



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

MARCH, 2022

Week-2

8-14 March, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

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

8th MARCH 2022

International Women's Day

- **Context:** The International Women's Day is celebrated annually across the globe on March 8th. This day is dedicated to women and talks about their achievements and the journey they have taken to better their lives.

Key Facts:

- This day is celebrated with the aim to focus on gender equality and spread the message that without the inclusion of half of the planet's population no vision can be fulfilled.
- The theme for International Women's Day 2022 is 'Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow'.
- The '#BreakTheBias' is the IWD 2022 campaign theme. Its aim is to encourage a gender-equal world free of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

NOTE:

- In 1977, the United Nations first officially recognized International Women's Day.
- On February 13, National Women's Day is held in India to commemorate Sarojini Naidu's birth anniversary. Sarojini Naidu was called the Nightingale of India and was a poet as well as political leader.

'Care at Work' Report

- **Context:** International Labor Organization (ILO) released the report "Care at work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender-equal world of work" on the occasion of International Women's Day.

Key Facts

- The report observed that around the world, 650 million women of reproductive age do not have maternity protection in line with Maternity Protection Convention, 2000.

- According to Maternity Protection Convention, 2000, pregnant women should be given a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave on at least two-thirds of their previous salary.
- Of the 185 countries surveyed, 85 countries did not meet the maternity leave provision.
- According to the report, under the current pace of reform, it would take at least 46 years to achieve minimum maternity rights.
- The report also highlighted how some workers do not get legal protection. They include workers in the informal sector, migrants, adoptive parents, and parents who are (LGBTQI+). The report noted that providing paternity leave would help both parents to balance work and child care responsibilities.

Kaushalya Matritva Yojana

- **Context:** The Chhattisgarh government has launched the 'Kaushalya Matritva Yojana'. On this occasion cheques of Rs. 5,000 each were also given to five women beneficiaries for safe motherhood at a state-level conference.

Key highlights

- Under this scheme, on the birth of a second girl child Rs. 5000 financial assistance will be given to women.
- 'Kanya Vivah Yojana' Coffee Table Book, brochures of schemes related to women empowerment, and Sakhi One Stop Center Telephone Directory were also released by the Chief Minister.
- This scheme was also started to address the issues of women lagging behind men in economic participation.
- On the occasion, officials doing excellent work in the direction of women's protection under 'Nava Bihan Yojana' and 'Sakhi One Stop Center' were felicitated by the Chief Minister.

9th MARCH 2022

123PAY: UPI for Feature Phones

- **Context:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das launched Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for feature phones called 'UPI123PAY'.

Key highlights

- UPI '123PAY' is a three-step method to initiate and execute services for those who use feature phones. Except 'scan and pay' option, all other transactions can be done by feature phones, with the help of UPI123PAY.
- Available services include initiating payments, paying utility bills, recharging FASTag, checking bank account balance, setting or changing UPI PIN.
- Bank account should be linked to feature phone to use UPI123Pay. There is no need for an internet connection, to initiate and execute transactions.
- According to RBI, four technology options can be utilized by users of feature phones for various transactions. They include: Calling an IVR (interactive voice response) number, application functionality in feature phones, missed call-based approach and proximity sound-based payments.

Next-Gen 3D Printed Catalysts

- **Context:** Next-Gen 3D Printed Catalysts are developed by researchers at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University in Melbourne, Australia.

Key Facts

- The researchers have claimed that they solved the biggest challenge in the development of hypersonic aircraft i.e. controlling the enormous heat that builds up when aircraft fly at speeds more than five times the speed of sound (Mach 5).
- The lab demonstrations showed that the 3D printed catalysts can power the hypersonic flight, simultaneously cooling the system.
- The 3D printed catalysts were made of metal alloys

and were coated with zeolites, synthetic minerals. These 3D printed catalysts have high versatility, powerful, efficient, cost-effective to manufacture, and easy to scale.

