



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

≡ 28 DECEMBER, 2021 ≡

## 1. Narco Coordination Centre

### Why in news?

- The third Apex Level meeting of Narco Coordination Centre, NCORD was held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.

### Following suggestions/decisions have been made:

- The centre has asked the States to constitute a dedicated Anti-Narcotics Task Force under the DGP to act as the Secretariat of the State NCORD.
- The formation of a central NCORD unit under NCB at the national level.
- Narcotics training module at national level to train police, CAPF personnel, prosecutors and people from various civil departments.
- An effective mechanism to prevent the increasing use of Dark-net and Crypto-currency in the business of Narcotics.
- Besides, cultivation of illegal drugs

will be prevented by the use of drones, satellite and other technology.

- States were also suggested that chapters related to drug abuse and its ill-effects should be added in the school curriculum for which the Department of School Education, Bureau of Police Research and Development and Ministry of Social Welfare and Empowerment should prepare a roadmap.

## 2. First Kashi Indian International Film Festival

### News:

The first Kashi Indian International Film Festival began in Varanasi on Monday.

### About:

The three-day festival will showcase glimpses of Indian classical music and dance and events on famous philosophers, poets, writers and musicians.

- Kashi is going to witness extravaganza of theatre, music, culture, arts and Bollywood in the festival which is expected to attract the filmmakers and film lovers of the world to this ancient city.
- The festival is being organised by Information and Broadcasting Ministry in collaboration with Film Bandhu and the Uttar Pradesh Government.
- A panel discussion on Varanasi, local music, the importance of Uttar Pradesh as a centre for film production and the potential for regional cinema will be held on the second day of the event.

### 3. Rivers as waterways

#### News:

- The progress on the Pandu Ship repair facility in Guwahati was reviewed by the Union Ministry of Shipping.
- The Minister said economic prosperity of Assam can be reinvigorated by developing the rivers as waterways for smooth and swift movement of cargo and passengers.

#### Rivers as waterways:

- A river is a natural, flowing stream of water that provides an avenue for drainage of water from higher elevations to a standing body of water at lower elevations, which is typically a lake or ocean.
- A waterway, by contrast, is defined as a body of water that is navigable by boat.
- This is usually taken to mean a commercial vessel or boat, but a broader definition is any type of boat or floating means of conveyance.
- A waterway can be a natural feature, a human-made feature, or a natural feature modified by humans.
- A water-way can be a river, but this concept also includes lakes, oceans, and human-made canals.

For a waterway to be navigable:

- it must be deep enough to accommodate the type of boat at issue (waterway draft),
- it must be wide enough to accommodate the boat (waterway beam width), it must be free of rapids or waterfalls (or have a way around such features, for example, locks and dams), and
- it must have a water current velocity

that allows boats to move easily against the current.



#### 4. Aung San Suu Kyi

##### Why in news?

- A Myanmar court has postponed verdicts in two cases against the ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi till January 10.
- No reason was given for the postponement of the verdict. This is the second postponement of the verdict.
- Earlier this month, the court had sentenced Aung San Suu Kyi to four years of imprisonment on charges of incitement and breaching of COVID 19 laws.
- However, it was later reduced to 2 years.
- The Nobel laureate has been detained since the generals staged a coup against her government on February 1, ending the Southeast Asian country's brief period of

democracy.

- Former State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi faces a long prison term if convicted of multiple charges framed against her by the military government.

#### 5. India wins bronze

##### News:

- Korea defeated Japan to lift the trophy in the Hero Asian Champions trophy **hockey** in Dhaka on Wednesday.
- The five-nation tournament came to an end with two matches being played on the last day of the game.
- India defeated Pakistan 4-3 to secure the bronze medal while Korea defeated Japan 4-2 to emerge Asian Champions.
- Kanta Tanaka of Japan was declared the best player of the tournament while Suraj Karkera of India was adjudged the best goalkeeper.
- Jang Jonghyun of Korea was the top scorer with 10 goals in the tournament.

#### 6. Flex-Fuel Vehicles

##### Why in news?

- Union Government has advised the Automobile Manufacturers in India

to start manufacturing Flex-Fuel Vehicles and Flex-Fuel Strong Hybrid Electric Vehicles complying with BS-6 Norms in a time-bound manner within a period of six months.

- The suggestion has been made in line with vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and government's policy on promoting ethanol as a transport fuel.
- Flex-Fuel Vehicles are capable to run on a combination of 100 per cent Petrol or 100 per cent bio-ethanol and their blends.
- This move will drastically reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions from vehicles.
- This will help India to comply with its commitment made at COP-26 to reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030.

## 7. “The Healthy States, Progressive India” report

### News:

NITI Aayog has released the fourth edition of “The Healthy States, Progressive India” report ranking states performance for the year 2019-20.

