



PLUTUS IAS Weekly

CURRENT AFFAIRS



PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 13-12-2021 to 19-12-2021

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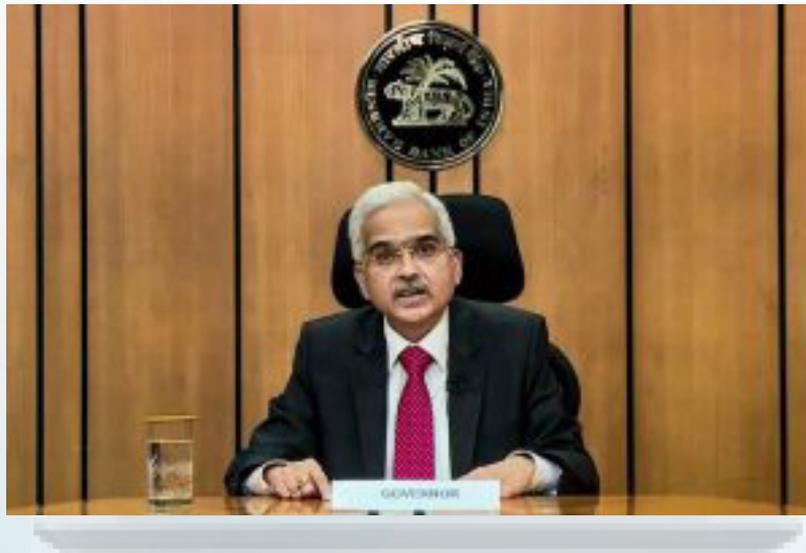
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CURRENT AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 2021

Repo rate remains unchanged at 4%, RBI following Accommodative stance (GS 3, Economics, The Hindu, Indian Express, RBI)



NEWS/CONTEXT :

Based on assessment of the macroeconomics conditions and outlook, the Monetary Policy Committee of RBI voted unanimously to keep policy rate status quo and to retain the Accommodative Policy stance by a majority of 5 to 1.

The policy repo rate consequently will remain unchanged at 4% and RBI will follow the accommodative stance as long as required to revive and sustain economic growth.

It is noted here that the monetary policy Committee of RBI comprises 6 members in total, three are the representatives of RBI including the RBI Governor and three represents the central government and decisions are taken on the basis of majority, with the RBI Governor having casting vote in case of a tie.

The RBI is of the view that there must be enough liquidity in the economy to recover from the impact of COVID-19 while ensuring the inflation remains within the target that is 4% +/- 2% band (i.e. 2 to 6%) with respect to Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation. It is to understand here that generally in any economy if money in circulation is increased, it can increase the aggregate demand in the economy as ultimately people will be getting that increased money in circulation (either from the government or banking system) and will be buying things and thus increasing the aggregate demand.

The repo rate is kept at 4% as CPI inflation for the month of October was 4.48%. The repo rate (also termed as policy rate, benchmark policy rate or simply interest rate of RBI) is the interest rate at which RBI gives short term loans to banks and its other clients. If this rate is kept as low (say less than current rate of 4%), the banking system could be taking more loans from the RBI (as loan for banks became cheap), money in circulation will increase, which increases aggregate demand and as demand increases, prices also increases, which normally results in demand pull inflation and CPI- Combined can go higher than the permissible upper limit of 6%.

Thus it is understood here that by keeping the repo rate towards the lower side, better growth can be achieved to recover the economy (from COVID 19 slowdown or any general recession), but at the same time inflation can also take place. The RBI monetary policy stance will always be to achieve a balance between growth and inflation, or say growth as much as possible keeping the inflation within the permissible limit (best if CPI- Combined inflation moves around 4%, which is also termed as moderate inflation).

This time RBI has kept repo rate as 4% as it is already towards lower side (because it was kept as more than 6% during 2018 and more than 5% during 2019) and thus will be following accommodative policy stance basically to push for fast recovery and growth in backdrop of Covid19 slowdown.

Accommodative monetary policy, also known as loose credit or easy or cheap monetary policy, occurs when a central bank (such as RBI or Federal Reserve) attempts to expand the overall money supply to boost the economy when growth is slowing (as measured by GDP). The policy is implemented to allow the money supply to rise in line with national income and the demand for money.

The other rates like Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) and bank rate remain unchanged at 4.25%. MSF is the interest rate at which RBI gives loans only to Schedule Commercial Banks even if they don't have government securities (G-secs) to keep as collateral with RBI. Schedule Commercial Banks can use the G-secs kept in Statutory Liquidity ratio, which is not supposed to be used in general circumstances. Here it is to note that banks are required to keep some statutory reserves intact, which means this much money cannot be used in giving loans. The two statutory reserves are Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity ratio (SLR).

Here we mention all information about Repo rate remains unchanged at 4%, RBI following Accommodative stance The Hindu Analysis.

**Md Layeeque Azam,
Economics Faculty**

Is China a democratic ? : Various views on Democracy (Source : The Hindu, GS Paper 2)

CONTEXT:

For the counter of the Democratic Summit hosted by Joe Biden, An American President, the Chinese government capped a week-long campaign criticizing liberal democratic systems by attacking America's democratic malaise. Chinese foreign ministry on friday said democracy was a common value of humanity instead of a geostrategic tool and the summit this week was aimed t defending US hegemony, which is out and out anti democratic

INTRODUCTION :

For a long time debate on democracy has been going on. There are various views on democracy but one

thing is common whether the participation of the public is in the lawmaking process or not ? This is the more acceptable parameter of democratic value and The democracy stands where the numbers of participants in the law making process stands. In democratic system it should ensure the maximum consent of the public in the lawmaking process.

