



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

APRIL, 2022

Week-2

8-14 April, 2022

★★ Useful for ★★

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

8th APRIL 2022

UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

- **Context:** Russia has been suspended from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) after there were allegations that its soldiers violated human rights in Ukraine.

Key highlights

- The United States first moved the resolution to suspend Russia over its military aggression in Ukraine. The resolution to remove Russia was titled 'Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council'.
- Under this resolution, grave concerns regarding human rights abuses committed by Russia in Ukraine were highlighted.
- The campaign to suspend Russia started after photos and videos of civilians killed by the Russian army in Bucha came to the fore.
- The UNGA can suspend any Council member that committed human rights violation during its membership term. A two-thirds majority vote is required by the General Assembly to suspend a member.

About UNHRC

- The UNHRC is an inter-governmental body under the United Nations. It is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights across the world.
- It also investigates human rights breaches and addresses various human rights issues.
- It was established on 15th March 2006 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The UNHRC replaced the earlier formed United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- There are 47-member states in the UNHRC and they serve for three years. They cannot be re-elected immediately after serving two consecutive terms.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (Amendment) Bill

- **Context:** The Lok Sabha has passed the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

Key facts

- The Bill has been passed to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005.
- In accordance with India's international commitments, the amendment bill was passed to prohibit the financing of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.
- The 2005 Act prohibited the transport, manufacturing, and transfer of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

About Weapons of Mass Destruction

- A weapon of mass destruction is a radiological, nuclear, biological, chemical, or any other weapon that can cause significant harm as well as kill numerous individuals and also cause great damage to infrastructures, the biosphere, or the natural structures.
- There are some of the treaties which regulate biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. These are the Geneva Protocol, 1925, which banned the use of biological and chemical weapons; the Chemical Weapons Convention, 1992, and the Biological Weapons Convention, 1972, which bans chemical and biological weapons
- The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regulates nuclear weapons proliferation.

New Nuclear Power Plants

- **Context:** In-principle approval has been accorded by the government of India for five new sites for locating nuclear power plants in the future.

Key facts

- The government has provided financial sanctions for the construction of 10 indigenously made 700 Mega Watt Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) that are to be set up in fleet mode.
- By 2031, the country's nuclear capacity is expected to reach 22,480 Mega Watt.
- At present, there are 22 reactors that are operational in the country with a total capacity of 6,780 Mega Watt.
- In January 2021, one reactor KAPP-3 that generates 700 Mega Watt has been connected to the grid. Also, 10 reactors are in various stages of construction at present and they will be adding a total capacity of 8,000 Mega Watt after their completion.
- Through the use of indigenously mined Uranium, the uranium requirement for the domestic safeguarded nuclear reactors is being met. Also, efforts have been made for the procurement of nuclear fuel from Kazakhstan, Russia, Canada, and Uzbekistan.

9th APRIL 2022

RBI Guidelines on Digital Banking Units

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently released guidelines for the banks of the country to set up digital banking units.

Key facts

- An announcement regarding the setting up of 75 DBUs in 75 districts was made in the Union Budget 2022-23.
- According to the guidelines, permission to open DBUs has been given to scheduled commercial banks (SCB) that have past digital banking experience.
- They can open DBUs in Tier 1 to Tier 6 centres without taking any permission from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The DBUs that will be opened by the SCBs will be treated as Banking Outlets. Each DBU has to be housed distinctly, with separate provisions for exit and entry.

- The guidelines state that the DBUs must be separate from the existing Banking Outlet with proper formats provided that will be appropriate for digital banking users.
- Each DBU must be headed by a senior and experienced executive of the bank who can be designated as the DBU's Chief Operating Officer (COO).
- Each DBU will be providing certain digital banking services and products. The products must be on both the assets and liabilities side of the digital banking segment's balance sheet.

About Digital Banking Units (DBUs)

- A DBU is a specialized business unit that houses minimum digital infrastructure for the purpose of delivering digital banking services and products.
- The DBU's objective is the expansion of financial inclusion and digital financial services.

RBI Monetary Policy

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India led by Governor Shaktikanta Das has released the monetary policy update for April 2022.

