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**MADE EASY  
WEEKLY  
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**WEEK-2**

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

**TARGETED EXAMINATIONS**

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

8<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## ZyCoV-D vaccine

- India is to get its sixth COVID-19 vaccine soon as drug firm Zydus Cadila's needle-free COVID-19 vaccine called 'ZyCoV-D' is all set to get emergency use authorisation (EUA) approval.

### Key Points

- ZyCoV-D is a plasmid DNA vaccine which when injected produces the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and elicits an immune response mediated by the cellular and humoral arms of the human immune system, which play a vital role in protection from disease as well as viral clearance, states the press release issued by the company.
- In simple terms, DNA vaccines carry into the body the genetic code for that part of the virus that triggers the immune system in the body. The message is decoded then to produce antibodies. This ensures that when an individual gets the actual virus, the body already knows how to fight it on.

### What Differentiates ZyCoV-D?

- Instead of using an injection, ZyCoV-D is applied using The PharmaJet needle-free system, Tropis. The technology uses a single-use, sterile, disposable syringe with a reusable injector. A needle-free syringe is filled with the vaccine and loaded to the injector.
- ZyCoV-D is an intradermal injection which means it only goes into the skin, unlike large needles that are given in the muscles. According to the company, the PharmaJet needle-free system can also lead to a significant reduction in any kind of side-effects.

## EOS-03 satellite

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently launched the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F10 EOS-03 mission, which fails to achieve the desired mission.

### Key highlights:

- It was capable of imaging the entire country four to five times every day.
- It was riding on a GSLV rocket (GSLV-F10), which has a new payload carrier designed to significantly reduce aerodynamic drag and thus carry larger payloads.
- The rocket was supposed to deposit the satellite in the geostationary transfer orbit, from where the satellite's onboard propulsion system will guide it to a geostationary orbit, 36,000 km from earth's surface.
- Geostationary transfer orbit is a circular orbit positioned approximately 35,900 km above Earth's equator and having a period of the same duration and direction as the rotation of the Earth. An object in this orbit will appear stationary relative to the rotating Earth.

### Significance:

- EOS-03, part of the new generation of earth-observation satellites, was meant to provide almost real-time images of large parts of the country.
- The images could be used for monitoring natural disasters like floods and cyclones, water bodies, crops, vegetation and forest cover.

9<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## Neeraj Chopra won Gold Medal

- Neeraj Chopra took the country's first Tokyo Olympics gold medal in the individual category and finished first in the table with a javelin throw of 87.58 m in his second attempt.

### Key Points

- It is also the country's second individual gold medal in its Olympic history after Abhinav Bindra's heroics in Beijing 2008.

- The Javelin thrower hails from Khandra village in Haryana's Panipat. Neeraj, who was initially interested in cricket, took up the sport in 2011 as he was inspired by watching people throw javelin in Haryana.
- No Indian had won a medal in athletics since 1920 when India started taking part in the Olympics in 1920 in Antwerp, Belgium.

### ■ NOTE:

He has become the first track and field athlete to win an Olympic gold medal for India and second Olympic athletics to win for India after Norman Pritchard, who won two silver medals at the 1900 Summer Olympics for India.

## PM-KISAN scheme

- The Prime Minister of India recently released the ninth instalment of financial benefit of about Rs 19,500 crore to over 9.75 crore farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme.
- With this, the government has so far transferred nine installments amounting around Rs 1.57 lakh crore to farmer families under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme.

### About PM-KISAN scheme

- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme was launched in February 2019.
- An annual financial benefit of Rs 6,000 is provided to eligible beneficiary farmer families, payable in three equal four-monthly installments of Rs 2,000 each, under the PM-KISAN scheme.
- This amount is transferred in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers. Amount is transferred to all the beneficiaries irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- PM-KISAN is a Central Sector Scheme which is 100% funded by the central government.
- This scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

## 127th Constitution Amendment Bill

- The Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Seventh Amendment) Bill 2021 which offers the provision of restoring the power of states and UTs to make their own OBC lists.
- Bill was introduced by Union minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Virendra Kumar.
- It was introduced in the Parliament to clarify some provisions of the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Bill, restoring the power of states to identify backward classes.

### About 127th Constitution Amendment Bill

- The Amendment Bill will amend clauses 1 and 2 of Article 342A and will also introduce a new clause 3. It will also amend Articles 366 (26c) and 338B (9).
- The 127th Constitution Amendment Bill is designed to clarify that the State Governments can maintain the 'state list' of OBCs as was the system prior to SC judgment. Articles 366 (26c) define the socially and educationally backward classes.
- The latest 'State List' will be taken out completely of the ambit of the President and will be notified by the State Assembly as per the proposed bill.