The form of democracy may be different as per the requirements of any country. It is not necessary that one party system, or two party system and multi party systems are the parameters of democracy. In China one party system can impose democratic values if in the lawmaking process it is ensured to take consent from maximum Chinese people. The election of the one single party in China is also occurs in democratic way as described by the high officials of the China. In 2016 and 2017, more than 900 million voters participated in elections to people 's congresses at the township and and country level- the world's largest direct election as white paper issued by China said. However it did not maintain that the congress, both at lower level and at the national level, maximum institutions are rubber stamps. No institution had right to ask any question to communist party policies or in other word it can be said as one party candidate, including for the post of president and Premier, are not uncommon

In this paper it has been also warned by China that in the name of democracy America is trying to establish its political hegemony and countries of the world should not blindly follow the democratic patten of America only otherwise it may be problematic and dangerous for those countries. The form of democracy should be in accordance with the cultural diversity and stability of the country. The Chinese official media pointed to India that His political system is chaotic and inefficient to justify. The Chinese published a commentary entitled "Women's status in China and India : who has human rights and democracy " authored by a foreign scholar at Beijing's Renmin University. Chinese women are far superior to those of Indian Women. The white paper entitled "" Democracy that works and published by China's State Council states CPC leadership is the fundamental guarantees for the whole progress of people. China did not duplicate western model of democracy

CONCLUSION:

On the basis of the above analysis it can not be said that the American democratic system is perfect and other countries of the world should follow western democratic system. In fact the objective of the democratic government is to make a welfare state. As per the needs of the country on the basis of cultural diversity, democratic system should be adopted and it should be kept in the mind that democracy should not remain a numbers game only. The protection of the interest of minorities (Linguistic, religious, racila etc) must be priory of that democratic system

Swarn Singh

COCO ISLAND GS- 2 INTERNATIONAL RELATION, BILATERAL RELATION

Coco islands are a small group of islands located in the North-eastern part of Bay of Bengal. It is situated 30 miles North to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands group of India, to 250 km south of the Burmese mainland and 1255 km south-east of Kolkata.

North of this Island group lies Preparis Island also belonging to Myanmar, and to the South lies the land for Island belonging to India.

Coco Island group consists of four islands on the great Coco reef and another Rai Coco island on the little Coco reef.

HISTORY OF COCO ISLAND: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The islands were first discovered by Portuguese sailors. The name is Coco Island because of the majority of coconut trees being there.
- In the 19th century the British government in India established a penal colony in the Andaman. Coco Island was the source of food for it and remained part of Andaman and Nicobar Island.
- Due to the remoteness of the Coco islands it was difficult for the British to govern them in 1882 the Britisher transferred the control of coco Island to the British government of Burma.
- After the separation of Burma from India this Island became a self-governing crown colony in 1937.
- At the eve of independence in 1947 the status of Coco Island was in Limbo just like Lakshadweep Island Andaman and Nicobar Island.
- The British raj was planning to deny the free India certain strategic locations including the island of the Lakshadweep, Andaman Island and also the Coco Island.

However the statesman shape of sardar Patel saved these islands for the country as he put strong negotiation with the British and did not yield to the British pressure.

In 1969 it was in last to house an increased number of political prisoners, in 1971 after the closing of the penal colony the facilities on great coco island were transferred to the Burmese Navy.

LEASE TO CHINA: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In 1994 China got this Island only from the Myanmar military. China supposedly established SIGNIT intelligence gathering station on Great Coco Island in 1992. They have signal intelligence facilities, Maritime bases, Android facilities and military airports in these islands.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Most sea lines of communication pass through the bay of Bengal and Andaman sea. Coco Island is located at the centre of these two seas. Coco Island is situated in proximity to the strait of Malacca which is a crucial point for the global supply route of oil from the gulf. In addition to this Coco Island provides a great strategic advantage to any world power to increase its influence in the Indian ocean region.

EFFECT ON INDIA: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- China has established its SIGNIT(signal intelligence) facility in coco Island to monitor Indian missile launches. Deccan monitor the missile testing facility of India located at Chandipur and Kalam Island and estimate even the classified detail of the missiles. In addition to this China can even monitor the Indian naval presence and its development in the region.
- China has already started working on its string of pearls theory to contain India in the region. They have already taken control of Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Gwadar port in Pakistan, Chittagong port in Bangladesh and have won the right of the Kyaukpyu port project in Myanmar. Along with all these strategic ports, Coco Island gives them Direct access to the bay of Bengal.

CAN INDIA TAKE IT BACK?

The Indian defence minister George Fernandes in an interview with the BBC in 2003, had stated that prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru had “donated” the Coco Island to Burma in the 1950 and the surrender of vital strategic assets. Many other reports also claimed that the Indian government had gifted the Coco Island to Myanmar in 1950. If we had gifted these islands, then definitely we can send our military and can take over land back, because India can blame myanmar that these islands are helping China To do anti Indian activities

and India had gifted these Island to the the government of Myanmar for its own use not for giving it on lease to the third party like China so we can take it back.

WAY FORWARD- TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- India needs to understand the strategic importance of the Andaman sea and needs to develop the infrastructure in the Andaman to make it a strong military and economic hub in the IOR.
- It is already home to a tri service command of the Indian armed forces. But the development and proper utilisation of this Island are still an issue.
- Radar station in the narcondam island and also need a push at appropriate level.

Anshum Verma

Significance of the revival of vaccine PSUs for Public health system GS Paper 3 Source – The Hindu

CONTEXT :

The honorable supreme Court Stated yesterday (13th Dec 2021 that it wanted to know the real status of the revivla policy of the government regarding vaccine PSUs

INTRODUCTION :

Entire world is facing the problem of coronavirus. The new variant of the coronavirus omicron increased the concern of the Indian government also. In this situation the Indian government should ensure the availability of the vaccine against the coronavirus. In this situation we should not rely on the private sector completely. Therefore Government wants ato revive the PSU and those PSUs will utilize their full production capabilities by placement of purchase order

Yesterday the Supreme court asked about the real status of the revival scheme. In fact a social activist and former IAS officer Amulya Ratna Nanda filed a case in this regard and during a hearing, a bench of Supremecourt headed by Justice Chandrachurna suggested that the government should file a response to that petition.

