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**MADE EASY
WEEKLY CURRENT
AFFAIRS**

WEEK-3

15th August - 21st August

Targeted Examinations:

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

Current Affairs MADE EASY

(15th August to 21st August 2020)

15th August 2020

National Digital Health Mission

On the event of 74th Independence Day, the Union Government launched the National Electronic Health Project under which every Indian to receive a Health ID card. The Identification card provides all pertinent material regarding the previous medical history, care and diagnosis of the applicant. The mission is focused solely on technology. The mission aims to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of health care in India. It will operate under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana or Ayushman Bharat.

Key Features

- The citizens holding the cards shall allow one-time access to the doctors and health care providers during their visit to the hospitals.
- The permission to access confidential medical data is to be provided for every visit by the patient himself. By this, the privacy of the patient is maintained. The control of access to the digital records will be completely in the hands of the patient. The doctors can access the medical record every time only at the will of the patients.
- The Mission allows patients to access health services remotely. It also features Tele-consultation and E-Pharmacies.

Optical Fibre Linking of Lakshadweep Islands

PM Narendra Modi in his speech for Independence Day celebrations announced that Lakshadweep Islands will be connected to the mainland by the Optical Fibre Cable connection. It will help to boost communication between India and Lakshadweep. Recently, the same type of connectivity has been made between Chennai and Port Blair. The cable will boost internet speed up to 400 Megabytes per second. Also, it will boost 4G mobile services and digital services such as e-governance, tele-education, tourism, tele-health in the islands.

The Department of Telecommunications is to implement the project.

UAE-Israel diplomatic relations

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become the first Gulf nation and the third in the Arab world to develop formal ties with Israel.

It is a part of an effort to stop the divisive occupation of areas of the West Bank viewed by Palestinians as part of their future state.

Jordan and Egypt are the other two nations who have diplomatic relations with Israel under the peace agreements.

Shaurya KGC

HDFC Bank has launched 'Shaurya KGC (Kisan Gold Credit) Card, a loan product for the armed forces. This is the first-of-its-kind scheme meant for the army personnel in the country and is based on the Kisan Credit Card guidelines of the government.

Salient features of this card:

- This credit card comes with a life cover of Rs 10 lakhs.
- It will provide finance for the agricultural requirements such as the production of crops, post-harvest maintenance and consumption needs, purchase of farm machinery, irrigation equipment, etc.
- The loan facility can be availed by visiting HDFC Bank branch or through the e-Kisan Dhan app of the bank.
- The card is tri-coloured implying the Army, the Navy and the Air Force of the country.

SRIJAN Portal

The Ministry of Defence has launched the Department of Defence Production Portal 'SRIJAN' as a part of opportunities for Make in India initiatives in the defence sector.

This portal provides information regarding the defence equipment and items which are being imported currently or to be imported by the Defence PSUs in the country.

The government will take proper measures regarding making these products indigenized.

Project Lion and Project Dolphin

PM Narendra Modi launched Project Lion and Project Dolphin as a part of 74th Independence Day celebrations.

Project Lion:

- The project aims to involve conservation of Asiatic Lions. It will focus on habitat development by engaging modern technologies. Also, the project is to address Human-Wildlife conflict.
- It will involve local communities living closer to lion landscapes. The Project will also provide livelihood opportunities to these people.
- Project Lion is to focus on health management of lions and provide world standard care to the lions.
- It is to be noted that around 92 lions died in Gir in January 2020. In 2018, around 59 lions died due to Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) outbreak in the sanctuary.

Project Dolphin:

- Project Dolphin was launched to conserve and protect the Dolphins in the rivers and oceans linked with India.
- The project will conserve dolphins in aquatic habitat using modern technology especially in anti-poaching activities.

16th August 2020

Saliva Direct

The United States Food and Drugs Administration approved the emergency usage of saliva-based COVID-19 diagnostic tests.

The testing method has been named 'SALIVA DIRECT'.

The Saliva Direct testing method is simpler and is less expensive as compared to the traditional method called the 'Nasopharyngeal swabbing'. The test method is to be used for test players and staff in the National Basketball Association.

Saliva Testing: The testing is performed from a spit sample of individuals. The traditional PCR is then performed on the saliva sample. It pairs well with LAMP (Loop Mediated Isothermal Amplification) that was used to detect outbreaks of Zika and Ebola in poor countries.

