



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**NOVEMBER, 2021**

**Week-3**

**15-21 Nov, 2021**

★★ Useful for ★★

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

15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

## Climate Change & Locust Infestations

- Recently, experts at COP-26 stated that infestation of desert locusts, which has plagued a vast swathe from eastern Africa to India in recent years, is closely linked to climate change.
- Plans to mitigate climate change must include action against pests and diseases, iterated by panelists at the Global Landscapes Forum Climate hybrid conference.
- The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement.

### About Locusts:

- They are related to grasshoppers.
- These insects form enormous swarms that spread across regions, devouring crops and leaving serious agricultural damage in their wake.
- Plagues of locusts have devastated societies since the Pharaohs led ancient Egypt, and they still wreak havoc today.
- The desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) is a notorious species.
- Found in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, this species inhabits an area of about six million square miles, or 30 countries, during a quiet period.

## RBI launched two customer-centric initiatives

- The Prime Minister of India launched two customer-centric initiatives of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
  1. The RBI Retail Direct Scheme
  2. The Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme.

### RBI Retail Direct Scheme

- It is aimed at enhancing access to the government securities market for retail investors. This scheme

offers a new avenue for directly investing in government securities issued by both Centre and state governments.

- Investors will be able to easily open and maintain their government securities account online with the RBI, free of cost.
- It will make the process of G-sec trading smoother for small investors.
- The scheme will facilitate the smooth completion of the government borrowing programme in 2021-22.

### About Government Security (G-Sec):

- G-Sec is a tradable instrument issued by the Central Government or the State Governments. It acknowledges the Government's debt obligation.
- It practically carries no risk of default and, hence, are called risk-free gilt-edged instruments.

## Norovirus

- Recently, the rare Norovirus infection was reported in some 13 students of a veterinary college in the Wayanad district of Kerala.

### About Norovirus

- Norovirus is a very contagious virus. Anyone can get infected and sick with norovirus.
- Norovirus illness is not related to the flu.
- **Transmission:**
  - Having direct contact with an infected person
  - Consuming contaminated food or water
  - Touching contaminated surfaces and then putting unwashed hands in the mouth
- **Symptoms:**
  - Diarrhoea
  - Vomiting
  - Nausea
  - Stomach pain
- **Prevention:**
  - Drinking water sources need to be hygienic.

- Wash the hands often.
- Everyone should be vigilant.
- Proper prevention and treatment can cure the disease quickly.

## Rezang La war memorial

- The Rezang La war memorial now includes names of Army personnel who lost their lives in the Galwan clash last year.
- It is dedicated to those who laid down their lives in the Battle of Rezang La during the 1962 war. It will now include the names of Army personnel who lost their lives in the violent clash at Galwan last year.

### About Rezang La

- It is also called Rechin La.
- It is a mountain pass on the Line of Actual Control between Indian-administered Ladakh and the Chinese-administered Spanggur Lake basin that is also claimed by India.
- The pass is located on the eastern watershed ridge of the Chushul Valley that China claims as its boundary.
- It is at the head of the Rezang Lungpa valley, which houses a stream draining into the Spanggur Lake.

16<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

## Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) Mission

- NASA is going to launch the agency's first planetary defence test mission named the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) on November 24, 2021.

### Key Points:

- It is a planetary defence-driven test of technologies for preventing an impact on Earth by a hazardous asteroid.
- The spacecraft will be launched on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

### Objectives:

- DART is the first technology demonstration of the kinetic impactor technique that could be used to mitigate the threat of an asteroid hitting Earth.
- The kinetic impactor mitigation technique is the impulsive deflection of the asteroid through the sudden addition of momentum. In simpler terms, DART is being sent to collide with an asteroid to change its orbital period.
- DART will also carry a small satellite or CubeSat named LICIAcube (Light Italian CubeSat for Imaging of Asteroids).
- It will target Dimorphous, the much smaller "moonlet" of a binary (two-body) asteroid system.
- Dimorphous orbits a larger asteroid named Didymos (Greek for "twin") which has a diameter of 780 metres.

## Rani Kamlapati

- The name of Bhopal's Habibganj railway station has been changed to Rani Kamlapati station.
- The renamed and redeveloped railway station was inaugurated on November 15, the birth anniversary of the iconic 19th-century tribal freedom fighter Birsa Munda.

