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**MADE EASY
WEEKLY
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

WEEK-1

01st March - 07th March, 2021

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

1st MARCH 2021

Arctic-monitoring Satellite

- Russia has successfully launched the Arktika-M satellite. The satellite was launched from the Soyuz carrier rocket from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

Key Highlights:

- The monitoring system will need at least two satellites to operate properly.
- As part of the system, they will provide round-the-clock all-weather monitoring of the Earth's surface and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.
- The launch of the second Arktika-M satellite is planned for 2023, Russian state news agency RIA Novosti reported.
- Economic development of the Arctic is one of Russian President Vladimir Putin's key goals.
- The payload of the satellite comprises MSU-GSM multi-spectral imager along with the transmitters for meteorological systems and rescue systems. The first launch for the satellite was scheduled for 2013 but it has been delayed and was launched in 2021.

NOTE:

Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities (Roscosmos) is a state corporation of Russian Federation which is involved in the space flights, aerospace research and cosmonautics programs.

Sugamya Bharat App

- Union Minister for Social justice and Empowerment has launched the "Sugamya Bharat App". The minister will also launch a handbook called "Access – The Photo Digest".

Key Facts:

- It is a mobile application developed to sensitise and enhance accessibility within the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign. These pillars namely-

the transportation sector, building an accessible environment and the ICT ecosystem in India.

- The app will aid the Accessible India Campaign towards making a barrier-free and conducive environment for Divyangjans (Persons with Disabilities – PwDs)

Features of the App:

- This mobile app comprises five main features. Out of these features, 4 are directly related to enhancing accessibility while the one is a special feature which caters to the Divyangjan with respect to the COVID-19 related issues.
- The accessibility related features of the app are-registration regarding the complaints of inaccessibility across 3 broad pillars of Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan.
- It also comprises various user-friendly features such as easy drop-down menus, videos in Hindi and English, sign language interpretation and uploading complaints with photographs.

Vinesh Phogat wins Gold

- The Indian wrestler, Vinesh Phogat, has won the gold medal in women's 53-kg category. She won the medal at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine.
- In the event, the Indian Wrestler, Vinesh Phogat, defeated the world number seven, Vanesa Kaladzinskaya from Belarus in the finals match. It was a fight to win the gold medal.

About Tokyo Games 2020:

- The 2020 Summer Olympics is also known as Tokyo 2020. It is an upcoming international multi-sport event which has been scheduled to be held from July 23 to August, 8 2021 in Tokyo, Japan.
- It was earlier scheduled from July 24 to August 9, 2020. But it was postponed in March 2020 because of COVID-19 pandemic.
- The event retains its name "Tokyo 2020" even though it has been rescheduled for 2021.

Golden Globes Awards 2021

- The 78th Golden Globe Awards ceremony recently took place in both a simulated and an offline environment on 28 February 2021. The award ceremony was shot in Los Angeles and New York City.
- The award ceremony was co-hosted for the fourth time by Amy Poehler and Tina Fey. All of the winning stars accepted their trophies in virtual form. They have given their acceptance speeches in practice.

Winners:

- The Netflix movie named "Mank" and "The Chicago 7 Trial" were up for Best Picture (Drama) Nominations.
- Twenty Netflix series were nominated in the television categories that were occupied by the film, such as "The Crown" and "Schitt's Creek."
- The award for the Best Motion Picture-Drama Award went to Nomadland, while the Best Director award went to Nomadland Director Chloe Zhao. She is the second woman ever to receive this award since Barbra Streisand won it in 1984.
- The Late American actor Chadwick Boseman won the award for Best Action in Motion Image for his depiction of Levee Green in a film called 'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.'

■ NOTE:

The Golden Globe Awards for the year 2021 were the first global televised awards in the midst of the current Covid-19 pandemic. The ceremony was also delayed from the normal date of January.

2nd MARCH 2021

RBI's State of the Economy Report

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its 'State of the Economy Report 2020' on 21 January 2021.

- RBI in its report has stated that the shape of the economic recovery in FY 2021-22 will be V-shaped, where 'V' stands for 'Vaccine'.
- According to the report, this is the slowest pace of growth in the six months as record-high retail prices have hit the consumption.