Atal Tunnel

The Himachal Pradesh Government announced the inauguration of the "Atal Tunnel" by the end of September 2020.

The tunnel is being built under Rohtang Pass in the Pir Panjal range on the Leh-Manali highway. It is located at 3,100 metres above sea level.

The length of the tunnel is 8.8 kilometers. The route is important as it feeds military supplies to the military su-sector that are located in Siachen Glacier and Aksai Chin.

Organic Farming: India ranked first

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare recently announced that India ranks first in Organic Farming.

India also ranks ninth in terms of areas under Organic Farming.

Sikkim was the first state in the world to become completely organic. The other states that have similar targets include Uttarakhand and Tripura.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana: The scheme is a major project under the National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture. Under the scheme, organic farming is promoted by adoption of organic villages through cluster approach. Over 50 and more farmers will form clusters with 50-acres of land and take up organic farming. The aim is to produce pesticide residue free produce and contribute towards improving health of the consumer.

Key Measures by Government of India:

- Under One District One Produce concept GoI is trying to develop more clusters of organic produce.
- Jaivik Kheti Portal was launched. Here farmers shall sell all of their organic produce promoting organic farming globally.
- Webinars are conducted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on Organic Farming.

17th August 2020

World's tallest pier bridge

The Indian Railways are building the world's tallest pier bridge in Manipur state. The bridge has an altitude of 141 metres. This has surpassed the mark of Mala-Rijeka bridge 139 meters long in Montenegro, Europe.

The bridge is a part of the 111 km long Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal railway line project. The project is to have 45 tunnels.

The total length of the bridge is 703 metres. The piers that will hold the bridge are to be constructed with hydraulic augers.

The 'Slip Form Technique' has been used to construct the bridge. It is a construction technique in which concrete is poured into a continuously moving form.

DG14G: New COVID-19 Strain

Malaysia has recently detected a new COVID-19 strain that is 10 times more infectious. The mutation of the virus is called D614G.

D614G is the official name given to the new mutated COVID-19 virus. It was first detected in Europe. However, it is now being seen in different parts of the world and has been found in Malaysia for the first time.

The D614G is located within the virus protein that makes up the spikes. These spike proteins are used by the virus to break into the human cells. The mutation changes are found at the 614th position of the amino acids in the spike proteins. It is between D (Aspartic acid) and G (Glycine) and hence the name D614G.

SWASTHYA Portal

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched a Tribal Health and Nutrition portal called 'SWASTHYA'. Also, the Ministry launched the "ALEKH" e-newsletter on health and nutrition.

SWASTHYA portal provides information related to health and nutrition of tribal populations in India.

It will also act as an integrated source of information about research studies, innovative practices, case studies and best practices that were collected from different parts of the country.

GOAL Initiative

The Government of India launched GOAL initiative to improve the lives of tribal people. GOAL was launched in partnership with Facebook.

GOAL is an acronym for Going Online as Leaders. The programme aims to mentor 5000 tribal youths in the country and enable them to become young leaders in their communities.

The initiative is being implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs along with Facebook and NITI Aayog.

The project also aims to close the gender gap and hence, it is committed to enroll more women. It will also work in bringing up leadership qualities in tribal women.

18th August 2020

CAMPA Fund

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has announced that the CAMPA funds shall be used only for plantation drives and afforestation. Also, the forest-based devolution funds are to be increased from 7% to 10%.

CAMPA stands for Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority.

The ministry has directed 80% of CAMPA funds towards afforestation and plantation drives. The funds were used to pay salaries to forest officials and infrastructure acquisition.

CAMPA:

- The money paid by the developers that razed the forest land is called the Compensatory Afforestation Fund. These funds are managed by CAMPA. They are also called CAMPA funds.
- The funds under the CAMPA act were to be used for:
 - Compensatory Afforestation
 - Net Present Value of forest
 - Other project specific payments.
- As per rules of CAMPA funds, 90% of funds are to be given to the states and 10% is to be retained by the Centre.

Delhi-Meerut Rapid Transit System

Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a total of 1 billion USD loan to provide assistance for the construction of modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut Rapid Transit System.

ADB'S finance will include the construction of railway tracks, station buildings, maintenance facilities, and traction, and power supply.

