



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

MARCH, 2022

Week-1

1-7 March, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

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

1st MARCH 2022

Index of Eight Core Industries

- **Context:** The Ministry of Commerce announced that in January 2022, compared to the same time period last year, the growth rate of eight core industries stood at 3.7 percent.

Key Highlights

- The core industries growth rate was 11.6 percent for the nine-month period between April and January.
- The eight-core sectors viz. natural gas, coal, petroleum refinery products, crude oil, steel, fertilizers, power, and cement grew by 4.1 percent in December 2021.
- Coal Production was increased by 8.2 percent, while its cumulative index increased by 10.3 percent from April to January as compared to the same time period of the previous year.
- Petroleum Refinery Production was increased by 3.7 percent, while the cumulative index increased by 9.3 percent from April to January.
- Steel Production was increased by 2.8%, while the cumulative index increased by 19.9% from April to January.
- Cement Production was increased by 13.6 percent, while the cumulative index increased by 24.6 percent in the nine months ending in January 2022.
- Electricity Generation was increased by 0.5 percent, while the cumulative index increased by 8.5 percent from April to January.
- Crude oil production was declined in last month. It fell by 2.4 percent, and the cumulative index fell by 2.6 percent in the nine months ending in January 2022.
- In January 2022, the combined Index of the Eight Core Industries stood at 144.4 which increased by 3.7 percent as compared to January 2021 index.

Madhabi Puri Buch

- **Context:** The Union government recently appointed Madhabi Puri Buch as the new chairperson of SEBI.
- Madhabi Puri Buch is the first woman chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- In between 2017 to 2021, she also served in SEBI, as a Whole Time Member. Now, she replaces Ajay Tyagi as the chairperson of SEBI whose term ended on February 28.



Selection Process

- As per the procedure for appointment of regulators, candidates are shortlisted by Financial Sector Regulatory Appointments Search Committee (FSRASC), which is headed by Cabinet Secretary. Shortlisted candidates are interviewed by panel, consisting of Economic Affairs Secretary and three external members with domain knowledge. On the basis of interactions, FSRASC recommends the name to Appointments Committee of Cabinet headed by Prime Minister.

IPCC Assessment Report

- **Context:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has recently compiled a climate assessment report.

Key Highlights

- India will be severely impacted if emissions are not reduced, according to the IPCC report.
- India will face effects due to food and water scarcity, heat reaching human survival limits, significant economic devastation, and rising sea levels if the emissions are not stopped.
- The IPCC report also notified that over 3.5 billion people, or 45 percent of the global population, live in climate-vulnerable areas.

- The report also stated that the ability to adapt by humans and natural ecosystems was being tested and increases in global warming will make it more difficult for them to adapt.
- The report covers sectoral and regional impacts of climate change for the first time as part of broadening the scope of its assessment.
- The report claims that sea-level rise will endanger Mumbai, while storms will threaten Kolkata. This hasn't been done in previous reports, and it gives a clearer picture of what has to be done about these dangers.
- Climate change and other related events will increase significantly premature deaths and ill health. The report also predicts that there will be an increase in vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue. Mental health issues are also predicted to worsen in adolescents, children, the elderly, and those suffering from underlying health conditions. These health impacts were not addressed in the previous reports.
- The river basins of Indus, Amu Darya, Sabarmati, Ganges could face severe water scarcity issues due to climate change.
- An increase in the warming level can also cause the global GDP to decline by 10 to 23 percent. Various major economies might face even larger declines due to climate change with the report estimating GDP losses of up to 42 percent in China and 92 percent in India by the end of the century if emissions remain high.

Development Goals (SDGs) such as zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, gender equality, and sustainable cities and communities.

- India did poorly in terms of quality education and quality of life on the ground. India struggled the previous year to end hunger and achieve food security, to achieve gender equality and create resilient infrastructure, to promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and to nurture innovation.
- On the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as part of the 2030 Agenda by 192 United Nations member states in 2015, India has dropped three places from last year's ranking of 117 to 120.
- According to the latest rankings, India has fallen behind all other South Asian countries, with the exception of Pakistan, which is ranked 129th. Bhutan is ranked 75th, Sri Lanka is 87th, Nepal is 96th, and Bangladesh is 109th among South Asian countries.
- The overall Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) score of India was 66 out of 100.
- According to the report, the states that are least prepared to meet the SDGs by the target year of 2030 are Jharkhand and Bihar.
- The report also stated that among the states Kerala topped, with Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh coming in second and third, respectively. Karnataka, Goa, Uttarakhand, and Andhra Pradesh tied for third place.
- According to the report, Chandigarh topped among the Union Territories, followed by Delhi, Puducherry, and Lakshadweep in second place, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands in the third position.