Key Findings:

- Regular purchases of diesel by the State refiners declined by 5.3 per cent in the month of February 2021. Diesel sales are closely linked to economic growth and account for about 40% of the country's total sales of refined petrol. This decline has become the biggest decline in three months.
- As per the report, gasoline and gasoil prices in India have increased to its record highs. This increase in mirroring the global markets. Taxes of the retail gasoline prices accounts for about 61% while for the diesel prices it accounts for 56%.

■ NOTE:

V-shaped recovery is witnessed when an economy suffers a sharp economic decline followed by a strong recovery.

Sansad TV

- The Parliament of India has combined two TV channels, namely Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV, into the consolidated "Sansad TV" channel.

Key Highlights:

- This new channel will continue to broadcast live house hearings, pack news and current affairs programs in Hindi as well as in English. The Rajya Sabha TV facility is run from a leased public property near the Talkatora stadium.
- Now this establishment will be merged with the infrastructure of Lok Sabha TV in order to create a new entity. The former textiles secretary, Ravi Kapoor, has been appointed as the CEO of the Sansad Tv on a contract basis for a period of one year.

About Sansad TV

- Sansad TV will consist of two outlets or channels which will ensure the seamless broadcast of live broadcasts from both Houses of Parliament.
- At the recess in Parliament, the channel would be given two options, i.e., to run the current affairs channels in English & Hindi, or to shut down one channel and run programs on another.

Freedom of Religion Bill

- The BJP government in Madhya Pradesh presented the "Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021" to the Assembly.
- This bill replaced the order that the government had brought to check religious conversions through any illegal means.

Key Highlights:

- The latest law repealed the decree issued by the government in December 2020 and enacted in January 2021.
- The bill requires a term of 10 years in prison under certain cases and a fine for violators. The bill was presented by the Home Secretary, Narottam Mishra. Now this bill is going to be discussed. Member States may recommend amendments to the bill.
- The supreme court of India has pronounced in several judgements that states and courts have no jurisdiction on the absolute right of adults to choose their life partner.

3rd MARCH 2021

Mercantile Marine Domain Awareness Centre

- India has unveiled the 'Real-Time Vessel Tracking System' to support seafarers and fishermen when and when they need it.
- The machine was called "Sagar-Manthan: Mercantile Marine Domain Awareness Center (MMDAC)."

- The system was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Maritime India Summit-2021.

About Sagar-Manthan: MMDAC

- The Vessel Monitoring System has the capability to screen Indian vessels globally. It can also be used to detect foreign vessels within 1,000 kilometers of the Indian coast.
- The vessel shall be owned by DG Shipping. It will offer assistance in emergency situations. The framework also has authentication features.
- In order to develop the security elements, the DG Shipping collaborated with the Indian Navy. India will also be sharing this system with the countries like Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Eastern Waterways Connectivity Transport Grid (EWaCTG):

- The project was launched with the goal of providing smooth communication between National Waterway-1 and National Waterway-2 via the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) routes.
- An economic corridor of 4,200 km of waterways and coastal shipping will also be established in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and North-Eastern India.
- The project seeks to establish a way for regional integration among the five countries namely Bhutan, Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Haryana: 75 Per Cent Private Jobs for Locals

- The Governor of Haryana, Satyadev Narayan Arya, has approved a bill to set aside 75 per cent jobs in the private sector for the citizens of the state.
- Reservation will be made in every company, confidence and company.
- The State Assembly passed the "Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill 2020" in 2020.

Key provisions:

- The bill tabled by the Deputy Chief Minister of Haryana, Dushyant Chautala, lays down the following provisions:
- The bill allows for private sector businesses to compulsively reserve 75 percent of positions for employees with a wage of up to 50,000 employees in the province.
- The bill also has a provision that can be invoked by businesses if they do not find appropriate applicants. In such situations, businesses can recruit people from outside. However, they need to tell the government about this.
- According to the bill, businesses are expected to register the specifics of workers receiving Rs. 50,000 of the salaries each month. If businesses refuse to do so after three months, they will be subject to fines.

Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017

- The Government of India notified comprehensive amendments to the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017. Its objective is to improve the working of the Insurance Ombudsman mechanism to facilitate resolution of complaints regarding deficiencies in insurance services in a timely, cost-effective and impartial manner.

