



April - 16

# **TNPSC BITS**

- The Actor Sonu Sood was made brand ambassador for Punjab's COVID vaccination programme.
- The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal launched the e-SANTA platform for marine products.
  - $\circ~$  This platform will provide more opportunities, freedom, and options to the fish and aqua farmers.
- Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have launched the construction of an international centre for trade and economic cooperation called "Central Asia".
- Bhutan has recently completed the vaccinating 93% of its adult population in the world.
  - Bhutan received AstraZeneca vaccine from India.

## TAMIL NADU

#### **New Member for NGT**

- The Former Tamil Nadu chief secretary Girija Vaidyanathan has been appointed as an expert member of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Southern Zone in Chennai.
- The serving expert member in the Southern Bench Saibal Dasgupta has been sent to Eastern Zonal Bench in Kolkata.
- They were appointed by the principal bench of the NGT in New Delhi
- The Appointments Cabinet Committee of the Union Government approved this appointment.
- ♦ However, the Madras High Court ordered an interim stay on this appointment.
- The Court observed that she did possess administrative experience, but not five years of experience in dealing with environmental issues.
- The NGT Act prescribes a minimum of administrative experience of 15 years including five years in dealing with environmental matters in the Central or a State government.
- Poovulagin Nanbargal, an NGO fighting on issues related to environment headed by Sundarrajan, approached the High Court in this regard.

NGT

✤ The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 is an Act of the Parliament of India.





- It enables the creation of a special tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.
- It draws inspiration from India's constitutional provision (Article 21 Protection of life and personal liberty).
- The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.
- ✤ The Principal Bench of the NGT is in New Delhi.
- It has regional benches in Pune (West), Bhopal (Central), Chennai (South) and Kolkata (East).
- ✤ The Chairperson of the NGT is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court.
- Each bench of the NGT will comprise at least one Judicial Member and one Expert Member.

# NATIONAL

### **Covid Hit Nation**

- India on April 12, 2021 became the second-worst hit nation in the world by the COVID-19 pandemic, surpassing Brazil.
- India now only stands behind the United States that has the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the world.
- ✤ Maharashtra is the worst-hit state in the country.

### Kumbh Mela 2021







- The Haridwar Kumbh Mela was held on the banks of the Ganga in Haridwar in Uttarakhand.
- ✤ It is celebrated in a cycle of approximately 12 years.
- It is held at four river-bank pilgrimage sites the Prayagraj/Allahabad of Uttar Pradesh (Ganges-Yamuna Sarasvati rivers confluence), Haridwar of Uttarakhand (Ganges), Nashik of Maharashtra (Godavari), and Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh (Shipra).

### **INTERNATIONAL**

### Air Bubble Agreement

- The Indian government has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka.
- It will allow all eligible passengers to travel between the two countries.
- India has finalized an air bubble agreement with Sri Lanka, making it the 6th such arrangement in (the) SAARC region & the 28th in total.
- ✤ A bilateral air bubble is a mechanism to resume flights between two nations with preconditions during the pandemic.

#### **Global Food Policy Report 2021**

- It is published by the International Food Policy Research Institute.
- This year it was based on the theme "Transforming Food Systems After COVID-19".
- Around 95 million people, mostly in Africa are living in extreme poverty.

### **ECONOMY**

#### Maximum balance for payment banks

- The Reserve Bank of India enhanced the limit of maximum end of day balance for the payment banks.
- ♦ It is from Rs. 1 lakh per individual to Rs. 2 lakhs.

#### Payments banks

- It is an Indian new model of banks conceptualised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- It is like any other bank, but operating on a smaller or restricted scale (Airtel Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, etc.).





- These banks cannot issue loans and credit cards.
- Both current account and savings accounts can be operated by such banks.
- Payments banks can issue ATM cards or debit cards and provide online or mobile banking.
- Bharti Airtel set up India's first payments bank.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Odyssey

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the US recently released the image of Mars to mark the 20th anniversary of Odyssey.
- ✤ The image depicted Dunes in Mars.
- Odyssey is the longest lasting spacecraft in Mars till date.
- ✤ It was launched on April 7, 2001.
- ✤ It arrived at Mars on October 24, 2001.

### **Remdesivir drug**

- The Government of India prohibits the exports of Remdesivir drug.
- Remdesivir has been considered a key anti-viral drug in the fight against Coronavirus.
- ✤ It was created in 2014 to treat Ebola.
- ✤ Later it was used to treat SARS and MERS.

### **IMPORTANT DAYS**

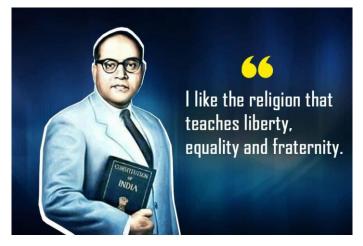
#### Ambedkar Jayanthi - April 14

- This year, Ambedkar Jayanti marks the prolific leader's 130th birth anniversary.
- Ambedkar Jayanti is observed as Equality Day in India.
- Since 2015 it has been observed as an official public holiday throughout India
- He was born on 14 April 1891 in the town and military cantonment of Mhow (now officially known as Dr Ambedkar Nagar) in the Central Provinces (now in Madhya Pradesh).





- ✤ He became the first law and justice minister of independent India (1947 to 1951).
- ✤ He is hailed as the Father of the Indian Constitution.
- ✤ He died on December 6, 1956 at Delhi.
- ✤ He was awarded India's highest civilian honour the Bharat Ratna in 1990.
- The period between April 14, 1990 and April 14, 1991 was observed as "Year of Social Justice".
- The United Nations celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Since 2017, 14 April is observed as Knowledge Day in the Indian state of Maharashtra.



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