- Along with the aircraft sector, they provide a revolutionary solution to thermal management across many industries, where overheating is a biggest problem. They can also be used in air pollution control for vehicles and to improve indoor air quality, which became important to tackle respiratory viruses like COVID-19.

NOTE:

3D printing is the construction of a three-dimensional object from a Computer-Aided Design (CAD) model. Using the software, the model is first developed by a computer, which then gives instructions to a 3D printer. In this process, parts are built layer by layer by depositing material such as plastic according to the digital 3D design data.

Dalit Bandhu Scheme

- **Context:** The Telangana government in its state budget allocated Rs 17,700 crore for the Dalit Bandhu scheme for the year 2022-23.

Key highlights

- Dalit Bandhu is a welfare scheme for empowering Dalit families in Telangana and enabling entrepreneurship among them through a Rs. 10 lakh direct benefit transfer per family.
- This scheme was announced by the state government in 2021.
- The scheme envisioned as a social welfare scheme aimed at assisting Dalit families. The initiative will encourage Dalit entrepreneurship in the state by providing a direct benefit transfer of Rs 10 lakh per family to all those who do not have a bank guarantee in order to establish a business.
- The government's financial assistance through this scheme is free and it is not a loan of any type, hence, there's no need for repayment.

- Beneficiaries who are eligible will receive the amount in their bank accounts.

10th MARCH 2022

Donate-a-Pension Initiative

- The Union Ministry of Labour and Employment has launched the 'Donate-a-Pension' programme under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana.
- This initiative has been launched to make the process of contributing to and creating a pension fund for the support staff easier.
- Under this pension scheme initiative citizens can donate the premium contribution of their support staff such as drivers, domestic workers, helpers, etc.

About Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM)

- PM-SYM is a contributory and voluntary pension scheme in which the beneficiary contributes a pre-determined age-specific contribution, which is matched by the government in a 50:50 ratio.
- It is overseen by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and is implemented by the Life Insurance Corporation of India and CSC eGovernance Services India Limited.
- The funds raised through the PM-SYM pension system are invested in accordance with the Government of India's investment strategy.
- Under this scheme, the beneficiaries are promised a guaranteed monthly pension amount of Rs 3000 per month after they reach the age of 60. During the receipt of the pension, if the beneficiary dies 50 percent of the beneficiary's pension will be given to the spouse as a family pension.
- According to the Labour Ministry, the scheme is open to workers with a monthly income of Rs 15,000 or less and who are between the ages of 18 and 40. They should also not be covered by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), New Pension Scheme (NPS), or Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). Also, he or she should not be a tax payer.

National Land Monetization Corporation

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi has approved the setting up National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC).

Key facts about NLMC

- National Land Monetization Corporation was first proposed in the Union Budget 2021-22 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- NLMC will be under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of Public Enterprise, Ministry of Finance.
- NLMC's initial authorized share capital will be 5000 crores and paid-up share capital is 150 crore.
- Appointment of Chairman and non-Government Directors will be done through a merit-based selection process. The Board of Directors of NLMC will comprise senior Central Government officers and experts. Technical expertise will also be provided to NLMC to professionally manage the monetization process.
- NLMC will support and undertake monetization of excess land and buildings of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and other Government institutions. NLMC will also provide technical advice to the Government in the implementation of the asset monetization program.
- Monetization by National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC) will speed up the strategic disinvestment process of CPSEs.

Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP) and National Safety Awards (NSA)

- **Context:** Recently, Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP) and National Safety Awards (NSA) were presented by the Ministry of Labor and Employment.

About Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP)

- The Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar (VRP) was previously known as Shram Vir National Awards. This award is given in recognition of outstanding

suggestions given by workers and implemented by the management of the factory during the previous calendar year.

