



Civils Cafe

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IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR PRELIMS VOL 14

- OPEC AND OPEC PLUS
- GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2021
- RBI RETAIL DIRECT SCHEME
- NEW SHEPHARD ROCKET SYSTEM
- 5G
- SEA SNOT
- WHITEFLIES
- NIPUN BHARAT PROGRAMME
- PMFBY 2.0



SCAN TO EXPLORE





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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1) OPEC AND OPEC PLUS

ABOUT OPEC

- OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the **Baghdad Conference in 1960**
- It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
- The founding members are Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- It aims to manage the supply of oil in an effort to set the price of oil in the world market, in order to avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies of both producing and purchasing countries.

ABOUT OPEC+

- The non-OPEC countries which export crude oil along with the 14 OPECs are termed as OPEC plus countries.
- OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

INTERNAL SECURITY

2) GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2021

IN NEWS: - The 15th edition of Global Peace Index 2021 has been released.

ABOUT GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2021

- The Global Peace Index is released by the Institute for Economics & Peace.

- The GPI ranks 172 independent states and territories (collectively accounting for 99.7 per cent of the world's population) according to their levels of peacefulness.
- It also identifies potential determinants of peace.
- The index is composed of 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators
- These indicators are grouped into three key domains:
 - ongoing conflict
 - safety and security and
 - Militarization
- Iceland has topped the peace index.
- Afghanistan is the least peaceful country in the world for the fourth consecutive year.
- India has been ranked 135th in the 2021 Global Peace Index.



THE INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

The Institute for Economics and Peace is an independent, not-for-profit think tank dedicated to building a greater understanding of the key drivers of peace, as well as identifying the economic benefits that increased peacefulness can deliver. It is headquartered in Sydney, Australia

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements

1. Global Peace index is released by the UN
2. The indicators used in the index are grouped into 3 domains: ongoing conflict, safety and security and militarization

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - b

ECONOMY**3) RBI RETAIL DIRECT SCHEME**

IN NEWS: - Prime Minister has launched the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)- Retail Direct Scheme to open up the Government bond market for the retail investors.

ABOUT RBI RETAIL DIRECT SCHEME

- In February 2021, RBI proposed to allow retail investors to open gilt accounts with the central bank to invest in Government securities (G-secs) directly.
- Under the scheme, small investors can buy or sell government securities (G-Secs), or bonds, directly without an intermediary like a mutual fund.
- It is similar to placing funds in debt instruments such as fixed deposits in banks.

A Gilt Account can be compared with a bank account, except that the account is

debited or credited with treasury bills or government securities instead of money.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

4) NEW SHEPHARD ROCKET SYSTEM

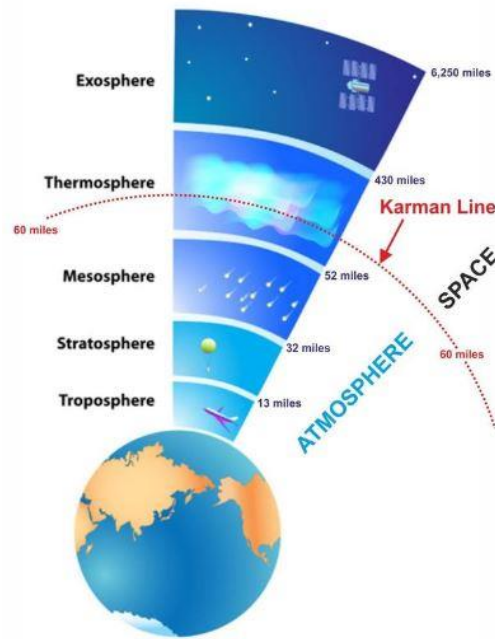
IN NEWS: - Amazon founder and billionaire Jeff Bezos's space company called Blue Origin concluded the online auction for the first seat on New Shepard, a rocket system meant to take tourists to space.

ABOUT NEW SHEPHARD ROCKET SYSTEM

- New Shepard has been named after astronaut Alan Shepard - the first American to go to space
- Essentially, it is a rocket system that has been designed to take astronauts and research payloads past the Karman line – the internationally recognized boundary of space
- The system is built by Blue Origin.
- It offers flights to space over 100 km above the Earth and accommodation for payloads.
- The system is a fully reusable, vertical takeoff and vertical landing space vehicle.
- The idea is to provide easier and more cost-effective access to space meant for purposes such as academic research, corporate technology development and entrepreneurial ventures among others.
- It will also allow space tourists to experience microgravity by taking them 100 km above the Earth.

