



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

DECEMBER, 2021

Week-1

01-07 Dec, 2021

★★ Useful for ★★

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

1st DECEMBER 2021

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0

- The Union Ministry of State for Skill Development, Entrepreneurship launched two ambitious projects of 'Revival of Namda craft of Kashmir and 'Upskilling of artisans and weavers of Kashmir under the under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0'.

Key Points:

- The Namda project will be an industry-based training programme that will contribute towards preserving and reviving the rich heritage associated with the unique craft in Kashmir.
- Namda is a rug made of sheep wool through a felting technique instead of the normal weaving process.

About PMKVY 3.0

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) launched the third phase of its flagship scheme PMKVY 3.0 in January 2021.
- PMKVY 3.0 will be implemented in a more decentralised structure with greater responsibilities and support from States/UTs and Districts by incorporating the learnings from PMKVY 1.0 and PMKVY 2.0.
- The new scheme will be more trainees and learner-centric addressing the ambitions of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- It aims to empower the country's youth and continue the journey of the Skill India Mission in building India as the skill capital of the world.

James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)

- The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is scheduled to be sent into orbit in last December.

Key Points:

- James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) will be a large infrared telescope with an approximately 6.5-meter primary mirror.

- The telescope will be launched on an Ariane 5 rocket from French Guiana in 2021.
- It will be the premier observatory of the next decade, serving thousands of astronomers worldwide and is considered the successor of the Hubble Space Telescope.
- It was formerly known as the Next Generation Space Telescope (NGST) but was renamed in 2002 after a former NASA administrator, James Webb.
- It is an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA).

Objective:

- It will study every phase in the history of the Universe, ranging from the first luminous glows after the Big Bang, to the formation of solar systems capable of supporting life on planets like Earth, to the evolution of the Solar System.

2nd DECEMBER 2021

Suspension of MPs

- Recently, 12 Opposition MPs have been suspended for the rest of the Winter Session in Lok Sabha.
- House disrupted during the passage of the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021.
- The members were suspended for the rest of the winter session under Rule 256 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Rajya Sabha.
- The Opposition said the rule is for ongoing sessions, not to be used in an earlier one.

Rules regarding MPs in Parliament:

- MPs are required to adhere to certain rules of parliamentary etiquette. Some of them are:
 - MPs are not to interrupt the speech of others
 - Maintain silence
 - Not obstruct proceedings by hissing or making running commentaries during debates

- Newer forms of protest led to these rules being updated in 1989.
 - Now, members should not shout slogans, display placards, tear up documents in protest, and play a cassette or a tape recorder in the House.
 - Rajya Sabha has similar rules.
- To conduct the proceedings smoothly, the rulebook also gives certain, similar powers to the presiding officers of both Houses.

Krishna River Water Dispute

- Recently, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were informed regarding information forthcoming from Karnataka for the past 14 years about how much Krishna river water it has diverted.
- Karnataka has argued that the dispute raised by Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was between them and did not concern it.
- It also states that a lot of water is going to waste —“flowing down into the ocean” and there is a need to harness it for irrigation and to replenish dry regions.

Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 262 of the Constitution deals with the adjudication of water disputes. The provisions in this regard are:
 - Article 262 (1) Parliament may, by law, provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution or control of the waters of, or in, any inter-State river or river valley.

About Krishna River

- The Krishna is an east-flowing river.
- Originates at Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra and merges with the Bay of Bengal
- Flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- The principal tributaries joining Krishna are the Ghataprabha, the Malaprabha, the Bhima, the Tungabhadra and the Musi.

Jaitapur Nuclear Plant

- There is some progress in the Jaitapur nuclear power project in Maharashtra with the French company EDF and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

Key Points:

- The Indo-French nuclear agreement was signed in 2008 to build a nuclear power plant in Jaitapur.
- It would be the world's most powerful nuclear power plant.
- There would be six state-of-the-art EPR reactors with an installed capacity of 9.6 GWe that will produce low carbon electricity.
- It would provide electricity to seven crore households.
- This project will embody the strong partnership between India and France, a commitment to a low carbon future, and will directly benefit Maharashtra with thousands of local jobs.

