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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	SC to hear petitions seeking stay on controversial CAA
2.	PRELIMS POINTERS

SC to hear petitions seeking stay on CAA

SOURCE: *The Hindu*

TAG: GS Paper – II **Government policies and interventions, India and its neighbourhood**

Practice Question:

Mains

Q. Critically analyze the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 **and** also, discuss the concerns associated with the Act **(250 words)**

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ Recently, the Supreme Court has agreed to hear a slew of petitions to stay the operation of the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and its rules notified earlier, which fast track the grant of Indian citizenship to non-Muslim migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) 2019

- ❖ The CAA provides citizenship on the basis of religion to six specific non-Muslim communities (**Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians**) from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before 31st December, 2014.
- ❖ It exempts the members of the six communities from any criminal case under the **Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Passport Act, 1920**.
- ❖ **What is Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019**
 - The act intends to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to make Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians illegal migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, eligible for citizenship of India. In other words, it seeks to facilitate non-Muslim immigrants from India's three Muslim-majority neighbours to become citizens of India.
 - Under the CAA, an illegal migrant is a foreigner who:
 1. Enters the country without valid travel documents like a passport and visa, or
 2. Enters with valid documents, but stays beyond the permitted time period.
 - Illegal migrants can be imprisoned or deported under the Foreigners Act, 1946 and The Passport Act, 1920.
 - Under The Citizenship Act, 1955, one of the conditions for obtaining citizenship by naturalization is that the applicant must have lived in India during the last 12 months, as well as for 11 of the previous 14 years.
 - The amendment reduces the residency requirement from 11 years to 6 years for individuals belonging to these six religions, and the specified three countries.



Exception

- ❖ The Act adds that the provisions on citizenship for undocumented immigrants will not apply to **the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura**, as included in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.
- ❖ These tribal areas include Karbi Anglong (in Assam), Garo Hills (in Meghalaya), Chakma District (in Mizoram), and Tripura Tribal Areas District.
- ❖ It will also not apply to the areas under **the Inner Line Permit under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873**.

WHY WE NEED The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)?

- ❖ The need for the CAA stems from the humanitarian concern for individuals facing persecution in these countries based on their religious beliefs. It provides a legal framework to grant citizenship to those who have fled religious persecution and sought shelter in India.
- ❖ Proponents of the CAA argue that it upholds India's tradition of providing refuge to persecuted minorities and fulfills its moral obligation to protect vulnerable populations.
- ❖ While Critics raise concerns about the exclusion of Muslims from the purview of the Act, arguing that it violates the secular principles of the Indian Constitution and discriminates against Muslim refugees.
- ❖ Overall, the need for the CAA is a matter of debate, with proponents emphasizing humanitarian considerations and critics raising questions about its constitutional validity and potential impact on India's secular ethos.

CONCERNS WITH THE ACT

- ❖ The Act categorizes migrants based solely on their country of origin, specifically from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
- ❖ The rationale for including only six specified religious minorities in the Act is unclear.
- ❖ India shares a border with Myanmar, a country with a history of persecuting the Rohingya Muslim minority.
- ❖ The differential treatment of migrants based on their entry date into India, specifically whether they arrived before or after December 31, 2014, is unclear.
- ❖ The differential treatment of migrants based on their entry date into India is in violation of Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to equality, applicable to both citizens and foreigners, as well as the principle of secularism enshrined in the preamble of the constitution.

IMPACT OF THE ACT

- ❖ It fails to extend protections to several marginalized groups in the South Asian region. This includes Rohingyas, often labeled as one of the world's most persecuted minorities, and Sri Lankan Tamils, the largest refugee group in India. Despite their dire circumstances and UN Refugee status, they are excluded from the benefits of the amendment.
- ❖ This discriminatory application of the CAA would render Muslims stateless, while other religious groups mentioned in the Act would retain their citizenship.
- ❖ It has broadened the criteria for canceling Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) registration, including vague grounds like 'violation of Citizenship Act or any other law.'
- ❖ Indian authorities are suppressing dissent against the discriminatory act through arbitrary detention, heightened surveillance, and crackdowns on protests



WAY FORWARD

- ❖ India, as a constitutional democracy, guarantees a safe and inclusive environment for all its citizens.
- ❖ Given its history of partition based on religious lines, India faces the challenge of safeguarding religious minorities in neighboring countries.
- ❖ These minorities often face ongoing threats of persecution and violence.
- ❖ India must carefully balance its responsibilities towards its own citizens and its duty to protect persecuted minorities in the region.
- ❖ India must also ensure utmost transparency in notifying the rules of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to alleviate concerns associated with it.