2nd MARCH 2022

State of India's Environment Report 2022

- **Context:** The State of India's Environment Report, 2022 was recently released by the Union Government.

Key Highlights

- According to this report, India's ranking has slipped due to substantial challenges in 11 Sustainable

Montreux Convention

- **Context:** Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Ukrainian government requested that Turkey use its authority under the Montreux Convention to restrict Russian vessels' movement from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

About Montreux Convention

- The Montreux Convention Regarding the Straits Regime, or simply the Montreux Convention, is an international treaty that governs Turkey's Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits
- It was signed on July 20, 1936, in the Montreux Palace in Switzerland, and took effect on November 9, 1936.
- This convention was signed to address the long-running Straits Question of who should manage the strategically important route between the Black and Mediterranean Seas.
- The maritime traffic through the Black Sea is regulated by the Montreux Convention.
- During peacetime, it grants full freedom of passage for all civilian vessels and allows Turkey to limit the movement of navies who do not belong to the Black Sea states.
- During wars, this pact gives Turkey the right to regulate the naval warship transits and blocking of the strait for warships of the countries in conflict. Military warships are restricted in terms of tonnage, number, and weaponry, with specific rules that govern their duration of stay and mode of entry.

Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP)

- **Context:** According to NITI Aayog, the logistics cost can be lowered down by leveraging the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP).

Key Facts

- ULIP will be a major game changer for Indian logistics landscape by assisting just-in-time inventory management, identification of cheaper logistic modes eliminating tedious documentation process, cargo movement monitoring, and improving international competitiveness.
- National Logistics Portal (NLP) is ready to be integrated with ULIP, in order to make the multi-modal logistics ecosystem more efficient.

- Pilot run of the ULIP platform has already been started, by on boarding some start-ups to verify usability of this platform. It integrates and converges 24 systems, 78 APIs and 1454 fields across waterways, ports, shipping, civil aviation, railways, DGFT & customs and road transport & highways.

About Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP)

- ULIP is designed for enhancing efficiency and reducing the cost of logistics in India by creating a transparent, single window platform to provide real-time information to all stakeholders.
- It was emphasized that the solution should have visibility of multi-modal transport and all the existing systems should be integrated with the ULIP system to create a National Single Window Logistics Portal.
- ULIP will provide real-time monitoring of cargo movement and ensure confidentiality of data with end-to-end encryption. It will also provide for comprehensive reduction in logistic cost.

3rd MARCH 2022

Swachh Survekshan 2022

- **Context:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched Swachh Survekshan, the seventh consecutive edition of the world's largest urban cleanliness survey.

Key Highlights

- Swachh Survekshan 2022 to be held with nearly 3,000 assessors of Ipsos Research Pvt. Ltd. which is the assessment agency, ready for assessing the performance of cities.
- In this year's survey the scope has been expanded to cover 100 percent wards for sampling, up from 40 percent in the previous years.
- Swachh Survekshan 2022 will deploy a larger number of assessors for the on-field assessment than last year in order to carry out this exercise smoothly.

- In preparation for Swachh Survekshan 2022, cities have been regularly filling in their data, updating their status in the Swachhatam Portal MIS, and running several citizen-centric campaigns.
- As part of the Swachh Survekshan 2022 survey, senior citizens will be asked to provide feedback.
- To ensure diverse viewpoints, Swachh Survekshan 2022 will also reach out to young adults who will be the country's and the Swachhata movement's future leaders.
- Swachh Survekshan 2022 aims to create a level playing field for smaller cities by introducing two population categories which are under 15,000 people and 15,000 to 25,000 people.
- District rankings have also been introduced for the first time to further widen the Survekshan footprint.
- To commemorate 75 years of progressive India, the Urban Local Body (ULB) collaborated with citizens to pick one Roundabout/ Chauraha in each city that could be decorated to reflect the spirit of India's 75 years of independence. In Swachh Survekshan 2022, this is a new indicator.
- Another new indicator, the 'Swachh Technology Challenge' has been included in Swachh Survekshan 2022. Under this challenge, individuals, organizations, and entrepreneurs across all Urban Local Bodies submitted ideas under four theme categories which are zero dump (solid waste management), social inclusion, transparency through digital enablement, and plastic waste management.