The petition had urged the Supreme court to push the reluctant Union government to put these PSUs to use, especially after public funds were once spent to make them compliant with good manufacturing practice

From the side of Government Solicitor General tushar Mehta stated that the revival of PSUs is the primary issue and policy of the government.

In fact, the Government was instructed earlier in 2016 regarding the revival of PSUs for the public health system but unfortunately the government did not honor its commitment.

CENTRAL PSUs AND STATE PSUs IN INDIA

After the liberalization and privatization policies, 17 PSUs were shut down by 2005 and in 2007, only 7 PSUs remained operational in India. Out of this, two are state level PSU and 5 central level PSUs.

STATE PSUs

- King Institute of Preventive Medicine (KPIM, Chennai), a state level PSU has not produced any vacancies for the past 2 decades.

- The only functional state level PSU today is Haffkine Institute and its commercial arm, Haffkine Biopharmaceutical Co Ltd Mumbai.

CENTRAL LEVEL PSU

- Bharat Biologicals and Immunologicals Ltd,
- Indian Institute of Immunologicals,
- Central research institute in kasauli,
- Pasteur Institute of India in Coonoor
- BCG vaccine laboratory

GOVERNMENT ' VIEW:

Government of India is also aware with the importance of vaccine PSU, because, in this period definitely demand of the vaccine will be increasing, and PSU would be revived by government through huge investment as described by Commerce and Industry minister Piyush Goyal. he said that India is planning to produce 5 Bn doses of covid -19 vaccine next year. and India will be increasing its export of the vaccine gradually.

CONCLUSION :

This period is very crucial for the government of India in economical as well as health sector also. Improvement in the economy is also an important factor. Government can use the money collected in the Prime minister relief fund for the revival of these PSUs. Government should invest huge money in the revival programme of these PSUs. Through this one side, govt could revive PSU and enhance economy and other side govt would strengthen its health system also

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

NATIONAL HEALTH ACCOUNTS ON HEALTH EXPENDITURE (GS -2 DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT RELATED TO HEALTH)

National health accounts has reported that there is decline of out of pocket expenditure from 64.2% in 2013-14 to 48.8% in 2017-18,owing to the increased government expenditure on health. The NHA estimates are based on internationally accepted system of health account 2011, provided by the World health organisation this report will be helpful to assist in policy formulation and strategy development and will enhance capacity building.

KEY POINTS

- There is an increased govt share in the total GDP, for the year 2017-18. The increase has registered to 1.35% in 2017-18 from 1.15% in 2013-14.
- In terms of per capita, the government's health expenditure has increased from 1042 to 1753 billion 2013-14 to 2017-18.
- The share of primary healthcare has also increased from 51.1% in 2013-14 to 54.7% in 2017-18. Primary and secondary care together accounts for more than 80% of the current govt. Health expenditure.
- The share of social security expenditure on health which encompasses social health insurance programmes, govt financed health insurance schemes and medical reimbursement in the public sector,has also led.

- Due to the rise in the share of government expenditure in the total budget to 40.8% there has been a decline in out of pocket expenditure to 48.8% for 2017-18. This has been possible due to the increased utilisation of government health facilities and reduction in the cost of services at the health care facilities.
- The government initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, Pradhan mantri Jan arogya yojana, Rashtriya bal swasthya karyakram, janani shishu Suraksha karyakram etc has helped the beneficiaries to access the healthcare facilities hence maximising the coverage of public health sector.

ISSUES WITH HEALTH SECTOR

- Limited existence of primary healthcare services,with limited services like pregnancy care,childcare and provision of national health programmes.
- Lack of training and supervision has led to the poor health management skills and has compromised the quality of health services for example As per the report of John Hopkins Bloomberg school of public health in 2019, nearly one out of every 100 children does not celebrate their 5th birthday either due to diarrhoea or pneumonia also suboptimal access to clean water and sanitation have challenged the eradication of such diseases.
- Lack of funding- India spent only 1.8% of its GDP on health in 2020-21 and its total out of pocket Expenditure is around 2.3% of GDP.its is comparatively low with regard to OECD countries average 7.6% and Brics countries average of 3.6%.
- India has less than the required number of doctors i.e one doctor over the population of 1445 against the norm of 1:1000.

WAY FORWARD

- India needs to optimize it's primary healthcare services so that non-communicable diseases can be early detected and prevented and children could be given protection from diarrhoea and pneumonia.
- There is a need to encourage investment in other colleges in lines of AIIMS to ramp up quality health services in low costs
- Public private partnership should be emphasised to leverage the expertise of the private sector.
- Research and development should be incentivised by additional tax deductions to further support greater investments in new drug developments and reducing GST on life saving and Essential drugs.
- More attention is required to be given towards training, reskilling and knowledge upgradation of the existing healthcare workforce so that quality services could be provided.
- There is a need to have a single authority responsible for public health that is legally empowered to enforce compliance of the health standards.

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Significance of UAPA for national Security (GS paper 3, Internal Security) (Source The Hindu)

CONTEXT :

Nealy 53% of persons arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in 2018, 2019 and 2020 were youngsters mostly below 30 years. This information is given by Union home ministry (MHA to the Lok Sabha)

INTRODUCTION

UAPA is an act to prevent unlawful activities and It was enacted for internal security of the country. The objective of THE UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT, 1967 was to curtail those activities which would disrupt the peace in the society. But after that it was amended in 1969, 1972, 1986, 2004, 2008, 2012 and in 2019 as per the requirement of the government.

