

Week 3 Current Affairs Update

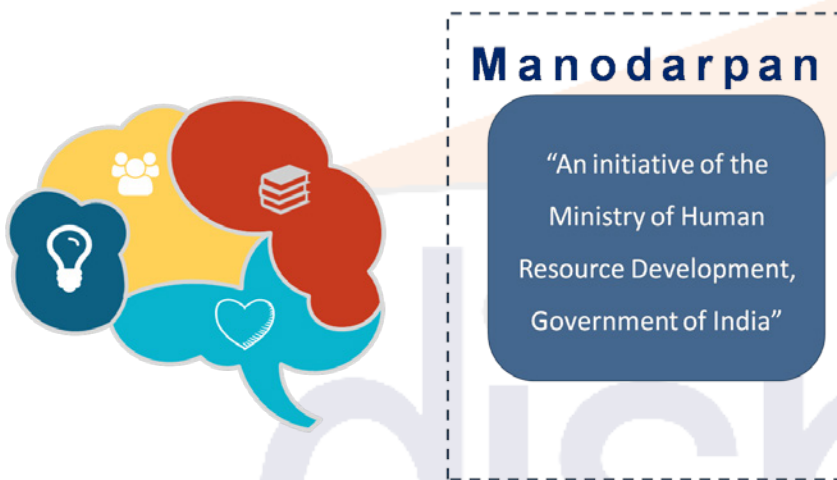
15th - 21st July 2020

EVENTS

NATIONAL

SOCIAL

MHRD LAUNCHES MANODARPAN INITIATIVE FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT TO STUDENTS



Date: 21st July, 2020

Key Points:

- Union Minister for Human Resource Development launched the MANODARPAN initiative of to provide psychosocial support to students for their Mental Health and Well-being
- Ministry of HRD felt that the mental well-being of the students also needs to be given equal importance like the academics.
- The mental health has a reciprocal relationship with the well-being and productivity of a society and its members.
- The MANODARPAN initiative has been included in the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan as part of a strengthening and empowering the human capital.
- MANODARPAN initiative is envisaged to facilitate a sustainable psychological support system for students, families and teachers.
- As part of this initiative National Toll-free Helpline, a special special web and a Handbook was also released.

DEFENCE

INDIA NAVY PARTICIPATES IN “PASSEX” EXERCISE WITH US NAVY



Date: 21st July, 2020

Key Points:

- The Navies of India and the US participated in the “PASSEX” exercise
- The joint exercise was carried out off the coast of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz of the US Navy joined fleet of Indian warships for the drill.
- The USS Nimitz is the world’s largest warship.
- The US Navy carrier strike group comprises USS Nimitz, Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton and Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Sterett and USS Ralph Johnson.
- The exercise between the two navies took place in the midst of Indo-China conflict in eastern Ladakh and Chinese activities in South China Sea.
- India carried out similar exercises with the Japanese navy last month.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

KAPP-3 ACHIEVES ‘FIRST CRITICALITY’



Date: 22nd July, 2020

Key Points:

- The third unit of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3) in Gujarat achieved its ‘first criticality’.
- KAPP-3 is the country’s first 700 MWe (megawatt electric) unit, and the biggest indigenously developed variant of the Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR).

- The term ‘criticality’ is a term that is used to indicate initiation of a controlled but sustained nuclear fission reaction
- The first two units at Kakrapar of 220 MWe each were based on Canadian technology.
- Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) use natural uranium as fuel and heavy water as moderator, are the mainstay of India’s nuclear reactor program.

NDTL ACCREDITATION SUSPENSION EXTENDS TILL JANUARY 2021



Date: 22nd July, 2020

Key Points:

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has extended the suspension of the India’s National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) by another six months.

WADA’s Laboratory Expert Group recommended the initiation of further disciplinary proceedings against the laboratory based on the outstanding non-conformities.

Non-confirmation to international standards by the NDTL led to further extension till January 2021.

WADA first suspended NDTL in August 2019 for a period of 6months

New round of inspection showed that non-conformities still existed and the reason for extension of the suspension.

The further suspension comes as a huge setback for the sports ministry and NDTL.