### Constitutional provisions:

- Articles 15 (4), 15 (5), and 16 (4) of the Indian constitution confer power on the State Government to declare and identify a list of socially and educationally backward classes. Central and state governments draw separate OBC lists as a practice.

### About NCBC:

- The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was established under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.
- The Constitution 102nd Amendment Act, 2018 gave constitutional status to the NCBC, and empowered the President to notify the list of socially and educationally backward classes for any state or union territory for all purposes.

- Article 338B of the Constitution mandates the central and state governments to consult the NCBC on all major policy matters affecting the socially and educationally backward classes.

### Background:

- On May 5, while scrapping a separate quota for the Maratha community in Maharashtra, the Supreme Court had ruled that after a 2018 amendment in the Constitution (102nd constitutional amendment), only the central government could notify socially and educationally backward classes (SEBCs), not the states.

10<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## Kakori Train Conspiracy renamed to Kakori Train Action

- The Uttar Pradesh government has renamed a landmark freedom movement event as Kakori Train Action while paying tributes to the revolutionaries who were hanged for robbing a train at Kakori in 1925 to buy weapons.

### About Kakori Train Conspiracy

- The Kakori Train Conspiracy was a train robbery, committed by the revolutionaries of the Indian independence movement against the British Raj on August 9, 1925, in a village called Kakori near Lucknow.
- Revolutionaries like Bismil and his party needed money to purchase weapons for HRA. So, they decided to plunder a train on a Northern Railway line.
- This robbery was carried out by 10 revolutionaries including Hindustan Republican Association's revolutionary Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Rajendra Lahiri, Keshav Chakraborty, Mukundi Lal, Banwari Lal.
- Significantly, freedom fighters Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan and Roshan Singh were hanged

on December 19, 1927 for their involvement in the Kakori Conspiracy.

### NOTE:

Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) was a revolutionary organisation which was founded by Ram Prasad Bismil, Sachindra Nath Sanyal, Sachindra Nath Bakshi and Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee. Earlier it was known as Hindustan Republican Association (HRA).

## IPCC: Sixth Assessment Report

- Recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the first part of its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) titled Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis.
- The report states that human activities are causing climate change, and the planet is irrevocably headed towards warming by 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times in the next two decades.

### Key Findings:

- Weather and climate events – such as extreme heat, heavy rainfall, fire conditions, and droughts – are becoming more severe and frequent because of climate change.
- The report finds we are already edging closer to a 1.5 degrees Celsius warmer world, and every day emissions rise the prospects for averting the worst impacts of climate change become dimmer.
- Carbon dioxide has been and will continue to be the dominant cause of global warming under all greenhouse gas emissions scenarios.
- It says, if greenhouse gas emissions are halved by 2030 and net zero by 2050, global warming can be stopped.
- Also, the IPCC report vindicates India's position that historical cumulative emissions are the source of the climate crisis that the World faces today.

### About IPCC:

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988.
- IPCC is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations (UN).
- It provides objective scientific information in order to understand human-induced climate change, its natural, political & economic impacts and possible response options.
- Membership to IPCC is open for all the members of the WMO and UN.

### SonChiraiya brand

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched a brand and logo called 'SonChiraiya'.
- It was launched to market the products of urban self-help groups (SHGs).

### Key Highlights:

- DAY-NULM, under the aegis of MoHUA, has focussed on equipping the urban poor women with adequate skills and opportunities, and to enable them to promote sustainable micro enterprises.
- It mobilises women from urban poor households into SHGs and their federations to create a support system for these women.
- Many of these SHGs are engaged in livelihood activities, producing goods such as handicrafts, textiles, toys, eatables and so on.
- This initiative (SonChiraiya) will certainly prove as a step towards increased visibility and global access for the products made by urban SHG women.

11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

### Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021

- India and Saudi Arabia are conducting their first-ever naval exercise, in reflection of their growing defence and military cooperation.

### Key points:

- This is the first edition of a bilateral naval exercise between India and Saudi Arabia.
- It comprises several shore and sea-based drills between the two navies.
- It reflects the growing defense ties between the two nations in the wake of the Indian Army chiefs' first visit to the West Asian country last year.
- INS Kochi is the Indian warship participating in the exercise.
- The exercise is being held against the backdrop of growing tensions in the Persian Gulf following a drone attack on the tanker MV Mercer Street off Oman.

### International Criminal Court

- Sudan has decided to hand long-time autocrat Omar al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court along with other officials wanted over the Darfur conflict.

