

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 12, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) – has decided to conduct the departmental examinations, which are held twice a year, through online mode from June this year.**
- ✓ While the objective-type tests will be held online, the descriptive tests will continue in the existing model of written examination.
- ✓ The computer-based online test will be conducted from June 22 to 26 this year.
- ✓ The descriptive-type written test will be conducted from June 27 onwards.

STATES

- **The dolphin population in Odisha - has gone up this year, as per the latest dolphin census carried out by the state wildlife department**



- ✓ In Bhitarkanika National Park, 342 dolphins — including 39 Irrawaddy dolphins, 22 bottlenose dolphins and 281 humpback dolphins were spotted in 2021
- ✓ In 2020, only 62 dolphins, including 60 Irrawaddy dolphins and two humpback dolphins, were sighted there.
- ✓ The 2021 dolphin census report also revealed that Gahiramatha located within Bhitarkanika National Park is the home of the state's largest population of dolphins.

- ✓ In general, Irrawaddy dolphins reside in the estuary areas of Chilika Lake, while humpback dolphins reside in Gahiramatha
- ✓ Irrawaddy dolphins are spotted only in Asia — from Chilika to Indonesia
- ✓ A total of 188 dolphins, including 162 Irrawaddy dolphins and 26 bottlenose dolphins, were sighted in Chilika lake in 2021.
- ✓ In 2020, 163 dolphins — 146 Irrawaddy and 17 bottlenose — were spotted in the lake
- ✓ The Irrawaddy Dolphins have been listed under ‘endangered’ category in the IUCN Red List.
- ✓ The Dolphin distribution in Chilika lake is the highest single lagoon population.
- ✓ In 1981, the lake was designated as the first Ramsar site of India.
- ✓ Gahiramatha was declared a marine sanctuary in 1997 to protect the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles in the Gahiramatha beach, the world’s largest rookery of sea turtles.
- ✓ Dolphins have been categorised as ‘endangered’ on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature’s Red List
- ✓ The annual survey was conducted on January 15, 2021 by ‘Transact survey’ method involving binoculars, GPS, range finder and data recording sheets

NATIONAL

- **The Centre – has banned the export of the drug Remdesivir in injection form alongwith its Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API)**
- ✓ The decision of the government is prompted by the rising demand of the drug for treatment of Covid-19 and to prevent hoarding of the drug
- ✓ Drugs inspectors and other officers have also been directed to verify stocks and check malpractice and also take other effective actions to curb hoarding and black marketing.
- ✓ The companies producing the drug have installed capacity of about 38.80 lakh units per month
- ✓ The government has asked the manufacturing companies to ramp up production of the drug
- ✓ Further, all local manufacturers of Remdesivir have been advised to display on their website details of their stockists or distributors to facilitate access to the drug.
- ✓ Originally used for treating Ebola, the anti-viral drug has proven useful in the treatment of Covid-19 patients.
- ✓ At present, seven Indian companies are producing Injection remdesivir under voluntary licensing agreement with the American pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences that holds the patent for the product.
- ✓ The Centre has also advised states to follow the National Clinical Management Protocol for Covid-19 which is based on evidence and includes remdesivir as an investigational therapy

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The four Indian astronaut-candidates - have successfully completed their Gaganyaan training in Russia and have arrived in Bengaluru recently**
- ✓ Apart from the basic astronaut training, the four IAF test pilots, now employees of Isro, will soon start the mission-specific training that will happen in multiple Indian cities.
- ✓ The Gaganyaan module-specific training — different conditions and reactions they need — will take place in Bengaluru, while buoyancy and water survival tests and training will happen at Chennai-based NIOT (National Institute of Ocean Technology).
- ✓ Some of the centrifuge tests will happen at the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) while physical and some simulator training will happen at the Isro Satellite Integration and Testing Establishment (ISITE), both in Bengaluru.
- ✓ Training in Russia was generic and their Gaganyaan-specific training — medical training, psychological training, advanced training, and flight simulation training — will happen now.
- ✓ Isro had signed a contract for astronaut training with the Russian organization, Glavkosmos

