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1st - 8th JULY, 2020



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PIB (1st to 8th July, 2020)

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by: **Dr. Piyush Choubey**

STARTS: **30** JULY, 2020

HISTORY
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By: **Piyush Kumar**

BATCH STARTS: **20** JULY, 2020

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25 JULY
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1 Li increase in the Universe

CONTEXT:

- In a study recently published in Nature Astronomy scientists from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) along with their international collaborators have provided robust observational evidence for the first time that Li production is common among low mass Sun-like stars during their He-core burning phase.

ABOUT:

- Light inflammable, metal lithium (Li) has brought about a transformation in modern communication devices and transportation.
- A great deal of today's technology is powered by lithium in its various shades. But where does the element come from?
 - The origin of much of the Li can be traced to a single event, the **Big-Bang** that happened about 13.7 Billion years ago, from which the present-day Universe was also born.
- Over time, Li content in the physical Universe has increased by about a factor of four, which is meager compared to the rest of the elements carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, iron, nickel and so on which grew about a million times over the lifetime of the Universe.
- Stars are primary contributors to this significant enhancement of heavier elements through mass ejections and stellar explosions.
- As per the current understanding based on today's best models, lithium in stars like our Sun only gets destroyed over their lifetime.
- The composition of all the elements in the Sun and the Earth is similar. But, the measured content of Li in the Sun is a factor of 100 lower than that of the Earth, though both are known to have formed together.

2 Accelerate Vigyan

CONTEXT:

- To provide a single platform for research internships, capacity building programs and workshops across the country, the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) has launched a new scheme called 'Accelerate Vigyan' (AV).

ABOUT:

- The primary objective of this inter-ministerial scheme is to give more thrust on encouraging high-end scientific research and preparing scientific manpower, which can lead to research careers and knowledge-based economy.
- Recognizing that all research has its base as the development of quality and well-trained researchers, AV will initiate and strengthen mechanisms of identifying research potential, mentoring, training, and hands-on workshops on a national scale.
- The vision is to expand the research base, with three broad goals, namely, consolidation/aggregation of all scientific programs, initiating high-end orientation workshops, and creating opportunities for research internships for those who do not have access to such resources/facilities.
- The scheme is sub-divided into two components: 'ABHYAAS' and 'SAMMOHAN'.

- As for the 'ABHYAAS' programme, it is an attempt to boost research and development in the country by enabling and grooming potential PG/PhD students by means of developing their research skills in selected areas across different disciplines or fields.
 - It has two components: High-End Workshops ('KARYASHALA') and Research Internships ('VRITIKA').
- SAMMOHAN has been sub-divided into 'SAYONJIKA' and 'SANGOSHTI'.
 - SAYONJIKA is an open-ended program to catalogue the capacity building activities in science and technology supported by all government funding agencies in the country.
 - SANGOSHTI is a pre-existing program of SERB.

The Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB)

- ▶ SERB is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament. Supporting basic research in emerging areas of Science & Engineering is the primary and distinctive mandate of the Board.
- ▶ The Board structure, with both financial and administrative powers vested in the Board, would enable quicker decisions on research issues, greatly improving thereby our responsiveness to the genuine needs of the research scientists and the S&T system.

3

Sankalp Parva

CONTEXT:

- To commemorate Sankalp Parva, Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism planted trees in Delhi.

ABOUT:

- The **Ministry of Culture** has decided to celebrate **Sankalp Parva** from **28th June to 12th July 2020**, where Ministry expects all its Subordinate Offices, Academies, Attached Institutions, and Affiliated Institutions to plant trees in its campus or at the surroundings wherever it is possible.
- The Ministry of Culture recommended to plant five trees which represents the herbal heritage of our country. These trees are (i) "Bargad" (ii) "Awla" (iii) "Pepal" (iv) "Ashok" (v) "Bel". It also said that if saplings of these trees are not available then people may do plantation of any other sapling of their choice.
- The organizations must ensure that each employee should plant at least one tree of his/her choice and over and above these five trees which should be planted.
- The Institutions must also ensure that the employee takes care of plant planted by them during the year so that it survives and flourish.

Other such initiatives:

- ▶ **Nagar van scheme:** On the occasion of World Environment Day, the government announced the implementation of the Nagar van scheme to develop 200 Urban Forests across the country in next five years with a renewed focus on people's participation and collaboration between Forest Department, Municipal bodies, NGOs, Corporates and local citizens.

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PRELIMS

TOTAL NO OF TESTS: **44**

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BATCH -1 Starts:

25 JULY, 2020

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“Some Practice Improves Result”

- ▶ **CAMPA Act or Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act:** It is Indian legislation that seeks to provide an appropriate institutional mechanism, both at the Centre and in each State and Union Territory, to ensure expeditious utilization efficiently and transparently of amounts released in place of forest land diverted for the non-forest purpose which would mitigate the impact of diversion of such forest land.
- ▶ **The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB):** It has been established by the Government of India to coordinate with all matters relating to Medicinal Plants and Support Policies and Programs for growth of trade, export, conservation, and cultivation.