About Swachh Survekshan

In 2016, MoHUA introduced Swachh Survekshan as a competitive framework to encourage the cities of the nation to improve urban cleanliness while also promoting widespread citizen participation.

Global Plastics Treaty

- Recently, 175 countries have agreed to a legally binding global treaty called "Global Plastics Treaty", to end the plastic pollution crisis by tackling the entire supply chain of material.

Key Highlights

- The resolution on first treaty was passed at meeting of UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi in Kenya.
- First treaty directly seeks to tackle 9 billion tonnes of plastic produced since plastic age ramped up in 1950s. Now, they have started working on how to implement the treaty by 2024.
- During the meeting, two competing ideas were put forward:
 - One idea is led by Peru and Rwanda. It encompassed all stages of life cycle of plastics, starting from production, consumption and disposal.
 - Second idea was a far more limited deal. It focused on plastics in oceans. It was spearheaded by Japan.
- Elements of the treaty are legally binding. The treaty also acknowledges that lower-income countries will find it difficult to tackle plastic and pollution than high-income ones. Thus, there is a need of financing model, in order to help in curbing plastic use and waste.

NOTE:

As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India generates around 26,000 tonnes of plastic per day. More than 10,000 tonnes of plastic waste remain uncollected per day.

National Gender Index

- **Context:** NITI Aayog to develop the 'National Gender Index' that will be used to measure the progress and identify persisting gaps in gender equality in order to make informed policy decisions.

Key Facts

- National Gender Index will serve as a tool to map the progress of states and Union Territories (UTs) on a defined gender metrics and build foundation for positive change.

- It will support the policy action and advocacy around gender. This index will also be aligned with the framework of Sustainable Development Goals.
- In the Global Gender Gap Report by World Economic Forum, India has slipped 28 places to rank 140th out of 156 countries. Thus, it become the third-worst performer in South Asia. As per report, India has managed to close 62.5 per cent of its gender gap till date. In 2020 report, it was ranked 112th among 153 countries.

4th MARCH 2022

General Consent to CBI

- **Context:** Meghalaya has become the ninth state of the country to withdraw General consent to CBI to investigate cases in the state.

About General Consent

- CBI is governed by the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946. Accordingly, it is mandatory to obtain the concerned state government's consent before beginning to investigate a crime in a state.
- States typically give a general consent to assist the CBI in conducting a seamless investigation of cases of corruption involving central government personnel in their states. This is consent by default otherwise CBI would have to seek permission from the state government in every case, even for small tasks.
- The withdrawal of consent means that the CBI will not be able to file any new cases involving central government officials or private persons in the state without the permission of the state government. CBI officers who will be entering the state that has withdrawn consent will lose all powers of a police officer as soon as they enter the state unless they have received permission from the government of the state.

NOTE:

Before Meghalaya, the eight other states that had withdrawn consent to the CBI are Punjab, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Mizoram, and Kerala. The first state to withdraw consent was Mizoram which did so in 2015.

Virtual QUAD Summit

- **Context:** Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in a virtual summit of QUAD leaders, along with U.S. President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Key Highlights

- The leaders reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the 2021 Quad Summit.
- They discussed the developments in Ukraine, including the humanitarian implications.
- This virtual meeting of Quad assumes significance amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine and western sanctions on Russia.
- They also agreed on accelerating the cooperation to achieve concrete outcomes in Japan where the next in-person summit of the QUAD will be held later this year.

About QUAD

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) or QUAD is a strategic security dialogue between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. It is considered as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power.
- Shared vision of Quad members is "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," and a "rules-based maritime order in the East and South China Seas."
- Quad's first in-person summit was held in Washington in September 2021.

Budapest Memorandum

- **Context:** Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances refers to three identical political agreements signed at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conference in Budapest, Hungary in 1994.

Key Facts:

- The signatories of the memorandum agreed to provide security assurances to Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine in return for their accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).
- It came after the Lisbon Protocol of 1992, which made Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan parties to the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I). It was a treaty signed by the US and the Soviet Union in 1991 to reduce the number of nuclear weapons.
- As a result of the agreements and the memorandum, between 1993 and 1996, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine gave up their nuclear weapons and became non-nuclear states.
- At that time, Ukraine had the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal.
- The memorandum was originally signed by three nuclear powers: Russia, the USA, and the UK. Later, China, and France, who became NPT members in 1992, also became signatories.

5th MARCH 2022

No-fly Zone

- **Context:** In the wake of the attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant of Ukraine, by the Russian forces, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked western nations to consider setting up no-fly zones to protect civilians and also prevent a nuclear accident.