- **The Military College of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering (MCEME) – has developed a new artificial intelligence-based device to caution dozing drivers of defence vehicles**
- ✓ The new device will alert the vehicle driver with a loud buzzer if his eyes close for more than three seconds
- ✓ The loud buzzer will ensure the drivers don't doze off while driving long distances, thereby preventing accidents
- ✓ This device was developed by Colonel Kuldeep Yadav of Military College of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering (MCEME) at Secunderabad
- ✓ It has been successfully tested in three Army vehicles for three months.
- ✓ The new device has been handed over to the Telangana government for trial on commercial vehicles.
- ✓ The current estimated price would be around Rs 10,000 for a device, but the cost is expected to reduce once there is large-scale production
- ✓ The AI-based Accident Prevention System is a small, economical and rugged device that can be mounted in the driver's compartment.
- ✓ The system is designed to be adjustable and can be easily mounted on existing cars and trucks.
- ✓ The power supply to the device is taken directly from the vehicle battery and can be used for long hours.
- ✓ It is also equipped to alert the vehicle owners through email.

- ✓ In a study carried out for the road transport ministry in 2019, one-fourth of drivers had admitted that they had fallen asleep behind the wheel and this was more prevalent in the case of truck drivers.
- **The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) – plans to land first person of colour and first woman on moon under its ‘Artemis’ programme**
 - ✓ The mission, sponsored by the Biden-Harris administration, aims to land the astronauts on the lunar south pole by 2024
 - ✓ The 'Artemis' program is named after the Greek goddess of the Moon and the twin sister of Apollo, the inspiration behind Nasa's first moon landing mission.
 - ✓ The initial group of Artemis astronauts also includes Indian American Raja Chari.
 - ✓ According to Nasa, the Artemis programme will serve as a proving ground for the returning astronauts to the Moon, who will later be sent to Mars
 - ✓ However, NASA is yet to announce the first two crew members of the Artemis programme.
 - ✓ NASA has requested 24.7 billion USD of funding for 2022 under the programme.
 - ✓ The other international partners in the programme are JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), Italian Space Agency, UK Space Agency, UAE space Agency, Brazilian Space Agency, Australian Space Agency, State Space Agency of Ukraine, Canadian Space Agency, and the European Space Agency.
 - ✓ The total cost of the programme is estimated to be 35 billion USD.
 - ✓ The programme is to be implemented in three parts – Artemis I, II and III
 - ✓ The first part is to be launched in 2021 as an unscrewed flight to test the space launch system and Orion spacecraft
 - ✓ The second part will be launched in 2023 as the first crewed flight test
 - ✓ The last part will land the astronauts on the lunar south pole by 2024

AWARDS

- **Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank - recently presented the AICTE Lilavati Awards, 2020 in New Delhi.**



- ✓ The awards were presented to six educational institutions based on the theme “Women Empowerment” this year
- ✓ The winners were selected by the All India Council for Technical Education in six sub themes from 456 entries
- ✓ SWEAT (Sona Women Entrepreneurship and Training) from Sona College of Technology, Tamil Nadu bagged the award under the ‘Women Entrepreneurship’ sub-theme.
- ✓ Paritrana from St. Joseph’s College of Engineering, Tamil Nadu won the award for the ‘Self Defense’ sub-theme.
- ✓ Radiant Seetha from Thiagarajar Polytechnic College won the contest in the ‘Legal Awareness’ sub-theme.
- ✓ Under the ‘Digital Literacy’, Bharatiya Vidyapeeth won the award, while Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development Pune won the award under the ‘Literacy’ sub-theme
- ✓ WIT Women Health Coalition from Walchand Institute of Technology, Maharashtra won the award under the ‘Women’s Health’ category
- ✓ The prize has been named after the twelfth century book called “Lilavati”, written by the mathematician Bhaskara II.
- ✓ Lilavati was the daughter of Bhaskara II.