

GOVERNANCE**E-Daakhil Portal**

E-Daakhil portal for Consumer grievance redressal is now operational in **15 States/UTs**.

Ministry: Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

Key Point

- E-filing was launched by National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) in September, 2020.
- Delhi was the first state to implement it.
- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, has provision for e-filing of consumer complaints in the Consumer Commissions and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint.

The digital software for filing complaints has features like **e-Notice**, filing written response by opposite party, alerts via SMS/Email, etc.

INDIAN ECONOMY**India Emerged Out of Technical Recession**

The Indian economy has emerged out of technical recession as it grew at 0.4% in the third (October-December) quarter of 2020-21 with improvement in manufacturing, construction and agriculture.

- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had contracted by 24.4% and 7.3% in the April-June and July-September quarters, respectively, marking a technical recession in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A technical recession is when a country faces a continuous decline for **two consecutive quarters** in the GDP.

Key Points**Growth Projections:**

- For the full fiscal year (2020-21), the National Statistical Office (NSO) has projected a contraction of **8%**, higher than the forecasts of the Economic Survey (**7.7%**) and the Reserve Bank of India (7.5%).
- The real GDP growth estimate for the third quarter (2020-21) is at **0.4%**. In the corresponding quarter last year, the economy had grown 3.3%.
- For the April-June quarter (Q1) and July-September (Q2), the contraction numbers were revised from 23.9% to 24.4% and 7.5% to 7.3%, respectively.

Growth Across Major Sectors:**Industries and Services Sector:**

- With improved performance of manufacturing, electricity and construction, industry recorded a growth rate of 2.6% in the third quarter against the contraction in the first two.
- However, services, with the largest share in GDP at 57%, still remained in the contraction zone with a 0.9% fall year-on-year.
- Financial, real estate and professional services grew 6.6% as against 9.5% contraction in the previous quarter and 5.5% growth in the corresponding period last year.
- Mining, trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting services and public administration services continued to stay in the negative territory in the third quarter registering a contraction of 5.9%, 7.7%, and 1.5%, respectively.

Cores Sector Output:

- India's eight core sectors recorded a meagre 0.1% rise in output in January 2021, propped up by a 5.1% rise in electricity, 2.7% growth in fertilizers and 2.6% growth in steel production, even as the other five sectors contracted.
- Coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, and cement recorded negative growth in January.
- The eight core industries constitute 40.27% of the Index of Industrial Production.

Agriculture:

- Growth in agriculture jumped 3.9% in October-December compared with 3% growth in July-September and 3.4% growth during the corresponding quarter last year.

Reasons:

New Investment: The positive momentum seen in investment demand (Gross Fixed Capital Formation - GFCF) as it grew by 2.6% in the third quarter after being in doldrums for several quarters now.

Increase in Centre's Capital Expenditure: The resurgence of Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE) in Q3 and Centre's capital expenditure increased year-on-year by 129% in October, 249% in November and 62% in December.

GFCE: It is an aggregate transaction amount on a country's national income accounts representing government expenditure on goods and services that are used for the direct satisfaction of individual needs (individual consumption) or collective needs of members of the community.

V-shaped recovery: The Q3 GDP numbers showed the success of the government's initial policy of "lives over livelihood". "The sharp V-shaped recovery has been driven by rebounds in both Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) and Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) as a combination of astute handling of the lockdown and a calibrated fiscal stimulus.

PFCE: It is defined as the expenditure incurred by the resident households and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) on final consumption of goods and services, whether made within or outside the economic territory.

INTERNATIONAL RELATION

Ghana first country to receive vaccine under COVAX

Ghana has become the first country in the world to receive a shipment of coronavirus vaccines under the COVAX program.

- About 600,000 doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine were sent to Accra in Ghana on February 23.
- The vaccine is manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII), Pune which is the largest vaccine manufacturer in the world

Key Points

- The COVAX program is led by the vaccine alliance GAVI, WHO and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) in partnership with UNICEF, vaccine manufacturers and the World Bank, among others.
- Aim: To ensure equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines globally
- It is supposed to be the largest vaccine procurement and supply operation in history.
- The program wants to vaccinate roughly 20 per cent of the population in the 92 Advance Market Commitment (AMC) countries, which include middle and lower-income nations that cannot afford to pay for COVID-19 vaccines.
- Countries with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita of less than US \$4000 and some other countries eligible under the World Bank International Development Association (IDA) shall be given top priority.

Do you know?

The AstraZeneca vaccine is known as **Covishield** in India.

It was given **Emergency Use Listing (EUL)** by the WHO in February, 2021.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Amazonia-1 Satellite

The ISRO recently launched **Amazonia-1 satellite of Brazil** and 18 Co-passenger satellites through PSLV-C51 rocket.