PRELIMS POINTERS:

5th March, 2024

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
<p>First Oil Palm Processing Mill in Arunachal Pradesh: A Milestone for Mission Palm Oil</p>	<p>WHY IN NEWS?</p> <p>First Oil Palm Processing Mill under the Mission Palm Oil initiative in Arunachal Pradesh, Milestone event, a significant step towards promoting oil palm cultivation in the Northeast region of India, Aims to reduce the country's reliance on imported edible oils while bolstering farmers' income</p> <p>ABOUT THE OIL PALM PROCESSING MILL:</p> <p>A Strategic Initiative"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It is a key component of the government's broader strategy to encourage oil palm cultivation in regions like Arunachal Pradesh, where the agro-climatic conditions are conducive to its growth. ❖ "AIM': By establishing processing infrastructure locally, the initiative aims to streamline the production process, reduce post-harvest losses, and create employment opportunities in rural areas. <p>Mission Palm Oil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It underscores the government's commitment to agricultural diversification and sustainable development. It seeks to harness the economic potential of oil palm cultivation while ensuring environmental sustainability and socio-economic inclusivity. <p>Government Strategy and Policy Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Through targeted interventions such as capacity building, extension services, and market linkages, the initiative aims to empower local farmers and enhance their livelihoods. <p>Milestone in Implementation:</p> <p>Impact of Oil Palm Processing Mill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The inauguration of the Oil Palm Processing Mill represents a significant milestone in implementing Mission Palm Oil in Arunachal Pradesh. ❖ Role: Vital link in the value chain, enabling local farmers to process harvested oil palm fruits locally and extract palm oil and valuable by-products. ❖ Approach: This decentralized approach not only strengthens the local economy but also contributes to the region's self-reliance in edible oil production.



Vision for Agricultural Transformation

- ❖ A commitment to promote sustainable agriculture and empowering farmers Adoption of modern agricultural practices, leveraging technology, and enhancing productivity to unlock the full potential of oil palm cultivation in the region.

Continued Support and Initiatives:

- ❖ Through various schemes and initiatives aimed at transforming the agricultural landscape and improving farmers' incomes.
- ❖ Emphasis:
- ❖ Sustainable development, rural prosperity, and food security

Transformative Potential of Mission Palm Oil

- ❖ Highlights the transformative potential of agricultural diversification and sustainable development initiatives in fostering rural prosperity and food security.

United Nations Recognizes India's Strides in Human Development:

WHY IN NEWS?

The United Nations recently lauded India's remarkable progress in several key human development indicators. India has witnessed significant advancements over the past three decades, as highlighted in the latest Human Development Report (HDR).

ABOUT THE REPORT:

Improving Life Expectancy: A Notable Achievement

- ❖ One of the most notable achievements is the substantial increase in life expectancy at birth since 1990.
- ❖ Over this period, life expectancy has risen by an impressive 9.1 years, reflecting improvements in healthcare, sanitation, nutrition, and living standards.

India's Classification: Medium Human Development Category

- ❖ The latest HDR categorizes India under the medium human development category, signaling progress in improving human well-being and living standards.
- ❖ Reflects sustained efforts to address socio-economic challenges, reduce poverty, promote education, and empower marginalized communities.

Testament to Resilience: India's Journey towards Development

- ❖ India's inclusion in the medium human development category is a testament to the country's resilience and determination.
- ❖ Despite challenges, India has made significant strides, contributing to overall improvement in human development outcomes.

Commitment to Sustainable Development

- ❖ As India continues its journey towards sustainable development, it remains committed to advancing human welfare and promoting social equity.
- ❖ Through targeted policies, investments in healthcare and education, and inclusive development initiatives, India aims to enhance human development outcomes.

Focus on Inclusive Growth

- ❖ India's commitment extends to fostering inclusive growth and development.



- ❖ Through inclusive policies and initiatives, India seeks to ensure a better future for all its citizens, with a focus on marginalized communities.

Future Prospects: Advancing Human Welfare

- ❖ With continued efforts, India aims to further enhance human development outcomes and ensure a better future for all its citizens.
- ❖ Through sustained commitment and holistic development strategies, India aspires to achieve higher levels of human well-being and prosperity.

Credit Assistance Program for Jan Aushadhi Kendras

WHY IN NEWS?

A credit assistance program for Jan Aushadhi Kendras was inaugurated recently aimed at enhancing healthcare accessibility and promoting entrepreneurship.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- ❖ The launch witnessed the exchange of a MoU between the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI) to facilitate project loans for Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

Growth of Jan Aushadhi Kendras

- ❖ The number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras has increased from 80 to around 11,000 units nationwide since 2014.
- ❖ These Kendras serve as crucial healthcare access points, attracting millions of visitors daily.

Financial Support for Entrepreneurs

- ❖ The credit assistance program offers project loans with a credit limit of up to Rs. 2 lakhs at competitive interest rates.
- ❖ The MoU aims to strengthen the Jan Aushadhi Kendra network by providing financial assistance and infrastructure support to entrepreneurs.