PEOPLE

NATIONAL

NEELA SATYANARAYAN



Date: 16th July

Key points:

- Maharashtra's first woman election commissioner Neela Satyanarayan passed away at 72, due to Covid-19.
- She was a 1972 batch IAS officer and became the state election commissioner in 2009.
- The 2012 local elections in Maharashtra were conducted during her tenure.
- She also worked as additional Chief Secretary of Revenue department
- In addition to her administrative duties she was a poet, author and newspaper columnist.
- Seven novels, ten volumes of poetry and two memoirs are credited to her list of contributions in addition to various other literary works.

NOOR MEHSUD



Date: 17th July

Key points

- Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terror group's leader Noor Mehsud designated as a global terrorist by the United Nations.
- Also known as Noor Wali and was named the leader of TTP in June 2018 following the death of former leader Mullah Fazlullah.
- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has added Mehsud to its ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List.
- Banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan leader Mehsud has been added to the sanctions list of individuals and entities subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo.
- He is banned due to "participating in the financing, planning, facilitating or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf of, or in support of" entities associated with Al-Qaida.
- The United States, domestically designated Mehsud as a terrorist in September 2019.

LALJI TANDON



Date: 21st July

Key points

- Governor of Madhya Pradesh, Lalji Tandon passed due to illness at the age of 85.
- He has played a vital role in strengthening the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh.
- Prior to MP he served as the Governor of Bihar between August 2018 and July 2019.
- He had served as a state minister in Uttar Pradesh several times between 1991 and 2003.
- Lalji Tandon began his political journey as a member of the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Parishad in 1978 and served two terms.

- He served as a member of Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha (MLA) for three terms between 1996–2009.
- He was the Leader of Opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha from 2003 to 2007.
- He was elected as the Member of Parliament from Lucknow to the 15th Lok Sabha.

ARUN KUMAR



Date: 22nd July

Key points

- Director General of Railway Protection (RPF) Arun Kumar nominated as Vice-Chairman of International Union of Railways (UIC).
- He has been nominated to be the vice-chairman of the Security Platform of the UIC for the period July 2020 to July 2022.
- Arun Kumar is an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 1985 –batch.
- The Union Internationale Des Chemins/International Union of Railways (UIC) is the global platform for railway systems working on inter-operability, developing common technical standards for railways across the world.
- The headquarters of UIC is in Paris and presently there are 194 members.



ISSUES

NATIONAL

HEALTH

KERALA GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION



Date: 17th July, 2020

Key Points

- The Kerala Government officially confirms community transmission of Covid-19.
- The community transmission confirmed in two coastal areas of Thiruvananthapuram district.
- These two areas are Pulluvila in Karumkulam panchayat and Poonthura under Thiruvananthapuram corporation limits.
- Kerala becomes first state in the country to see community transmission of Covid-19.
- The community transmission was confirmed as 96 per cent of the people who tested positive in the district got infected through local transmission.
- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the state had anticipated the community transmission phase of the disease but the situation is under control.
- The prevention measures to be adopted by the government included total lockdown in coastal areas of Thiruvananthapuram.

ECONOMY

IND-RA PREDICTS INDIA'S FISCAL DEFICIT TO INCREASE TO 7.6 %



Date: 19th July, 2020

Key Points

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) predicts India's fiscal deficit to increase to 7.6% in financial year 2020-21.
- It also estimated the contraction of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 5.3 % in FY21
- The expected fiscal deficit is more than double the Budget Estimate due to shortfall in revenue and extra expenditure in view of Covid-19 pandemic.
- Fiscal deficit is an important macroeconomic health indicator.
- The agency also reported that states like Assam, Goa, Gujarat and Sikkim are expected to witness a double-digit contraction.
- At a combined level, the fiscal deficit of the Centre and states together will be 12.1 per cent, with the states contributing 4.5 per cent.

