



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

22 DECEMBER, 2021

## 1. FM transmitters

### News:

- The Government is going to set up one hundred and 16 new FM transmitters in various States across the country.
- Prasar Bharati has approved the setting up of FM transmitters in 111 locations and Five mobile transmitters along the border and Ladakh.
- Apart from these, Two hundred and 36 cities have been approved for the auction of FM radio channels.
- A few days ago, Ladakh's capital city Leh got its first-ever Top FM radio

### About:

- AM is a technique used in electronic communication, most commonly for transmitting information through a radio carrier wave.

It works by continuously changing the strength of the transmitted signal in relation to the information being sent.

- In FM, a radio wave is known as the "carrier" or "carrier wave" is modulated in frequency by the signal that is to be transmitted.
- AM radio ranges from 535 to 1700 kHz or up to 1200 bits per second. FM radio ranges in a higher spectrum from 88.1 to 108.1MHz. or up to 1200 to 2400 bits per second.

## 2. Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill 2021

### Why in news?

It was introduced in the Lok Sabha amid protests by the Opposition members.

### About:

- It seeks to enhance the legal minimum age of marriage of a girl from 18 to 21 across all religions.
- The Legislation will provide the right of equality to women across all religions and castes in marriages.
- The amendment proposed to define a child states: '(a) "child" means a

- male or female who has not completed twenty-one years of age'.
- The Bill which proposes amendments to the 2006 law was sent to a Parliamentary Standing Committee for further discussion.
- The legal age of marriage for women is being raised by the Centre on the recommendations of the Jaya Jaitly Committee that was constituted by the WCD Ministry in June 2020.

### **3. Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle**

#### **Why in news?**

The first set of indigenously developed next-generation Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle was inducted into the Corps of Engineers of Indian Army.

#### **About:**

- The AERV has been designed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by Ordnance Factory Medak & Bharat Electronics Limited, Pune.
- The vehicle is capable of carrying out reconnaissance of water obstacles and boggy patches

- This is done for execution of engineer tasks with capabilities to carry out reconnaissance and provide real-time to force commanders.

#### **Significance :**

- AERVs induction will boost the Indian Army operations, particularly on the western front.
- The system will enhance existing engineer reconnaissance capabilities of Indian Army
- It would be a major game-changer in support of mechanised operations in future conflicts.
- This is a crucial step concerning the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' in manufacturing defence equipment.

### **4. Rewards For Justice Programme (RFJ)**

#### **Why in news?**

- The Rewards For Justice Programme (RFJ) of the US State Department has announced a reward of USD 5 million for the information on the killing of Bangladeshi blogger Avijit Roy and his wife in Dhaka in 2015.
- Those responsible for the attack are believed to be in Bangladesh.
- A terrorist group from Bangladesh

Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) had claimed responsibility for the attack.

- ABT seeks to radicalize youth to kill those it deems to be anti-Islamic.
- Shortly thereafter Al Qaida circulated a video claiming responsibility for the attack on Avijit Roy and Rafida Bonya Ahmed.
- Bangladesh born US citizen Avijit Roy was an atheist blogger and activist who challenged fundamentalism in Bangladesh through his writings by advocating freedom of expression.
- He also coordinated international protests to raise awareness about imprisoned atheist bloggers in Bangladesh.
- He along with his wife was attacked with machetes in Dhaka while returning from a book fair in Feb 2015.
- A series of attacks and murder of bloggers who wrote against religious extremism took place in Bangladesh between 2013-16.
- It evoked strong condemnation across the world including the UN and the US.

## 5. PM SVANidhi

### Why in news?

- Government has said that loan worth

two thousand 714 Crore rupees has been disbursed to over 27 lakh beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors, Atma Nirbhar Nidhi Scheme - PM SVANidhi so far.

- Out of the total beneficiaries, 59 percent are male and 41 percent are female.

### About:

- It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020.
- This was done for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- The duration of the scheme is until March 2022.
- Its benefits are:

(1) Vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.

(2) On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of

beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis.

(3) There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.

(4) The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month.

(5) The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/ early repayment of loan.

(6) SIDBI is the implementing agency.

## 6. Common electoral roll

### Why in news?

- The central government is planning to hold a meeting with state election commissioners soon to try and persuade them to adopt a common electoral roll for Parliament, Assembly and local body elections.
- The government, as of now, is not in favour of amending the law but wants to persuade the state to adopt a common electoral roll.