Present status of India's Nuclear Power:

- The share of nuclear power in the total electricity generation in the country is about 3.1% in the year 2020-21.
- The first nuclear power reactors built in India were two BWRs at Tarapur, constructed by GE as turnkey projects through Indo-US cooperation.
- There are presently 22 reactors with a total capacity of 6780 MW in operation and one reactor, KAPP-3 (700 MW) has been connected to the grid on January 10, 2021.
 - Ten (10) nuclear power reactors with 8000 MW capacity (including 500 MW PFBR being implemented by Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited {BHAVINI}) are under construction.

Great Green Wall of Africa

- Africa's Great Green Wall (GGW) programme to combat desertification in the Sahel region has an important contribution towards combating climate change.

- The study showed that for every dollar invested into land restoration yields across the African continent from Senegal in the west to Djibouti in the east, investors can expect larger returns.

Sahel region:

- Extends south of the Sahara from Senegal in the west to Ethiopia in the east of Africa.
- Vast areas of the formerly fertile region are now virtually uncultivated due to droughts, poor agricultural cultivation methods as well as land overuse due to the growing demand for food and firewood.

Great Green Wall (GGW) Programme:

- GGW was launched in 2007 by the African Union.
- Initial idea for the GGW: A band of trees about 8,000 kilometers long and 8 kilometers wide, stretching across Africa from east to west.
- The GGW programme aims to restore 100 million hectares of degraded ecosystems across 11 countries in the region. It aims to promote sustainable development and climate change mitigation.
- Countries selected as intervention zones for the Great Green Wall are Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan.

3rd DECEMBER 2021

India Young Water Professional Programme

- Recently, the first edition of the India Young Water Professional Programme (IYWPP) was launched under the National Hydrology Project.

Key Points:

- This program has been taken up under the National Hydrology Project and supported by the Australian Water Partnership.
- About 70% of the program is focused on project-based learning through Situation Understanding

and Improvement Projects(Engaged Training and Learning Model).

- The Program focuses on gender equality and diversity because sustainable water management can only benefit from the views and skills of all members of society.
- It is outcome-driven and the participants will be having certain tools and techniques by the time they are finished with the Programme.

National Hydrology Project (NHP):

- It is a Central Sector scheme sponsored by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Govt. of India. Financial aid provided from the World Bank.
- Its timeline is 8 years from 2016-17 to 2023-24.
- Its objective is to improve the extent and accessibility of water resources information and strengthen institutional capacity to enable improved water resources planning and management across India.

Barbados: World's Newest Republic

- Recently, Barbados has officially removed Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state and become the world's newest republic.
- Before Barbados, the last nation to remove the Queen as head of state was Mauritius in 1992.
- The Royal Barbados Police Force will become the Barbados Police Force and crown lands would become state lands.
- The country would continue to celebrate Independence Day on November 30 in the memory of the country's first president Errol Walton Barrow.

About Barbados

- It is a country in the southeastern Caribbean Sea, situated about 100 miles east of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
- The geographic position of Barbados has profoundly influenced the island's history and culture and aspects of its economic life.

Stubble Burning & PM 2.5

- The average contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's PM2.5 level in November was 14.6%.
- SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research) revealed recent data regarding pollution in Delhi.
- PM 2.5 that are emitted from various sources and are linked to negative health effects such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and premature mortality.
- The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to the daily levels of PM2.5 – a chief pollutant – in Delhi was as high as 48% on November 7.
- The highest contribution of stubble burning to PM2.5 in Delhi for a day was 58% in 2018, 43% in 2019, and 46% in 2020.

About Stubble Burning:

- Stubble burning is the practice of intentionally setting fire to the straw stubble that remains after grains, such as rice and wheat, have been harvested.
- The origin of stubble burning can be traced to the advent of the Green Revolution and mechanised harvesting, which utilised the combined harvesting technique.