Key highlights

- The Policy Repo Rate has been kept unchanged at 4 percent.
- The Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate remains unchanged at 4.25 percent.
- The Bank Rate also remains unchanged at 4.25 percent.
- Reverse Repo Rate is 3.35 percent.
- The Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) is 4 percent.
- The Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) is 18 percent.
- The forecast for GDP growth has been lowered to 7.2 percent due to the ongoing Russia Ukraine War. The earlier forecast by the RBI was 7.8 percent.
- The RBI announced the citizens of the nation can now withdraw money from ATMs without the usage of any cards in all the banks across India. This decision has been taken to boost the Digital India initiative.

About Monetary Policy Committee

- The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India.
- The meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee are held at least 4 times a year (specifically, at least once a QUARTER) and it publishes its decisions after each such meeting.
- The six-member Monetary Policy Committee is headed by Shaktikanta Das (the RBI governor).
- **Members:**
 1. Dr. Michael Debabrata Patra (Deputy Governor of the RBI)
 2. Dr. Mridul K. Sagar (an RBI officer who is nominated by the Central Board)
 3. Prof. Ashima Goyal (Indira Gandhi Institute of Developmental Research)
 4. Prof. Jayanth R Varma (professor of finance at IIM Ahmedabad)
 5. Dr. Shashanka Bhide (a senior adviser with the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi).

10th APRIL 2022

Atal Innovation Mission

- **Context:** The continuation of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has been approved by the Union Cabinet until March 2023.

Key highlights

- The AIM will be working on creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation culture in India.
- Along with AIM's extension, other targets have been included like the setting up of 101 Atal Incubation Centers (AICs) and 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs).
- 200 start-ups will also be supported by the mission via the Atal New India Challenges.
- Rs 2000 crore has been allocated keeping in mind the new targets for the support and establishment of the beneficiaries.

About Atal Innovation Mission

- The Atal Innovation Mission was announced in 2015 under the NITI Aayog. The aim of this mission was to promote and create innovation and an entrepreneurial ecosystem across the country.
- The mission was launched with the intention of reaching out to the key stakeholders at various universities, schools, MSMEs, research institutions, and industries and involving them in this mission.
- The focus of the Atal Innovation Mission lies in the creation of necessary institutions and infrastructure to promote innovation across the country.
- Rs. 2000 crore have been raised by AIM-supported start-ups from private equity and government investors.
- AIM has also helped in the creation of thousands of jobs and has helped in providing employment opportunities in the rural areas as well as tier 2 and tier 3 cities.
- This programme is being run across all the states and Union Territories of the country.

Expanding Heat Resilience Report

- **Context:** According to a new report titled 'Expanding Heat Resilience,' the cities and districts of India must increase their efforts to protect the vulnerable during the summer. This report has been released by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

Key highlights

- The report has been released while the country, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), has recorded its warmest March since 1901.
- In March 2022, temperatures reached 40 degrees Celsius across large parts of western and central India.
- In Kerala, and Himachal Pradesh extreme temperatures are being recorded. These states have no history of heatwaves.
- According to the report, in 2019 the number of states that are affected by heatwaves stood at 28 whereas in 2018 it was 19.

- The NRDC report has highlighted heat action plans that have been implemented by a few Indian states. Heat warnings have been issued by Andhra Pradesh and the state government has also created public awareness.
- Odisha has restricted the use of public transportation services during peak hours in the summer with the aim of limiting passengers' exposure to heat stress.
- The report also talks about the success of the heat action plan of Ahmedabad that was introduced in 2013 and is South Asia's first such initiative developed. This initiative helped in avoiding 1,190 deaths a year due to heat.
- This report will help experts to formulate plans that will help during the summer months and will also help in monitoring the deaths during or immediately after a heatwave.

11th APRIL 2022

State Energy and Climate Index

- **Context:** The State Energy and Climate Index (SECI) has been launched by NITI Aayog.

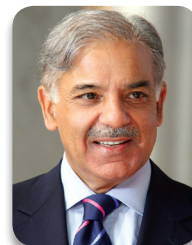
Key facts

- It is a first-of-its-kind index that aims to track the efforts made in the energy and climate sector by the states and UTs of India.
- This index's parameters have been devised while keeping in mind the country's goals regarding clean energy transition and climate change.
- This index has ranked the states and the UTs of India based on the efforts they have put towards improving energy consumption, energy access, safeguarding the environment, and energy efficiency.
- This index has also helped to move toward the agenda of the accessible, affordable, clean, and efficient energy transition at the State level.
- This index has also encouraged healthy competition among the states and UTs of the nation in different fields of climate and energy.