Key Points

- **PSLV-C51** is the 53rd mission of PSLV.
- Amazonia-1 is the primary satellite of the launch.
- PSLV-C51/Amazonia-1 is the first dedicated commercial mission of **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**.
- NSIL is a Government of India company under Department of Space.
- Amazonia-1 is the optical earth observation satellite of National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

This satellite would provide remote sensing data to users for monitoring deforestation in the Amazon region and analysis of diversified agriculture across the Brazilian territory.

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021

The third and final leg of 11th edition of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021 took place at Murshidabad, West Bengal.

Various colourful performances were given by the local artists, including 'Baul Gaan', 'Alkup Gaan', 'Leto gaan', 'Jhumuriya' and Ranpa folk dances.

Key Points

- Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav is the flagship festival of the Ministry of Culture.
- It has been organized since 2015 with the active participation of Seven Zonal Culture Centres.
- It was started with an intention to exhibit the rich cultural heritage of the country in all its rich and varied dimensions namely, Handicrafts, Cuisine, Painting, Sculpture and Performing Arts-Folk, Tribal, Classical and Contemporary- all at one place.

Significance:

- It has been playing a pivotal role to take the vibrant culture of India out to the masses instead of confining it to auditoria and galleries.
- It has been instrumental in showcasing folk and tribal art, dance, music, cuisines & culture of one state in other states reinforcing the cherished goal of “Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat”.
- It also provides an effective platform to the artists and artisans to support their livelihood.
- It reconnects the people (especially the youth) with their indigenous culture, its multifaceted nature, magnificence, and historical importance in the context of ‘India as a Nation’ over the millennia.
- Till date, Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavs have been held at various places such as Delhi, Varanasi, Bengaluru, Tawang, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tehri and Madhya Pradesh.

Purnagiri Temple

- Purnagiri Temple was recently in news.
- Tanakpur (Uttarakhand)-Delhi Junction Special train was recently flagged off.
- Pilgrims visiting Purnagiri temple will be benefitted with improved connectivity.
- On the **Annapurna range**, the temple organises the **Purnagiri Mela** in Uttarakhand on Navratri.
- The temple is situated at a distance of 20Km from Tanakpur, on the right bank of the river Kali in Champawat, Uttarakhand.
- Purnagiri Devi temple is one of the **108 Siddha Peeths**.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme**

Government is planning to replace the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP) with a new programme MERITE Project.

Key Points**About the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme:**

- It was started in 2002 by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development with the assistance of the World Bank and is being implemented in a phased manner.
- It aims to upscale the quality of technical education and enhance capacities of institutions.
- The Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme III (TEQIP-III) was started in 2017 and will be completed by 2021.
- It aims to develop technical education as a key component for improving the quality of Engineering Education.
- The Objective is to improve quality and equity in engineering institutions in focus states such as in low income states.

About MERITE Project:

The project has an objective to improve technical education like the TEQIP.

However, the MERITE Project is still in the conceptual stage and has not yet received Cabinet approval.

INDIAN HISTORY**Morarji Desai**

Recently, the 125th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Morarji Desai was observed.

He was the 4th Prime Minister (1977-79) and the first non-Congress Prime Minister of India.

Key Points

- Shri Morarji Desai was born on 29th February, 1896 in Bhadeli village, now in the Bulsar district of Gujarat.
- After graduating in 1918 from the Wilson Civil Service in Bombay, he served as a Deputy Collector for twelve years.

Joined Congress:

- In 1930, when India was in the midst of the Civil Disobedience Movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Desai, having lost his confidence in the British sense of justice, decided to resign from Government service and to plunge into the struggle.
- Shri Desai was imprisoned thrice during the freedom struggle. He became a Member of the All India Congress Committee in 1931 and was Secretary of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee until 1937.

Participation in Individual Satyagraha:

- He was detained in the individual Satyagraha launched by Mahatma Gandhi, released in October, 1941 and detained again in August, 1942 at the time of the Quit India Movement.

Political Career:

- In 1952, he became the Chief Minister of Bombay.
- He joined the Union Cabinet as Minister for Commerce and Industry in November, 1956. Later, he took the Finance portfolio in March, 1958.
- In 1963, he resigned from the Union Cabinet under the Kamraj Plan. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who succeeded Pt. Nehru, as Prime Minister, persuaded him to become Chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission for restructuring the administrative system.
- According to Kamaraj Plan, it was proposed that all senior Congress leaders should resign from their posts and devote all their energy to the revitalization of the Congress.
- Desai was arrested and detained on 26th June, 1975, when Emergency was declared. He went on an indefinite hunger strike to support the Nav Nirman movement of Gujarat.
- Nav Nirman Andolan was a socio-political movement in 1974 in Gujarat by students and middle-class people against economic crisis and corruption in public life.
- He was later unanimously elected as Leader of the Janata Party in Parliament and was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India on 24th March, 1977.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM**National Science Day 2021**

National Science Day (NSD) is celebrated every year on 28th February to commemorate the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' by Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930. The first NSD was celebrated in 1987.