About No-fly Zone

- It is also known as no-flight zone (NFZ) or air exclusion zone (AEZ).

- A no-fly zone is an area established by a military power over which unauthorized aircrafts are not allowed to fly.
- No-fly zone aims to prevent the operation of enemy nation's aircraft in the region. After the imposition of a no-fly zone by a country, generally, military personnel are deployed to enforce it and also for surveillance purposes. To prevent violations, a country may even resort to preemptive attacks on aircrafts.
- No-fly zone was earlier set up during the 1991 Gulf War in Iraq, civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1993-95), and the 2011 Civil war in Libya.
- However, no-fly zones are not just permitted to the military context. They can be even established for civilian purposes. For example, it was set up during Olympic Games held in London in 2012.

'Sambhav' and 'Svavlamban' Initiatives

- 'Sambhav' and 'Svavlamban' are the initiatives to tackle the issue of plastic waste in India.
- These initiatives were recently launched by Union Ministry of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), at the International Summit on Plastics Recycling and Waste Management.
- These initiatives aim to encourage young entrepreneurs, especially from the aspirational districts of India.
- The 'Sambhav' and 'Svavlamban' initiatives and the summit will have multiple benefits i.e. formalizing the informal waste sector, job creation in the MSME sector, and reduction in plastic waste.

About International Summit on Plastics Recycling and Waste Management

- It was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma.
- This summit was organized in New Delhi by the MSME Ministry in association with the All-India Plastics Manufacturers' Association (AIPMA).

- This motto of the summit was “Know your Waste and how Recycling is the right thing to do, which is to be done in a right way”. Around 1350 MSMEs attended the summit, which was conducted in hybrid mode.
- This summit provided a platform for entrepreneurs, experts, businessmen, and other stakeholders to deliberate challenges and solutions in the MSME sector and plastics sectors.

Kavach

- **Context:** Recently, Kavach- the indigenously-developed system that prevents collisions between trains, successfully tested.

About Kavach

- Kavach or “armor” is the indigenously-developed system that prevents collisions between trains. It is also known as Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS).
- It is being developed since 2012 and in 2016 first field trials were conducted.
- At present, it is operational in the Lingampalli & Vikarabad section of the South-Central Railway (SCR) zone.
- It will be soon operational all over India in a gradual manner, as proposed in the Budget.
- Kavach system allows station master and loco-pilot to effectively communicate with each other during times of emergency.
- **It will be made possible with the following components:**
 - Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags on the railway sleepers.
 - Transmission towers are connected with the electronic devices inside the locomotive and at stations.
 - Loco-pilot will be informed in advance by the instruments regarding the safe speeds to be maintained. He will also get to know in advance about the signal, without the need to directly see the signal.

- If loco-pilot jumps red signal, especially when trains are on the same line facing each other (Signal Passed at Danger (SPAD)), then the Kavach system will automatically apply brakes to prevent an accident.
- Also, the system will alert the loco-pilot by making sounds if the train is approaching level-crossing. This will be extremely useful in adverse weather conditions like fog, where the visibility will be poor.
- It will automatically shift the train speeds to safe limits if the train is moving on curves, bridges, etc.

6th MARCH 2022

SLINEX 2022 Exercise

- **Context:** The ninth edition of the Indian and Sri Lankan Navy bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX (Sri Lanka–India Naval Exercise) being held at Visakhapatnam.

Key Highlights

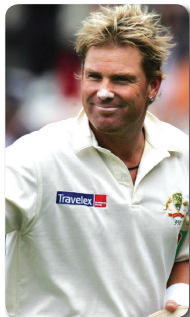
- In two phases, this exercise to be conducted with the Harbour Phase taking place at Visakhapatnam and the Sea Phase taking place in the Bay of Bengal.
- The SLNS Sayurata, an advanced offshore patrol vessel, will represent the Sri Lankan Navy, while the Indian Navy will be represented by the INS Kirch, a guided missile corvette. Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Seaking, INS Jyoti, a Fleet support tanker, Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft, and Chetak Helicopters are among the Indian Navy's other participants.
- The aim of SLINEX is to increase mutual understanding, interoperability, and the exchange of best procedures and practices for multi-faceted maritime operations between the two navies.
- SLINEX also exemplifies Sri Lanka and India's deep maritime engagement and has grown in scope over time to improve bilateral cooperation, in line with India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)'.

Shane Warne

- **Context:** Legendary Australian Spinner Shane Warne recently found dead in Thailand.

