Cause:

- Recovery in global demand (led by recovery in China and the US).
- Supply-side constraints.
- Loose monetary policy of global central banks.
- Investment in Asset Creation

### Foreign Inward Remittance Advice (FIRA)

- PayPal has introduced an automated process to obtain the monthly Foreign Inward Remittance Advice (FIRA). It is an automated process to obtain monthly foreign inward remittance advice.
- PayPal merchants will now be able to download their monthly digital FIRA issued by the bank by simply logging into their PayPal account.

#### About FIRA:

- Foreign Inward Remittance Advice (FIRA) is a document that acts as a proof for all inward remittances and payments received from abroad.
- This is issued by banks in India and is required by exporters of all sizes, individual or a business, such as a limited company, partnership firm, sole proprietorship firm etc.

### Iron Dome of Israel

- In the conflict between Israel and Palestine, both sides have taken to air strikes and rocket attacks. Rockets fired from Gaza being intercepted by the Israeli Iron Dome air defence system. It appeared that the rockets were hitting an invisible shield.



### About Iron Dome air defence system:

- The Iron Dome is a mobile all-weather air defence system developed by Israel to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells fired from short distances.
- The system detects rockets 4 to 70 km away and will engage with interceptors to destroy targets mid-air.
- Iron Dome operates day and night, under adverse weather conditions, and can respond to multiple threats simultaneously.
- The Dome has three central components – detection and tracking radar, the weapon control system and missile firing unit.

#### ■ NOTE:

India has got S-400, which caters to the three threats (rockets, missiles and cruise missiles). But they have much longer range. S400 has to cater to shooting down missiles, aircraft in some 300 to 400 km range.

13<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

### Officer dismissed under Article 311

- Sachin Waze, a police officer who was suspended in connection with the Mukesh Ambani terror scare case, was dismissed from service by Mumbai Police Commissioner under Article 311 (2) (b) without a departmental enquiry.

#### Background:

- After Waze was arrested by the NIA in March in connection with his role in the Ambani terror scare case and subsequent murder of Mansukh Hiran, he was suspended. On May 11, Mumbai Police Commissioner Nagrale dismissed him for service under Article 311 (2)(b) of the Indian Constitution.

#### About Article 311:

- Article 311 says that no government employee either of an all India service or a state government shall be

dismissed or removed by an authority subordinate to the one that appointed him/her.

- Section 2 of the article says that no civil servant shall be dismissed or removed or reduced in rank except after an inquiry in which s/he has been informed of the charges and given a reasonable opportunity of being heard in respect of those charges.

### HPIV Human Parainfluenza Viruses

- The researchers have found out a new way to block the attachment of HPIV (Human Parainfluenza Viruses).

#### About HPIV

- Human parainfluenza viruses are the viruses that cause human parainfluenza. HPIVs are a paraphyletic group of four distinct single-stranded RNA viruses belonging to the Paramyxoviridae family.
- These viruses are closely associated with both human and veterinary disease
- Parainfluenza is a common virus that can cause both upper and lower respiratory infections, including colds, bronchitis, croup, and pneumonia.
- Despite the name, it is not related to influenza (the flu). It is caused by an entirely different virus known as the human parainfluenza virus (HPIV)

#### Peptides

- Peptides are short chains of amino acids. They are connected with one another in a sequence of peptide bonds. They are distinguished from proteins by shorter length. Peptides help the human body to fight against microbes.

### Vineyard Wind Project

- The USA has approved the nation's first major offshore wind farm, billing it as the launch of a new domestic energy industry that will help eliminate emissions from the power sector.
- Vineyard Wind Project is the first major Offshore wind farm that is to power 400,000 homes. The project aims to install 84 turbines in the Atlantic Ocean.

## About the Project:

- Vineyard Wind final federal approval to install 84 or fewer turbines off Massachusetts as part of an 800-megawatt offshore wind energy facility.
- The project is expected to create 3,600 area jobs and will power up to 400,000 homes.
- Apart from the Vineyard project, there are a dozen offshore wind projects planned along the East Coast. When all the projects are installed, it is estimated that more than 2,000 turbines will be churning the wind energy along the coast between North Carolina and Massachusetts.

14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021

## Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem

- Israeli police stormed the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in East Jerusalem, leaving a reported 300 people injured.
- Hamas in the Gaza Strip attacked Israel for its actions. They were engaged in Air strikes. During the air strikes, Israel used IRON DOMES to defend itself from the missiles launched from Gaza.

## About Al-Aqsa Mosque

- It is one of the holiest structures in the Islamic faith. It sits inside a 35-acre site known by Muslims as Haram al-Sharif, or the Noble Sanctuary, and by Jews as the Temple Mount.
- The site is part of the Old City of Jerusalem, sacred to Christians, Jews and Muslims.
- It is believed to have been completed early in the eighth century and faces the Dome of the Rock, the golden-domed Islamic shrine that is a widely recognized symbol of Jerusalem.
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, has classified the Old City of Jerusalem and its walls as a World Heritage Site.

## NOTE:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation has classified the mosque as the World Heritage Site. This means that the mosque is of international importance and deserves special protection.

## Yaogan satellites

- China conducted two launches of classified Yaogan satellites in the last week while much of the world waited to see where and when the Long March 5B would fall.
- The satellite is to be used for electromagnetic environmental surveys and other related technical tests.

## About the launch

- China launched three Yaogan-30 satellites and Tianqi-12 satellite in its Long March 2C. It was launched from Jiuquan Launch Centre in Gobi desert.
- Prior to the Yaogan-30 mission, the Yaogan-34 satellite was launched.
- The satellites will be used for electromagnetic environment surveys and other related technology tests, according to state media Xinhua.
- No images and few details of Yaogan satellites are released, much in the same way as classified launches carried out by other countries. Yaogan series satellites are understood by western analysts to be Chinese military reconnaissance satellites.

## NOTE:

Yaogan satellite is a series of Chinese Reconnaissance satellites. Reconnaissance satellite is a spy satellite deployed for military or intelligence applications. However, Chinese claim that Yaogan satellites are launched for land survey, crop yield assessment, scientific experiment and disaster monitoring.