- The suggestions should be regarding improving the quality, productivity, safety, health of the industrial workers or conservation of environment in industrial premises.
- There are 28 awards and awardees will be given a cash prize and a certificate of merit in three categories:
 - **Class 'A':** 5 awards of Rs. 75,000/- each
 - **Class 'B':** 8 awards of Rs. 50,000/- each
 - **Class 'C':** 15 awards of Rs. 25,000/- each

About National Safety Awards (NSA)

- National Safety Awards are awarded in recognition of the outstanding safety performance of industrial establishments, construction sites, ports, and installations under the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB).
- The objective of the awards is to stimulate and maintain the interests of both the management and the workers in the prevention of accidents.
- The awards are given under twelve schemes: Ten are for Factories/Construction sites /Installations under AERB and two are for Ports.
- These awards help in improving the occupational safety of workers and the adoption of best safety practices by the industries.

11th MARCH 2022

Mission Indradhanush

- **Context:** Odisha topped the list at the national level in full immunization coverage, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5, with 90.5 percent coverage. It was announced during a review meeting on the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0.
- Preventive doses against 12 different kinds of diseases are included in full immunization. The

disease includes tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, jaundice, tetanus, whooping cough, brain fever, HIV, measles, pneumonia, diarrhoea, rubella, Japanese fever, and others.

About Mission Indradhanush

- The Government of India's Mission Indradhanush is a healthcare initiative. It was first launched on December 25, 2014. This scheme seeks to achieve 90 percent full immunization coverage in India and also sustain it by the year 2022.
- Vaccination is being provided against Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, Polio, Tetanus, severe form of Childhood Tuberculosis, Measles, and Hepatitis B and pneumonia & meningitis caused by Haemophilus influenza type-B and also against Japanese Encephalitis and Rotavirus Diarrhea in selected states and districts of the nation.

About Intensified Mission Indradhanush

- The Union Government launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) in 2017 to further intensify the immunization programme. The government hopes to reach every kid under the age of two, as well as all pregnant women who have been left out of the routine immunization programme.

About Intensified Mission Indradhanush 4.0

- Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 4.0 was launched recently by the Ministry of Health. It will ensure that unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children, as well as pregnant women, receive Routine Immunization (RI) services. Children up to the age of two will be covered under this drive.

PARAM Ganga

- **Context:** PARAM Ganga is the 'Made in India' Petascale supercomputer installed at IIT Roorkee under National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).

About PARAM Ganga

- PARAM Ganga has a supercomputing capacity of 1.66 PFLOPS (Peta Floating-Point Operations per Second). It was designed and commissioned by C-DAC under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
- The crucial components required to build PARAM Ganga are manufactured and assembled in India along with an indigenous software stack developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
- PARAM Ganga will provide greater computational power to Indian scientists and will give a boost to research and development activities across various disciplines.

About National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)

- National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- It is being implemented by the C-DAC and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore.
- It is the responsibility of C-DAC to design, develop and commission the supercomputing system.

Lord Buddha

- **Context:** The largest reclining statue of Lord Buddha in India is being built in Bodh Gaya, Bihar.

Key facts

- This statue is being built by Buddha International Welfare Mission.
- The statue will be 30 feet high and 100 feet long.
- In the statue, Lord Buddha is in the sleeping posture.
- The giant statue's construction began in the year 2019.
- This statue is being made with fiberglass and is being built by sculptors who are from Kolkata.

- From February 2023, the giant statue of Lord Buddha will be opened for the devotees.
- Bodh Gaya is the place where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment, hence, the statue is being built here.

About Mahaparinirvana Mudra

- Lord Buddha's idol is in the Mahaparinirvana Mudra is very important in Buddhism as he preached to his followers in this pose before attaining Mahaparinirvana.
- Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh also has an idol of Lord Buddha in this posture as this where he attained Mahaparinirvana.

About Bodh Gaya

- Bodh Gaya is a pilgrimage site located in Bihar's Gaya district. It is the place where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.
- The four most important pilgrimage sites related to Gautam Buddha's life are Bodh Gaya, Kushinagar, Lumbini, and Sarnath with Bodh Gaya being the most important.
- Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002.