### About:

The opposition is against any such provision because:

Article 243 K of the Constitution says, “Elections to the Panchayats: The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to the Panchayats shall be vested in a State Election Commission consisting of a State Election Commissioner to be appointed by the Governor.”

### Previously on the issue:

- Justice M N Venkatachaliah headed the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution and recommended a common electoral roll.
- The Second Administrative Reforms Commission in its sixth report on local governance in 2007 took a view that local government laws should provide for adoption of assembly electoral rolls for local government without any revision of names by the State Election Commissions.
- The Law Commission of India in its 255th Report on Electoral Reform in 2015 also favoured introduction of common electoral roll for Parliament, assembly and local body elections.

## 7. Sri Aurobindo.

### Why in news?

- Prime Minister is heading an extensive 53-member committee that has been set up to mark the 150th birth anniversary of spiritual leader Sri Aurobindo.
- Besides the Prime Minister, the other members of committee are Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, two former PMs — Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda—and several cabinet ministers, as per a Gazette notification released by the Ministry of Culture on Tuesday.
- The objective is to commemorate the occasion “in a befitting manner” and to provide “policy direction and guidelines for formulation of programmes... at the national and international levels”.

### About:

- The 150th birth anniversary falls on August 15, 2022, and coincides with the India @75 celebrations mooted by the Centre, called Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- During this time, the government is putting special focus on celebrating the legacy of freedom fighters who may have played a major role in the

struggle for Independence, but whose contribution is not very well known.

- Sri Aurobindo was born in Calcutta on August 15, 1872 and took a leading role in secret preparations for an uprising against the British government in India.

## 8. Millets

### News:

- NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) on 20th December 2021.
- The partnership focuses on mainstreaming of millets and supporting India in taking lead globally in knowledge exchange using the opportunity of 2023 as an International Year of Millets.
- It will aim at building resilient livelihoods for small-holder farmers and adaptation capacities to climate change and transforming food systems.
- The Sol focuses on strategic and technical collaboration between NITI Aayog and WFP, to strengthen the climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.

## **Significance:**

- Recognizing the importance of millets, Government of India observed 2018 as a year of millets to encourage and promote the millet production.
- Leading this initiative further, GoI spearheaded the UNGA resolution for declaring 2023 as International Year of Millets.
- Numerous steps have been taken to promote millets including establishment of centre for Excellence, Integration of nutri-cereals in National Food Security Act and establishment of Millet Mission in multiple states.
- Despite this, various challenges in terms of production, distribution and adaptability among consumers remain.

## **9. Chillai kalan in Kashmir**

### **Why in news?**

Kashmir is in a deep freeze as the harshest spell of winter, locally called 'chillai kalan', started on Tuesday, with the minimum temperature already sub-zero in the entire Valley.

### **About:**

- It is the local name given to 40 day

period of harsh winter in Kashmir. It is the coldest part of winter.

- Chillai Kalan is a Persian term which means 'major cold'.
- The ongoing cold wave is said to reach its peak with Kashmir's mountains covered in snow for weeks, and the famous Dal Lake also reaching freezing point until the fag end of January.
- The bone-chilling cold conditions is followed by a 20-day-long 'Chillai Khurd' and 10-day-long 'Chillai Bacha'.

### **Health significance:**

- The number of heart attack and stroke patients at Kashmir hospitals doubles in winter.
- Not only the elderly, but young and healthy people come to hospitals with heart problems, and some of them are even brought dead.

## **10. Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act**

### **Why in news?**

The Centre has decided to amend the Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002 to "plug the loopholes in the Act".

## About:

- Cooperatives are a state subject, but there are many societies such as those for sugar and milk, banks, milk unions etc whose members and areas of operation are spread across more than one state.
- The Act was passed to govern such cooperatives.
- For example, most sugar mills along the districts on the Karnataka-Maharashtra border procure cane from both states.

- Administrative and financial control of these societies is with the central registrar, with the law making it clear that no state government official can wield any control on them.

## Why amendment is needed?

- There is an apparent lack of day-to-day government control on such societies.
- Unlike state cooperatives, which have to submit multiple reports to the state registrar, multistate cooperatives need not.

