



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

NOVEMBER, 2021

Week-2

8-14 Nov, 2021

★★ Useful for ★★

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

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Global Methane Pledge: UN COP26

- The Global Methane Pledge was launched at the ongoing UN COP26 climate conference in Glasgow. So far, over 90 countries have signed this pledge, which is an effort led jointly by the United States and the European Union.

Key Points:

- The pledge was first announced in September by the US and EU. It is not a structured agreement
- It aims to reduce the global methane emissions across the globe and to cut down methane emissions by up to 30 per cent from 2020 levels by the year 2030.
- If implemented globally, this would minimise global warming by 0.2 degrees Celsius by the 2040s, compared to projected temperature rises.
- The planet is presently around 1.2 degrees Celsius hotter than it was before the Industrial Revolution.
- As of now, India, the third-largest source of methane emissions, is not a signatory.
- Independent International Methane Emissions Observatory launched for Methane monitoring at COP26.

About Methane:

- Methane is the second-most abundant greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, after carbon dioxide. It is the simplest hydrocarbon, consisting of one carbon atom and four hydrogen atoms (CH₄).
- It is a colourless, odourless, and highly flammable gas.
- Approximately 40% of methane emitted is from natural sources and about 60% comes from human-influenced sources. Human sources of methane are responsible for 60 per cent of global methane emissions.
- Natural sources include decay of plant material in wetlands, the seepage of gas from underground deposits or the digestion of food by cattle.

India's 5G Leap

- The fifth generation mobile network, or 5G, is the next level of mobile network that will shape the Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Industrial 4.0, quality of service delivery, innovation, etc.
- DoT has allowed trials in rural and urban areas of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Pune and Hyderabad, and Gujarat.

About 5G technology:

- 5G or fifth generation is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks.
- 5G mainly works in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high-frequency spectrum all of which have their own uses as well as limitations. The low band spectrum has shown great promise in terms of coverage and speed of internet and data exchange, the maximum speed is limited to 100 Mbps.
- The mid-band spectrum, on the other hand, offers higher speeds compared to the low band but has limitations in terms of coverage area and penetration of signals. The high-band spectrum offers the highest speed of all three bands, but has extremely limited coverage and signal penetration strength.

5Gi

- 5Gi is basically a Made in India 5G standard created through a joint collaboration between IIT Hyderabad and Madras (Chennai).
- 5Gi uses millimetre wave technology to provide high-speed internet connectivity.
- 5Gi offers more range at a lower frequency, which is the opposite of 5G.

National Sports Awards 2021

- The National Sports Awards for the year 2021 were announced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.
- National Sports Awards are given every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports.
- It is announced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

Key Highlights:

- Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2021: It is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over a period of the previous four years. This year, it will be given to 12 Sportspersons.
- **Arjuna Awards 2021:** It is given for good performance over a period of the previous four years and showing qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline. This year, 35 Sportspersons will receive this award.
- **Dronacharya Award 2021:** It is given to coaches for doing outstanding and meritorious work on a consistent basis and enabling sportspersons to excel in International events.
- **Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime Achievement:** It is given to honour sportspersons who have contributed to sports by their performance and continue to contribute to the promotion of sports events after their retirement.
- **Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar:** It is given to corporate entities (both in the private and public sector), sports control boards, NGOs including sports bodies at the State and National level who have played a visible role in the area of sports promotion and development.
- **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy:** Overall top performing university in inter-university tournaments is given this award.

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Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020

- The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020, provides 75% reservations to local people in private-sector jobs. This reservation is only applicable for jobs that offer a salary of less than Rs 30,000 a month.

Key Points:

- The law covers the whole of the State and will be in effect for 10 years. It will be applicable to:
 - all the Companies, Societies, Trusts,
 - Limited Liability Partnership firms, Partnership Firm,
 - any person employing ten or more persons and
 - an entity, as may be notified by the Government, from time to time.
- The compliance time period would be 3 months.
- In the case of noncompliance, a fine between 25,000 and 1,00,000 would be levied.
- The benefits of the law could be availed by those who have the domicile.