Alternatives to Stubble Burning

- **Turbo Happy Seeder (THS) machine:** One such method is using a Turbo Happy Seeder (THS) machine, which can uproot the stubble and also sow seeds in the area cleared.
- **Pusa bio-decomposer:** It is developed by the scientists at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, which turns crop residue into manure in 15-20 days by accelerating the decomposition process.
- **In-situ treatment of stubble:** The government is currently giving equipment to farmers to mix the stubble back into the soil so that they do not have to burn it.
- **Ex-situ treatment:** Under this, some companies have started collecting stubble for their use, but we need more action on this front.

4th DECEMBER 2021

Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)

- RBI is working out a phased implementation strategy for the introduction of Central Bank Digital Currency with little or no disruption.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed amendments to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, which would enable it to launch a CBDC.

About Central Bank Digital Currency:

- It is a legal tender and a central bank liability in digital form denominated in a sovereign currency and appearing on the central bank's balance sheet.
- It is the same as a fiat currency and is exchangeable one-to-one with the fiat currency. Only its form is different.
- It can be converted or exchanged at par with similarly denominated cash and traditional central bank deposits.
- It can be transacted using wallets backed by the blockchain and is regulated by the central bank.

NOTE:

Fiat Money is a government-issued currency that is not backed by a commodity such as gold. It gives central banks greater control over the economy because they can control how much money is printed. Most modern paper currencies, such as the US dollar, are fiat currencies..

Pashmina Production

- Recently, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has roped in 4 Khadi Institutions from Varanasi & Ghazipur districts in Uttar Pradesh for processing Raw Pashmina wool and weaving it further into the woollen fabric.
- This is the first-ever attempt to introduce the heritage craft of Pashmina weaving outside J&K and familiarize the artisans in the rest of India with this unique art.

About Pashmina:

- The word Pashmina comes from the Persian word 'Pashm' which means 'soft gold'.
- Pashmina comes from an animal fibre Cashmere, derived from the Changthangi goat of Ladakh.
- It is indigenous to the high altitude regions of Leh-Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir.
- It is well known for its warmth, lightweight, and softness in addition to its characteristic dye absorbing property.
- Pashmina has been accredited by the Guinness Book of World Records for being the costliest cloth in the world.

5th DECEMBER 2021

Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021

- A bill to regulate and supervise assisted reproductive technology clinics was passed by the Lok Sabha by a voice vote.

Key Highlights:

- The Bill seeks to regulate and supervise assisted reproductive technology clinics and banks, prevent misuse of the technology, and promote ethical practice of the services.
- This bill is meant for those who aspire to parenthood. It is for the women to attain motherhood if they so desire.
- The bill has excluded live-in couples, single men and the LGBTQ community.
- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill stipulates that a woman wishing to donate ovum must be between 23 and 35 years, married and have at least a child of her own, 3 years or older.
- According to the bill, a woman above the legal age of marriage and below the age of 50 and a man above

the legal age of marriage and below the age of 55 can avail the assisted reproductive technology services.

- The bill stipulates that every ART clinic and bank must be registered under the National Registry of Banks and Clinics of India.
- It also proposes stringent punishment for those practising sex selection and sale of human embryos or gametes.
- The bill proposes the constitution of a national board.

About Surrogacy:

- Surrogacy involves a woman agreeing to carry a baby for someone else.
- After the baby is born, the birth mother gives custody and guardianship to the intended parent or parents.
- A woman who agrees to carry and give birth to a baby for another person is a surrogate or birth mother.

G20's Troika

- Recently, India joined the G20 Troika comprising the current, previous and incoming presidencies of the grouping.
- A "Troika", represented by the country that holds the Presidency, its predecessor and its successor, works to ensure continuity within the G20. Currently, Italy, Indonesia, and India are the Troika countries.

About the G20:

- The G20 is a premier forum for international economic cooperation.
- It is a strategic multilateral platform connecting the world's major developed and emerging economies.
- The G20 holds a strategic role in securing future global economic growth and prosperity.
- The G20 members represent more than 80 percent of world GDP, 75 percent of international trade and 60 percent of the world population.

- The G20 has no permanent secretariat.
- Participants: Members: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Spain is also invited as a permanent guest.

Dam Safety Bill, 2019

- Recently, the Dam Safety Bill, 2019 was introduced in Rajya Sabha.