Key Highlights:

- The amendments strengthened the reach of the allegations submitted to the ombudsman from conflicts to service violations on the part of insurers, dealers, agents and intermediaries.
- Within the reforms, insurance brokers have been placed under the oversight of the Ombudsman. This was achieved by encouraging Ombudsmen to push awards on to insurance agents as well.
- Furthermore, the regulations on the timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the process have been improved. Policyholders can also submit reports online to the Ombudsman.

- The amended rules also aim to provide a complaint tracking framework to allow policyholders to monitor the status of their grievances electronically.
- The rules also specify that an ombudsman can use video-conferencing to hear cases.
- In the event of a vacancy in the office of any specific Ombudsman, extra fees will be paid to another Ombudsman in order to allow access to redress under the Ombudsman mechanism.
- As per the provision, the selection committee will now include a person with a record of promoting consumer rights or promoting the cause of consumer welfare in the insurance industry.
- Under the changes, the Executive Board of Insurers, which oversees the Ombudsman's process, has been called the Insurance Ombudsman's Board.

NOTE:

Ombudsman is an official who is appointed to investigate the complaints regarding the service or on an administrative authority. The ombudsman is usually appointed by governments however, the private companies can also appoint them.

'Catch the Rain' campaign

- The National Water Mission (NWM), Ministry of Jal Shakti in collaboration with Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports launched the 'Catch the Rain' Awareness Generation Campaign.

Key highlights:

- The campaign is labeled "Catch the storm, when it comes, when it falls." The campaign would help to create adequate Rain Water Harvesting Structures (RWHS) that are ideal for climatic conditions and subsoil strata before the monsoon falls.
- The campaign will run the drives to make check dams, rooftop RWHS, water harvesting pits, desilting of tanks to increase its storage capacity and removal of encroachments.

- The campaign will be launched with the aim and effort to ensure that buildings in the district have rooftop RWHS so that maximum quantity of rain water falling in any compound is impounded within it.

4th MARCH 2021

Himalayan Serow

- A Himalayan mammal is the newest creature that has been spotted in the state of Assam. The Himalayan serow, a goat-antelope, was cited in the 950-sq. km. Manas Tiger Reserve.

About Himalayan Serow:

- Himalayan Serow has a resemblance of a cross between a goat, a donkey, a cow, and a pig. It's a medium-sized mammal with a large head, thick neck, short limbs, long, mule-like ears, and a coat of dark hair.
- This mammal has many species and all of them are found in Asia. They are mainly restricted to Himalayan region only.
- Himalayan serows are herbivores, and are typically found at altitudes between 2,000 metres and 4,000 metres. They are also found in eastern, central, and western Himalayas, but not in the Trans Himalayan region.
- Recently it was spotted in the Spiti region of Himachal Pradesh. Serows are generally not found at this altitude, and never before has a serow been seen in the Himalayan cold desert.
- It is otherwise a very unreachable animal, and few people have ever caught so much as a glimpse of it.
- The animal has also been spotted in the Rupi Bhaba Wildlife Sanctuary, and in the higher reaches of Chamba.
- The upper legs of the species are rusty red in colour while the lower legs are whitish. The species has been listed in CITES Appendix I.

Mobile Train Radio Communication system

- Mobile Train Radio Communication (MRTC) System has been launched by the Western Railways in the Mumbai Local Trains. This system will play a significant role in preventing train accidents by effective communication.

Key Points:

- The Mobile Train Radio Communication system is a technologically advanced and effective communication system. This system provides for an instant and constant interaction of train crew with the station master as well as the Control Centre.
- It is an integrated system with the ongoing Train Management System in order to communicate with the Driver and Guard by using the train number as well as cab number code.
- It is the first time that MTRC is commissioned in Indian Railways.
- It is TETRA (Terrestrial Trunk Radio) based Digital technology, employing TDMA on Air Interface and Internet Protocol based Network Architecture with Distributed Switching Architecture.
- The MTRC has a provision for broadcast calls too in case of emergency.
- The new system has already been installed in 90 out of 100 rakes running between Churchgate and Virar.

Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

- The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its "Waste to Wealth" Mission launched the "Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship".

Key Points:

- The Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship initiative was launched with the objective of recognizing the students, self-help groups, community workers, sanitary workers and municipal workers who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management in a scientific and sustainable manner.