4

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana**CONTEXT:**

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced the extension of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana till the end of November 2020.

ABOUT:

- During these five months, more than 80 crore people will be benefitted.
- The beneficiary would be provided 5 kg free wheat/rice per month along with 1 kg free whole chana to each family per month.
- Under the **National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013**, the expenditure towards intra-state transportation and handling charges for movement from FCI depots to Fair Price Shops (FPSs) as also dealer's margin, etc. are shared between Govt. of India and States/UTs as per the sharing pattern and norms for expenditure on this account as per rules framed under NFSA.

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 2016 (PMGKY) is a scheme launched by the Government of India on the lines of the Income declaration scheme, 2016 (IDS) launched earlier in the year.
- As a part of the **Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 2016**, the PMGKY scheme provides an opportunity to declare unaccounted wealth and black money confidentially and avoid prosecution after paying a fine of 50% on the undisclosed income.
- An additional 25% of the undisclosed income is invested in the scheme which can be refunded after four years, without any interest.
- To overcome the economic impact of coronavirus-induced lockdown on the poor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, soon after the imposition of lockdown on March 24, announced a relief of Rs 1.70 lakh crore under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana.

National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013

- ▶ The enactment of the National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013, marks a paradigm shift in the approach to food security from welfare to a rights-based approach.
- ▶ The Act legally entitles up to 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population to receive subsidized food-grains under the Targeted Public Distribution System.

- About two-thirds of the population, therefore, is covered under the Act to receive highly subsidized food grains.
- It is being implemented in all the States/UTs, on an all India basis.

5 Operation Samudra Setu

CONTEXT:

- Navy ships to bring back Indian nationals from Iran

ABOUT:

- INS Jalashwa, deployed by the Indian Navy for "Operation Samudra Setu", entered Tuticorin harbour with 687 Indian nationals embarked from Bandar Abbas, Iran. Thus, so far Indian Navy ships have brought back 920 Indian citizens from Iran.
- The embarkation of Indian nationals was facilitated by the Indian Mission in Iran. Personnel were embarked onboard after carrying out requisite medical screening. COVID related safety protocols were also strictly adhered to during the sea-passage.
- The evacuees were received by local authorities at Tuticorin and arrangements were in place for speedy disembarkation, health screening, immigration, and transportation of the evacuees.
- Operation Samudra Setu is part of the Centre's initiative to repatriate Indians stranded in foreign countries due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- With this evacuation, the Indian Navy has now repatriated 3992 Indian nationals from Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Iran during the ongoing pandemic.

Other operations by India:

- **Vande Bharat Mission:** It is the biggest evacuation plan to bring back Indian citizens stranded abroad amidst the coronavirus-induced travel restrictions.
- **Operation Sanjeevani:** IAF airlifted medical and hospital consumables for the Maldives. Medicines including influenza vaccines, anti-viral drugs such as Lopinavir and Ritonavir (these two medicines are being used in other countries to treat COVID-19) have gone to the Maldives.

6 Dhamma Chakra Day celebrations

CONTEXT:

- President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Dhamma Chakra Day celebrations on Asadha Purnima.

ABOUT:

- The Dhamma Chakra Day celebration is being organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

- This follows a very successful hosting of Virtual Vesak and Global Prayer Week from May 7- 16, 2020 by IBC and Ministry of Culture.
- Royalties, Supreme heads of the Buddhist Sanghas and Eminent Masters and Scholars from around the world and IBC chapters, member organizations are participating.

Dhammachakra Pravartan Day

- Dhammachakra Pravartan Day (DhammaChakra Anupravartan Din) is a day to celebrate the Buddhist conversion of B. R. Ambedkar and approximately 600,000 followers on 14 October 1956 at Deekshabhoomi.
- Dhammachakra Pravartan day is a day when Architect of Indian Constitution Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar converted himself as Buddhist. It is celebrated at Deeksha Bhoomi every year.
- Every year on Ashoka Vijayadashami, millions of Buddhists gather at Deekshabhoomi to celebrate the mass conversion.

International Buddhist Confederation

- It is the biggest religious Buddhist confederation, based in Delhi, India.
- The architect of this Confederation is Lama Lobzang. This confederation is named as the first organization which unites Buddhists from the whole world.

7

Agreement for Emergency Response Programme

CONTEXT:

- The World Bank and the Government of India signed the \$750 million agreement for the MSME Emergency Response Programme to support the increased flow of finance into the hands of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

ABOUT:

- The World Bank's MSME Emergency Response Programme will address the immediate liquidity and credit needs of some 1.5 million viable MSMEs to help them withstand the impact of the current shock and protect millions of jobs.
- This is the first step among a broader set of reforms that are needed to propel the MSME sector over time.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the MSME sector leading to loss of livelihoods and jobs. The Government of India is focused on ensuring that the abundant financial sector liquidity available flow to NBFCs, and that banks which have turned extremely risk-averse, continue taking exposures in the economy by lending to NBFCs.
- This project will support the Government in providing targeted guarantees to incentivize NBFCs and banks to continue lending to viable MSMEs to help sustain them through the crisis.

