



Sleepy Classes

Free. Regular. Quality.

Daily News Discussion (DND)

4th May 2021

Visit our website www.sleepyclasses.com or

our [YouTube channel](#) for entire GS Course **FREE** of cost

Also Available: Prelims Crash Course || Prelims Test Series

Table of Contents

1. Environment.....	1
1.1.Global Forest Goals Report 2021.....	1
2. Science & Technology	3
2.1.Python-5 Air to Air Missile	3
2.2.Covid-19 vaccine pricing	4
3. Geography	7
3.1.MACS 1407.....	7
4. Economy	8
4.1.No GST Medical oxygen import	8
4.2.Corporate social responsibility (CSR).	9
5. Polity.....	11
5.1.Don't discriminate in vaccination: SC.....	11
5.2.Central Vista works get nod	11
5.3.Myanmar refugees can approach UNHCR.....	13
6. International Relation.....	14
6.1.Kyrgyzstan- Tajikistan issue.....	14
Current affairs Worksheet (4th May 2021).....	15

Note -

- The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.
- Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .

Click [here](#) to watch the following topics on YouTube

1. Environment

1.1. Global Forest Goals Report 2021

- Recently Global Forest Goals report 2021 released by Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations

Key points

- It highlighted that the **novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic** has aggravated the challenges faced by countries in managing their forests.
- In 2020, nearly 18% of the **world's forests stood in legally** established protected areas, compared to just over 14% in 2000.
- The **area of protected forests grew worldwide at nearly three million ha per year** between 2010 and 2020 (10 million ha/year between 2000 and 2010), with increases in every region.
- Currently, **73% of the world's forests is under public ownership**, **22% is privately owned**, and the remainder is categorized as either "unknown" or "other" (where ownership is disputed or in transition).
- The **United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030** was created with a mission to **promote sustainable forest management and enhance the contribution of forests and trees to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.
- It is the **first evaluation of where the world stands in implementing the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030**.
- The **first Global Forest Goal in the Plan provides for increasing forest area by three per cent by 2030**.



Quantified goals for forest area / tree planting as reported by countries

Country	Official objective as reported by countries
Australia	Plant 20 million trees by 2020 and a billion plantation trees by 2030
Brazil	Increase planted area by two million hectares (ha)
Bulgaria	No decrease in forested area allowed
Côte d'Ivoire	Increase forest cover to 20 per cent by 2030
India	Add 200,00 ha of forests and tree cover per year

2. Science & Technology

2.1. Python-5 Air to Air Missile

- Tejas, India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft, added the 5th generation Python-5 Air-to-Air Missile (AAM) in its air-to-air weapons capability on April 27, 2021.
- Trials were also aimed to validate enhanced capability of already integrated Derby Beyond Visual Range (BVR) AAM on Tejas.
- Derby missile achieved direct hit on a high-speed maneuvering aerial target and the Python missiles also achieved 100% hits, thereby validating their complete capability

Derby Missile

- Derby (Alto) is a beyond visual range (BVR) air-to-air missile (AAM) developed by Israeli defence company
- Powered by a rocket motor, the Derby missile has a speed of Mach 4 and can hit targets at a range of up to 50km.
- I-Derby ER (Extended Range) provides an operational range of up to 100km.

Python-5 Missile (Fifth generation air-to-air missile)

- Developed by the Israeli defence company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.
- Can be launched from very short to beyond-visual ranges with greater kill probability
- Speed upto Mach 4 and an operational range of more than 20 km.
- Dual use missile suitable for air-to-air and surface-to-air missions.
- Equipped with lock-on-before launch (LOBL) and lock-on-after launch (LOAL) capabilities

Light Combat Aircraft Tejas

- Indian single-engine, fourth-generation, multirole light fighter aircraft.
- The indigenously-developed aircraft has been manufactured at the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) for the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy.



Mach Number



ratio = $\frac{\text{Object Speed}}{\text{Speed of Sound}} = \text{Mach Number}$



Subsonic
Mach < 1.0



Transonic
Mach = 1.0



Supersonic
Mach > 1.0



Hypersonic
Mach > 5.0

- It came from the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme, which began in the 1980s to replace India's ageing MiG-21 fighters
- It is designed to carry a range of air-to-air, air-to-surface, precision-guided, weapons

2.2.Covid-19 vaccine pricing

- Supreme Court flagged **differential pricing for vaccines**, and directed the central government to clarify in its affidavit the basis and rationale for pricing.

How does the government regulate the pricing of drugs?