12th MARCH 2022

Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) Status

- **Context:** Joe Biden, the U.S. President announced that the U.S. will revoke Russia's Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status in the wake of Russian invasion of Ukraine.

About PNTR Status

- Permanent Normal Trade Relations status is a legal designation in the U.S. for free trade with a foreign country.
- The U.S. changed the name of Most Favored Nation (MFN) to PNTR in 1998.

About MFN Status

- MFN status is a designation given by one country to another country. The country that is awarded MFN status will be given all trade advantages, such as low tariffs, that any other country also receives.
- MFN status is one of the cornerstones of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The members of WTO agree to accord MFN status to each other. However, there are certain exceptions for preferential treatment of developing countries, regional free trade areas, and customs unions.
- As per the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), any country can revoke the MFN status that it had previously awarded to another country. According to Article 21 (National Security) of WTO, MFN status can be revoked without giving any explanation.

■ NOTE:

India revoked Pakistan's MFN status in response to the Pulwama attack of 2019. In 2022, G7 nations resolved jointly to revoke Russia's MFN status in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Captive Employer Initiative

- **Context:** Recently, a webinar was hosted on the Capital Employer Initiative which is a programme financed by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)- a nationwide placement-linked skill training programme.

About Capital Employer Initiative

- Captive Employer initiative is aimed at addressing the vision of a demand-based and dynamic skilling ecosystem that caters to the requirements of the industry while assuring sustainable placements for the rural poor youth of the country.
- Under this initiative, post-training placement of candidates for at least six months with a minimum CTC of Rs 10,000 has been assured.
- This initiative will also give a significant boost to the industry and they must make optimum use of this opportunity.

About Creative Employer

- Any industry or employer that employs candidates within its own organisation or one of its subsidiaries and has adequate in-house training facilities is referred to as a captive employer.
- The initiative will enable the industry to seek trainees as needed, with active cooperation from States and UTs, and train them to meet their own organizational or industrial needs, as well as provide candidates with guaranteed placement.

About DDU-GKY

- DDU-GKY is a nationwide placement-linked skill training program that is funded by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- It is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission, which is specifically aimed at rural poor youth aged 15 to 35, with the goal of increasing income in poor households and assisting rural youth in achieving their professional goals.

PLI Scheme

- **Context:** The Ministry of Civil Aviation recently invited applications from the eligible drone manufacturers for the PLI scheme.

About PLI Scheme for Drone

- Under the scheme, manufacturers of drones and drone components will be given an incentive of 20% of the value addition made by them during the next three years.
- The value addition will be calculated as the annual sales revenue from drones and drone components minus their purchase cost. Also, there must be a minimum value addition of 40% of net sales for drones and drone components.
- Under the schemes, the total incentive provided is Rs. 120 crore spread over three financial years. With the help of the PLI scheme, it is expected that by the year 2026 the Indian drone industry will have a total turnover of up to Rs 15,000 crore.

NOTE:

Note: Recently, the government banned the import of foreign drones to promote their domestic manufacturing. However, there are certain exemptions. With due clearance, drones can be imported for R&D, defense, and security purposes.

13th MARCH 2022
ESA Vigil

- **Context:** The European Space Agency's (ESA) Vigil Mission, formerly known as Lagrange, is a planned solar weather mission. Under this mission, two spacecraft will be stationed at the Lagrangian points L1 and L5, respectively.

Key facts

- This mission plans to position two spacecraft in the L1 and L5 Lagrangian points, where gravitational forces interact to provide a stable region where propellant may be saved and observations can be made.
- Since L1 is located in the solar wind 'upstream' from Earth measurements at the L1 will provide information about the space weather approaching Earth. At L1, the spacecraft will measure the density, speed, dynamic pressure, and temperature of the solar wind, as well as the charged particle environment and the strength and direction of the interplanetary magnetic field.
- The L5 point allows the tracking of coronal mass ejections (CMEs) from the side in order to assess their speed and direction. At L5, the spacecraft would conduct measurements of the interplanetary medium and monitor the solar disk and corona.