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Article 16(3):** Provides for an exception by saying that Parliament may make a law “prescribing” a requirement of residence for jobs in a particular state. This power vests solely in the Parliament, not state legislatures.
- **Article 371:** Some states have special protections under Article 371. Andhra Pradesh under Section 371(d) has powers to have “direct recruitment of local cadre” in specified areas.

Draft Mediation Bill, 2021

- The Indian government has issued a Draft Mediation Bill for Public Consultation, that seeks to safeguard the interest of litigants to approach competent adjudicatory forums.
- Its objectives is to promote, encourage and facilitate mediation especially institutional mediation for resolution of disputes commercial and otherwise,

Main Features :

- The draft Bill proposes for pre-litigation mediation and at the same time safeguards the interest of the litigants to approach the competent adjudicatory forums/courts in case an urgent relief is sought.

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- The successful outcome of mediation in the form of Mediation Settlement Agreement (MSA) has been made enforceable by law. Since the Mediation Settlement Agreement is out of the consensual agreement between the parties, the challenge to the same has been permitted on limited grounds.
- The mediation process protects the confidentiality of the mediation undertaken and provides for immunity in certain cases against its disclosure.
- The registration of Mediation Settlement Agreement has also been provided for with State/District/Taluk Legal Authorities within 90 days to ensure maintenance of authenticated records of the settlement so arrived.
- Provides for establishment of the Mediation Council of India. Provides for community mediation.

Zika Virus Disease

- With a rise in the number of Zika virus cases in Uttar Pradesh, doctors have advised that people should avoid all non-essential travel to areas reporting cases.

About Zika Virus:

- Mosquito-borne virus transmitted by Aedes aegypti mosquitoes which also transmit 3 other vector-borne diseases – Chikungunya, dengue and yellow fever.
- It also spreads through blood transfusion and sexual contact.
- First identified in 1947 in Zika Forest, Uganda from where it derives its name.
- Pregnant women infected with the Zika virus may give birth to babies with severe brain damage or serious birth defects i.e. neurological disorders and foetal deformation known as Microcephaly in which infants are born with abnormally small heads.
- There is no specific treatment or vaccine currently available to treat Zika.
- WHO declared the Zika virus and its suspected link to birth defects as an international public health emergency.

'Good' Mosquitoes to Combat Dengue

- Researchers in Indonesia have found a way to fight disease-bearing mosquitoes by breeding a species of the insect which carries a kind of bacteria wolbachia that prevents viruses like dengue from growing inside them.
- Wolbachia is a common bacteria which is not found in dengue-carrying Aedes aegypti mosquitoes.
- Results show that deploying mosquitoes with Wolbachia reduced dengue cases by as much as 77% and hospitalizations by up to 86%.

About Dengue:

- It is commonly known as break-bone fever is a flu-like illness caused by the Dengue virus. It is caused when an Aedes mosquito carrying the virus bites a healthy person.
- This disease is mainly found in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world.
- There is no specific treatment for dengue. Early detection of disease progression associated with severe dengue, and access to proper medical care lowers fatality rates of severe dengue to below 1%.

■ NOTE:

Wolbachia is a common bacteria that occurs naturally in 60% of insect species, including some mosquitoes, fruit flies, moths, dragonflies and butterflies.

UNESCO's Network of Creative Cities

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has designated Srinagar as a part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

Key Highlights:

- 295 across the globe: UNESCO designated 49 other cities too as a part of the creative cities network. With this, the total number of creative cities in the world has reached 295 across 90 countries.

- Sixth Indian city: After Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Varanasi and Jaipur, Srinagar is the sixth Indian city to achieve this distinction.
- The Srinagar city has been designated the creative city in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts only second city in India in this category after Jaipur.
- **Other 4 cities:** This year four Indian cities Kolkata, Gwalior, Indore and Srinagar had applied to the Ministry of Culture.

UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN):

- It was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.
- UNESCO designates the creative cities in seven fields: Craft, Folk Art, Media Arts, Film Design, Gastronomy, Literature and Music.

Padma Awards 2020

- The President of India has presented the Padma Awards to the recipient for the year 2020. 7 Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan and 102 Padma Shri awards given to civilians for their indifferent contribution to society.

Padma Awards

- Padma Awards are one of the highest civilian honours of India. Announced annually on the eve of Republic Day (26th January). Awardees are presented with a Sanad (certificate) signed by the President and a medallion.
- **The Awards are given in three categories:**
 - Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service)
 - Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher-order)
 - Padma Shri (distinguished service).
- **Disciplines:**
 - Art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service etc.

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Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) Report, 2021

- The Union Minister for Commerce and Industry has launched the 3rd edition of the Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) report, 2021.

Key Points:

- Gujarat has been adjudged as the Best Performing State.
- Haryana second while Punjab got the third position as per the report.
- Uttar Pradesh is the top improver.

About LEADS Report:

- Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) Index is a composite indicator to assess international trade logistics across states and Union territories. LEADS is an attempt to bring Longevity, Efficiency, Accuracy, Durability, and Smartness in the Logistics sector.
- It is a perception-based survey.
- It is based on a stakeholders' survey for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- LEADS is influenced by the World Bank's biannual Logistics Performance Index (LPI).

Star College Mentorship Programme

- Union Ministry of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology launched the first-ever mentorship programme called the 'DBT-Star College Mentorship Programme' for young innovators to mark the 75th year of India's Independence.
- It will help young scientists and students to innovate and find solutions to future challenges through peer learning & hand-holding.

Key Points:

- It was the first-ever Mentorship Programme for Young Innovators to mark the 75th Year of India's Independence.
- This is a pan India Scheme that envisages Star College in every district of the country supported by the Department of Biotechnology
- It is in line with the Prime Minister's Independence Day address wherein he emphasized that the roadmap for the next 25 years will be
- The plan envisages handholds at colleges particularly in the rural areas or lesser endowed areas. It will also conduct outreach activities with government schools.
- The Star Status Colleges will help in strengthening UG Science Courses throughout the country by mentoring the newer colleges.
- The programme will help towards the concept of networking and outreach.

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Global Resilience Index Initiative (GRII)

- Recently, ten global organisations with partial funding and in-kind contributions from the insurance sector and partner institutions have launched a Global Resilience Index Initiative (GRII) at COP26.

About GRII

- It will provide a globally consistent model for the assessment of resilience across all sectors and geographies.
- The GRII will be using cross-sector risk modelling experience, including public-private partnerships between governments, academia, insurance and engineering.
- GRII has been initiated with partial funding and in-kind contributions from the insurance sector and partner institutions.
- It will help in mobilising the trillions of investment needed to meet the Paris goals on climate-resilient development.

GRII partners and supporters:

- Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)
- Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment (CCRI) & others

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

- It is a partnership of national governments, the United Nations (UN) agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions.
- It Aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.
- India is a member of the coalition and has also invested in the estimated fund requirements to cover the core costs over the first five years.

Kerala bats to develop new dam at Mullaperiyar

- The Kerala government made a strong pitch in the Supreme Court to decommission the 126-year-old deteriorated Mullaperiyar dam operated by Tamil Nadu and built a new one.
- The SC ordered the Mullaperiyar Dam Supervisory Committee to issue directions on issues concerning the dam's safety.
- Kerala has urged the Supervisory Committee to reconsider the peak value of the upper rule level of 142 feet.
- Kerala's affidavit coincides with a red alert issued in Chennai following torrential rains. The Chennai rains came on the heels of several days of downpour in Kerala.

Mullaperiyar Dam

- The Mullaperiyar is a 126-year-old dam.
- It is located on the confluence of the Mullayar and Periyar rivers in Kerala's Idukki district.
- The dam intends to divert the waters of the west-flowing river Periyar eastward to the arid rain shadow regions of Tamil Nadu.