### Background:

- The Darfur war broke out in 2003 when non-Arab rebels took up arms complaining of systematic discrimination by Bashir's Arab-dominated government.
- The United Nations says 300,000 people were killed and 2.5 million displaced in the Darfur conflict.

### About International Criminal Court (ICC):

- The International Criminal Court (ICC), located in The Hague, is the court of last resort for prosecution of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- It is the first permanent, treaty based, international criminal court established to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.
- Its founding treaty, the Rome Statute, entered into force on July 1, 2002.
- The Court's management oversight and legislative body, the Assembly of States Parties, consists of one representative from each state party.

12<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## Special Economic Zones (SEZs)

- **Context:** The government has proposed to free up unused built-up area worth about 30,000 crore and idle land inside Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for other economic activity. SEZs account for about 30% of India's exports.

### About SEZs

- Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are geographically delineated enclaves in which regulations and practices related to business and trade differ from the rest of the country and therefore all the units therein enjoy special privileges.

### Objectives of the SEZs:

- To create additional economic activity.
- To boost the export of goods and services.
- To generate employment.
- To boost domestic and foreign investments.
- To develop infrastructure facilities.

### Facilities and incentives for SEZs:

- Duty-free import/domestic procurement of goods for development, operation and maintenance of SEZ units.
- Income tax exemption on export income.
- Exemption from Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT).
- Single window clearance for Central and State level approvals.

### Present Issues:

- SEZs in India have not been as successful as their counterparts in many other countries. Several Asian economies, particularly China, Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore, have greatly benefited from these zones.

- Most manufacturing SEZs in India have performed below par due to their poor linkages with the rest of the economy. Weak connections of coastal SEZs with their hinterlands inhibited these zones from utilising their full potential.
- Many states did not match the central SEZ Act with State-level legislation, which rendered the single window system ineffective.
- Lack of a robust policy design, efficient implementation and effective monitoring have seriously jeopardized India's effort to industrialise through SEZs.

## Herpes Virus

- Recently, A male elephant in an Odisha forest tested positive for the herpes virus after the death of another wild elephant suffering from the same pathogen.
- The autopsy report revealed that the death was due to acute haemorrhagic disease caused by the Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus (EEHV)

### About EEHV

- It is a type of herpes virus that can cause fatal haemorrhagic disease in elephants.
- It is one of the deadliest viral infections in elephants worldwide but is most commonly found in Asian elephants.
- **Symptoms:** Sudden illness which includes reduced appetite, swollen glands on both sides of the face and nasal discharge.

### About Herpes virus:

- The herpes simplex virus is categorized into 2 types: Herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) and Herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2).
- HSV-1 is mainly transmitted by oral-to-oral contact to cause oral herpes (which can include symptoms known as "cold sores"), but can also cause genital herpes.
- HSV-2 is a sexually transmitted infection that causes genital herpes.

- Both oral herpes infections and genital herpes infections are mostly asymptomatic or unrecognized but can cause symptoms of painful blisters or ulcers at the site of infection, ranging from mild to severe.

13<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## Ujjwala 2.0 scheme

- The government has launched the second phase of the Ujjwala gas connection scheme for the poor.
- Under Ujjwala 2.0, migrant workers would no longer have to struggle to get address proof documents to get the gas connections. These workers would only be required to submit a self-declaration of their residential address to get the gas connection.

### About Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana:

- It was launched in May 2016.
- It aims to provide LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections to poor households.
- Under the scheme, a deposit-free LPG connection is given to the eligible household with financial assistance of Rs 1,600 per connection by the Centre.
- The scheme gained traction with its ambit being expanded to include 80 million poor families from the earlier target of 50 million families with an additional allocation of Rs 4,800 crore.

### Objectives of the scheme:

- Empowering women and protecting their health.
- Reducing the serious health hazards associated with cooking based on fossil fuel.
- Reducing the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel.
- Preventing young children from a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution by burning fossil fuel.

### Eligibility criteria:

- Applicants must be a woman above the age of 18 and a citizen of India.
- Applicants should belong to a BPL (Below Poverty Line) household.
- No one in the applicant's household should own an LPG connection.
- The household income of the family, per month, must not exceed a certain limit as defined by the government of the Union Territories and State Government.
- Applicants must not be a recipient of other similar schemes provided by the government.

## National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)

- The Union Govt. has announced this new national initiative on palm oil production to help increase farm incomes. The scheme involves investment of over Rs 11,000 crore.
- The scheme aims to achieve self-reliance in edible oil, Harness domestic edible oil prices that are dictated by expensive palm oil imports and to raise the domestic production of palm oil by three times to 11 lakh MT by 2025-26.