### Findings:

- Among the larger states, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana have emerged among the best three performers in terms of overall performance.
- Uttar Pradesh has ranked at the top in terms of incremental performance by registering the highest incremental change from the base year 2018-19 to the reference year 2019-20.
- Telangana has performed well both in terms of overall performance as well as incremental performance and secured the third position in both instances.
- Among the smaller states, Mizoram has emerged as the best performer in overall performance as well as incremental performance.
- While among UTs, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir have ranked among the bottom UTs in terms of overall performance but emerged as the leading performer in terms of incremental performance.

### About:

- The Health Index is a weighted composite score incorporating 24 indicators covering key aspects of

health performance.

- The domains covered in the report are health outcomes, governance and information, and key inputs and processes.
- The objective of the annual health index is to track progress on health outcomes and health systems performance, develop healthy competition, and encourage cross-learning among states and UTs.

### Significance:

- The report is an example of cooperative and competitive federalism.
- The overall score shows that there is still a long way to go to improve health parameters.
- The objective is to see the incremental improvement which is key to assess how the states have performed over the period.

## 8. New ban on Afghan women

### News:

- The Taliban have said that Afghan women seeking to travel long distances by road should be offered transport only, if accompanied by a male relative.
- The directive is the latest curb on

women's rights since the Islamist group seized power in August.

### Significance:

- The order shuts off opportunities for women to be able to move about freely or to be able to flee, if they are facing violence at home.
- Last month, the group banned women from appearing in television dramas and ordered female journalists and presenters to wear headscarves on screen.
  - The document calls on vehicle owners to refuse rides to women not wearing Islamic face coverings, or hijabs, although it does not say which type of covering to use.
  - Most Afghan women already wear headscarves. It also bans the playing of music in vehicles.
  - Since taking power following the departure of US and allied forces, the Taliban have told most female workers to stay at home while secondary schools are open only to boys and male teachers.
- The Taliban said, the restrictions are temporary and only in place to ensure all workplaces and learning environments are safe for women and girls.

- During their previous rule in the 1990s, women were barred from education and the workplace
- The country faces a deep humanitarian and economic crisis made worse by the removal of international support after the group seized power.

## 9. James Webb Space Telescope

### News:

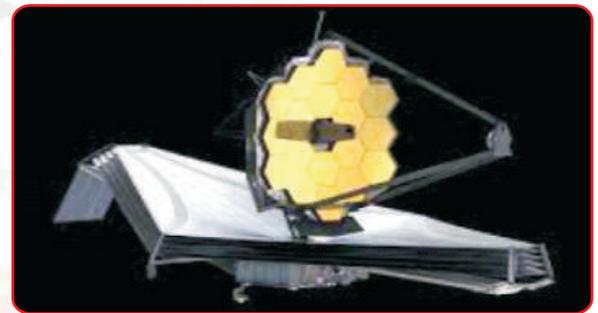
- World's largest and most powerful space telescope has been launched successfully into orbit to make breakthrough discoveries on the origins of the Universe and Earth-like planets beyond our solar system.
- The James Webb Space Telescope, NASA's premier space observatory of the next decade, launched in an Ariane rocket from the European Space Agency's base in French Guiana on Christmas Day.

### About:

- The Webb telescope will reach its destination in solar orbit some 1.5 million km from Earth - about four times farther away than the moon.
- And Webb's special orbital path will keep it in constant alignment with the Earth as the planet and telescope

circle the sun in tandem.

- It will see farther into our origins, from the formation of stars and planets, to the birth of the first galaxies in the early Universe.
- It intends to show humans what the Universe looked like even closer to its birth nearly 14 billion years ago.
- Webb, named after one of the architects of the Apollo Moon landings, is the successor to the Hubble telescope.
- Jointly built by NASA, the European Space Agency, and the Canadian Space Agency, the new observatory is, however, 100 times more powerful.



## 10. 5G Services

### Why in news?

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) said that Gurugram, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Ahmadabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Pune, and

Gandhi Nagar would be among the first cities to get 5G services in 2022.

### About:

- 5G or fifth generation is the latest upgrade in long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks.
- It mainly works in three bands — low-, mid- and highfrequency — all of which have their uses as well as limitations.
- While the low-band spectrum has shown great promise in terms of coverage, the maximum Internet speed is limited to 100 Mbps (megabits per second).
- This means that while telcos can use and install it for commercial cellphone users who may not have specific demands for very high

speed Internet, the low-band spectrum may not be optimal for specialised needs of industries.

### Significance:

- One of the reasons why the bigger cities were chosen for these trials is their telecom services penetration, making it easier to convince more people to upgrade from 4G.
- Since the costs for 5G services are initially going to be on the higher side, it would be wise to test the service in areas where more consumers would find them affordable.
- A third reason is that cities provide all kinds of locations, such as walled complexes and open spaces, that are suitable for testing of various 5G bands.