- The dam stands at the height of 53.66 metres and 365.85 metres in length.

Submarine Vela

- 4th Scorpene submarine of the Project-75, Yard 11878 commissioned as INS (Indian Naval Ship) Vela.
- The Indian Navy currently has 12 submarines. In addition, there are two nuclear submarines INS Arihant and INS Chakra in the navy's fleet.

Key Points:

- INS Vela is known to have advanced stealth and combat capabilities when it comes to engaging with the enemy.
- The submarines in the Project-75 Scorpene-Class are powered by diesel-electric propulsion systems.
- Scorpene is one of the most sophisticated submarines, capable of undertaking multifarious missions including anti-surface ship warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying, and area surveillance.

NOTE:

Project-75 Project includes the construction of six submarines of Scorpene design. These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.

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Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan

- India hosted the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan in a first such meeting on Afghanistan.
- This National Security Advisors' (NSAs') level dialogue participated by Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Pakistan and China have refused to participate.

Key Points

- The dialogue was led by India's NSA Ajit Doval, who reviewed the security situation in the region following the recent Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.
- The meeting, however, did not have any representation from the erstwhile Afghan government or the Taliban, which has not been recognised by India as a legitimate political player in Afghanistan
- **Delhi Declaration:**
 - A joint statement titled the 'Delhi Declaration' issued after the meeting called for "collective cooperation" against terrorism and drug trafficking in the region and "expressed concern over the deteriorating socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.
 - No representation from Afghan government or the Taliban.

MPLAD Scheme Restored

- Recently, the Union Cabinet has restored the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) till 2025-26.

Key Points:

- This scheme was suspended in April 2020 and its funds were subsumed in the consolidated fund of India. It was suspended for two financial years, 2020-21 and 2021-22.
- However, as the covid-19 pandemic situation has improved and the economy is recovering, the Government announced a partial rollback.
- **Reason for Restoration:**
 - Citing economic recovery, the Government announced a partial rollback.
 - The MPs will get 2 crore instead of the annual approved 5 crore.

Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS):

- The MPLADS is a Plan Scheme fully funded by the Government of India. The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 5 crores. It was introduced in December 1993.
- Lok Sabha Members can recommend works within their Constituencies Elected Members of Rajya Sabha can recommend works within the State of Election.
- Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the country.
- The objective is to enable the Members of Parliament (MP) to suggest and execute developmental works of capital nature based on locally felt needs with an emphasis on the creation of durable assets.

Earth's First Landmass Emerged in Singhbhum

- Scientists have found sandstones in Singhbhum with geological signatures of ancient river channels, tidal plains and beaches over 3.2 billion years old, representing the earliest crust exposed to air.

Major Findings:

- Currently, a widely accepted view is that the continents rose from the oceans about 2.5 billion years ago. However, the study has suggested that this has happened 700 million years earlier which is about 3.2 billion years ago.
- Moreover, the earliest continental landmass to emerge may have been Jharkhand's Singhbhum region.
- The study has also challenged another well-accepted notion that continents rose above the ocean due to plate tectonics.
- According to the study, Earth's earliest continents emerged not through plate tectonic processes but from massive outbursts of magma that hardened into continental crust.

Formation of the Earth's Continents (Isostasy)

- Huge plates of crustal and upper mantle material (lithosphere) "float" on more dense, plastically flowing rocks of the asthenosphere.
- The "depth" to which a plate, or block of crust, sinks is a function of its weight and varies as the weight changes.
- This equilibrium, or balance, between blocks of crust and the underlying mantle is called isostasy.
- The taller a block of crust is, the deeper it penetrates into the mantle because of its greater mass and weight. Isostasy occurs when each block settles into an equilibrium with the underlying mantle.
- Blocks of crust that are separated by faults will "settle" at different elevations according to their relative mass.