Karman Line

The Karman line is the internationally recognized boundary of space.



The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) defines Karman Line as the altitude of 100 kilometres above Earth's mean sea level. FAI is the world governing body for air sports, and also stewards definitions regarding human spaceflight.

5) 5G

IN NEWS: - Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has announced that India's major metros will have 5G services next year.

ABOUT 5G

- 5G is the fifth-generation technology standard for broadband cellular networks, which cellular phone companies began deploying worldwide in 2019
- It is a new global wireless standard after 1G, 2G, 3G, and 4G networks.

Benefits of 5G

- Operate in the millimeter wave spectrum (30-300 GHz) which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds.
- Operate in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high frequency spectrum.
- Reduced latency will support new applications that leverage the power of 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence. (In a wireless (or wired) connection or network, latency refers to the delay between a signal or information originating at the transmitting end, and when it is received at the other end.)
- Increased capacity on 5G networks can minimize the impact of load spikes, like those that take place during sporting events and news events.

Evolution from First Generation to Fifth Generation

- 1G was launched in the 1980s and worked on analog radio signals and supported only voice calls.
- 2G was launched in the 1990s which uses digital radio signals and supports both voice and data transmission with a bandwidth of 64 Kbps.
- 3G was launched in the 2000s with a speed of 1 Mbps to 2 Mbps and it has the ability to transmit telephone signals including digitised voice, video calls and conferencing.
- 4G was launched in 2009 with a peak speed of 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps and it also enables 3D virtual reality.

LATENCY

Latency is a measure of delay. In a network, latency measures the time it takes for some data to get to its destination across the network

Latency meaning in networking is best thought of as the amount of time it takes for a packet of data to be captured, transmitted, processed through multiple

devices, then received at its destination and decoded. Latency is measured in milliseconds, or during speed tests, it's referred to as a ping rate.

LTE AND VoLTE

- LTE is called 'Long Term Evolution'.
- Airtel launched the first LTE network service in India in 2012.
- Generally, LTE is also called 4G.
- VoLTE stands for 'Voice over Long-Term Evolution'. It also supports 4G networks.
- In VoLTE, you can enjoy data connectivity while calling. Reliance Jio had started this VoLTE service in India

PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements

1. 5G has a increased latency than 4G
2. 5G operates in 3 bands
3. 5G operates in the millimeter wave spectrum

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3 only

Answer: - b

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

6) SEA SNOT

IN NEWS: - Turkey's Sea of Marmara, which connects the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea, has witnessed the largest outbreak of 'sea snout'

ABOUT SEA SNOT

- Sea snot is a slimy layer of grey or green sludge in the sea which can cause considerable damage to the marine ecosystem.
- It is marine mucilage that is formed when algae are overloaded with nutrients as a result of water pollution combined with the effects of climate change.
- The nutrient overload occurs when algae feast on warm weather caused by global warming. Water pollution adds to the problem.
- It looks like a viscous, brown and foamy substance.
- Overproduction of phytoplankton caused by climate change and the uncontrolled dumping of household and industrial waste into the seas has led to the present crisis



PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements

1. Sea snot is a slimy layer of grey or green sludge in the sea which can cause considerable damage to the marine ecosystem.
2. Water pollution contributes to Sea Snot

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - c

7) WHITEFLIES

IN NEWS: - Exotic invasive whiteflies in India are causing direct and indirect yield losses in agriculture, horticulture and forestry crop plants.

ABOUT WHITEFLIES

- Whiteflies are tiny, sap-sucking insects that may become abundant in vegetable and ornamental plantings, especially during warm weather.
- They excrete sticky honeydew and cause yellowing or death of leaves.
- They are members of the insect family Aleyrodidae (order Homoptera)
- Most of the whitefly species are native to the Caribbean islands or Central America.
- Around eight types of whitefly species are found in India. The first invasive whitefly was reported from Kerala in 1995. These species are now distributed throughout India except Jammu & Kashmir.
- Whiteflies reduce the production yield and also damage crops. Approximately 1.35 lakh hectares of coconut and oil palm in India are affected by the rugose spiralling whitefly.
- Other invasive whiteflies were also found to expand their host range on valuable plant species, especially coconut, banana, mango, sapota, guava, cashew, oil palm, and ornamental plants such as bottle palm, false bird of paradise, butterfly palm and important medicinal plants.