### About Rani Kamlapati:

- Rani Kamlapati was the widow of Nizam Shah, whose Gond dynasty ruled the then Ginnorgarh, 55 km from Bhopal, in the 18th century.
- It is said that she avenged her husband's death by killing Alam Shah, Nizam Shah's nephew. Alam Shah had poisoned his uncle.
- She built the seven-storey Kamlapati Palace that overlooks Upper and Lower Lakes and is now an ASI-protected monument.
- Rani Kamlapati Palace is a secular architecture of the 18th century built of Lakhauri bricks, cusped arches over crumpled pillars.

- Kamlapati was the “last Hindu queen of Bhopal”, who did great work in the area of water management and set up parks and temples.

## Five-year terms for CBI and ED chiefs

- The President promulgated two ordinances that would allow the Centre to extend the tenures of the directors of the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate from two years to up to five years.

### Key Points:

- The chiefs of the Central agencies currently have fixed two-year tenure, but can now be given three annual extensions.
- Amendments: While the change in tenure of the CBI Director was affected by amending the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, the change to the tenure of the ED Director was brought in by amending the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003.
  - It provided further that no such extension shall be granted after the completion of a period of five years in total, including the period mentioned in the initial appointment.

### About Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI):

- It is the main investigation agency of the central government for cases relating to corruption and major criminal probes.
- It has its origin in the Special Police Establishment set up in 1941 to probe bribery and corruption during World War II.
- CBI was set up by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1963 after the Santhanam committee recommendation.
- The superintendence of CBI rests with CVC in corruption cases and with the Department of personnel and training in other matters.
- Presently it acts as an attached office under DOPT.

### NOTE:

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) is a law enforcement agency and economic intelligence agency responsible for enforcing economic laws and fighting economic crime in India. It is part of the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

17<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

## S-400 Air Defence System

- Russia has started supplying S-400 air defence system to India, and the first division will be delivered by the end of 2021

### About S-400 system:

- The S-400 is known as Russia's most advanced long-range surface-to-air missile defence system.
- It is capable of simultaneously tracking numerous incoming objects including aircraft, missiles and UAVs in a radius of a few hundred kilometres and launching appropriate missiles to neutralise them.
- It has radars that can pick up an incoming object up to a distance of 1,000 kilometres, track several dozen incoming objects simultaneously, distribute the targets to missile systems and ensure a high success rate.

### About CAATSA:

- CAATSA is a tough US law that authorises the administration to impose sanctions on countries that purchase major defence hardware from Russia in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its alleged meddling in the 2016 US presidential elections.
- Its provisions include sanctions targeting Russia's defence and intelligence sectors, serving as an important tool for the US government to discourage Russian arms purchases around the world.
- It has been imposed on Iran, Russia and North Korea.

## Regulation of Cryptocurrencies in India

- The PM chaired a meeting on cryptocurrency where the need for its regulation was discussed.
- Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021 introduced. Under this, a plan to ban private digital currencies favours RBI backed currency.
- A 3-6 month exit period prior to banning the trading, mining and issuing of cryptos. Finally, Cryptocurrencies, though unregulated, are not illegal in India.

### Key Points:

- Cryptocurrencies make it possible to lend, sell, buy, or borrow without an identity, credit score, or even a bank.
- All records of its creation and when it's sent or received are stored in a sort of big digital book that anyone can access, keeping it honest. It can't (easily) be stolen or seized and can be used anywhere in the world.
- Some coins are used to transfer value (measured in a currency like dollars) cheaper and faster than using credit or conventional means. Meaning the cost to send someone crypto, which can be converted into regular currency, is cheaper than something like a check or wire transfer.
- However crypto is NOT just used for illegal purposes. In fact, due chiefly to its price fluctuation and other reasons it has fallen out of favor on the black market.

### Famous Cryptocurrency:

- **Bitcoin:** Introduced in 2009 Created by "Satoshi Nakamoto" (Real name and identity unknown). It is the world's first successful cryptocurrency.
- **DOGECOIN:** Introduced in 2013 by Jackson Palmer and later Billy Markus. Dogecoin is a digital currency like bitcoin or ethereum.
- **Ethereum:** Launched in 2015, created by Vitalik Buterin.

- **Litecoin:** Introduced in 2011 Created by Charlie Lee. Litecoin is unique from Bitcoin in that it can produce a greater number of coins and its transaction speed is faster.
- **Stellar Lumen (XLM):** Introduced in 2015 Created by Jed McCaleb. Stellar is a decentralized computer network that operates using blockchain technology. On the Stellar network, you can trade its form of currency, which is called XLM.

