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APRIL 7, 2022



INTERNATIONAL

Western Nations Impose New Sanctions on Russia

Synopsis:

- ❖ Western powers announced tough new sanctions on Russia after Russian President Vladimir Putin recognised the independence of two self-proclaimed republics in east Ukraine and planned to send troops to the region.
- ❖ The US and the EU have both separately laid out plans for sanctions against Russia, targeting the country's financial services, businesses and wealthy elites.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ Amid rising fear of an invasion of Ukraine, the US and the European Union have said they will enforce financial and economic sanctions against Russia
- ❖ President Vladimir Putin told Russia's defence ministry to deploy what he calls peacekeeping forces into two breakaway regions of Ukraine, defying Western warnings that such a step would be illegal and wreck peace negotiations.
- ❖ Western powers hit back President Joe Biden said the United States was imposing a first tranche of sanctions against Russia for "the beginning of a Russian invasion of Ukraine" and promised that more would come if Moscow moves further into the country.
- ❖ US sanctions will hit two large Russian financial institutions and Russian sovereign debt. sanctions will also begin against Russian elites and their family members.
- ❖ The European Union has also imposed new sanctions on Russia that will "hurt a lot".
- ❖ The sanctions blacklist more politicians, lawmakers and officials, ban EU investors from trading in Russian state bonds and target imports and exports with separatist entities. They will not affect Vladimir Putin, however.
- ❖ Russia, which has been under Western sanctions since its 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, is likely to face more stringent punitive measures this time;
- ❖ United States has already announced some, and foreign ministers of EU nations are expected to add to that after a meeting.



13 International Trade Agreements - Federal Government

Synopsis:

- ❖ India has signed 13 free trade agreements with international countries in the last 5 years. Accordingly, India has entered into 13 free trade agreements with its trading partners.
- ❖ Includes the recently signed India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (IndAus ECTA), the India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Joint Agreement (CECPA) and the India-United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Joint Agreement (CEPA).



Key Highlights:

- ❖ India has signed 6 limited priority trade agreements. Anupriya Patel, Associate Minister of Commerce and Industry, conveyed this information in writing to the Lok Sabha.
 1. India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
 2. South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan)
 3. India-Nepal Trade Agreement
 4. Indo-Bhutan Agreement on Trade, Trade and Transport
 5. India-Thailand Free Trade Agreement - Early Harvest Plan
 6. India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement
 7. India-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement - Goods, Services and Investment Agreement (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam)
 8. India-South Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
 9. India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
 10. India-Malaysia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement
 11. India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Joint Agreement
 12. India-UAE Comprehensive Joint Agreement
 13. India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement
- ❖ The economic impact assessment of the above agreements shows that there has been growth in both exports and imports with the contracted countries.



Lok Sabha passes Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill

Synopsis:

- ❖ The Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill provides a legal safeguard for police and investigating agencies to collect and store biological and physical samples of convicts and those accused of a crime.
- ❖ The Lok Sabha passed the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill that seeks to replace the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ The Rajya Sabha passed the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022, which seeks to authorise the collection, storage and analysis of biometric samples of convicts and others involved in criminal matters.
- ❖ Home Minister Amit Shah said the data collected would be protected and shared through a secure mechanism so that people's privacy was not risked.
- ❖ Bill had the objectives of increasing the rate of conviction and forensic capacity and collecting scientific evidence, eliminating third-degree methods against those accused of crimes.
- ❖ 'We will ensure that the political agitators do not have to give their physical and biological samples.
- ❖ But if leaders are arrested in a criminal case, they will have to give their samples,' the Home Minister
- ❖ Citing the European Court of Human Rights he said that the retention and storage of fingerprints, DNA profile and cellular samples without consent are violations of human rights.
- ❖ "There is no scientific basis to presume that any of the measurements including handwriting, fingerprints is unique to a person,
- ❖ CPI MP Binoy Viswam the Bill was draconian, and added that the Centre wanted to threaten everybody"

Forbes billionaire list

Synopsis:

- ❖ Ambani, Adani and the other top 10 richest Indians on Forbes 2022 list
- ❖ Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani maintained their top slots in the list of India's richest, ranking number 1 and 2, respectively.
- ❖ Despite the coronavirus pandemic, which was raging last





year, the 36th-annual ranking of billionaires across the world, had several Indians on the list. The Ambanis, Adanis, Mittals and Birlas all feature on the Forbes' latest rich list.