- To ensure accessibility, the **pricing of essential drugs is regulated centrally through The Essential Commodities Act, 1955**.
- Under **Section 3** of the Act, the government has enacted the **Drugs (Prices Control) Order**.
- The **DPCO lists over 800 drugs as "essential"** in its schedule, and has capped their prices.
- The **capping of prices** is done based on a formula that is worked out in each case by the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)**, which was set up in **1997**.

Can the government regulate the price of Covid-19 vaccines through DPCO?

- Regulation through DPCO is **not applicable for patented drugs or fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs**.
- This is why the price of the **antiviral drug remdesivir**, which is currently in great demand for the treatment of serious cases of Covid-19, is **not regulated by the government**.
- Globally, the American biotechnology firm **Gilead Sciences owns the patent for the drug**. Several pharma companies have obtained a licence from Gilead to manufacture remdesivir.
- To bring vaccines or drugs used in the treatment of Covid-19 such as remdesivir under the DPCO policy, **an amendment can be brought**.

What legal avenues are available for the government to address differential pricing for vaccines?

The Patents Act, 1970

- Has two key provisions that could be potentially invoked to regulate the pricing of the vaccine.

Section 100 of the Patents Act

- gives the **central government the power to authorise anyone (a pharma company) to use the invention for the "purposes of the government"**.
- This provision **enables the government to license the patents of the vaccine to specific companies to speed up manufacturing and ensure equitable pricing**.

Under Section 92 of the Act

- deals with **compulsory licensing**, the government can, without the permission of the patent holder, license the patent under specific circumstances prescribed in the Act.
- After the government issues a notification under Section 92, pharma companies can approach the government for a licence to start manufacturing by reverse engineering the product.

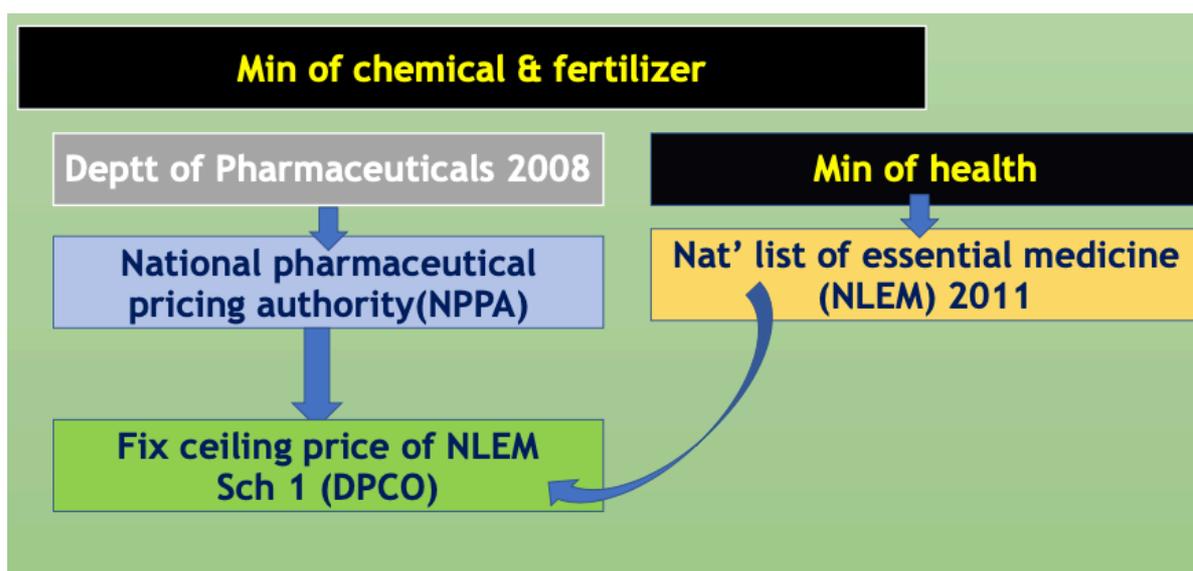
- However, in the case of **biological vaccines like Covid-19**, even though ingredients and processes are well known, it is difficult to duplicate the process from scratch. The process will also entail **new clinical trials to establish safety and efficacy**, which makes compulsory licensing less attractive.