## National Interlinking of Rivers Authority (NIRA)

- Recently, the Centre has set in motion the process of creating the National Interlinking of Rivers Authority (NIRA).

### About NIRA:

- National Interlinking of Rivers Authority (NIRA) is an independent autonomous body for planning, investigation, financing and the implementation of river interlinking projects in the country.
- It will replace the existing National Water Development Agency (NWDA) and will function as an umbrella body for all river linking projects.
- It is to be headed by a Government of India Secretary-rank officer.

### Benefits of River interlinking

- Most parts of the country are monsoon dependent and the quantum of rain varies widely across different regions.
- This interlinking of river projects can help India in increasing the connectivity by creating more inland waterways, therefore, cater to the logistic deficiency.
- It will ensure that scarcity of water does not become an inhibitor to development in the country.
- The Indian Rivers Inter-link aims to link India's rivers with a network of reservoirs and canals and so reduce persistent floods in some parts and water shortages in other parts of India.

## 18<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

### Kartarpur Corridor

- The government is considering reopening the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara corridor to Pakistan to allow Sikh pilgrims to cross over, more than 20 months after it was shut down due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

#### About Kartarpur Corridor:

- Often dubbed as the “Road to Peace”, it connects the Darbar Sahib Gurdwara in the Narowal district of Pakistan with the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in the Gurdaspur district in India’s Punjab province.
- The corridor was built to commemorate the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism on 12th November 2019.
- Location: On the bank of river Ravi in Pakistan. It is about four km from the Dera Baba Nanak shrine, and about 120 km northeast of Lahore.
- It is one of the holiest places for Sikhs where Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji settled and preached for the last 18 years of his life until his death in 1539.

### Exercise SITMEX – 21

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Karmuk, an indigenously built Missile Corvette is participating in the 3rd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX – 21, from 15 to 16 Nov 21 in the Andaman Sea.

#### Key Points:

- The first edition of SITMEX was hosted by the Indian Navy off Port Blair in September 2019.
- The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) hosted the second edition of the exercise in November 2020.
- It is being conducted annually and it highlights growing synergy, coordination and cooperation in the maritime domain between the three friendly navies.
- The two days of maritime drills will witness the three navies engaged in various tactical exercises

including naval manoeuvres and surface warfare drills.

- Aim: To enhance mutual interoperability and imbibing best practices between IN, Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and Royal Thai Navy (RTN).

### BRCA Gene

- Recently, the importance of BRCA gene testing was highlighted for reducing cancer risk in women.

#### Key Points:

- The BRCA gene test is a blood test that uses DNA analysis to identify harmful changes (mutations) in either one of the two breast cancer susceptibility genes — BRCA1 (BREast CANcer gene 1) and BRCA2 (BREast CANcer gene 2).
- They produce proteins that help repair damaged DNA.
- They are associated with breast tissues that help repair damaged DNA or destroy cells if the damaged DNA cannot be repaired.
- They are tumour suppressor genes. When they work normally, these genes help keep breast, ovarian, and other types of cells from growing and dividing too rapidly or in an uncontrolled way.
- Everyone has two copies of each of these genes— one copy inherited from each parent.

## 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

### Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP)

- Recently, the Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj inaugurated 'Bhumi Samvaad' - National Workshop on Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP).
- The discussion was held primarily on the progress of different components of the Digital Land Record Modernization Programme and best practices undertaken by different States/UTs to share with other States.

## About Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme(DILRMP):

- In 2008, two schemes viz, Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) and Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA&ULR) were merged into a modified scheme named DILRMP.
- It is a Central Sector Scheme that has been extended up to 2020-21 at a total cost of Rs. 950 crores.
- It attempts to build upon the commonalities that exist in the arena of land records in various States to develop an appropriate Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS) across the country. ILIMS integrates all the processes and land records databases with the banks, financial institutions, circle rates, Registration Offices and other sectors.
- It aims to replace the present deeds registration and presumptive title system with that of conclusive titling with a title guarantee.

## Autonomy of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- Recently, the Centre told the Supreme Court that the CBI is an “autonomous body” and it has no ‘control’ over it.

### Key Points:

- West Bengal has challenged the CBI’s jurisdiction to register FIRs and conduct investigations in the State in myriad cases. The State had withdrawn its “general consent” to the CBI way back in 2018.
- Recent Ordinance passed: Increased the tenure of directors of CBI & ED from two to five years (up to one year at a time).
- Oppositions criticise the move, it will undermine the institution by sidestepping the checks and balances imposed by the Parliament.