- Three Categories of Awards under the Fellowships:
 - **Category-A:** This category will be open to School students of standards 9th to 12th who are engaged in the waste management community work.
 - **Category-B:** This category is open to UG, PG and Research Students engaged in the waste management community work.
 - **Category-C:** This category of the fellowship is open to the Citizens who are working in the community and through Self Help Groups, municipal workers or sanitary workers who are working beyond the specifications of their job requirements.

Waste to Wealth Mission:

- This mission will identify, develop, and deploy technologies to treat waste to generate energy, recycle materials, and extract worth.
- The Waste to Wealth Mission is one of the nine national missions of the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- The mission will assist and augment the Swachh Bharat and Smart Cities projects to create circular economic models that are financially viable for waste management to streamline waste handling in the country.

5th MARCH 2021

World Report on Hearing

- The First World Hearing Report was published by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the eve of World Hearing Day on 3 March.
- The report underlines the need to quickly speed up attempts to eliminate and resolve hearing loss by investing and increasing access to hearing and hearing resources.

Key Findings

- According to the survey, at least 700 million people will be affected by hearing loss and need attention to the ear and hearing.

- The study points out that a billion young people in the 12–35 age range are at risk of hearing loss due to noise pollution in leisure settings.
- It also states that, more than five per cent of the global population have disabling hearing loss which accounts for 432 million adults and 34 million children till date. However, only 17 percent of them required hearing aid.

NOTE:

The world health Organisation defines the disabling hearing loss as there is a loss greater than the 40 decibels (dB) among the adults and loss more than 30 dB among the children.

Ease of Living Index 2020

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched its "Ease of Living Index-2020" on 4 March 2021.
- It also includes lists of cities with populations of more than one million and a special list for cities with populations of less than one million.

Key Highlights:

- In the list of Indian cities with a population of more than one million, "Bengaluru" emerged as the best city in the "simple of living" index of all 49 million-plus cities in the year that Bengaluru moved the city of Pune to second place in the survey.
- Ahmedabad ranked third among 111 towns.
- The index reveals that the ease of living in Dhanbad, Bareilly and Srinagar was the lowest.
- In the list of cities with population of less than a million, Shimla has been ranked the highest. It is followed by Bhubaneswar. In this category, the Muzaffarpur city in Bihar was ranked at the lowest.

About Ease of Living Index:

- The Ease of Living Index (EoLI) is an assessment tool that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development.

- It provides a comprehensive understanding of participating cities across India based on quality of life, economic-ability of a city, and its sustainability and resilience.

Freedom House's report 2020

- The US government financed the Freedom House NGO recently released its annual study on global human rights and freedoms. The study entitled "Freedom in the World 2021 – Democracy under Siege" released a report on political freedom around the world.

Key findings:

- India's score fell by four points to 71, the worst decline among the world's 25 largest democracies.
- India scored 34 out of 40 points in the political rights category, but only 37 out of 60 in the civil liberties category, for a total score of 71, a drop from last year's score of 75.
- India is near the bottom of the pile among the countries categorised as "Free", with only Tunisia receiving a lower score.
- The scrapping of Article 370, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), as well as the crackdown on mass protests have been listed as the main signs of declining freedom.

Freedom in world report:

- The freedom in world report was launched by the freedom house in the year 1973. In the report, it assessed the level of freedom across the countries, ranked them on the basis of numerical score and declared the countries as "free", "partly free" or "not free". This report is one of the oldest quantitative measures of democracy.

6th MARCH 2021

Carbon Capture, Use and Storage" Technology

- The United Nations report has called to scale up carbon capture, use and storage in light of the Paris Agreement on Climate change which aims for the net-zero emissions goal in order to limit global warming.

Key Highlights:

- The scaling-up "carbon capture, use & storage" (CCUS) technology comprises components like capturing the CO₂ emissions from the coal and gas power plants. It also aims to harness or reuse carbon dioxide from heavy industry for deep underground storage.
- The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) claimed that the large-scale introduction of CCUS technologies would enable countries to decarbonize these sectors.

About Carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS):

- CCUS is a major technology for reducing carbon emissions. This technology can be extended to the entire energy market.
- These technologies include the carbon dioxide (CO₂) capture process from fuel combustion or industrial processes, the transport of CO₂ through ships or pipelines, and, finally, the use of CO₂ as a resource for the production of valuable products or services, or the permanent storage of CO₂ underground in geological formations.
- These systems have called for the reduction of fossil or negative carbon dioxide emissions either from the bio-based process or directly from the atmosphere.