- **Six parameters have been used by this index that are:**
 - Access Affordability and Reliability of Energy
 - Discoms' (Power distribution companies) Performance
 - Energy Efficiency
 - Clean Energy Initiatives
 - New Initiatives
 - Environmental Sustainability
- These parameters have been further divided into 27 indicators.
- **Top 3 performers among the larger states**
 1. Gujarat
 2. Kerala
 3. Punjab
- **Top 3 performers among the smaller states**
 1. Goa
 2. Tripura
 3. Manipur
- **Top 3 performers among UTs**
 1. Chandigarh
 2. Delhi
 3. Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli
- The states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand were placed at the bottom of this index.

Shehbaz Sharif

- **Context:** On 11th April 2022, Shehbaz Sharif took oath as Pakistan's 23rd prime minister. Senate chairperson Sadiq Sanjarani administered the oath to Sharif.



Key highlights

- After securing 174 votes (the requirement for a majority is 172), Sharif was declared the prime minister of the country.
- Shehbaz Sharif is ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif's younger brother. He has also served as the Punjab province's chief minister for three terms.
- The united opposition that deposed Imran Khan from the post of prime minister chose Sharif as their leader.

Background of event

- The then PM Imran Khan was removed from the post on 9th April 2022 following a no-confidence motion. After his removal, Imran Khan has alleged a conspiracy by the US to topple his government.

12th APRIL 2022

HELINA

- **Context:** Helina, the Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) which is the Nag missile's helicopter-launched version was recently tested. The testing was conducted in the country's northern high-altitude mountain regions after it was successfully tested in Pokhran's desert region.

Key facts

- The test was conducted as part of the ongoing user validation trials of this missile's third-generation 'fire-and-forget' class missile.
- This missile has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- This missile has been developed to be integrated with choppers in both the Air Force and the Army.
- Dhruvastra is the name that is sometimes used to refer to the Air Force version of this missile.
- This missile system can be fired during all-weather day and night and can destroy tanks with conventional as well as explosive reactive armour.
- The maximum range of this missile is 7 km and it has been developed and designed to be integrated into the ALH's (Advance Light Helicopter) weaponized version.

India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

- **Context:** India and the United States recently held a 2+2 Defence and Foreign Minister dialogue in Washington. In this annual meeting, the fourth of its kind, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar participated.

Key highlights

- Talks were held with the United States' Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Under the Biden administration, this was the first such dialogue to be held.
- Following the dialogue, a pact on Space Situational Awareness was also signed.
- In this dialogue, topics like the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership between India and the US were discussed.
- Other topics related to science, defence, technology, emerging technology, public health, climate, COVID-19 pandemic management, etc. were also discussed.
- Along with the 2+2 dialogue, the Foreign and the Defence Ministry also held bilateral meetings. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh discussed major defence-related deals with Lloyd Austin, Defense Secretary. The purchase of 30 Predator armed drones by India was the major talking point in this meeting. Also, the tender by the Navy for 26 decks-based fighter aircraft for INS Vikramaditya, and INS Vikrant was discussed.

13th APRIL 2022

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

- **Context:** Recently, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved Rs. 5911 crores for the continuation of the 'Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan' (RGSA).

Key highlights

- Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme has been extended for a period of four years from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2026 with the aim of developing the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) governance capabilities.
- The scheme will also be focusing on empowering the elected representatives of Panchayati raj institutions for various leadership roles

- It will also be aiming to help 2.78 lakh rural local bodies across the country achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- The revamped RGSA will ensure that development happens in villages and will bridge the gap present between the urban and rural areas.
- The total financial outlay for this scheme is Rs. 5,911 crore with the central government providing Rs 3,700 crore while the states will provide Rs 2,211 crore.
- Under this scheme, capabilities will be developed to deliver the SDGs through local governance that will be inclusive along with a focus on the optimum utilisation of all available resources.
- **Through this scheme, the PRIs will be able to deliver SDG localization based on the themes that are:**
 - healthy, child-friendly, and water sufficient village
 - enhanced livelihood and poverty-free villages
 - village infrastructure that will be self-sufficient and socially secured villages
 - green and clean village
 - engendered development in the village
 - village with good governance
 - Strengthening of Gram Sabhas
- This initiative will also be strengthening the Gram Sabhas so that they can function as an effective institution and also include vulnerable groups.
- Under this scheme, the Panchayats will be able to strengthen themselves progressively through various incentives that will be provided on the basis of the criteria of recognizing Panchayats' roles in achieving SDGs.