The project aims at smoothening regional connectivity by establishing transit options across the densely populated sectors of the National Capital Region connecting Delhi to Meerut in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Delhi-Meerut Rapid transit system is an 82-kilometer long semi high-speed rail corridor that connects Delhi and Meerut via Ghaziabad. The network is the first of three priority rail corridors, planned under Phase-I of the RRTS (Regional rapid Transit System) project of NCR Transport Corporation.

ILO-ADB report

The joint report of the International Labour Organization and the Asian Development Bank titled 'Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis in Asia and the Pacific' apprehended that the COVID-19 pandemic may hit with a job loss of 41 lakh youth in India.

The report also added that a major percentage of job loss will be faced by the workers associated with the construction and farm sector.

19th August 2020

National Recruitment Agency

The Union Government approved the setting up of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) that will be responsible for conducting the Common Eligibility Test (CET). National Recruitment Agency (NRA) will be a multi-agency, autonomous body to conduct a Common eligibility test to fulfill the vacancies of non-gazetted officer posts of Group B and C for Railways, Banks, and SSC.

The online mode of Tier-1 examination of the CET will be conducted by the National Recruitment Agency. Every district is going to have at least one exam center.

The NRA will conduct a common eligibility test (CET) for graduate level, higher secondary level and the matriculate level candidates. The score of CET will be valid for three years but one can reappear in the examinations to upgrade his position and scores. CET will be the first tier of recruitment examinations. The other tiers will be conducted by the concerned recruitment agencies.

Death Valley

Furnace Creek of the Death Valley in the Southern California desert has recorded highest air temperature on Earth since July of 1913.

The Weather Prediction Center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration measured 54.4 degrees Celsius temperature in that area. However, the verification of the recorded temperature is yet not confirmed by the concerned authority.

Death Valley is a graben (a down-dropped block of land between two mountain ranges), located in Eastern California region. Due to its location in the rain-shadow area of four mountain ranges, the valley is extremely dry in nature.

RBI's New Regulations Framework

The Reserve Bank of India formulated a new framework for the establishment of a new umbrella entity for retail payments. According to RBI, the entity will be handed over the responsibility of setting up, managing, and operating new payment systems in the retail space following the same way as the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) does.

The guideline of RBI says such an entity must have a minimum paid-up capital of Rs. 500 crore.

The entity will be registered under 'for-profit' or a Section 8 Company as per the Companies Act, 2013.

Retail payment: Retail payments are the transactions between consumers and businesses and public authorities like store payments, online payment, etc.

Rename of Manduadih railway station as Banaras

The Union Home Ministry has given green light to the Uttar Pradesh government's request of renaming Manduadih railway station as Banaras railway station.

The no-objection certificate for changing the name has been received by the Government of UP.

The Diesel Locomotive Works is located near Manduadih station which is four kilometers away from Varanasi Cantt Station.

Madhya Pradesh: Reservation of State Government jobs

The Madhya Pradesh Government announced its intention to reserve the seat of all state government jobs for the people of the state.

If this happens, Madhya Pradesh will become the first state of India to reserve seats for all state government jobs for the domicile population.

Article 16 of the Indian Constitution safeguards the citizen from any kind of discrimination in the employment on grounds of religion, race, sex, caste, descent, and place of birth or residence. But there are some exceptions. One of them is that the Parliament of India has the power to prescribe "residents" as a condition for employment.

20th August 2020

Swachh Survekshan Report 2020

The results of the Swachh Survekshan 2020 survey was announced recently. Indore retained the first position as the cleanest city of India, for the fourth time in a row.

Surat bagged the second place while Navi Mumbai was ranked third. The survey monitors the performance of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Swachh Survekshan sanitation survey was carried out in over 4,000 cities for 28 days.

Key Highlights

- Indore ranked first in the city list of more than 1 lakh population.
- Karad (Maharashtra) ranked first in the city list of less than 1 lakh population.
- Chhattisgarh is the cleanest state of India as per the report.
- Varanasi topped in the category of "Ganga Towns' cities.
- Delhi ranked first in the list of Cleanest Capital city.

Tribes India On Wheels

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the "Tribes India On Wheels" Mobile Vans. A total of 57 mobile vans have been flagged off in 31 cities.

It is an initiative of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) to uplift the tribal community through boosting the sales of the products of the Indian tribes considering the Van Dhan scheme.

TRIFED has adopted the title 'Go Vocal for Local Go Tribal' to improve the condition of the affected tribal communities during this pandemic condition.

Van Dhan Scheme is an initiative of TRIFED which was launched in 2018. The scheme aims at improving tribe's incomes by promoting tribal products and value addition.