It was also cleared that presently no amendments in UAPA are under consideration. Maximum arrest under UAPA of persons below 30 years of age was made in Uttar Pradesh (205) followed by Jammu Kashmir(166), Manipur (113) and Jharkhand (35). Now these facts are to think whether this is UP where anti national activities are going on in large numbers? If we observe, we find the answer NO. Kasmir, and the state of northeast and the state influenced with naxals are distrubed regions and the use of UAPA should be more in these states but the data is little more surprising

WHETHER THIS UAPA USED IN UP IS FOR POLITICAL BENEFITS ONLY :

If we analyze the data provided by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), we see that the conviction rate of the arrest under the UAPA is very poor, only 10 -15 % of people could be convicted under this act. This data is for national level. If we see the date for UP, we see that the condition is more poor in UP

During the last few days, we saw the arrest of some students of UP under UAPA who were celebrating the victory of Pakistan in T20 world cup cricket. Can they be convicted? This is the big question.

SIGNIFICANCE OF UAPA ACT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Definitely, when this act was enacted by the parliament, at that time India was facing the problem of the disintegrating elements and the Punjab crisis was also there. But nowadays, the nature of internal security has changed. Therefore, in 2019, the government changed this UAPA act, but the implementation of this act is not proper. Sometimes we see the arrest of people only because of political reasons. This must be avoided otherwise the significance of this act would fade.

Our police and investigating agencies must be mere professional so that the conviction rate should be increased otherwise, the trust over this act would not be for a long time and it will lose its significance.

Therefore this is the duty of state and the center government also to use this act properly and this is the most significant act to control over anti national activities but another dark phase of this implementation of this act is that it is being used for political benefits and those students and the youngers who are not aware with the concept of nation, national integration and indian constitution, commit any crime unwillingly, our agencies must investigate in this direction also and try to use this act when they have proper and sufficient evidence against the accused

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Need to Regulate Social media (GS-2,3, The Hindu)

The need for regulation of social media platforms has accelerated after the episode of facebook whistle blowers revelations. This is in the context that handful of companies yields more money and power than that of the several governments, their extraordinary influence on economy, society and policies and hence there is an urgent need to put certain checks and balances on their unbridled power.

RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN RECENT DECADE: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The phenomenal rise of social media platforms like facebook, twitter, whatsapp etc. has become a double edged sword in terms of functioning of democracies.
- It has democratised access to information, while on the other hand it has concentrated power over that information with a handful of private companies, their billionaire owners, and certain ideologically committed activist groups.
- It has become easy for billions of netizens around the world to bypass traditional curators of information such as journalists and editors in order to get the content of their choice.
- In addition to being the consumer, netizens have also become creators and disseminators of content.
- Misinformation on social media can alter public opinion for the worse and create a sense of panic and restlessness among the public, which is a threat to democracy.
- It is to be noted that social media provides a liberal platform which allows common citizens to put forward their views regarding policies and acts and let them directly communicate with their leaders and vice versa.
- Thus the public opinion gets amplified on social media, which consequently makes democracy more transparent and stronger.

NEED FOR REGULATION

- Whatsapp has about 400 million active indian users 300 million Fb users, 250 million youtube users, which is more than the US.
- With such a large market share, these significant data fiduciaries have an obligation to abide by the law of land, in the interest of the data subjects in India at large.
- Data fiduciaries are using their significant market power to defy rules of the land in which they operate.
- India being a democratic country always has legal recourse and the judiciary to oversee undue exercise of power by the state.

CHALLENGES BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- A stringent policy of policing social media could violate the individuals right to privacy.
- It will be not easy to compel fb Inc, the owner of whatsapp to give up on the app's unique selling proposition to the users of complete end to end confidentiality.

WAY FORWARD

- The benefits of technology can not be ignored, especially social media with wide outreach. In the midst of a pandemic there was whatsapp fb and twitter for SOS calls.
- In the pandemic era followed by prolonged periods of lockdown, social media has given respite to people from mental distress.

- There can be no dispute that social media is necessary in order to connect with peers.
- The government should regulate these social media platforms, but not to the extent that it becomes difficult for them to do business in india.

CONCLUSION

India is not a surveillance state, there must not be any unconstitutional check on the right to privacy and freedom of speech and expression. Further, there is a need for social media awareness to enable citizens to distinguish between right content and wrong control and also to know when democratic processes are being manipulated. There must be a balance as the constitution itself has provided several limitations on one's right to speech and expression. Social media platforms need to provide safeguards in the event when democratic processors are being intentionally disrupted or harmful falsehoods are spreading and enable people to find out what is true.

Anshum Verma

Zero budget natural farming (ZBNF) (GS-1,3)

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is a set of farming methods which supports chemical-free agriculture practice drawing from traditional Indian practices. It was also a grassroots peasant movement, which spread to various states in India especially in the southern India state of Karnataka where it first evolved. This practice was originally propagated by an agriculturist and recipient of Padma Shri Subhash Palekar, along with the state's farmers association called Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), put together these zero budget farming practices as an alternative to many unsustainable agricultural practice under Green Revolution that were driven by chemical fertilizers, pesticides and intensive irrigation.

The liberalization and the green revolution of Indian agriculture led to a deep crisis in Indian agriculture that made small scale farming an impractical profession as seeds became costly, inputs, and markets were inaccessible and expensive for small and poor peasants. Indian farmers increasingly find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of debt, because of the high production costs, high interest rates for credit, the volatile market prices of crops, the rising costs of fossil fuel based inputs, and private seeds. Debt especially taken from non institutional sources, is a problem for farmers of all sizes in India. Under such circumstances ZBFN promises to end poor peasants' reliance on loans and drastically cut production costs, ending the debt cycle for them.