Key Points

Basic Objective: To propagate the message of the importance of science and its application among the people.

2021 Theme: 'Future of STI (Science, Technology and Innovations): Impacts on Education, Skills, and Work'.

Nodal Agency to Support Celebration: National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC) of Ministry of Science and Technology.

Awards Conferred:

- National S&T Communication Awards, Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR) awards, and SERB Women Excellence Awards and Rajendra Prabhu Memorial Appreciation Shield for outstanding work in science media and journalism.
- The first-ever National S&T Databases on S&T Awards in India and Indian origin Academicians abroad, was released.

Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR):

- AWSAR is an initiative that aims to disseminate Indian research stories among the masses in an easy to understand and interesting format.

Objectives:

- To encourage youth pursuing higher studies to submit at least one story/article based on their research work.
- Foster, strengthen and create scientific temper through popular science writing and creating a culture of science communication/popularisation among the scholars.
- Recognize the initiative and output of researchers on the specific aspects of natural, physical, mathematical and information sciences, applied science, technology, engineering, and multi-disciplinary science.
- Conduct training Workshops for Early Career Researchers (PhD Scholars and PDFs) in popular science writing.

Some Recent Developments:

National Research Foundation (NRF): It is to be set-up as an autonomous body envisaged under the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

It will look after funding, mentoring, and building 'quality of research' in India. The NRF aims to fund researchers working across streams in India.

Draft National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP 2020).

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. Globalisation has been widely debated as a matter of boon or bane for the world. In this context, discuss the ethical challenges posed by the process of globalization.

Ans:

Globalization is the process of the spread of products, technology, information, and jobs across national borders and cultures. It has transformed the world from a collection of discrete communities to more integrating along with the cultural, political, and economic spheres.

However, as globalization operates across diverse cultural and legal frameworks, it has given rise to moral dilemmas in labor standards, marketing practices, the environment, corruption, and human rights.

Ethical Challenges Associated With Globalization

- **Increasing Inequality:** The general complaint about globalization is that it has made the rich richer while making the poor poorer.
- **The UN Development Program reports that the richest 20% of the world's population consume 86% of the world's resources while the rest 80% consume just 14%.**
- **Malpractices of MNCs:** Multinational corporations (MNCs) are accused of crony capitalism, social injustice, unfair working conditions as well as lack of concern for the environment, mismanagement of natural resources, and ecological damage.
- **Forced Migration:** Globalisation has promoted economic determinism which has led to environmental degradation, pollution, loss of biodiversity and habitat.
- **This has led to a sharp increase in the number of environmental refugees and economic refugees.**
- **This has often resulted in gross violation of human rights in many developing and least developing countries.**
- **Loss of Family Values:** Globalisation has promoted higher consumerism which led to the dissolution of families, rise in nuclear families, and increasing isolation of old-aged parents.

Conclusion

Although the process of globalization is many centuries old (as reflected in the silk road), it is more of a modern age phenomenon. It has certainly bridged the gap between the developed and developing world, but it also resulted in many global issues like pandemics, climate change, terrorism, etc.

Thus, the need is to adopt a more sustainable model of globalization .i.e Indian version of globalization Vasudhiva Kutumbkam.

DAILY QUIZ

1. Consider the following initiatives:

1. Margadarshan and Margadarshak initiative
2. Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY)
3. Manodarpan initiative
4. SARAL initiative

Which of the initiatives mentioned above are taken to improve technical education in India?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 and 4 only
- c) 1, 2 and 4
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

2. Consider the following statements:

1. Switzerland is a landlocked country with Germany, France and Italy as its immediate neighbours.
2. Switzerland is acknowledged as a neutral state in the Treaty of Versailles.
3. Switzerland is not a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

3. Consider the following statements:

5

1. National Science Day (NSD) is celebrated to commemorate the Birth Anniversary of Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman.
2. Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930 for the discovery of the Raman Effect.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only**
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. Consider the following statements:

1. A technical recession is when a country faces a continuous decline for four consecutive quarters in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
2. The growth rate in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) is GDP minus net product taxes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

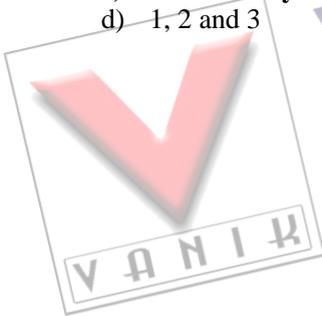
- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only**
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. Consider the following statements:

1. Switzerland is a member of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
2. The Bandung Conference of 1955 is an antecedent to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement.
3. The United Nations has recognized 12th December as an International Day of Neutrality.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only**
- d) 1, 2 and 3



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