

**May - 08**

## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ Prime Minister launched Van Dhan Scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) during the celebrations of Ambedkar Jayanti (April 14) at Bijapur, Chattisgarh. PM also inaugurated first model Van Dhan Vikas Kendra under the scheme in Bijapur.
- ❖ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the country's largest IT outsourcing company created history by becoming the first Indian IT company to reach the \$100 billion market capitalization (m-cap) mark.

## **NATIONAL**

### **Rastriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan**

- ❖ The Prime Minister launched a scheme that seeks to strengthen the country's Panchayati Raj system and address critical gaps that hinder its success.
- ❖ It was launched at Ramnagar Hills in the tribal dominated Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The Central government scheme aims at making rural local bodies self-sustainable, financially stable and more efficient.
- ❖ The programme seeks to address critical gaps that hinder the success of Panchayats by enhancing their capacities and effectiveness and promote devolution of powers and responsibilities.

### **Gram Swaraj Abhiyan**

- ❖ The Union Government launched "Gram Swaraj Abhiyan- Special Interventions", a high-intensity outreach programme to deliver welfare schemes to select villages which need particular attention. It was launched on the occasion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti (14th April) under the name of "Sabka Sath, Sabka Gaon, Sabka Vikas".



- ❖ This plan will be implemented in 484 districts in 33 States and Union Territories. The maximum number of these villages are in Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Meghalaya.
- ❖ The abhiyan was launched on the lines of rural development schemes like Antyodaya based on principle of convergence and saturation. The initiative aims for 100% coverage of seven schemes launched by Central Government for eligible beneficiaries in three-week window from April 14 to May 5, 2018.
- ❖ The seven schemes covered under it are Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Ujala scheme, Saubhagya, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and Mission Indra Dhanush.
- ❖ The objective of the 'Abhiyan' is to promote social harmony, reach out to poor rural households, obtain feedback on ongoing programmes, enrol in new initiatives, focus on doubling farmers' income, enhance livelihood opportunities and re-emphasise national priorities such as cleanliness and strengthen Panchayati Raj institutions

### **Gobar Dhan scheme**

- ❖ The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has launched GOBAR (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources) – DHAN scheme at National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) Karnal.
- ❖ It was launched under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)
- ❖ The GOBAR-DHAN Scheme aims to positively impact village cleanliness and generate wealth and energy from cattle and organic waste.
- ❖ The scheme envisages implementation of 700 bio-gas units in different states of the country in 2018-19.

### **Urea Subsidy Program**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal of Department of Fertilizers to continue Urea Subsidy Scheme from 2017 upto 2020 and implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for disbursement of fertilizer subsidy. The proposal in these regards was forwarded by Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.



- ❖ This decision implies that there will be no increase in price of urea, till 2020.
- ❖ The continuation of the urea subsidy scheme will ensure timely payment of subsidy to urea manufacturers resulting in timely availability of urea to farmers at statutory controlled price. Implementation of DBT in Fertilizer Sector will reduce diversion of fertilizers to non-agricultural use and plug leakages.
- ❖ Department of Fertilizers is in process to roll out DBT in fertilizer sector nationwide.
- ❖ DBT will entail 100% payment to fertilizer companies on sale of fertilizers to farmers at subsidized rates.
- ❖ The DBT in fertilizer sector being implemented is slightly different from normal DBT implemented for other schemes.
- ❖ Under it, the subsidy will be released to the fertilizer companies instead of the beneficiaries, after the sale is made by the retailers to the beneficiaries.
- ❖ Urea Subsidy is part of Central Sector Scheme (CSS) of Department and is wholly financed by Central Government of India through budgetary support. It also includes Imported Urea subsidy which is directed towards import to bridge gap between assessed demand and indigenous production of urea in the country. It also includes freight subsidy for movement of urea across the country.
- ❖ At present, there are 31 urea manufacturing units, out of which 28 urea units use Natural Gas as feedstock/fuel and remaining 3 urea units use Naphtha as feedstock

### **LNG from USA**

- ❖ After crude oil, India today began importing natural gas from the US, with the first shipment of LNG under a 20-year deal being flagged off from Louisiana.
- ❖ A charter ship, MV Meridian Spirit arrived at Dabhol of Maharashtra after 25 days voyage from Louisiana
- ❖ The development comes on heels of India's first import of crude oil from US in October 2017.