The word 'budget' refers to earning and expenses, thus the phrase 'Zero Budget' means without using any money, and without spending also on the purchase of inputs. 'Natural farming' means farming in sync with Nature and without chemicals.

THERE ARE FOUR PILLARS OF ZBNF: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

1. Jivamrita/jevamrutha
2. Bijamrita/beejamrutha
3. Acchadana – mulching
4. Whapasa – moisture

1. JEEVAMRUTHA:

Jeevamrutha is the first and important pillar of zero budget farming. It is a blend of aged cow urine and fresh cow dung from India's indigenous jaggery, water, pulse flour, soil, and cow breed. This mixture is one type of

natural fertilizer that not only provides nutrients, but also acts as a catalytic agent that promotes the activity of microorganisms, especially earthworm in the soil, which is applied to farmland.

2. BIJAMRITA:

It is the second pillar used for the treatment of seeds, seedlings or any planting material. It is a blend of tobacco, green chilies, and neem leaf pulp etc so that it became effective in protecting young roots from fungus as well as from soil-borne and seed-borne diseases. It provides a kind of natural protection to seeds.

3. ACCHADANA (MULCHING):

Acchadana (Mulching) is the third pillar of this farming practice. It helps to maintain soil moisture content by any of the 3 mulching practices- Soil Mulch, Straw Mulch, Live Mulch. This pillar helps to protect the topsoil of the farmland and does not ruin it by tilling.

4. WHAPASA (MOISTURE):

It is a condition where both water and air molecules are present in the soil. It helps to reduce the extra irrigation requirement.

ADVANTAGES OF ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING: TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Reduces the initial cost of farmers for inputs
- Farmer's income will increase automatically
- The soil ecosystem will improve
- Cow dung which is full of nutrients and available locally, will add soil value
- Cow dung's bacteria will decompose the organic matter in soil and will make soil suitable for the plants
- Low consumption of electricity and water
- Improves the productivity of the soil
- It will decrease the risk of diseases attacking the crop.
- Farming production quality improves as we use no chemical fertilizers

There are many government initiatives for supporting practices like organic farming, zero budget based natural farming etc.

The Government of India is promoting these initiatives in the country through schemes like Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) etc.

In the revised guidelines of the PKVY scheme during the year 2018, various organic farming models like Natural Farming, Rishi Farming, Vedic Farming, Cow Farming, Homa Farming, Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) etc. have been included.

The prerequisites for the success of COP26: Climate justice along with climate finance (GS-3)

In the run-up to the Conference of the Parties (COP26), there is a mounting pressure on developing countries like India to curb emissions but nobody is talking much about cumulative historical global emissions that heated the earth by 1.1% above the pre-industrial levels.

If we fail to arrest these emissions and curb the rise in the temperature 0.5C below the preindustrial level

then it will lead to many disasters like unprecedented rise in sea levels, sudden weather changes, increased number of cyclones like we see today in arabian sea, crop failure, unpredictable monsoon, submergence of small island countries and storms will make a huge part of the planet prone to disaster and uninhabitable.

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) like carbon dioxide (CO₂), CO, SO_x, CH₄, and nitrous oxides (NO_x) etc. contribute to global warming but they have varied impact on global warming depending on their respective warming potential. CO₂ stays for the longest in the atmosphere, whereas methane, second most abundant greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide (CO₂), is comparatively short-lived but is 28 times more powerful than CO₂ as it can warm up the planet 80 times more than CO₂ in 20 years of their release.

India is the third largest emitter of CO₂ but its per capita share is very less as compared to countries like USA and CHINA. India comes at 21st in the descending order of magnitude of per capita emissions. Contrarily, the historical emissions place India as a fairly low emitter. India's lead in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 1992, by introducing Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), paved the way for the principle of equity and climate justice.

IN COP26, INDIA'S PROMISE ON FIVE POINTS DESERVE APPRECIATION: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

1. To power 50% of our energy needs from renewable sources
2. Increasing the renewable installed capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) by 2030 from the present 100 GW
3. Reducing the total emission to 1 billion tonnes from its projected emissions from now till 2030
4. Reducing the carbon intensity of the economy by 45% by 2030
5. Pledging net zero by 2070.

India represents 17% of the global population, but its historical cumulative emissions are only 4% of the global emissions (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change).

Any commitment to net zero by India and similar developing countries will not bring a sizable reduction in GHG emissions unless the United States (US), European Union (EU), and China whose combined emission accounted for almost half of the total emissions, take any concrete measures. The failure of the COP25 was attributed to the poor initiative by the highest polluters. The Paris Agreement of 2015 talked about "loss and damage" but did not say much on liability and redress. The proposal of climate finance by the US to the tune of \$100 million annually was brought in and recorded as early as 2009, but the deadline of 2020 has been pushed to 2023.

The basic idea behind climate finance is to compensate the countries facing natural disasters caused by global warming. The other route to protect the planet from depletion and devastation is by technology transfer to ensure clean production practices. This calls for the initiative of the historical emitters to lead by sharing their clean technology, which they acquired. Although technology transfer was never on the table of previous conferences, the UNFCCC aims at the adaptation of the climate goals through several means, including this.

India is predominantly an agricultural economy, and more than half of its population is dependent on agriculture for employment. Livestock and agriculture is central to the economy but both these activities emit methane. Signing a pledge to stop deforestation and cut methane emission may put the rural economy in peril. Livestock emission—from the gastroenteric releases and manure—make up 32% of anthropogenic methane emissions. The NO_x from fertilisers also contribute to global warming. The destruction of peatland contributes to methane ending up in the atmosphere. But any disproportionate stress on methane or NO_x emission reduction will disturb the food chain causing other imbalances in addition to the rise in food insecurity in less developed and developing countries. The solution lies in farmer-friendly technologies to

reduce emissions from livestock and bring climate-friendly paddy cultivation practices within the reach of farmers.