About Dam Safety Bill, 2019

- The Bill provides for the surveillance, inspection, operation, and maintenance of all specified dams across the country.
- These are dams with height more than 15 metres, or height between 10 metres to 15 metres with certain design and structural conditions.
- **Two national level bodies:**
 - **The National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS):** Its functions include evolving policies and recommending regulations regarding dam safety standards. It will be chaired by the National Water Commissioner.
 - **The National Dam Safety Authority:** Its functions include implementing policies of the National Committee, providing technical assistance to State Dam Safety Organisations (SDSOs), and resolving matters between SDSOs of states or between a SDSO and any dam owner in that state.
- Functions of the national bodies and the State Committees on Dam Safety have been provided in Schedules to the Bill. These Schedules can be amended by a government notification.

6th DECEMBER 2021

Gujarat International Finance Tech City (GIFT City)

- On barren land along the Sabarmati river GIFT City developed as the country's first greenfield integrated city.

GIFT City

- The Gujarat International Finance Tech City (GIFT City) is a Central Business District being built between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat
- Its main purpose is to provide high quality physical infrastructure (electricity, water, gas, district cooling, roads, telecoms and broadband), so that finance and tech firms can relocate their operations in it
- It will have a SEZ, international education zone, integrated townships, an entertainment zone, hotels, a convention centre, and international techno park, Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) units, shopping malls, stock exchanges etc.
- Gujarat International Finance Tech-City Company Limited (GIFTCL) is responsible for developing and implementing the project. GIFTCL is a joint venture of Gujarat Urban Development Company Limited (GUDCOL) and Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS).

About IFSCA:

- International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) was established as a statutory authority on April 27, 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019.
- It is headquartered at GIFT City, Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- It is a unified authority for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0

- The Union Government provided performance details of Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0 in Rajya Sabha.

About Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0

- It is an initiative by the government to provide immunization free of cost to pregnant women and children in India.
- Two rounds of IMI 3.0 of 15 days' duration were conducted in February 2021 & March 2021 to reach out to the pregnant women and children who missed vaccination under routine immunisation programmes in 250 districts across 29 states/UTs.
 - During IMI 3.0 around 9.5 lakh children and 2.2 lakh, pregnant women were vaccinated.
- **Targeted Beneficiaries:**
 - The focus of the IMI 3.0 will be the children and pregnant women who have missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Beneficiaries from migration areas and hard to reach areas will also be targeted.
- **Aims:**
 - To reach the unreached population with all the available vaccines under the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) and thereby accelerate the full immunization coverage of children and pregnant women.

NOTE:

- Mission Indradhanush was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) on 25th December 2014 with the aim of expanding immunization coverage to all children across India.
- The Ministry of Health is being technically supported by WHO, UNICEF, Rotary International and other donor partners.

Smart Cities Mission

- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has extended the timeline for the implementation of the Smart Cities Mission to June 2023 due to the Covid pandemic.

About Smart Cities Mission (SCM)

- SCM is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in 2015.
- It will cover 100 cities and is being implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) and all state and union territory (UT) governments.
- It initially aimed to be completed by 2019-20 but has since been extended.
- Its objective is to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to their citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'Smart' Solutions.
- It works on four pillars: Social Infrastructure, Physical Infrastructure, Institutional Infrastructure, Economic Infrastructure.

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)

- The need was felt to revise the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to accommodate predictions.

About Graded Response Action Plan:

- GRAP is a set of measures to be taken to reduce Air Pollution depending on the current level of pollution.
- It was notified by the Union Environment Ministry in 2017 to fight air pollution, based on the SC directions.
- GRAP works only as an emergency measure. As such, the plan does not include action by various state governments to be taken throughout the year to tackle industrial, vehicular and combustion emissions.
- The plan is incremental in nature — therefore, when the air quality moves from 'Poor' to 'Very Poor', the measures listed under both sections have to be followed.