Controlling Whiteflies:

- Whiteflies have been difficult to control by using available synthetic insecticides.

Biological Control Methods:

- They are currently being controlled by naturally occurring insect predators, parasitoids (natural enemies of pests, provide biological control of pests in greenhouses and crop fields) and entomopathogenic fungi (fungi that can kill insects).
- Entomopathogenic fungi specific to whiteflies are isolated, purified, grown in the lab or mass-produced and applied into the whitefly infested field in combination with the release of lab-reared potential predators and parasitoids.
- They are not just environmentally friendly but also economically feasible.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements

1. Whiteflies can be controlled by Entomopathogenic fungi.
2. Around eight types of whitefly species are found in India
3. They excrete sticky honeydew and cause yellowing or death of leaves.

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3 only

Answer: - c

MISCELLANEOUS**8) NIPUN BHARAT PROGRAMME**

IN NEWS: -Ministry of Education has launched NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat Scheme.

ABOUT NIPUN BHARAT PROGRAMME

- This initiative is being launched as a part of NEP (National Education Policy) 2020.
- The NIPUN Bharat Programme aims to cover the learning needs of children in the age group of 3 to 9 years.
- NIPUN Bharat is envisaged to support and encourage students, along with their schools, teachers, parents, and communities, in every way possible, to help realise the true potential of our children and propel the country to new heights.
- Target of the programme is to ensure that every child in the country attains foundational literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27.
- The goals of the Mission are set in the form of Lakshya Soochi or Targets for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy.
- Lakshyas have been developed from Balvatika to Grade 3.
- The Lakshyas are based on the learning outcomes developed by the NCERT and international research and ORF studies.

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**→ Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan DhanYojana****★ Eligibility**

- Small and Marginal Farmer (SMF) – a farmer who owns cultivable land upto 2 hectare as per land records of the concerned State/UT.
- Age of 18- 40 years

★ **Salient features of the scheme:**

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme for the farmers which are age groups between 18 and 40 years
- The scheme is voluntary and contributory for farmers A monthly pension of Rs. 3000/- will be provided to them on attaining the age of 60 years.
- The farmers will have to make a monthly contribution of Rs.55 to Rs.200, depending on their age of entry, in the Pension Fund till they reach the retirement date i.e. the age of 60 years.
- The Central Government will also make an equal contribution of the same amount in the pension fund.
- The spouse is also eligible to get a separate pension of Rs.3000/- upon making separate contributions to the Fund.
- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) shall be the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for Pension payout.
- If the spouse does not wish to continue, the total contribution made by the farmer along with interest will be paid to the spouse.
- If there is no spouse, then total contribution along with interest will be paid to the nominee.
- If the farmer dies after the retirement date, the spouse will receive 50% of the pension as Family Pension.
- After the death of both the farmer and the spouse, the accumulated corpus shall be credited back to the Pension Fund.

- The beneficiaries may opt voluntarily to exit the Scheme after a minimum period of 5 years of regular contributions.
- The farmers, who are also beneficiaries of the PM-Kisan Scheme, will have the option to allow their contribution to be debited from the benefit of that Scheme directly.

★ **Exclusion criteria**

- SMFs covered under any other statutory social security schemes such as National Pension Scheme (NPS), Employees' State Insurance Corporation scheme, Employees' Fund Organization Scheme, etc.
- Farmers who have opted for Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan Dhan Yojana (PM-SYM) administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment
- Farmers who have opted for Pradhan Mantri Laghu Vyapari Maandhan Yojana (PM-LVM) administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment

★ **Other exclusion categories**

- All Institutional Landholders
- Former and present holders of constitutional posts
- Former and present Ministers/ State Ministers and former/present Members of Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha/ State Legislative Assemblies/ State Legislative Councils, former and present Mayors of Municipal Corporations, former and present Chairpersons of District Panchayats.
- All serving or retired officers and employees of Central/ State Government Ministries/ Offices/Departments and their field units, Central or State PSEs and Attached offices/ Autonomous Institutions

under Government as well as regular employees of the Local Bodies (Excluding Multi Tasking Staff / Class IV/Group D employees)

- All Persons who paid Income Tax in the last assessment year.
- Professionals like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants, and Architects registered with Professional bodies and carrying out their profession by undertaking the practice.