The climate change debate involves the classic case of global commons exploited by the players because of non-excludability. The abstract notion of universalism versus national interests results in different approaches of the players (nations). In the former, all humanity is a composite whole aiming at protecting the environment vis-à-vis the latter with priorities of the individual nations for their well-being leading to the trade-off between securing more rights for their group/nation/bloc. The brouhaha over net-zero emission pledges does not guarantee any check on the emissions before the target date but determining the growth curve of emissions will help.

Although many countries have submitted their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and others have even revised their submissions upwards, the scenario is, at best, suitable for a rise of 2.7% above the pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. All this, too, is only subject to complete fulfilment of the commitments made by the nations. The negotiators at the summit should aim higher with the principle of universalism, considering the basic needs of the poorest of the poor. The protection of vulnerable communities and regions from the vagaries of the environment is as much a necessity as the basic needs of all the dwellers of the planet and should not be posed as competing goals. Hence, climate finance should include technology transfer as well to serve the needs of all.

Swarn Singh

Sedition Law : Is it a tool to crush the voice of opponent **GS paper II, Paper I The Hindu**

INTRODUCTION :

Union Law minister Kiran rijuju, on 10 Dec 2021 told the Loksabha that the ministry of home affairs had no proposal under consideration to scrap section 124 A of Indian Penal code which is related to sedition

What is section 124A of India penal code

This was a law of the colonial period through which the British government crushed any protest and discontentment of the Indians.

Under Section 124A of IPC, a person would be charged if that person by words or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the government established by law.

The sedition law which is enshrined in Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was introduced by the British government in 1870 to tackle dissent against colonial rule.

For last 2 decades it has been observed that many opponent people were booked through this section and even supreme court rejected this section many time because this section had lost its credibility therefore it should be revoked by the central government but as per the statement of union law minister that government still understand its significance so it should not be revoked or curtailed

HISTORY OF 124 A CHARGE OVER INDIAN FREEDOM FIGHTER: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

According to the LOC (Library of Congress)blog, the first known instance of the application of the law was the trial of newspaper editor Jogendra Chandra Bose in 1891. Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi many times were booked through this section of Indian Penal code. In modern India, it has also been observed that those who criticized the prime minister, chief minister or any other important government were arrested

with this charge. Therefore, nowadays this section is continuously losing its significance. Recently in a case filed by Major General (retired) SG Vombatkere, during the hearing, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana stated that this is colonial rule and it should be repealed.

In fact Major General (retired) SG Vombatkere had challenged the validity of this section 124 A in the court on the grounds that it has a “chilling effect” on speech and poses an unreasonable restriction on the fundamental right of free expression. Indian citizens were given the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expressions.

This sedition law has been challenged before this incident because generally the government has been using this section as a tool to crush the voice of the opponent.

CONCLUSION

The section of IPC 124 A has been the subject of debate for a long time. Just after independence communist leaders opposed this section and appealed to the government many times to repeal it. And nowadays it was also suggested by the honorable supreme court to remove this section. Now the ball is in the court of the legislature whether the government would remove this section or will amend this section. As per the situation of the country it looks that this section would not be removed in near future even though the possibility of the amendments are still there

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Legal Guarantee to MSP: The Demand of farmers and Obligations under AoA of WTO (GS 3, Economics, The Hindu, Indian Express)

CONTEXT:

The demand of farmers for the legal guarantee of MSP has many dimensions of debate. For example, will it not be heavy fiscal burden on the government to procure all 23 crops for which government announces MSP?, what about logistic and storages if procured by the government, and what about obligations made under Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) under WTO regarding de minimis limit of trade distorting domestic support, like MSP.

The WTO endeavors for fairly competitive international trade practices. It does not favor the support from the governments to their respective producers. The logic behind is that if a government directly supports its producer, the producer would be making more products, resulting in a production surplus which ultimately results in cheap export, and thus the domestic producer of this country can capture the international market. All this became possible only due to support from the government (domestic support) to its producer. Hence this kind of support is considered as trade distorting and against the principle of free and fair market system, which is advocated by WTO.

These kinds of domestic support (Subsidies) restrictions are mentioned in the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), which is one of the many agreements under WTO. In AoA, the domestic support from the governments or Subsidies are categorized in terms of green boxes, blue boxes, amber boxes and development boxes.

GREEN BOX :

Under green box subsidies are not considered as trade distortive. These subsidies must not be products specific

and must not involve price support (such remunerative price or MSP). They can include environmental protection and regional development programmes. Examples of green boxes are domestic policies dealing with research, extension, inspection and grading, environmental and conservation programs, disaster relief, crop insurance, domestic food assistance, food security stocks, structural adjustment programs, and direct payments not linked to production. At present there are no limits on spending on blue box.

DEVELOPMENT BOX :

Agriculture Agreement allows developing countries additional flexibilities in providing domestic support. The type of support that fits into the developmental category are measures of assistance, whether direct or indirect, designed to encourage agricultural and rural development and that are an integral part of the development programmes of developing countries. They include investment subsidies which are generally available to agriculture in developing country members, agricultural input subsidies generally available to low-income or resource-poor producers in developing country members, and domestic support to producers in developing country members to encourage diversification from growing illicit narcotic crops.

BLUE BOX :

It is also called as “amber box with condition”. These are subsidies which tend to limit the production. Here farmers are given support to limit/reduce the production so as to neutralize the production distortion. Actually the story behind is that in the 1970s and 1980s the US and European countries were hugely incentivizing their agriculture production by directly supporting the farmers which was later seen as trade distortive. These countries got enough fixed resources like land and others behind agriculture production because of huge government incentives. The crux is that now to fix the trade distortion problem, they shall not be using all resources for production, maybe sometimes like leaving the land fallow. This will obviously reduce the income of the farmer. Here if farmers are given some support/benefits from the government to balance their reduced income, then this support/benefits/subsidies will be counted in blue box. For example subsidies linked with capping of acreage or number of animals. There is no WTO cap for blue box subsidies.