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)		
Category	Ambient Particulate Matter (PM) Concentration	Measures
Moderate to Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM 2.5 between 61-120 mg/m³ PM10 between 101-350 mg/m³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce pollution control in thermal power plants Mechanized sweeping on roads Ban on firecrackers Stop garbage burning
Very Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM 2.5 between 121-250 mg/m³ PM 10 between 351-430 mg/m³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop use of diesel generator sets Increase bus and metro services and increasing frequency of metro service Stop use of coal/firewood in hotels and open eateries
Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM 2.5 more than 250 mg/m³ PM 10 more than 430 mg/m³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase frequency of mechanized sweeping of road and sprinkling of water on roads Close brick kilns Hot Mix plants Stone Crushers Introduce concessional rates to encourage off-peak travel in public transport
Severe + or Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM 2.5 of or more than 300 mg/m³ PM 10 of or 500 mg/m³ <p>(Persist for 48 hours of more)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop entry of diesel trucks into Delhi (except essential commodities) Stop construction activities Introduce odd and even scheme, Shutting of schools

7th DECEMBER 2021

Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

- The Public Accounts Committee has completed 100 years of its formation.

About Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

- The PAC is the oldest parliamentary committee in Indian legislative affairs and has been crucial in upholding the principle of accountability as it exercises oversight of public expenditure.

- First set up in 1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.
- The Public Accounts Committee consists of 22 members elected according to the principle of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote:
 - Fifteen members elected by Lok Sabha every year from amongst its members.
 - Seven members of Rajya Sabha elected by that House in like manner are associated with the Committee.

- This system of election ensures that each Party/Group is represented on the Committee in proportion to its respective strength in the two Houses.
- The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the members of Lok Sabha elected to the Committee.
- A Minister is not eligible to be elected as a member of the Committee and if a member, after election to the Committee, is appointed as a Minister, she/he ceases to be a member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.
- The term of office of members of the Committee does not exceed one year at a time.
- The Committee is assisted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in the examination of Accounts and Audit Reports.

Private Member’s Bill

- The Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman reserved his decision to allow the introduction of a private member’s Bill to amend the Preamble to the Constitution.
- BJP Member from Kerala K J Alphons moved the motion to introduce the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in the Upper House that would amend the Preamble.
- It seeks to replace the word ‘socialist’ with ‘equitable’, among other changes.
- The MP has argued that the term “socialist” has “political connotations and carries a historical baggage which is not acceptable to a large section of India”.

About Private Member’s Bill

- A member of parliament (MP) who is not a minister is a private member.
- The Bills introduced by private members are referred to as Private Member’s Bills.
- Government Bill: The Bills introduced by ministers are called government Bills. The government bills have the backing of the government and reflect its legislative agenda.
- The MP who wants to move a Private Member’s Bill has to give at least a month’s notice, for the House Secretariat to examine it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation.

Differences Between Government Bill & Private Member’s Bill			
	Public Bill		Private Bill
1	It is introduced in the Parliament by a minister.	1.	It is introduced by any member of Parliament other than a minister.
2.	It reflects of the policies of the government (ruling party).	2.	It reflects the stand of opposition party on public matter.
3.	It has greater chance to be approved by the Parliament.	3.	It has lesser chance to be approved by the Parliament.
4.	Its rejection by the House amounts to the expression of want of parliamentary confidence in the government and may lead to its resignation.	4.	Its rejection by the house has no implication on the parliamentary confidence in the government or its resignation.
5.	Its introduction in the House requires seven days’ notice.	5.	Its introduction in the House requires one month’s notice.
6.	It is drafted by the concerned department in consultation with the law department.	6.	Its drafting is the responsibility of the member concerned.

Nagaland's Hornbill Festival

- Hornbill Festival 2021 of Nagaland kicked off recently, after a gap of one year following the outbreak of COVID-19.

Hornbill Festival

- This festival usually takes place between the 1st and the 10th of December every year in Kohima. The festival gets its name from the Indian Hornbill.
- The Hornbill is a common bird among the folklores and tribes of Nagaland and can be commonly seen prancing around in the forests of Nagaland.
- Hornbill Festival is held at Naga Heritage Village, Kisama which is about 12 km from Kohima.
- The aim of the festival is to revive and protect the rich culture of Nagaland and display its extravaganza and traditions.



Great Hornbill

It is also known as the concave-casqued hornbill, great Indian hornbill or great pied hornbill is one of the larger members of the hornbill family.

It is found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