## ECONOMY

### **Interactive Robotic Assistant (IRA) 2.0 – HDFC Bank**

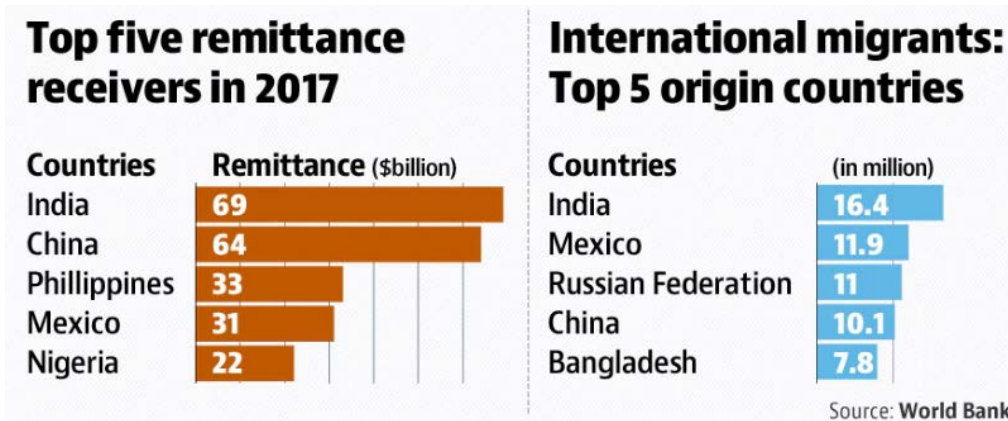
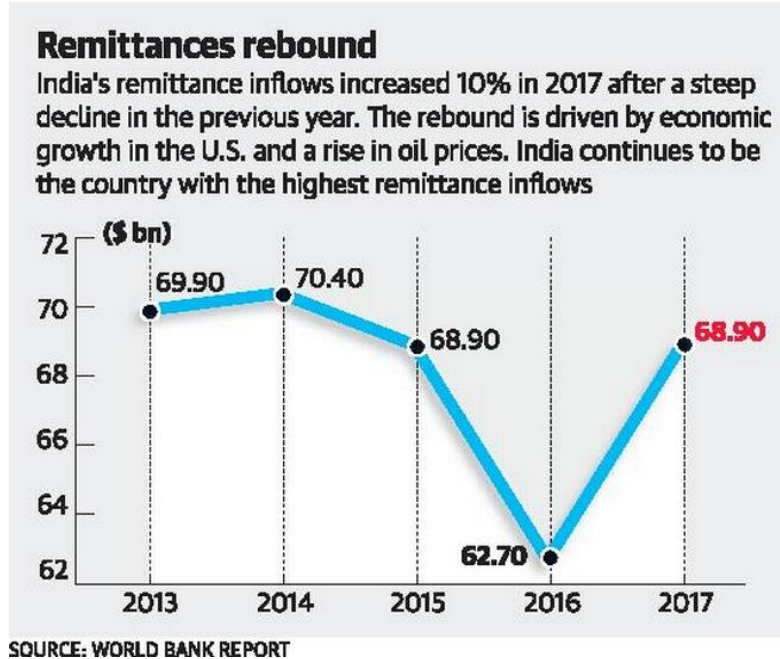
- ❖ HDFC Bank has launched Interactive Robotic Assistant (IRA) 2.0, an interactive humanoid at its Koramangala Branch in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The interactive humanoid aims to enhance user experience for customers visiting in this branch.
- ❖ HDFC was first bank in India to introduce humanoid IRA 1.0 for customer service at Kamala Mills Branch in Mumbai in January 2018. Currently, IRA 1.0 is stationed at Palarivattom Branch in Kochi. IRA 1.0 is GPS enabled indoor humanoid. It has speech recognition module that can be trained to understand what customers speak and uses ultrasonic sensor to move in inside branch. It has face detection algorithm for recognition customers.

### **Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has tightened reporting norms for the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) under which individual can transfer up to US \$2,50,000 abroad in a year. The purpose of tightening of norms is to improve monitoring and also to ensure compliance with LRS limits.
- ❖ LRS is facility provided by RBI for all resident individuals including minors to freely remit upto certain amount in terms of US Dollar for current and capital account purposes or combination of both. The scheme was introduced in February 2004 and its regulations are provided under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.

### **Highest Remittances**

- ❖ According to recently released Migration and Development Brief by World Bank, India has retained top position as recipient of remittances with about \$69 billion in 2017.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Dakota aircraft

- ❖ A restored Dakota aircraft joined the Indian Air Force in an induction ceremony at Hindan air force station.



- ❖ The Dakota DC-3 VP 905 has been inducted more than four decades after the aircraft fleet was phased out following an illustrious service record.
  - ❖ The restored Dakota rechristened as 'Parashuram'.
  - ❖ The Dakota was accepted by the Chief of Air Staff from the Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar on February this year.
  - ❖ The Dakota popularly known as the Gooney Bird was the first major transport aircraft inducted in the fledgling Indian Air Force.
  - ❖ It was at the forefront of operations from 1947 to 1971. The aircraft played a crucial role in Kashmir operations in 1947 war and Bangladesh war.
  - ❖ After 1971, the Dakota was replaced by Avro HS-748.
-