RuPay SoftPoS

- National Payments Corporation of India, the umbrella entity for digital payments in India, and SBI Payments have partnered to launch “RuPay SoftPoS”. This technology will be helpful in transforming the NFC enabled smartphones into merchant Point of Sale (PoS) terminals for retailers.

Key Points:

- It will provide a seamless, cost-effective acceptance infrastructure to retailers at a nominal cost.
- It will also play a role in boosting digital payment acceptance among millions of underserved Indian MSMEs.
- It will also help Merchants to use near-field communication (NFC)-enabled smartphones as the point of sale (PoS) terminals in order to receive payment up to Rs 5,000 using a simple tap and via pay mechanism.

NOTE:

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation that operates the retail payments and settlement systems across India. NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation which is registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013.

Delhi Board of School Education

- Delhi Chief Minister announced that the Delhi Cabinet gave approval to the constitution of the Delhi Board of School Education.

Key Highlights:

- In the new academic session 2021-22, 20-25 schools will be included in the new Delhi Board of School Education.
- The CBSE affiliation of these schools will be scrapped and they will be affiliated to the new Delhi board.
- The schools will be selected after discussion with Principals, teachers and parents.

- The Chief Minister also hopes that all the schools will come forward to voluntarily get the affiliation with the new board within four-five years.

NOTE:

The Delhi Board of School Education will comprise a governing body which will be headed by the Education minister of Delhi government.

7th MARCH 2021

Maitri Setu

- The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh via video conferencing.
- He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several infrastructure projects in Tripura on the occasion.

About ‘Maitri Setu’:

- The ‘Maitri Setu’ is a bridge that has been built in the River Feni. Feni river flows between the Indian boundary in the state of Tripura and Bangladesh.
- The name ‘Maitri Setu’ has been chosen to symbolize the growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between both the countries. The construction of the bridge was done by the “National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd”.
- It is a 1.9 Km long bridge that connects the Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh.

Swadhinta Puraskar

- Bangladesh has announced the names of nine individuals and one organization who will be conferred with the Highest Civilian Award of Bangladesh called “Independence Award” for the year 2021.

Key Highlights:

- As per the announcement, four individuals have been selected posthumously under the category of freedom fighters with respect to their contribution to the liberation war of Bangladesh.

- These four individuals include- A K M Bazlur Rahman, Brig Gen. Khurshid Uddin Ahmed, Ahsan Ullah Master and Akhataruzzaman Chowdhury Babu. Apart from them, Dr. Mrinmoy Guha Niyogi was selected for contributing to science and technology. Mahadev Saha has been selected for award for his contributions in literature.
- Ataur Rahman and Gazi Mazharul Anwar will be honoured with the award for their contribution in Culture while Dr. M Amzad Hossain was nominated for the award for his social & public service.
- Among the various organisations, “Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council” was nominated for the award for “Research & Training”.

■ **NOTE:** _____
Swadhinta Puraskar is also called as the Independence Award, Swadhinata Padak and the Swadhinata Puroskar. It is the highest civilian award which is conferred by the government of Bangladesh since 1977.
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Singorgarh Fort

- Foundation stone for the conservation works of Singorgarh Fort was laid down in Madhya Pradesh by the President of India.
- He also inaugurated the newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India.

About Singorgarh Fort:

- This fort is located in the Damoh district of the state of Madhya Pradesh. It's the hill-fort of the Kingdom of Garha. The fort is scattered over the hills of the forested area. It is located 45 km from the town of Jabalpur. It's been a magnificent fort.
- This fort was the residence of the Rajgond rulers of central India. The fort is currently in a ruined state for which conservation work is being started.
- The fort also comprises a pond at the hilltop that provides water. Under the rule of Rani Durgavati in the year 1564, the fort was attacked by the last war of the Garha Kingdom dynasty.

■ **NOTE:** _____
Gondwana Kingdom was a ruling kingdom in the Gondwana region of India. The region comprises the core region of eastern part of Vidarbha (Maharashtra), some parts of Madhya Pradesh and parts of west of Chhattisgarh.
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