

April - 15

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Under National Rural Livelihood Mission, there are more than 690 lakh Self Help Groups working all over the country.

NATIONAL

DigiLocker

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resource Development has designated DigiLocker as the sole National Academic Depository (NAD).
- ❖ The ministry has directed the University Grants Commission to implement NAD as a permanent scheme within DigiLocker.
- ❖ NAD will be implemented as a permanent scheme without the levy of any user charges by DigiLocker through the Ministry of Electronics and IT.
- ❖ DigiLocker is primarily a cloud-based safe online storage service under its Digital India initiative.
- ❖ It allows users to store electronic versions of important documents like Aadhaar card, birth certificates, voter's ID cards, PAN cards, driving license, property documents and provides access to these on the go.
- ❖ It was launched by the Prime Minister on July 2015.



Red, Orange and Green Zones

- ❖ It has now been concluded that India will enter into “smart Lockdown”.
- ❖ Under the smart lock down, India is to be demarcated into red, orange and green zones.
- ❖ The red zones are regions that were declared as hotspots.
- ❖ Here no economic activity is to be allowed.
- ❖ The orange zones are regions where limited public transport is to be allowed.
- ❖ In these regions harvesting of farm products will also be allowed.
- ❖ In the green zones, along with farm activities, MSME industries will also begin to function.
- ❖ These industries will provide in-house lodging facilities for employees along with social distancing facilities.

YUKTI portal

- ❖ The Ministry of Human Resource and Development has launched the YUKTI portal to monitor initiatives.
- ❖ YUKTI is Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation.
- ❖ The portal will record, cover and monitor initiatives of Ministry of HRD and other educational institutes in the country.



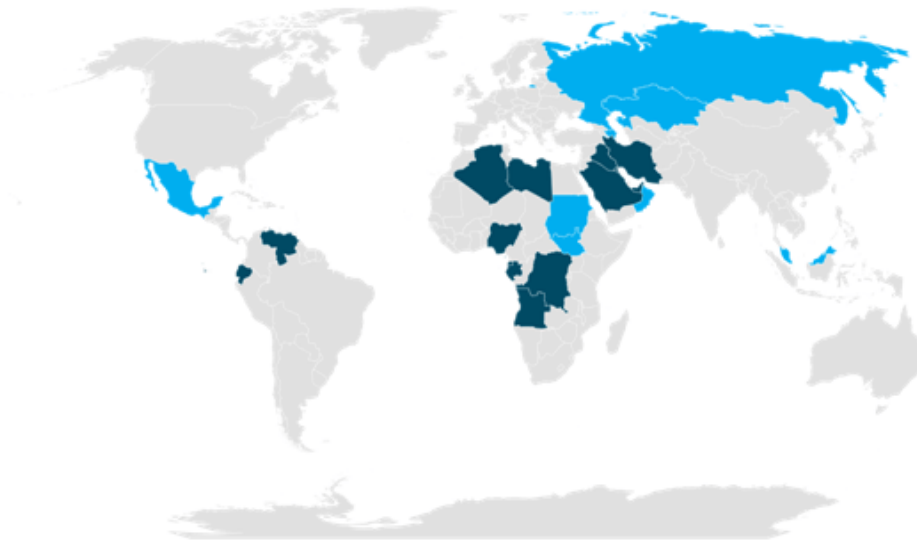
INTERNATIONAL

Cut in Oil Productions

- ❖ It is the new OPEC deal between Saudi Arabia and Russia.
- ❖ The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia have come together to cut oil output by 10%.
- ❖ This is being done to control the falling oil prices amidst lock down all over the world due to COVID-19.
- ❖ The Russian Government earlier refuted to sign the deal when Saudi Arabia initiated production cuts.
- ❖ The OPEC asked Russia to cut its production by 300,000 barrels per day.
- ❖ Though the new deal has made the biggest cuts, it will not cause major changes to price changes as the demand is unpredictably low.
- ❖ The deal was brokered by the US President and also by G20.
- ❖ Opec+ refers to the alliance of crude producers, who have been undertaking corrections in supply in the oil markets since 2017.
- ❖ OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.