About Shane Warne

- He was a right-arm leg spinner who is widely regarded as one of the finest bowlers in cricket history, and he was named as one of the five Wisden Cricketers of the Century by a panel of cricket experts in 2000, the only specialist bowler in the quintet and the only one still playing at that time.
- Warne's international career began in Australia, where he made his debut against India in the third Test in a five-match series between the two nations. Warne, a 22-year-old at the time, would only take one wicket in the match, that of Ravi Shastri, who made a double century.



Warne's Cricket Career

- Warne took 34 wickets at an average of 25.79 in six tests in the 1993 Ashes series against England. During the 1993 series, he was best remembered for one ball or that ball or Gating Ball which is termed as the ball of the century, which he bowled to Mike Gatting of England at Old Trafford, Manchester.
- In February 2003, he was excluded from the World Cup in South Africa due to the use of a banned diuretic, which was discovered during a drug test. He was then given a 12-month suspension.
- He took his 500th wicket in his first Test match after his return in March 2004, making him only the second bowler in history to do so.
- By the end of the season (2003-2004), Warne and Sri Lankan off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan had surpassed Courtney Walsh's (West Indies) record of 519 Test wickets set in 2001. In his career, he took 708 wickets, and later this record was broken by Muralitharan.

- In 2008, he was appointed as the captain of Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League, after retiring from international cricket. He led the Rajasthan Royals to victory in the inaugural season of the competition.

7th MARCH 2022

National Highway for Electric Vehicle (NHEV)

- **Context:** Recently, a working group from NHEV has recently met NITI Aayog to discuss the new battery swapping policy.

About NHEV

- National Highway for Electric Vehicle (NHEV) is an organization which aims at promoting electrification of India's transportation systems.
- NHEV is constructing a green charging station along the Jaipur-Delhi-Agra E-highway. It will have many amenities like restaurant, coffee lounge, a bank, an ATM, a showroom, etc. for the customers to use while charging their vehicles.
- NHEV set up India's largest EV charging station launched in Gurugram. It has 121 EV chargers and a capacity to charge up to 1000 cars within a day. It has been set up in a record time of just a month. With this new EV charging station, Gurugram became the first city to have the top two charging stations in India.
- These initiatives of NHEV to promote e-mobility will have numerous benefits like clean environment, reduction in fuel imports, and promotion of new business opportunities.

Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)

- **Context:** National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) has signed a MoU with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) to develop a sustainable model for promoting entrepreneurship at the grassroots level by initiating the SVEP.

About SVEP

- The Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP) is a sub-scheme of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- SVEP is being implemented since 2016 by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- SVEP's objective is to support entrepreneurs in rural areas to set-up enterprises at the village-level in non-agricultural sectors. Its focus is on providing self-employment opportunities in rural areas.
- It helps rural poor to come out of poverty. They are encouraged to setup enterprises and support is provided till the enterprise stabilizes. Financial assistance and training in business management are also provided. Thus, the three main pillars of start-up i.e. finances, incubation and skill ecosystems are addressed by the scheme.
- SVEP aims to develop a pool of community resource persons – enterprise promotion (CRP-EP) who are local & support entrepreneurs setting-up enterprises in rural areas.
- SVEP also promotes block resource center (BRC) in SVEP blocks, to monitor and manage the community resource persons (CRP) and appraise SVEP loan application. BRCs support sustainable revenue model to operate efficiently and independently.

■ NOTE:

NIESBUD is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

HANSA-NG

- **Context:** Recently, HANSA-NG has successfully completed sea-level trials at Puducherry. These sea-level trials were conducted to evaluate HANSA-NG's handling qualities, climb performance, balked landing, and other systems performance at sea level.

About HANSA-NG



- HANSA-NG is the two-seater aircraft and a revamped version of the HANSA aircraft. It has been indigenously designed and developed by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research -National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL).
- HANSA-NG is an advanced flying trainer. It is powered by Rotax Digital Control Engine. It has other special features like composite lightweight airframe, glass cockpit, bubble canopy with wide panoramic view, electrically operated flaps, etc.
- Its advantages include low cost and low consumption of fuel. Thus, it is most suitable for Commercial Pilot Licensing (CPL) purposes and meets the needs of Indian flying clubs.

About National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL)

- NAL was established in 1959 by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in New Delhi. It is India's maiden aerospace research firm.
- NAL's main responsibility is to develop civilian aircrafts in India. It closely works with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). It also has technology to investigate into the accidents in aerospace.

■ NOTE:

Aircrafts like HANSA-NAL will boost India's indigenous capacity and will help India realize the goals of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.