### Key features:

- The special emphasis of the scheme will be in India's north-eastern states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to the conducive weather conditions in the regions.
- Under the scheme, oil palm farmers will be provided financial assistance and will get remuneration under a price and viability formula.
- It is expected to incentivise production of palm oil to reduce dependence on imports and help farmers cash in on the huge market.

- India is the largest consumer of vegetable oil in the world. Of this, palm oil imports are almost 60% of its total vegetable oil imports.
- In 2016-2017, the total domestic consumption of palm oil by India was 9.3 million MT, with 98.97 percent of it imported from Malaysia and Indonesia.

### About Palm oil:

- Palm oil is currently the world's most consumed vegetable oil. It is used extensively in the production of detergents, plastics, cosmetics, and biofuels.
- Top consumers of the commodity are India, China, and the European Union (EU).

### NASA's Perseverance rover

- **Context:** NASA's Perseverance rover is exploring the Jezero Crater on Mars and attempting to collect its first rock samples. However, no rock samples were collected during the first attempt.

### About Perseverance Rover:

- It was launched in 2020 aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V.
- It carried a unique instrument, MOXIE or Mars Oxygen ISRU Experiment which for the first time manufactured molecular oxygen on Mars using carbon dioxide from the carbon-dioxide-rich atmosphere.
- It also carried Ingenuity, the first ever helicopter to fly on Mars.
- It is the planned first step to bring back rock samples from Mars for analysis in sophisticated laboratories on Earth: with the goal of looking for biosignatures: or signatures of present or past life.

### Key objectives of Mission:

- Look for signs of ancient microbial life.
- Collect Martian rock and dust samples for later return to Earth.

- Deliver an experimental helicopter.
- Study the climate and geology of Mars.
- Demonstrate technology for future Mars missions.

14<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

### Quad Meeting

- Recently, Senior officials of Australia, India, Japan, U.S. met at a video conference for the first Quad meeting since March, 2021.

### Key Highlights:

- Quad leaders exchanged views" on regional issues such as the East and South China seas, where the Chinese navy has had conflicts over territorial rights with other countries, North Korean actions, and military rule in Myanmar.
- There were also deliberation on Quadrilateral cooperation in the areas of "quality infrastructure, maritime security, counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief toward the achievement of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific region.
- A special emphasis was made on their support for the "centrality" for the ASEAN grouping of South-East Asian countries in the Indo-Pacific region.
- They discussed plans to cooperate on COVID vaccines, for one billion Johnson and Johnson vaccines to be produced in India by 2022, funded by the U.S. and distributed by Japan and Australia in South East Asia.

### About QUAD

- It is also known as Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD).
- QUAD is an informal group of India, the US, Japan and Australia.
- It is a strategic dialogue with the objective to ensure a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo Pacific.

## CENSUS 2021

- **Context:** Owing to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, Census 2021 and other Census-related field activities have been postponed. The forthcoming Census is to be the first digital Census.
- In the Census, data is collected on demographic and various socio-economic parameters like education, SC/ST, religion, language, marriage, fertility, disability, occupation and migration of the individuals.

### Historical Significance

- The Census was first started under British Viceroy Lord Mayo in 1872. It helped in framing new policies, government programs to uplift areas of improvement in the community.

- The first synchronous census in India was held in 1881. Since then, censuses have been undertaken uninterruptedly once every ten years.
- The responsibility of conducting the decennial Census rests with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

### DO YOU KNOW?

- The earliest literature 'Rig-Veda' reveals that some kind of population count was maintained during 800-600 BC in India.
- The 'Arthashastra' by 'Kautilya' written in the 3rd Century BC prescribed the collection of population statistics as a measure of state policy for taxation.

## UNSC Debate on Maritime Cooperation

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently presided over a UN Security Council (UNSC) Open Debate on the topic- Enhancing Maritime Security. The UNSC then adopted India's presidential statement on maritime security.

### Five-point agenda on maritime cooperation:

- Removal of barriers to legitimate maritime trade.
- Resolution of maritime disputes peacefully in accordance with international law.
- Fight threats from natural disasters, non-state actors.
- Conservation of marine resources.
- Promoting responsible maritime connectivity.



### Efforts by India to enhance maritime cooperation:

- The Indian Navy has been patrolling to counter piracy in the Indian Ocean since 2008.
- White Shipping Information Fusion Centre.
- Support for hydrographic surveying and training of maritime security personnel to several countries.
- SAGAR' Security and Growth for All in the Region.
- India's Deep Ocean Mission.