AMBER BOX :

Nearly all domestic support measures considered to distort production and trade (with some exceptions) fall into the amber box, which is defined in Article 6 of the Agriculture Agreement as all domestic supports except those in the blue and green boxes. These include measures to support prices, or subsidies directly related to production quantities.

These supports are subject to limits. “De minimis” minimal supports for both product-specific and non-product-specific support are allowed, defined as a share of the value of agricultural production. This threshold is generally 5% of the value of agricultural production for developed countries, 10% for most developing countries.

THE ISSUE IN LEGALIZING MSP :

Procuring all the 23 crops at MSP, as against the current practice of procuring largely rice and wheat, will result in India breaching the de minimis limit making it vulnerable to a legal challenge at the WTO. Even if the Government does not procure directly but mandates private parties to acquire at a price determined by the Government, as it happens in the case of sugarcane, the de minimis limit of 10% applies. Very recently, a WTO panel in the case, India – Measures Concerning Sugar and Sugarcane, concluded that India breached the de minimis limit in the case of sugarcane by offering guaranteed prices paid by sugar mills to sugarcane farmers.

WAY FORWARD/ALTERNATIVES :

India can shift the support system from Price-based (in the form of MSP) to Income-based, which will not be trade distorting under the AoA provided the income support is not linked to production. Or alternatively, Price-based (in the form of MSP) can be given to the de minimis limit and can be supplemented with Income-based support policy. But in the backdrop of three repealed farm laws, whatever is to be done in the near future regarding agriculture reforms, the government has to engage and convince the farmers priorly.

MD. Layeeque Azam

Annexation of Goa : The first diplomatic victory after independence of India GS : Paper I Sources : Times of India, Indian Express, The Hindu

CONTEXT :

Today is the Goa liberation day and Our Honorable prime minister will visit Goa on liberation day celebration

INTRODUCTION :

At the time of Independence, Goa was neither under the control of the British Indian Government nor it was a princely state. Goa was directly controlled by the Portuguese government and the British never interfered in the internal affairs of administration of Goa. Therefore, it was a big challenge to merge Goa.

HISTORY OF GOA IN BRIEF : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

As per some scholars this area of Goa was mentioned in Mahabharata also and Its name was Gomantak and the port near the mouth of mandovi river was named as Gowapura on which The Portuguese named it Goa. Aryans culture (Led by saraswat Brahman) remained here for a long time.

During medieval era, Bahmany invaded this region and in this way Islam reached here Portuguese captured Goa in 1510 under the leadership of Alfonso de Albuquerque, even though Dutch also seized Goa many times but when British made an alliance with Portuguese, Goa was brought under the direct control of Portuguese authority and Bombay was given to British.

ANNEXATION OF GOA :

During the British Rule in India, Goa remained free and always enjoyed independent rules under the control of the Portuguese government. After the independent Goa's authority did not surrender Goa to the Indian government, even the public of Goa wanted to be merged with India. But since Goa was not part of the British Indian Government, so Goa was not bound to sign any instrument of the annexation.

In the mid of 1954, the nationalist leaders of the Goa demanded to free Goa and merge it with India but Goa authority rejected this demand then these nationalist had to compel for the protest against Goa authority. Many times the Indian government appealed to the British to intervene in this matter. In the mid of 1954 pro nationalist people seized the Portuguese enclave of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and established pro Indian administration (Self rule). This encouraged other nationalist of Maharashtra and nearby places to liberate Goa from Portuguese control. Thousands of Satyagraha from different parts of India reached Goa but Goa's authority seized the border and did not allow any outsiders to enter. After some time thousands of the

Satyagarhis tried to enter the territory of Goa. Police of Goa started a fire and many people were killed who were fighting with non violent manner.

The Indian government raised this issue at international level and warned Portugal to suspend all diplomatic relations with Portugal. This tension enlarged after 1961 when Indian government decided to send his army in Goa on the ground of humanism because many satyagarhis were arrested and being tortured by Goa authority. Indian troops supported by naval and airforce invaded Goa on 18 Dec 1961 and declared an integral part of India. People of Goa overwhelmingly supported this annexation. Finally Portugal authority had to recognise this victory of India over Goa. In this way All three territories Goa, Daman, Diu subsequently became part of India. Goa became a state in 1987.

CONCLUSION :

The annexation of Goa with minimum casualties was a big achievement. Definitely it was the appreciable diplomatic skill of our leaders so that we could annex Goa with military support. Now Goa is free and an integral part of India and enjoying status as a State. Similar technique was adopted in the annexation of Sikkim (1973). The matter of Sikkim was not very typical in comparison to Goa because it was a princely state but China could interfere in this matter. Both were annexed after independence through our wise diplomatic skill

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC- TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

For Prelims: MCQ related to annexation of Goa, History of Goa etc may be asked

For mains :

After the Independence of India, annexation of some states like Sikkim and Goa was a big challenge in front of the Indian Government. Discuss this and explain how the Indian government tackled these challenges?

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Pacific Ring of Fire (GS-1)

An earthquake of magnitude 7.3 hit eastern Indonesia whose epicenter was in the Flores Sea, north of East Nusa Tenggara province.

Why do so many earthquakes come to Indonesia?

Indonesia is vulnerable to earthquakes because it's in the world's most seismically active region famously called the Ring of Fire, an area where most of the world's volcanic eruptions occur and it is on the fault lines in the basin of the Pacific Ocean. Though the whole Ring of Fire has seen a large amount of activity in recent days, Indonesia still experiences more due to its position on a large grid of tectonic plates.