→ **PM-Kisan scheme:**

- It is a central sector scheme Under the scheme, income support of ₹ 6,000 per year in three equal installments of ₹ 2000 is provided to cover all farmer families in the country irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- The state governments and Union Territory administration identify the farmers who are eligible for the scheme and share the list with the Centre.

Exceptions:

Affluent farmers have been excluded from the scheme such as Income Tax payers in last assessment year, professionals like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants etc and pensioners drawing at least Rs.10,000/- per month (excluding MTS/Class IV/Group D employees).

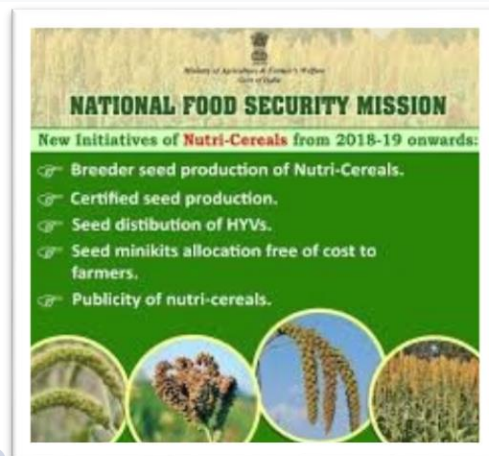
Similar programmes by states:

1. Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana- MP.
2. The Rythu Bandhu scheme- Telangana.
3. Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income augmentation (KALIA)- Odisha.

→ **National Food Security Mission**

- Its a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. 60:40 General Category States and 90:10 for NE and Hilly States.

- NFSM aims to increase the production of rice, wheat, pulses, coarse cereals and commercial crops through area expansion and productivity enhancement and even restoring soil fertility.
- It further aims to augment the availability of vegetable oils and to reduce the import of edible oils.
- National Food Security Mission includes National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm



→ Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana



- PMFBY replaced the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and the Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).
- To provide comprehensive insurance coverage against crop failure, thereby assisting farmers in stabilizing their income.
- All food and oilseed crops, as well as annual commercial/horticultural crops, for which past yield data is available.
- Farmers must pay a 2 per cent premium for all Kharif crops and a 1.5 per cent premium for all Rabi crops. The premium is 5% in the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops.

PMFBY 2.0

- The revamped PMFBY, often known as PMFBY 2.0, incorporates the following features:
 - Enrollment is entirely voluntary for all farmers from the 2020 Kharif.
 - It was earlier compulsory for loanee farmers to avail Crop Loan/Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops.

→ Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

- RKVY scheme was launched in the year 2007 which was later rebranded as Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied sector Rejuvenation (RAFTAAR) to be implemented for three years till 2019-20 with a budget allocation of Rs 15,722 crore.
- The main motive of this plan is to reinforce the infrastructure as well as facilities in Agriculture and its related sectors.
- The sectors/areas covered under the RKVY – RAFTAAR scheme are Crop Cultivation, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Dairy Development, Agricultural Research and Education, Forestry, Wildlife, Plantation, Agricultural Marketing, Food Storage, Warehousing, Soil

and Water Conservation, Agricultural Financial Institutions and other Agricultural Cooperation.

- The main sub-schemes that are implemented under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) – Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sectors Rejuvenation (RAFTAAR) are:
 - ❖ Accelerated Fodder Development Programme (AFDP)
 - ❖ National Saffron Mission
 - ❖ Crop Diversification Programme (CDP)
 - ❖ Reclamation of Problem Soil (RPS)
 - ❖ Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI)

→ **Accelerated Fodder Development Programme (AFDP)**

This sub-scheme of RKVY – RAFTAAR is introduced by the Department of Animal Husbandry to increase the availability of green and dry provender (fodder). This scheme is also formed to win the shortage of fodder that is caused due to natural disasters such as pollution, droughts, floods, etc.

→ **National Saffron Mission**

Saffron is also known as the best golden spice in India and the world. It is counted second in terms of production after Iran. India exports saffron to England, America and some Middle East countries.