Increase in FRP of Sugarcane

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the proposal to increase the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) by Rs 10 for the next marketing year, starting in October 2020.

The initiative has been taken after the recommendation of the Commission of Agricultural Costs and Prices.

Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) is the minimum price, to be paid by the sugar mills to the farmers for their sugarcane. It is determined under Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966. State Advisory Price (SAP) is the price fixed by the sugarcane producing states on their own. It is usually higher than the Fair and Remunerative Price. The states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana have their own SAPs.

Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)

In spite of Beijing's hostile stance, India is on its way to becoming an alliance with Japan and Australia to initiate a trilateral Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) to combat reliance on China.

Tokyo had originally initially suggested the plan. The Government of India was voicing its immediate need to operate on the initiative.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will also be invited to join SCRI. The objective of the initiative is to attract FDI with a vision of creating an economic powerhouse" and strengthening the relationship among partner countries.

Military Mutiny of Mali

Following the incident of mass protest and military mutiny, the president of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has resigned.

The week-long political crisis emerged on the demand to relinquish the President with the allegation of worsening the country's economic condition and mismanagement of the security situation.

Mali is among the poorest countries in the world. Geographically it is a vast country, adjacent to the Sahara Desert. It had experienced several military mutinies and currently battling with jihadist attacks.

Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP)

The Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla attended the virtual mode of Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP).

The two days long event was organized jointly by Inter Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of Austria with the assistance of the United Nations.

The theme of the conference was 'Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet'.

21st August 2020

National strategy for Financial Education for 2020-25

The Reserve Bank of India has come up with the Second National Strategy for Financial Education (NSFE) for the time period of 2020-25.

The document of the apex bank recommended a '5 C' approach with the objective of the circulation of financial education in the country.

NSFE 2020-25 has been designed to strengthen several parts of the society for the ultimate development of knowledge, skills, behaviors necessitated for better control of money and future planning.

National Strategy for Financial Education 2020-25: It is a document, published by RBI, that looks forward to developing financial services, financial literacy across the country through the implementation of various targets. The NSFE 2020-25 is the second one of its kind. The first NSFE was documented for 2013-18 by the National Centre for Financial Education.

'5 C' approach: The '5 C' approach for dissemination of financial education recommended by NSFE 2020-25 includes 'Content' development, 'Capacity' building, 'Community' model, 'Communication' strategy, 'Collaboration' of stakeholders.

Chandrayaan-2

As per a statement of the Indian Space Research Organisation, the second lunar mission of India, Chandrayaan-2 has completed one full year around the moon in lunar orbit. All its instruments are functioning well and there is sufficient fuel for its operations for seven more years.

ISRO reportedly claimed even after completing one year there is no sign of technological glitch in any of the instruments and it is expected to be in operation for about seven more years.

India's Lunar missions:

- In 2008, Chandrayaan-1, India's first lunar probe was launched with a lunar orbiter and an impactor by ISRO. It was in operation until Aug 2009.
- In 2019, Chandrayaan-2, the second of its kind was launched with an orbiter, a lander named Vikram, and a six-wheeled rover named Pragyaan by ISRO. The orbiter is still functional but the lander crashed before its induction in any research operation.

Indira RasoI Scheme

Rajasthan Government has launched the Indira RasoI scheme that will provide nutritious and quality food to the poor and needy people, at Rs 8 per plate in urban areas.

The government will bear Rs 100 crore every year, to implement the scheme.

The scheme aims at providing nutritious food to the urban poor population for Rs. 8 per meal. The cost of each plate is Rs. 20 but the government will provide Rs. 12 as a subsidy. It has a target of serving 4.87 crore people in a year.

Corona Fighters' awareness video game

A video game named 'The Corona Fighters' has been launched by the Union Health Ministry and Family Welfare. It also launched two promotional videos regarding proper COVID-19 guidelines.

The web-based video game has been designed in such a way that will influence the players in the real world to combat COVID-19 by using masks, washing hands, and eating healthy foods.

Srisailam Hydroelectric power plant

Telangana's Srisailam Hydroelectric power station witnessed a massive fire accident. The incident was followed by an abrupt explosion in unit 4 of the power station.

The Srisailam Hydroelectric Power Plant is constructed across the Krishna River located between Kurnool and Mahabubnagar districts. The construction of the project started in 1980.

The Srisailam is a Gravity & Masonry type dam.