INTERNATIONAL

HEALTH

SPAIN ORDERS CULLING OF OVER 1 LAKH MINK



Date: 18th July, 2020

Key Points

- The Spanish authorities have ordered culling of over 1 lakh mink after many of them tested positive for Coronavirus.
- Around 87% of the minks at a farm in Aragon situated in north-eastern Spain were tested positive following a farm employee's wife contracted the virus in May.
- Seven other farm workers have since tested positive for the disease.
- The mink, bred for their prized fur, were isolated and monitored closely after the workers became infected.
- Aragon is one of the Coronavirus hotspots in Spain, where more than 250,000 infections and 28,000 deaths have been recorded since the start of the pandemic.
- The decision to cull the mink was taken to prevent the risk of human transmission although it is still not clear transmission is possible from animals to humans and vice versa.
- There have been other cases of workers testing positive for Coronavirus at mink farms in Denmark and the Netherlands.
- Earlier in the Netherlands, tens of thousands of mink have been slaughtered in after outbreaks were discovered at farms across the country.



disha
Nurturing Ambitions

HEALTH

INDIAN SCIENTISTS DEVELOP LOW-COST SUPERCAPACITOR FROM INDUSTRIAL WASTE



Date: 15th July, 2020

Key Points

- Scientists at ARCI have developed a low-cost supercapacitor electrode derived from industrial waste cotton.
- This environmentally friendly and sustainable supercapacitor can be used as an energy harvester storage device.
- The natural seawater will be used for the first time as alternative aqueous electrolyte to existing electrolytes for the economic fabrication.
- Scientists have converted industrial waste cotton into highly porous carbon fibers by activation process and then utilised the porous carbon fibers to make high-performance supercapacitor electrodes.
- Supercapacitor is next-generation energy storage device and offers advantages over to lithium-ion batteries and conventional capacitors.
- International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI), Hyderabad is an autonomous organization of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India

IIT DELHI LAUNCHES WORLD'S MOST AFFORDABLE CORONAVIRUS DIAGNOSTIC KIT



Date: 15TH July, 2020

Key Points

- The prestigious Indian Institute of Technology at Delhi (IIT-D) launches the 'Corosure' Covid-19 diagnostic kit.
- The 'Corosure' is indigenously developed and the most affordable Coronavirus diagnostic kit in world.
- The base price of this RT-PCR based kit is Rs 399 and after adding the RNA isolation and laboratory charges it costs up to Rs 650 only.
- The kit can deliver results within three hours and is unique as it uses "probe-free" method unlike "probe-based" methods used in other available kits.
- 'Corosure' is based on comparative sequence analysis using unique short stretches of RNA sequences in the COVID-19 and SARS COV-2 genome.
- ICMR approved the kit with highest score and DCGI approved it with very high sensitivity and specificity.
- IIT Delhi gave non-exclusive open licence to companies for commercialising the test, but with a price rider of Rs 500 for the assay needed for testing.

HRD MINISTRY LAUNCHES FIRST ON-LINE NISHTHA PROGRAMME



Date: 16th July, 2020

Key Points

- The Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD) launched first on-line NISHTHA programme Key Resources.
- This programme is specific for 1200 Key Resources Persons of Andhra Pradesh.
- NISHTHA is a National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement at the elementary stage under 'Samagra Shiksha' programme of MHRD to improve learning outcomes.

- Out of 33 states/UTs in which it was launched the training programme in 29 states has been completed.
- NISHTHA in face-to-face mode was launched earlier in August last year but due to COVID-19 pandemic this mode was affected
- For providing training to remaining 24 lakh teachers and school heads, NISHTHA has been customized for online mode to be conducted through DIKSHA and NISHTHA portals by the NCERT.
- Andhra Pradesh becomes the first state for which on-line NISHTHA programme has been launched
- These resource persons will help in the mentoring of teachers of Andhra Pradesh, who will take on-line NISHTHA training on DIKSHA later on.

INTERNATIONAL

SPACE TECHNOLOGY

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES LAUNCHES FIRST MARS MISSION



Date: 20th July, 2020

Key Points

- United Arab Emirates launches its first ever mission to Mars and Arab world's first interplanetary mission.
- The Hope probe launched on an H2-A rocket from Tanegashima spaceport, Japan.
- The Hope mission also known as "Al Amal" in Arabic is a \$200 million project to study weather and climate.
- Hope's arrival in February 2021 is set to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the UAE's establishment.
- The Emirates Mars Mission partnered with a team at the University of Colorado Boulder to build the spacecraft,
- UAE space agency formed in 2014 and earlier launched satellites in 2009 and 2013 in collaboration with South Korea.