OPEC and OPEC+ Member Nations, 2019



ECONOMY

Developing countries in WTO

- ❖ US president has asked for changing the WTO (World Trade Organization) rules for changing the developing country status of China.
- ❖ There are no WTO definitions of “developed” and “developing” countries.
- ❖ Members announce for themselves whether they are “developed” or “developing” countries.
- ❖ Generally countries are designated as developed, developing, and least developed countries (LDCs).
- ❖ However, other members can challenge the decision of a member to make use of provisions available to developing countries.
- ❖ Developing country status ensures special and differential treatment (S&DT).
- ❖ It allows them more time to implement agreements and commitments, to safeguard their trade interests, and to implement technical standards.
- ❖ China became a WTO member in 2001.
- ❖ By 2011, China became the second-largest economy in GDP terms, the first largest merchandise exporter, the fourth largest commercial services exporter and the first destination for inward FDI among developing countries.

Matter of choice

WTO allows member countries to classify themselves as “developed” or “developing”. However, other members can challenge the decision of a country to be classified as “developing”. Only the “least-developed countries” status is designated by the UN. Countries in the three lists:

Developing	Developed	Least-developed countries
India	U.S.	Afghanistan
China	European Union	Bangladesh
Russia	Japan	Bhutan
Brazil	Canada	Myanmar
South Africa	Australia	Nepal
South Korea	New Zealand	South Sudan



MSP for MFP scheme

- ❖ The TRIFED asks State Nodal Departments & Implementing Agencies to initiate procurement from available funds under 'MSP for MFP scheme'.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet, in 2013, approved a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for marketing of non-nationalized / non monopolized Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and development of a value chain for MFP through Minimum Support Price (MSP).
- ❖ The Minor Forest Produce (MFP), also known as Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), is a major source of livelihood and provides essential food, nutrition, medicinal needs and cash income to a large number of STs who live in and around forests.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Smart Stethoscope

- ❖ A team at the Indian Institute of Technology of Bombay (IIT-B) has developed a "digital stethoscope".
- ❖ It can listen to heart beats from a distance and record them, minimising the risk of healthcare professionals contracting the novel coronavirus from patients.
- ❖ It was developed by a start-up called "AyuDevice" from the IIT's technology business incubator.
- ❖ The product has been developed with clinical inputs from doctors at Reliance Hospital and PD Hinduja Hospital.

Contact tracing

- ❖ Global technology giants Apple and Google have announced that they are partnering on developing contact tracing technology to help governments and health authorities tackle the novel coronavirus pandemic.
- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) defines contact tracing as the process of identifying, assessing, and managing people who have been exposed to a disease to prevent onward transmission.

ENVIRONMENT

Fly Ash in Sasan

- ❖ The Reliance Power's Ultra Mega Power Project's (UMPP) in Sasan area of Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh fly ash dyke collapsed recently.

- ❖ Popularly known as Flue ash or pulverised fuel ash, it is a coal combustion product.
- ❖ It is composed of the particulates that are driven out of coal-fired boilers together with the flue gases.



Earth's seismic noise

- ❖ Scientists at the British Geological Survey (BGS) have reported a change in the Earth's seismic noise and vibrations amid the coronavirus lockdown.
- ❖ In geology, seismic noise refers to the relatively persistent vibration of the ground due to a multitude of causes.
- ❖ This noise includes vibrations caused due to human activity, such as transport and manufacturing.
- ❖ It is the unwanted component of signals recorded by a seismometer.
- ❖ Seismometer records ground motions, such as those caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and explosions.
- ❖ To measure seismic activity accurately, geologists place their detectors 100 metres below the Earth's surface.
- ❖ Since the lockdown, researchers were able to study natural vibrations even from surface readings.