Key Highlights:

- ❖ Mukesh Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industries, retained his position as the chart topper of Indian billionaires, with the 10th rank worldwide.
- ❖ Reliance Industries chairman and managing director Mukesh Ambani continues to stay on top of the list as the richest Indian with a net worth of \$90.7 billion, according to the Forbes Billionaires List 2022, which was published on Tuesday. Tesla and SpaceX chief Elon Musk emerged as the richest person in the world, followed by Amazon's Jeff Bezos and Louis Vuitton chief Bernard Arnault.
- ❖ Ambani ranked at the 10th position on the global list, followed narrowly by fellow industrialist and Adani Group founder Gautam Adani, whose fortune climbed by almost \$40 billion over the past year, to an estimated \$90 billion.
- ❖ Among other prominent faces on the list included Shiv Nadar, Cyrus Poonawalla, Radhakishan Damani, Lakshmi Mittal, Savitri Jindal, Kumar Birla, Dilip Shanghvi, Uday Kotak and Sunil Mittal.
- ❖ world's billionaire club has declined by 87 compared to 2021, with 2,668 persons, and an aggregate net worth of \$12.7 trillion — \$400 billion less than in 2021.

NATIONAL

Chennai ranked world's cheapest FDI location for electronics R&D

Synopsis:

- ❖ Chennai has been ranked the cheapest location in the top 100 electronics R&D FDI destinations as per the latest assessment using the FDI Benchmark, an investment location comparison tool by Financial Times.
- ❖ Chennai has an estimated annual operating cost of \$1.24 million for a 50-person R&D centre, which is cheapest in the world.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ The Malaysian city of Penang took the second spot with an estimated annual operating cost of \$1.32 million, followed by Gurgaon with \$1.52 million and Pune with \$1.53 million.
- ❖ Chennai ranked second among the world's most competitive locations, only after Seoul, which houses large campuses of companies like Samsung and LG Electronics.
- ❖ In this ranking, Chennai was followed by Chinese cities like Guangzhou and Shenzhen. Three other Indian cities, Bangalore, Pune, and Gurgaon were among the top 10 cities on this list.



- ❖ The location competitiveness benchmark is based on the cost and quality of doing electronics R&D activities.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government, which is already taking steps to attract investors. While companies like Samsung and Apple currently have a strong presence in manufacturing, the presence of large R&D centre is missing, according to a Hindu Business Line report.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government is trying hard to woo more investors in the electronics sector and is planning to organise global investors meet in 2023.
- ❖ According to a Business Standard report, the state has seen \$50-billion investment through memoranda of understanding since 2019.

India ranks 3rd in billionaire population globally

Synopsis:

- ❖ Arikamedu area near Ariyankuppam in Pondicherry is 3 km from the Bay of Bengal. Located in the distance. Evidence of maritime trade here from 200 BC to 200 AD has been found through excavations.



Key Highlights:

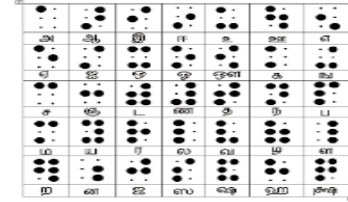
- ❖ The discovery of coins, bells, and earthenware engraved with the image of the Roman emperor Augustus confirmed the trade with the Romans from the region.
- ❖ Lelandie, a native of France, published a treatise on Arikamedu in 1769. In 1908, Zhao Tuiprooy, a professor at the French College, collected multi-colored beads and pottery that boys had played with in the Arikamedu area.
- ❖ Gomez medallion with Augustus' head engraved, Roman coins engraved with the image of an elephant on one side and a lion on the other.
- ❖ Textile cover well found in Arikamedu area, Brahmi writing pottery, texts exploring wall areas of Greek settlement and published by foreigners.
- ❖ This place of historical significance as the Tamils flew the flag in the sea trade has now been turned into an open-air bar.
- ❖ On the other hand sand theft is on the rise. Sand theft is taking place by destroying historical monuments. Even in an area controlled by the Archaeological Survey of India, sand is commonly stolen.



India ranks 3rd in billionaire population globally

Synopsis:

- ❖ Chandrasekaran, Director, Central Institute of Classical Tamil Studies, that in order to benefit the visually impaired, 41 Tamil classic texts are being published in Braille texts with simple text.
- ❖ At the Central Institute of Classical Tamil Studies, new plans have been drawn up to undertake various types of Tamil development work. Work has been expedited with the aim of publishing at least five books a month.



Grade 2: Braille Cell with dot 3, 4, 6 gives abbreviation of "இருபுள்ளம்"

Key Highlights:

- ❖ We are actively engaged in the work of learning Classical Tamil education online, searching for classical clues on the computer, publishing international journals, conducting comparative studies of global languages with Tamil, and conducting international seminars.
- ❖ Similarly, the project is planned to showcase the classic features of eminent and eminent professors and spread them through YouTube.
- ❖ Appropriate facilities have been set up in the new premises to bring in a scholar on a daily basis.
- ❖ Classical Tamil seats are planned to be set up in reputed foreign universities.
- ❖ In the first phase, steps are being taken to set up classical Tamil seats in the Universities of Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Reunion.
- ❖ Work is in progress to publish 41 Tamil classic texts in Braille texts with plain text for the benefit of the visually impaired.
- ❖ books will be provided free of cost to the visually impaired.