ADR Report on Political Fundings

- Over 55% of the donations received by regional parties in FY 2019-20 came from "unknown" sources, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said in a report.

Key Highlights:

- Huge share from "unknown" sources: Electoral bonds accounted for nearly 95% of the donations from "unknown" sources.
- The report noted that donations received by national parties from "unknown" sources added up to 70.98% of their income.
- Parties from the south topped the list: Parties in the south such as TRS, TDP, YSR Congress Party, DMK and JD(S) topped the list of regional parties with the highest incomes from "unknown" sources.
- Share from "known" donors: The donations received by regional parties from "known" donors is 22.98% of their total income.

About Electoral Bonds:

- Electoral Bond is a financial instrument for making donations to political parties.
- It is an initiative of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- Electoral Bond is in the nature of a Promissory Note and an interest free banking instrument.
- A citizen of India or a body incorporated in India will be eligible to purchase the bond.
- Electoral bonds would be issued/purchased for any value, in multiples of 1,000, from the specified branches of the State Bank of India (SBI).

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Privilege Motion

- Congress chief in the Rajya Sabha moved a privilege motion against the Culture Minister over the appointment of a former MP as the chairperson of the National Monuments Authority (NMA).

About Privilege Motion:

- All Members of Parliament (MPs) enjoy rights and immunities, individually and collectively, so that they can discharge their duties and functions effectively.
- Any instance when these rights and immunities are disregarded by any member of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha is an offence, called 'breach of privilege', which is punishable under the Laws of Parliament.
- Article 105 of the Constitution expressly mentions two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings.
- Apart from the privileges as specified in the Constitution, the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, provides for freedom from arrest and detention of members under civil process during the continuance of the meeting of the House or of a committee thereof

and forty days before its commencement and forty days after its conclusion.

National Monuments Authority (NMA)

- It is set up under the Ministry of Culture as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act (AMASR) which was enacted in March 2010.
- Several functions have been assigned to the NMA for the protection and preservation of monuments and sites through management of the prohibited and regulated areas around the centrally protected monuments.

Acharya Kripalani

- The Prime Minister recently paid tribute to freedom fighter Acharya Kripalani on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

About Acharya Kripalani:

- He was born on 11 November 1888 in Hyderabad, Sindh. His original name was Jivatram Bhagwandas Kripalani but was popularly known as Acharya Kripalani.
- Before joining the freedom movement, Kripalani studied at Fergusson College in Pune, and then went on to become a school teacher.
- He was actively involved in movements like Non-Cooperation Movement, Quit India Movement, and Salt Satyagraha.
- Due to his active participation in the freedom movement, Kripalani joined the All India Congress Committee (AICC) and also climbed the political ladder faster than the others.
- He became one of the founders of the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) after independence leaving congress.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1952, 1957, 1963 and 1967 as a member of the Praja Socialist Party.

Nutrition Smart Villages

- Recently, the Union Agriculture Minister announced a programme on “Nutrition Smart Village” to strengthen the Poshan Abhiyan. It will be part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to commemorate the 75th year of Independence of India.



**Nutrition
Smart Village**

Key Points:

- This new initiative aims to reach out to 75 villages across India through the network of All India Coordinated Research Project on Women in Agriculture (AICRP-WIA) which is in operation at 13 centres in 12 States of India.
- The initiative has been undertaken in line with the Prime Minister's call to all the academicians, agricultural scientists and all the institutions to adopt and transform 75 villages.
- Under the initiative, a total of 75 villages will be adopted by AICRP centres and ICAR-CIWA, for which the AICRP centres will adopt 5 villages each with the remaining to be adopted by ICAR-CIWA with an aim to develop 75 Nutri-Smart villages.

Objectives:

- Promoting nutritional awareness, education and behavioural change in rural areas involving farm women and school children, harnessing traditional knowledge through the local recipe to overcome malnutrition and implementing nutrition-sensitive agriculture through homestead agriculture and Nutri-garden.