## About CBI:

- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the main investigation agency of the central government for cases relating to corruption and major criminal probes.
- It has its origin in the Special Police Establishment set up in 1941 to probe bribery and corruption during World War II.
- CBI was set up by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1963 after the Santhanam committee recommendation.
- **Functions:**
  - Corruption Cases
  - Economic Crimes like financial frauds, narcotics, antiques, smuggling etc.
  - Special Crimes like Terrorism, ransom for kidnapping etc.
  - The CBI was empowered to probe cases concerning any of the Central subjects enumerated in the Union List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

## Pochampally Village

- Recently, the Pochampally Village in Telangana State has been selected as one of the best Tourism Villages by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).
- The prestigious award will be given on the occasion of the 24th session of the UNWTO General Assembly on 2nd December 2021 in Madrid, Spain.

## About Best Tourism Villages initiative:

- The Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO Pilot initiative aims to award those villages which are outstanding examples of rural destinations and showcase good practices in line with its specified nine evaluation areas.
- **Aim:** To support villages to enhance their rural tourism potential through training and access to opportunities for improvement.
- The Ministry of Tourism recommended three villages for the UNWTO Best Tourism Village entry from India.

**NOTE:**

- Pochampally, 50 Kms from Hyderabad, is a town in Nalgonda district of Telangana and is often referred to as the Silk City of India for the exquisite sarees that are woven through a unique style called Ikat.
- This style, Pochampally Ikat, received a Geographical Indicator (GI Status) in 2004.

**20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

**Rajasthan Camel Act, 2015**

- Camel herders and cattle rearers in Rajasthan have been carrying out sustained opposition and protests against the Rajasthan Camel Act, 2015, citing loss of livelihood and business.

**Key Highlights:**

- It aims to provide for the prohibition of the slaughter of camels and also to regulate temporary migration or export thereof from Rajasthan in order to safeguard the camel species and also the interests of the public deriving benefit from them.
- According to the law, no person shall possess, sell or transport for sale or cause to be sold or transported camel meat or camel meat products in any form.
- It further adds that no person shall export and cause to be exported any camel himself or through his agent, servant or other person acting on his behalf from any place within the State to any place outside the State for the purposes of slaughter or with the knowledge that it may be or is likely to be slaughtered.
- **Objectives:**
  - It was passed in 2015 citing that the animal is endangered and in need of initiation of sincere efforts for its conservation and protection.
  - It has also been observed that a large number of camels are transported or carried out of Rajasthan to other states for the purpose of slaughter.
  - The recurrent famine and scarcity conditions in the State tend to increase this menace all the more.

- The existing laws are not sufficient to tackle this problem.

**Indian Ocean Naval Symposium**

- The 7th edition of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs is being hosted by the French Navy in Paris from 15 – 16 Nov 21.

**About Ocean Naval Symposium (ONS):**

- The IONS is a voluntary and inclusive project that brings together the navies of the Indian Ocean Region's (IOR) littoral states in order to strengthen maritime cooperation and regional security.
- It also contributes to the development of an effective response mechanism as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) in the event of natural disasters.
- India (2008–10), the United Arab Emirates (2010–12), South Africa (2012–14), Australia (2014–16), Bangladesh (2016–18), and the Islamic Republic of Iran (2018-21) have all held the IONS chairmanship.
- France will take over as Chairman in June 2021 for a two-year term.

**Members:**

- The IONS is composed of 24 member nations that border or lie inside the IOR, as well as eight observer nations.
- The members have been classified geographically into four sub-regions:
  - Bangladesh, Maldives, India, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom are all coastal states in South Asia.
  - Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates comprise the West Asian Littorals.
  - France (Reunion), Mauritius, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa comprise the East African Littorals.
  - Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Timor-Leste are all part of the South East Asian and Australian littorals.



## Purvanchal Expressway

- The 341-km Purvanchal Expressway at Karwal Kheri in Sultanpur district, inaugurated by the Prime Minister is one of the biggest completed infrastructure projects by the Uttar Pradesh government.

### Key Points:

- The infrastructure project, which is one of the biggest completed by the Uttar Pradesh government and cost an estimated Rs 22,496 crore, has been billed as the “carrier of development” to the underdeveloped Purvanchal region.
- The expressway starts from Chandsarai village in the district of Lucknow located on the Lucknow-Sultanpur road and ends at Haidaria village on National Highway 31 in Ghazipur district.
- The government has developed land banks along the expressway and the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority has been authorised to develop industrial hubs along the highway.