The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897

- This has been the main legal weapon for the government in dealing with the pandemic.
- Section 2 of this law gives the government “power to take special measures and prescribe regulations as to dangerous epidemic disease”.
- Under this when at **any time the State Government is satisfied that the State** or any part thereof is visited by, or threatened with, an outbreak of any dangerous epidemic disease, the State Government, if it **thinks that the ordinary provisions of the law for the time being in force are insufficient** for the purpose, may take, or require or empower any person to take, such measures and, by public notice, prescribe such temporary regulations to be observed by the public or by any person or class of persons as it shall deem necessary to prevent the outbreak of such disease or the spread thereof, **and may determine in what manner and by whom any expenses incurred (including compensation if any) shall be defrayed.**
- These broad, undefined powers can be used to take measures to regulate pricing. However, the **law lacks the teeth to implement such an important policy framework.**
- Violation of the Act is penalised under **Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code**, which deals with “**disobedience to order duly promulgated by (a) public servant**”. The punishment prescribed under this law is imprisonment of up to six months or a fine that could extend up to Rs 1,000.

Other

- Apart from these legislative options, experts **suggest that the central government procuring directly from the manufacturers could be the most beneficial route** to ensure equitable pricing. As the sole purchaser, it will have greater bargaining power.



**National
pharmaceutical pricing
authority(NPPA)**

- Implement Nat'pharmaceutical pricing policy 2012 & DPCO (issued by DoP)
- Ceiling sch 1 DPCO 2013
- Monitor annual inc of non sch price
- Administer Pharma shahi dam & Pharma jan samadhan

- Pharma shahi dam-mb app-shows MRP fixed by NPPA for schedule 1 drugs**
- Pharma jan samadhan schm-complaint redressal system wrt availability & pricing of medicine**

3. Geography

3.1.MACS 1407

- Indian Scientists have developed a high-yielding and pest-resistant variety of soybean.

About MACS 1407

- Suitable for cultivation in the states of **Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and North-Eastern** states and its seeds will be made available to farmers for sowing during the 2022 Kharif season.
- Scientists from **MACS- Agharkar Research Institute (ARI)**, Pune, an autonomous institute of the **Department of Science & Technology**, Government of India in collaboration with **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**, New Delhi have developed higher yielding varieties and improved practices for the cultivation of soybean
- Using the conventional **cross breeding technique** they developed MACS 1407 which gives **39 quintals per hectare making it a high yielding variety** and is also **resistant to major insect-pests** like girdle beetle, leaf miner, leaf roller, stem fly, aphids, white fly and defoliators. Its thick stem, higher pod insertion (7 cm) from ground, and resistance to pod shattering make it suitable even for mechanical harvesting.
- It is **suitable for rain-fed conditions** of north- east India.
- MACS 1407' showed 17% increase in yield over the best check variety and 14-19 % yield advantage over the qualifying varieties.
- It is highly adaptive to sowing from 20 June to 5 July without any yield loss.
- This makes it **resistant to the vagaries of Monsoon** as compared to other varieties.
- Its seeds have **19.81 % oil content, 41 % protein** content and show good germinability.

4. Economy

4.1.No GST Medical oxygen import

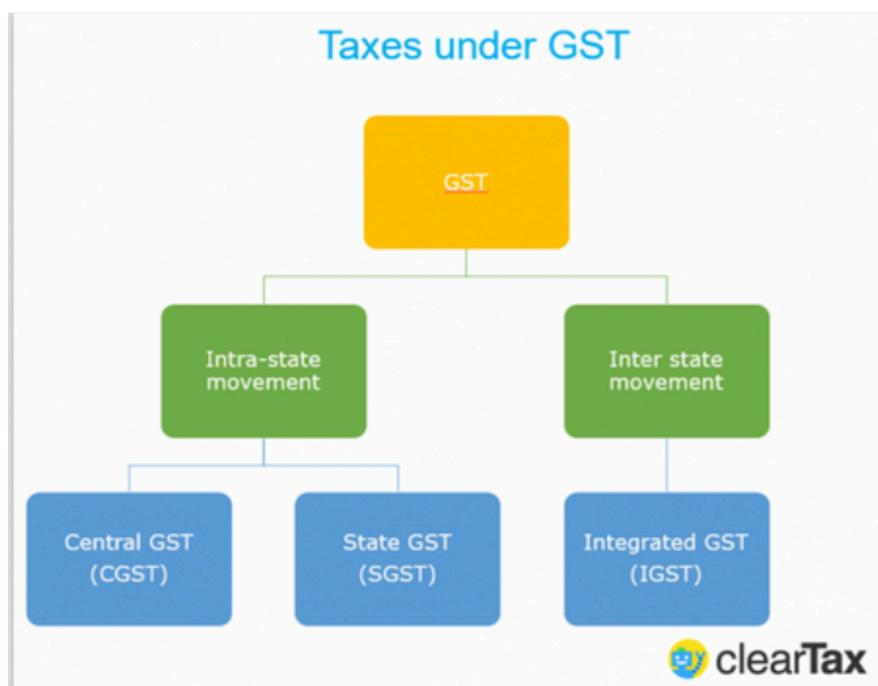
- Imports of COVID-19 relief material, including **vaccines, medical oxygen and Remdesivir vials, will get a conditional 'ad-hoc' Goods and Services Tax (GST) exemption** till June 30, the Finance Ministry said recently.
- These items are **already exempt from customs duty and health cess; now integrated GST (IGST), levied on such imports, will be withdrawn** for two months for 'relief materials being donated from abroad
- The **exemption won't be available for domestic companies or charities importing these items** if they are purchasing them, **even if for free distribution in the country.**
- The relevant notification specifies that the **relaxation is for COVID-19 material 'received free of cost for free distribution anywhere in India for COVID relief'**.
- **Global donors would need to register with individual States** where they wish to route relief.

Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST)

- Under GST, CGST is a tax levied on **Intra State supplies** of both goods and services by the **Central Government** and will be governed by the CGST Act

State Goods and Services Tax (SGST)

- SGST will also be levied on the same Intra State supply but will be governed by the State Government
- However, it is clearly mentioned in **Section 8 of the GST Act** that the taxes be levied on **all Intra-State supplies** of goods and/or services but the **rate of tax shall not be exceeding 14%, each.**



Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST)

- Under GST, IGST is a tax levied on all **Inter-State supplies** of goods and/or services and will be governed by the IGST Act.

- IGST will be applicable on any supply of goods and/ or services in both cases of **import into India and export from India.**

4.2. Corporate social responsibility (CSR).

- Experts are calling on the government to **ease CSR regulations to allow corporate expenditure on vaccinations for employees and treatment of employees suffering from Covid** to be covered under spending for corporate social responsibility (CSR).
- Companies are **not permitted to count expenditure incurred exclusively for the welfare of employees** as part of their mandatory CSR expenditure under current CSR norms.
- The Centre has **already made numerous changes in CSR norms over the past year to allow corporates to count expenditure towards curbing the spread of Covid-19**, including their spending on Covid vaccine awareness and donations to the PM- CARES fund as CSR expenditure.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- CSR norms were **mandated by the new Companies Act, 2013** and Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules.

Criteria

- Companies with a **minimum net worth of Rs 500 crore, turnover of Rs 1,000 crore, or net profit of Rs 5 crore** are required to spend at least **2 per cent of their average profit for the previous three years on CSR activities every year**

Other key requirements?

Constitution of a committee

- Constitution of a **committee of the Board of Directors** consisting of 3 or more directors

CSR Policy

- Formulation of the Corporate Social Responsibility Policy **by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the CSR Committee**

Board's Responsibility

- Required to **disclose in their report the composition of the CSR Committee and other compliance undertaken by the company and place it on the company's website.**

What if they could not spend the amount?

- Companies will now have to **transfer the unspent amount to Prime Minister's Relief Fund and/or Other Such State and Central Funds** within six (6) months of the expiry of the financial year.
- If the unspent amount **deals with an ongoing project**, then the said amount shall be **transferred to an Unspent Corporate Social Responsibility Account. This has to be spent within 3 years.**

Activities covered (specified under Schedule VII of the Act.)

- Education.
- Environmental Sustainability
- Extreme Hunger and Poverty.

- Gender Equity and Women Empowerment.
- Combating HIV-AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases.
- Social Business Projects.
- Contribution to Prime Minister's Relief Fund and Other Such State and Central Funds.

Activities not covered

- Activities that **benefit only the employees of the company and their families**
- Events such as marathons/ awards/ charitable contribution/ advertisement/sponsorships of TV programmes etc.
- Expenses incurred by companies for the fulfillment of any Act/ Statute of regulations (such as Labour Laws, Land Acquisition Act etc.) would not count as CSR expenditure under the Companies Act.
- Directly or indirectly contribution to any political party shall not be considered as a CSR activity.
- Activities undertaken by the company in pursuance of its normal course of business.