The World Bank Group, including its private sector arm – the International Finance Corporation (IFC), will support the government's initiatives to protect the MSME sector by:

- **Unlocking liquidity:** This program will support the government's efforts to channel that liquidity to the MSME sector by de-risking lending from banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) to MSMEs through a range of instruments, including credit guarantees.
- **Strengthening NBFCs and SFBs:** This will include supporting the government's refinance facility for NBFCs. In parallel, the IFC is also providing direct support to SFBs through loans and equity.



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- **Enabling financial innovations:** Today, only about 8 percent of MSMEs are served by formal credit channels. The program will incentivize and mainstream the use of fintech and digital financial services in MSME lending and payments.

8 Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

CONTEXT:

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has given its approval to a new pan India Central Sector Scheme-Agriculture Infrastructure Fund.

ABOUT:

- The scheme shall provide a medium - long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support.
- Under the scheme, Rs. One Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to agricultural institutions.
- The Project by way of facilitating formal credit to farm and farm processing-based activities is expected to create numerous job opportunities in rural areas.
- All loans under this financing facility will have interest subvention of 3% per annum up to a limit of Rs. 2 crore. This subvention will be available for a maximum period of seven years.
- Moratorium for repayment under this financing facility may vary subject to minimum of 6 months and maximum of 2 years.
 - Further, credit guarantee coverage will be available for eligible borrowers from this financing facility under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) scheme for a loan up to Rs. 2 crore. The fee for this coverage will be paid by the Government.
 - In case of FPOs the credit guarantee may be availed from the facility created under FPO promotion scheme of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DACFW).
- Agri Infra fund will be managed and monitored through an online Management Information System (MIS) platform. It will enable all the qualified entities to apply for a loan under the fund.
- The National, State, and District level Monitoring Committees will be set up to ensure real-time monitoring and effective feedback.
- The duration of the Scheme shall be from FY-2020 to FY-2029 (10 years).

9 Case Study Based on Community Health Workers

CONTEXT:

- About 42,000 Jharkhand's Sahiyas took part in the Intensive Public Health Survey to identify the COVID-19 high-risk population.

Case Study:

- On 13th March 2020, Kamarunisha and her husband Noor Mohammad, of Telo village in Bokaro district, Jharkhand returned home after participating in the Jamaat. They were tested for COVID-19 at the airport and advised home quarantine in their village. The village **Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA), known as Sahiya**, Reena Devi, obtained this information during the household survey.

- She immediately informed the medical officer-in-charge of the block, counseled the couple to follow home quarantine as per norms, and followed up regularly regarding their health status and healthcare needs. Kamarunisha tested positive and was immediately quarantined at Bokaro General Hospital.
- The Sahiya, Reena Devi, coordinated for a medical team to be sent to the couple's house the next day and helped in-home quarantine for the family members. She continued to actively follow-up with the couple and played a crucial role in creating awareness in the family as well as in the community for the prevention of COVID-19.
- Timely action and persistent efforts by Reena Devi helped in preventing the spread of infection to other members of the family and her community.

Sahiya:

- ▶ The ASHAs in Jharkhand, known as "Sahiyas", has been supporting the delivery of health care services to the last mile, especially in the tribal areas.
- ▶ Since the launch of the programme, the Sahiyas have been widely acknowledged for their commitment and agency in enabling access to health care, even in the hard to reach and remote tribal areas.
- ▶ Sahiyas have been actively engaged in various activities related to COVID-19 since March 2020, such as creating awareness about preventive measures of COVID-19 like frequent hand-washing with soap and water, use of masks/face covers when stepping out in public spaces, following proper etiquette while coughing and sneezing, etc. They are also involved in contact tracing, line listing, and follow up of the COVID-19 cases.

Manju Jeena of Odisha:

- ▶ Manju Jeena, an ASHA from village Kandalei of Khurda district, Odisha, has been working tirelessly to support COVID-19 related activities and ensure that her community has access to essential and other health services.
- ▶ In her years of committed community service, Manju has built up significant social capital, enabling her to effectively negotiate in addressing COVID related stigma and resultant discrimination.
- ▶ When a young returnee migrant was denied entry into the village and his home, Manju took it upon herself to single-handedly address the stigmatizing behavior of the community.
- ▶ She combined community awareness on COVID-19 with relentless advocacy to ensure that the returnee was able to stay in home quarantine.
- ▶ She rigorously undertook regular follow up on his health status and healthcare needs during the quarantine period.



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IAS
2021

PRELIMS 2021 PRACTICE PROGRAMME

BATCH-1 Starts

Test Timings:
9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

2
AUGUST
2020

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