## 25th year of PESA Act

- Recently, the Union Minister of Tribal Affairs and the Union Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj jointly inaugurated the one-day National Conference on provisions of the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act 1996 (PESA).
- The conference aims to celebrate 75 years of progressive India and commemorate the 25th year of enactment of the PESA.

### About PESA Act, 1996:

- The Parliament enacted special legislation called Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) in 1996 and came into force on 24th December 1996.
- It is now applicable in the Fifth Schedule areas, which deals with the administration of the districts dominated by the tribal communities, and is in force in 10 states of the country.
- Six States namely Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Telangana have notified PESA Rules.

21<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

## Shale and Its Potential in India

- Recently, Cairn Oil & Gas has announced that it is partnering US-based Halliburton to start shale exploration in the Lower Barmer Hill formation, Western Rajasthan.
- The company is looking to increase the recoverable reserves at its offshore assets by 10 times via enhanced use of technology, in partnership with Halliburton.

### Shale Gas:

- Shales are fine-grained sedimentary rocks formed of organic-rich mud at the bottom of ancient seas.
- Subsequent sedimentation and the resultant heat and pressure transformed the mud into shale and also produced natural gas from the organic matter contained in it.
- Over long spans of geologic time, some of the gas migrated to adjacent sandstones and was trapped in them, forming conventional gas accumulations.

### NOTE:

Shale Basins of preliminary interest identified by Indian geologists are the Cambay Basin in Gujarat, the Assam-Arakan basin in northeast India, and the Gondwana Basin.

## India world's largest recipient of remittances: World Bank

- According to the World Bank, India is the world's largest recipient of remittances in the year 2021.
- India received \$87 billion in 2021 with the United States being the biggest source, accounting for over 20 percent of these funds. India had received over \$83 billion in remittances in 2020.
- India is followed by China, Mexico, the Philippines, and Egypt.

**About Remittance:**

- Remittance refers to money that is sent or transferred to another party (country), usually overseas.
- Remittances represent one of the largest sources of income for people in low-income and developing nations. It often exceeds the amount of direct investment and official development assistance.
- Remittances help families afford food, healthcare, and basic needs.

**RBI proposed new law to regulate digital lending**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed new norms and asked the government to frame a new legislation to curb illegal digital lending in the country.
- The proposals come after a panel set up by the regulator found that there are 1,100 loan apps in various app stores, of which 600 are illegal.
- RBI had constituted the working group on digital lending including lending through online platforms and mobile apps under the chairmanship of Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director, RBI.

**Digital Lending**

- Digital lending is the process of availing credit online. Its increased popularity amongst new-age lenders can be attributed to expanding smartphone penetration, credit range flexibility, and speedy online transactions.

**Significance**

- India has a huge growth potential when it comes to the Digital Lending landscape:
- Digital lending is mostly preferred by those who are generally not able to avail any credit through the formal sources of finance, like banks.
- Digital lending is mostly preferred by those who are generally not able to avail any credit through the formal sources of finance, like banks.

- Digital lending is a powerful tool that can be used for financial inclusion.
- With new innovations underway, digital lending offers much better products to the masses at a much faster rate which is even more cost-efficient.
- Online lending has played a pivotal role in evading cumbersome red-tapism usually involved while availing loans offline in a traditional setting.

**Uniform Civil Code**

- Recently, the Allahabad High Court has called upon the Central government to forthwith initiate the process of Uniform Civil Code implementation.
- The court directed the Centre to consider the constitution of a committee or commission for implementing the mandate of Article 44, as directed by the Supreme Court.

**About Uniform Civil Code (UCC):**

- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) calls for the formulation of one law for India, which would be applicable to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption.
- It dates back to colonial India when the British government submitted its report in 1835 stressing the need for uniformity in the codification of Indian law relating to crimes, evidence, and contracts, specifically recommending that personal laws of Hindus and Muslims be kept outside such codification.
- An increase in legislation dealing with personal issues at the far end of British rule forced the government to form the B N Rau Committee to codify Hindu law in 1941.

**Constitutional Provisions:**

- Article 44: The "State shall endeavour to provide for its citizens a uniform civil code (UCC) throughout the territory of India."
- Article 37: The "state shall endeavour by suitable legislation", while the phrase "by suitable legislation" is absent in Article 44.