Entrance test for central universities

Synopsis:

- ❖ University Grants Commission (UGC) announced the introduction of the Central University Entrance Test (CUET), which is now mandatory for undergraduate admission at any of the 45 central universities in the country.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ The University Grants Commission (UGC) has announced that admission into undergraduate courses in all centrally-funded universities will henceforth be solely on the basis of a Common University Entrance Test (CUET) and Class 12 board examination marks will not be considered.



- ❖ UGC chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar said that the CUET will be held in the first week of July and that all 45 central universities will have to admit students on the basis of their scores on the test.
- ❖ Class 12 Board Exam marks will no longer be considered, however, the UGC noted that these marks could still be used as an ‘eligibility criterion,’ casting doubts on the actual value of these scores.
- ❖ The CUET will be a computerised test to be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and the application window for the same will reportedly open from the first week of April. Following the exam, the NTA will prepare a merit list on the basis of which these universities will admit students.
- ❖ Delhi University (DU), Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JU) and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) are some of the most well-known of the 45 central universities.
- ❖ A common entrance exam for university admissions is reportedly meant to level the playing field for aspirants as different examination boards in the country may mark students differently.
- ❖ The Indian Express quoted an unnamed government official as saying, “Some Boards are more generous than others in marking and this gives their students an unfair advantage over others.”

Bill introduced to ban financing of weapons of mass destruction

Synopsis:

- ❖ External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha that seeks to ban funding of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and empowers the Centre to freeze and seize financial assets of people involved in such activities.
- ❖ Amid sloganeering by Opposition members over repeated fuel price hikes, Mr. Jaishankar introduced the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, which also fulfils India’s international obligations pertaining to WMDs.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ The earlier law of 2005 regarding WMDs and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) only banned their manufacture.
- ❖ “In recent times, regulations relating to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems by international organisations have expanded,” Mr. Jaishankar said in the statements of objects and reasons of the Bill.
- ❖ The Minister noted that the United Nations Security Council’s targeted financial sanctions and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force have mandated against financing of the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems.



- ❖ “In view of the above, there is a need to amend the said Act to provide against the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems so as to fulfil our international obligations,”
- ❖ The Bill seeks to insert a new Section 12A in the existing law which states that “no person shall finance any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947 or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems”.
- ❖ The Bill would give the government powers to “freeze, seize or attach funds or other financial assets or economic resources owned or controlled, wholly or jointly, directly or indirectly, by such person; or held by or on behalf of, or at the direction of, such person; or derived or generated from the funds or other assets owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by such person”.

Agricultural Exports Touched Record Rs 3 Lakh Crore

Synopsis:

- ❖ Kovind the government is focusing on making the country self-sufficient in edible oils besides making special efforts to promote organic farming, natural farming and crop diversification.
- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind the country's farm production and procurement increased during the 2020-21 crop year despite the pandemic and agricultural exports reaching a record level of Rs 3 lakh crore during the same period.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ In his address to the joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament at the start of the Budget session, Kovind said the government is focusing on making the country self-sufficient in edible oils besides making special efforts to promote organic farming, natural farming and crop diversification.
- ❖ "My government is working continuously to empower the farmers and the rural economy of the country... I would like to give maximum credit to the small farmers of the country for this consistent success and strengthening of the agriculture sector,"
- ❖ Highlighting achievements of the Modi government in the farm sector, the President despite the pandemic, farmers produced more than 30 crore tonnes of food grains and 33 crore tonnes of horticulture produce in the 2020-21 crop year
- ❖ The government made record procurement with the purchase of 433 lakh tonnes of wheat during the 2021-22 rabi marketing year (April-March) benefiting about 50 lakh farmers.
- ❖ A record quantity of about 900 lakh tonnes of paddy was procured during the 2020-21 Kharif marketing (October-September), benefitting 1.30 crore farmers,



- ❖ "Our agriculture exports have also reached a record level due to the efforts of the government. Agricultural exports registered a growth of more than 25 per cent in 2020-21, and have reached nearly Rs 3 lakh crore," Kovind. He was referring to crop year 2020-21.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Health Day: April 7

Synopsis:

- ❖ World Health Day is World Health Awareness Day on April 7 every year.
- ❖ The theme of World Health Day 2022 is 'Our Planet, Our Health'.
- ❖ This year's theme aims to draw global attention to the well-being of our planet and the people who inhabit it.
- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) convened the first World Health Assembly in 1948, which called for the establishment of World Health Day.
- ❖ The first World Health Day was held on April 7, 1950, and every year thereafter it was observed on that date.
- ❖ The main objective of this day is to raise awareness about a specific health topic to highlight the priority area of the World Health Organization.



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