Saffron is cultivated in only four districts of Jammu and Kashmir namely, Pulwama, Budgam, Srinagar and Kishtwar. It is in great demand for its medical, cosmetic and aromatic properties. The Saffron Mission was originated to enhance the old-style (traditional) saffron cultivation in parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The plan was designed to improve the saffron production by providing quality seeds and uninterrupted water supply. This scheme has been

adopted to encourage and promote saffron farming along with training to the farmers.

→ **Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI)**

This program of RKVY scheme was initiated to harness the water potential for enhancing rice production in Eastern India comprising seven states namely, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

→ **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana**

PARAMPARAGAT KRISHI VIKAS YOJNA

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojna (PKVY)" a sub-component of Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme under National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) aims at development of sustainable models of organic farming through a mix of traditional wisdom and modern science to ensure long term soil fertility build up, resource conservation and helps in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Its objectives are

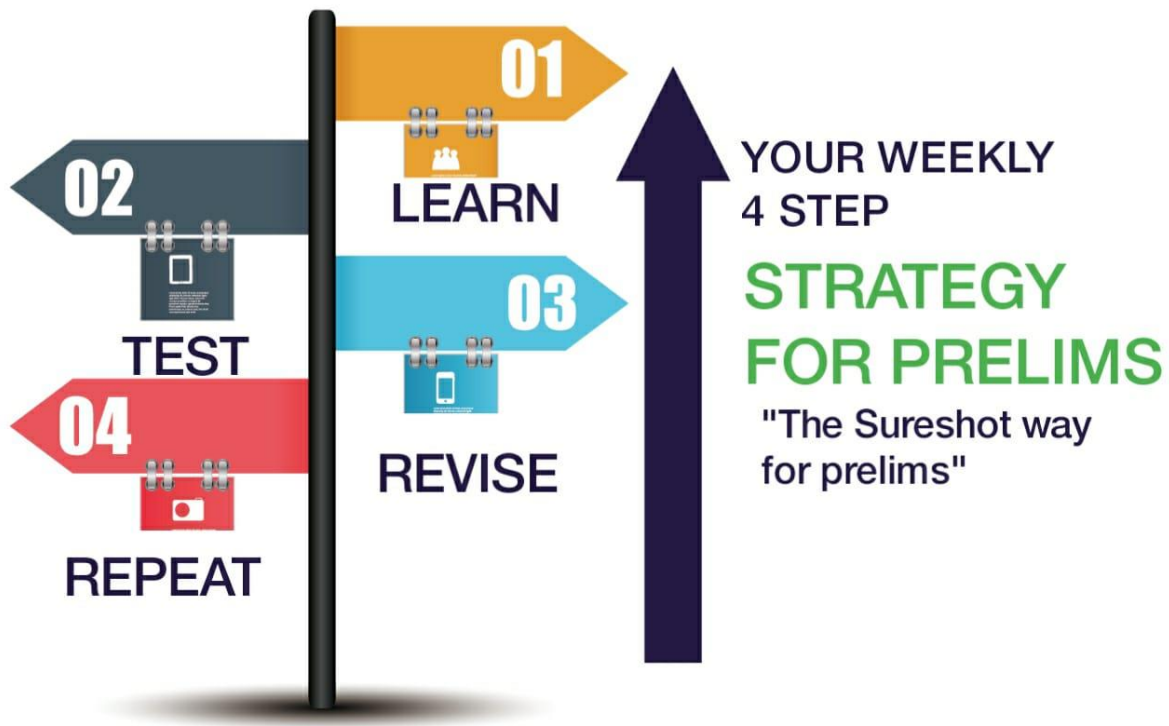
- To promote organic formula.
- Discourage use of chemical fertilizers & pesticides.
- Promote traditional practice of farming, use of bio-fertilizer, vermicompost etc.
- Sustainable method of agriculture – (crop rotation, water efficiency)
- Setting up fruit/vegetable/agro waste compost.
- Set up biofertilizer quality control unit and production units

- Under PKVY, Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and PGS certification.
- Participatory Guarantee System under PGS-India programme will be the key approach for quality assurances under the PKVY.
- Fifty or more farmers will form a cluster having 50-acre land to take up the organic farming under the scheme.
- In this way during three years 10,000 clusters will be formed covering 5.0 lakh acre area under organic farming.
- There will be no liability on the farmers for expenditure on certification.
- Every farmer will be provided Rs. 20,000 per acre in three years for seed to harvesting of crops and to transport produce to the market



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