About Lagrange Points

- The gravitational forces of a two-body system, such as the Sun and the Earth, produce enhanced regions of attraction and repulsion at Lagrange Points in space. Spacecrafts use these points to reduce the amount of fuel needed to remain in position.
- Lagrange points are named after Joseph-Louis Lagrange, an Italian-French mathematician.

MSME Innovative Scheme

- **Context:** The Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) launched the MSME Innovative Scheme.

About MSME Innovative Scheme

- MSME Innovative Scheme aims to guide the MSMEs in developing business ideas into viable business propositions. Thus, the scheme acts as a hub for innovation activities.
- The scheme will provide support through guidance, financial and marketing assistance, technical support, etc. to ensure the scaling up of MSMEs.
- This new scheme was launched with the combination of existing sub-schemes around incubation, design, and IPR for MSMEs. These schemes will continue to operate as individual programs.
- The incubation component of the "MSME Innovative Scheme" will help MSMEs in adopting the latest technologies.

National Digital Tourism Mission

- **Context:** The draft report for setting up of National Digital Tourism Mission is published for feedback from the public.

Key highlights

- The draft report highlighted that the tourism sector is highly fragmented and there are many challenges in subsectors of tourism such as transport, accommodation, restaurants, etc. However, there are many opportunities in these sectors.
- The draft report noted that the tourism sector is unable to reap the benefits of information exchange because most of the tourism systems developed by the government and the private sector are currently functioning in silos.
- The current data systems don't interact with each other using a common language, thereby hindering data analytics and the subsequent policy-making.

About National Digital Tourism Mission

- The National Digital Tourism Mission aims to bridge the current information gap among various stakeholders of the tourism sector with the help of a digital highway.
- The objective is to harness the full potential of digitization in the tourism sector by enabling the exchange of information and services.

14th MARCH 2022

National Financial Reporting Authority

- **Context:** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey as the chairperson of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA).

About Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

- National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) is a statutory body, established in 2018 under the Companies Act 2013. It is an independent regulatory body, which oversees the auditing profession, accounting standards, and policies in India.
- Powers and duties of NFRA mentioned in Section 132 of Companies Act 2013 are:
 - To recommend accounting and auditing standards in India.
 - To undertake investigations, and impose sanctions against auditors and audit firms for any violations.
 - The sanctions can be either in the form of penalties or debarment from practice for up to 10 years.
- The main reason for establishing NFRA is to improve the transparency of financial statements presented by India's listed companies and large unlisted companies.

YUva Vlgyani KAryakram (YUVIKA)

- **Context:** YUVIKA-2022 residential programme will be held in coming months.

About YUVIKA

- YUVIKA (Yuva Vlgyani KAryakram) is an annual space education and training programme sponsored by ISRO and funded by India's Department of Space.
- The programme was started by the Indian government in order to inspire early interest in space technologies among the youth. The programme was announced through ISRO's Student Outreach Programme.
- The aim of this program is to develop and nurture an interest in space science in young minds.
- The criteria for selection are academic achievement and extracurricular activities. Participants are chosen based on a number of factors, including grades in Class 8 and participation in science fairs organised by the school, district, state, or Central government authority in the previous three years.

International Arbitration Centre

- **Context:** The CJI recently laid foundation for International Arbitration Centre in Hyderabad. It was proposed by the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) Trust. IAMC-Hyderabad is India's first arbitration centre for alternate dispute resolution.

Arbitration

- Arbitration is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedure in which a dispute is submitted, by agreement of the parties, to one or more arbitrators who make a binding decision on the dispute.
- In choosing arbitration, the parties opt for a private dispute resolution procedure instead of going to court.

About Conciliation

- Conciliation is also an alternative dispute resolution instrument where parties seek to reach an amicable dispute settlement with the assistance of the conciliator, who acts as a neutral third party.
- It is a voluntary proceeding, where the parties involved are free to agree and attempt to resolve their dispute by conciliation.