SVANidhi se Samridhhi Programme

- **Context:** The 'SVANidhi se Samridhhi' program has been launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in additional 126 cities across 14 States and UTs of India.

Key highlights

- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic-related challenges in 2020-21, this program was successful in providing

social security benefits to lakhs of street vendors and their families across the country thus protecting them from the livelihoods risks.

- The Phase-1 of the 'SVANidhi se Samridhhi' was launched on 4th January 2021, an additional program under the PM SVANidhi was launched in 125 cities across India. In the first phase, 35 lakh street vendors and their families were covered.
- Scheme sanctions of 22.5 lakh have been extended to them along with 16 lakh insurance benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Jeeban Jyoti Yojana.
- Pension benefits of 2.7 Lakh have also been extended under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana.
- After Phase 1's success, MoHUA has expanded this program to additional 126 cities and has the aim of covering an additional 28 lakh street vendors and their families across the country.

About PM SVANidhi

- The Prime Minister Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) program was launched by MoHUA in June 2020.
- Under this scheme, an affordable working capital loan is provided to the street vendors of the country. The scheme not only extends loans to the country's street vendors but also aims for their economic upliftment and holistic development.
- Up to Rs 10 thousand rupees is provided to the street vendors as a working capital loan for the facilitation of the resumption of their livelihoods that was affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AVSAR

- **Context:** The AVSAR- 'Connect to Opportunities Initiative' has recently been launched by Jammu & Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Key facts

- AVSAR is a dedicated portal that will be used to connect job aspirants of J&K with the industry. This initiative was launched under Mission Youth.
- This newly launched initiative has the aim of creating more than 10,000 job opportunities for the aspirants of the J&K in 2022.
- This initiative has been provisioned so that the youth of J&K can be facilitated with real-time information informing the aspirants about job opportunities and pre-placement activities.
- All technical institutions of J&K will be on-board on this portal to achieve the best possible outcome for the youths of J&K.

14th APRIL 2022

Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya

- **Context:** On 14th April 2022, Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. The contribution of India's prime ministers will be showcased in the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya.

Key facts

- The sangrahalaya has been built adjacent to the Nehru Memorial Museum Library in Teen Murti Bhavan on a 10,000-square metre piece of land.
- The museum will be housing exhibits related to the former prime ministers of the country. The museum will have 43 galleries.
- The design of the museum has incorporated energy conservation practices that are sustainable. To build this museum no trees have been transplanted or felled.
- The logo of this museum represents the hands of the Indian people holding the Dharma Chakra which symbolizes democracy and the nation.
- All the information for the museum has been collected with the help of the institutions like Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati, Sansad TV, Films Division, Media Houses (Indian and foreign), and Ministry of Defence, Foreign News Agencies, etc.

- The contents of the museum are being displayed using Virtual reality, holograms, augmented reality, interactive kiosks, multimedia, smartphone applications, computerized kinetic sculptures, interactive screens, etc.

'Tree City of the World' Tag

- **Context:** The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN-FAO) along with Arbor Day Foundation has recognized Hyderabad and Mumbai jointly as the '2021 Tree City of the World.'

Key highlights

- The recognition has been won by the two Indian cities due to their commitment to maintaining and growing greenery and urban trees so as to build resilient, healthy, and happy cities.
- This is the first time Mumbai has made it to the list.
- Hyderabad has been featured on this list for the second consecutive year.

About 'Tree Cities of the World' tag

- The programme was started by the UN-FAO and Arbor Day Foundation, an American non-profit organisation.
- The aim of starting this programme was to recognise towns and cities across the world that are committed to ensuring that their trees and urban forests are sustainably managed, properly maintained, and duly celebrated. The programme also provides a framework for a sustainable and healthy urban forestry programme in a city or a town.
- To be recognized as a 'Tree City,' a city needs to meet five core standards that show its commitment to caring for its forests and trees. The city must also have a dedicated annual budget for implementing a tree management plan. Also, the city must organise an annual celebration of trees with the aim of raising awareness among the people and must also acknowledge the citizens who have carried out the tree programme in the city.