Utilization of Technology

- ❖ The program utilizes GST and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) platforms to ensure easy access to working capital for micro and small enterprises.

Government's Commitment to Healthcare

- ❖ The initiative aligns with the government's commitment to expanding the reach of affordable and quality healthcare services.
- ❖ By leveraging technology and strategic partnerships, the program aims to enhance the accessibility and affordability of essential medicines for all sections of society.

Impact on Healthcare Accessibility

- ❖ The credit assistance program is expected to improve healthcare accessibility by supporting the expansion and sustainability of Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

Promotion of Entrepreneurship

- ❖ The initiative promotes entrepreneurship by providing financial autonomy to small entrepreneurs and strengthening the healthcare infrastructure in the country.

Conclusion: The inauguration of the credit assistance program for Jan Aushadhi Kendras marks a significant step towards improving healthcare accessibility and promoting



entrepreneurship in India. By providing financial support and leveraging technology, the program aims to enhance the reach and sustainability of Jan Aushadhi Kendras, thereby ensuring affordable and quality healthcare services for all citizens.

**Indo-Pacific Economic
Framework for
Prosperity (IPEF)**

WHY IN NEWS?

The latest Ministerial Meeting on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) has highlighted the substantial progress in promoting economic collaboration among partner nations in the Indo-Pacific area.

ABOUT THE MEETING:

- ❖ The meeting, hosted by the United States, focused on enhancing economic engagement among partner countries in the Indo-Pacific region. It provided a platform for high-level officials to discuss the progress and negotiations related to the four pillars of the IPEF framework.

About IPEF:

- ❖ IPEF is a US-led initiative launched jointly with partner countries in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ Its objectives include strengthening economic partnership, enhancing resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the region.
- ❖ The framework consists of four pillars.
- ❖ India, along with other Indo-Pacific countries (14 – USA, Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam excluding China), actively participates in the IPEF to promote economic growth, peace, and prosperity in the region.

❖ **Progress Across Pillars:**

- Progress was reported under all pillars of the IPEF framework.
- Pillar I: Fair and Resilient Trade
- Pillar II: Supply-chain resilience
- Pillar III: Clean Economy (including initiatives for clean energy and climate-friendly technologies)
- Pillar IV: Fair Economy (focusing on anti-corruption and tax measures)

❖ **Regional Hydrogen Initiative:**

- Some IPEF partners introduced a regional hydrogen initiative aimed at promoting the widespread deployment of renewable and low-carbon hydrogen in the Indo-Pacific region.

❖ **Conclusion of Negotiations:**

- The meeting announced the substantial conclusion of negotiations for an international IPEF Supply Chain Agreement under Pillar II of the framework.
- This agreement aims to enhance the resilience, efficiency, sustainability, and inclusivity of supply chains among member countries.

Conclusion: The IPEF Ministerial Meeting marked significant progress in fostering economic engagement and cooperation among Indo-Pacific countries. It highlighted the



importance of collaborative efforts to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities for sustainable development in the region.

E-Vehicle Manufacturing Policy

Why in news?

Recently, E-Vehicle Manufacturing policy was approved to promote India as a manufacturing destination for electric vehicles (EVs) with the latest technology.

About The Policy

Objectives of the Policy

- ❖ Aims to attract investments from global EV manufacturers.
- ❖ Strengthen the EV ecosystem and reduce import dependency.
- ❖ Curb air pollution, particularly in urban areas.

Key Provisions of the Policy

- ❖ Minimum investment requirements.
- ❖ Timeline for manufacturing and domestic value addition targets.
- ❖ Customs duty incentives and annual import limits.

Importance of Domestic Production

- ❖ Reducing import dependency on crude oil.
- ❖ Lowering the trade deficit.
- ❖ Promoting healthy competition among EV players.

Policy's Contribution to Environmental Sustainability

- ❖ Curbing air pollution and promoting clean energy adoption.
- ❖ Aligning with the government's Make in India initiative.

Alignment with Existing Policy Initiatives

- ❖ Complements previous schemes like FAME scheme, National Electric Mobility Mission Plan, and amendments to building bye-laws.
- ❖ Reinforces the government's commitment to promoting EV adoption and infrastructure development.

Implications and Future Outlook

- ❖ Expected increase in investments and EV manufacturing activities in India.
- ❖ Potential to accelerate the transition towards electric mobility and achieve environmental sustainability goals.

Conclusion:

The introduction of the E-Vehicle Manufacturing Policy represents a significant step towards promoting India as a global hub for electric vehicle manufacturing. By attracting investments, strengthening the EV ecosystem, and reducing import dependency, the policy aligns with the government's objectives of fostering economic growth, promoting clean energy adoption, and addressing environmental challenges. This initiative, coupled with existing policy initiatives, is expected to drive the rapid expansion of the electric mobility sector in India, paving the way for a sustainable and environmentally-friendly transportation ecosystem.