There are three major continental plates– the Pacific, the Eurasian and the Indo-Australian plates and one smaller Philippine plate on the confluence of these plates that Indonesia sits on. As a result, a number of volcanoes, earthquakes etc. occur every year. Indonesia is home to more than 400 volcanoes, out of which around 1/3rd are currently active, accounting for about a third of the world's active volcanoes.

What is the Ring of Fire?

It is the Circum-Pacific Belt only which is referred to as “The Ring of Fire,” is a path along the Pacific Ocean characterized by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes. Almost 40,000 kilometers (24,900 miles) is the length of this ring. It marks the boundaries between several tectonic plates including 3 major plates like the

Pacific, Indian-Australian, and North American and many smaller ones like Juan de Fuca, Cocos, Nazca, and Philippine Plates.

Seventy-five percent of Earth's volcanoes, more than 450 volcanoes, are located along the Ring of Fire. Almost 90 percent of Earth's earthquakes take place along this ring, including the most violent and dramatic earthquakes of this planet.

The abundance of volcanoes and earthquakes along the Ring of Fire is caused by the amount of movement of tectonic plates in the area. Along this Ring of Fire, most of the plates formed convergent boundaries resulting in subduction zones. In this one plate will be pushed down, or subducted, by another plate above. As rocks in the plate get subducted, they melt and become magma. The abundance of magma so near to Earth's surface as a result of subduction, gives rise to many volcanic activities.

Here is a significant exception to this ring, is the border between the Pacific and North American Plates as these two plates form a transform boundary, in which plates move sideways past one another. These types of transform boundary movements generate a large number of earthquakes as tension in Earth's crust builds up and is released periodically.

RISK:

The people most at risk from earthquakes and volcanism are people of those countries that lie on so-called subduction zones in the Ring of Fire, like the US west coast, Chile, Japan, Indonesia and island nations including the Solomon Islands etc, as here boundaries mark the collision between two tectonic planets.

FORMATION OF RING OF FIRE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Ring of Fire is the result of convergent plate movements from subduction of oceanic tectonic plates beneath lighter continental plates and their meeting zone is called a subduction zone.

Why is the Ring of Fire the home to most of the earthquakes?

- The deepest earthquakes took place in subduction zone areas as tectonic plates scrape against each other resulting in tremors and the Ring of Fire has the world's biggest concentration of subduction zones.
- The tectonic plates were forced to move and crash up against each other because of the energy released from the earth's molten core, causing friction. The friction only causes a build-up of energy and when this energy is finally released it causes an earthquake. If this happens at sea it can cause devastating tsunamis.
- Tectonic plates usually only move on average a few centimetres each year, but when an earthquake strikes, they speed up massively and can move at several metres per second.

*Earthquake : A sudden violent shaking of the ground, typically causing great destruction, as a result of movements within the lithosphere as a result of plate movements or volcanic action.

The focus of an earthquake is the point inside the earth's crust at which the seismic waves are initiated and the epicenter is the point directly above the focus on earth's surface.

Swarn Singh

Significance of Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (Source – The Hindu) (GS paper II, III)

CONTEXT :

Many environment actives and social workers are opposing biological diversity act 2002 when Government introduced some amendment in this Bill in Lok Sabha

INTRODUCTION :

This act is called Biodiversity Act in short. This act was enacted by the Indian parliament in 2002 and the objective of this act was to conserve the natural resources as well as environment also.

This act would be implemented in entire India including Kashmir. This act has 65 sections and applicable on foreign nationals also. This act was introduced in parliament for fulfilling the obligations of India described in the convention of biological diversity in 2002 (which is an international organization of 196 countries) and India had participated in this convention in 2002. Under the Act, the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has been formed and is headquartered at **Chennai**.

Convention on Biological Diversity: the objectives of this convention are to conserve biodiversity, to protect earth from environmental degradation and to make acts accordingly. India participated in 2002 in this convention

PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The important provision of this act is the establishment of the state biodiversity board and the power and function of the boards also described in this act
- This act established national biodiversity fund and state biodiversity fund also
- The orders of this act would be under the jurisdiction of Civil Courts
- There are provision of the punishment also (imprisonment of 5 years and fine of 10 Lac) and the offense is cognizable offense

WHAT IS THE MAIN CONCERN OF THIS BILL: TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Many traditional Indian medicine practitioners, seed sector, and industry and researchers demanded for some relief or relaxation in this bill so that they could extract and explore more herbal seeds and medicines. In the favor of these people, the Government introduced the amendment bill which provides the exemptions to registered AYUSH medical practitioners and the people of having certified traditional knowledge on the herbal seeds from giving prior intimation to State biodiversity boards for accessing biological resources for certain purposes.

Even Though Government Ensured that through this amendment there would not be any effect over the effort of government in conserving the biodiversity

But Indian Environmental experts oppose this amendment because they think that these industrialists based on herbal meditation would exploit natural resources beyond the limit for earning profit and in this way they could harm the environment also. Even though the Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE) stated that this new amendment will be beneficial for the Ayush Ministry and through this bill neither local communities would be benefited nor the protection of biodiversity would be strong. The Bill in the current form would pave the way for “bio piracy” and would mean AYUSH manufacturing companies would no

longer need to take approvals and thus it would be contradictory to the objectives for which this bill was enacted earlier.

CONCLUSION AND WAYFORWARD : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Biodiversity Bill is to ensure the protection from environmental degradation as well as protection of biodiversity but simultaneously on the cost of conservation of biodiversity, the development in the field of medical research and Ayurveda and herbal medicines should not be influenced. Keeping the concerns of the environmentalist Government should take appropriate action in this regard and should ensure the development of medical research and the environmental conservation. Government should also be concerned towards the interest of local communities also because in the process of development these communities should not be left behind.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