Changes made in 2021

- Impact Assessment for **big CSR projects** has been **made mandatory**.
- **Disclosure of all CSR projects and activities** besides the CSR Committee's composition is now **mandatory** on the company's website.
- CSR activities are **now allowed to be carried through charitable trusts unlike the 2014 framework**.
- Also, all CSR projects have to be mandatorily registered from April 1 in the **new Form CSR-1**.
- The Centre recently clarified that the **expenditure incurred by a company on setting up of makeshift hospitals and Covid facilities would also count towards their mandatory CSR expenditure**

Way forward

- Expand CSR definition to **include employee vaccination**, such a move would **improve the reach of the vaccination** drive in a shorter time frame and boost vaccinations for unorganised labour in the manufacturing sector.
- Also **benefit the overburdened healthcare system** in general and should be counted towards CSR expenditure
- Centre should clarify **whether companies incurring scientific research expenditure on Covid-19 vaccination** and treatments under their CSR expenditure **would be allowed to avail income tax benefits on the same**.
- The government had **last year permitted drug makers to classify research and development expenditure on therapies for Covid-19** as CSR expenditure, but corporations are **not permitted to claim tax benefits on CSR expenditure** under current rules.

5. Polity

5.1. Don't discriminate in vaccination: SC

- The Supreme Court said in an order recently that **vaccinations being provided to citizens constitute a valuable public good**, and there should be **no discrimination in the process**.

Supreme court

- **Discrimination cannot be made between different classes of citizens who are similarly circumstanced on the ground that while the Central government will carry the burden of providing free vaccines for the 45 years and above population, the State governments will discharge the responsibility of the 18 to 44 age group on such commercial terms as they may negotiate.**
- The rational method of proceeding in a manner consistent with the right to life (which includes the right to health) under Article 21 would be for the **Central government to procure all vaccines and to negotiate the price with vaccine manufacturers.**
- Once quantities are allocated by it to each **State government, the latter would lift the allocated quantities and carry out the distribution**

5.2. Central Vista works get nod

- An expert panel of the Environment Ministry has **accorded environmental approval to ancillary projects that are part of the construction of a new Parliament**, including a new residence for the Prime Minister, common Central Secretariat buildings, Central Conference Centre, a building for the Special Protection Group and a Vice-President's Enclave
- These are to be **built by the Central Public Works Department.**
- The PM's residence is scheduled to be ready by next December, a month **after the construction of a new Parliament Building.**
- The rest of the many buildings are expected to be ready **between 2024 and 2026.**

Central Vista Project

- Proposed by **Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**
- The project aims to renovate and redevelop 86 acres of land in Lutyens's Delhi.
- In this, the landmark structures of the government, including **Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhavan, India Gate, North Block and South Block**, etc. stand.
- The work on the project has **continued despite the second week of lockdown** in the capital that has brought most construction sites to a grinding halt.
- The construction work for the project has been brought **under the ambit of "essential services", a move condemned by the Opposition.**



Essential Services Maintenance (ESMA) Act 1968

Aim

- To certain **essential services** (which if obstructed would) affect the normal life of the community”.
- Maintaining or **increasing supplies of essential commodities**
- Supply utilization for equitable distribution and
- Fair price availability of essential commodities.
- Works **against unethical trade practices** like hoarding and black-marketing.

Power under ESMA

- Enacted under **Concurrent list**, so both centre and state have power to decide
- ESMA gives **police right to arrest without a warrant** anybody violating the Act's provisions.

Essential services

- Production, supply or distribution of **petroleum, coal, power, steel, and fertilizers and any service in connection with banking, Communication and transport services, purchase and sale of food grain.**
- Sanitation, water supply, hospitals, or related with the defense of the country.
- The **employees can't even refuse to work overtime** if their work is considered necessary for the maintenance of any of the essential services.
- Anyone who **involves in the strike is subject to legal actions** prescribed under the ESMA.

5.3. Myanmar refugees can approach UNHCR

- The High Court of Manipur recently **allowed seven Myanmar nationals, who entered India secretly following the February military coup, to travel to New Delhi to seek protection from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).**

What court said

- Though India is **not a party to the UN Refugee Conventions**, the court observed that the **country is a party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966.**
- “The far-reaching and myriad protection afforded by **Article 21** of our Constitution, as interpreted and adumbrated by our Supreme Court time and again, would indubitably **encompass the right of non-refoulement**
- **Non-refoulement** is the principle under international law that a person fleeing from persecution from his own country **should not be forced to return.**

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

- The ICCPR is a multilateral treaty adopted by UN General Assembly Resolution on 16 December 1966, and in force from 23 March 1976.
- The covenant **commits its parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process and a fair trial.**
- It is monitored by the **UN Human Rights Committee** (a separate body to the UN Human Rights Council).
- It is **part of the International Bill of Human Rights, along with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).**

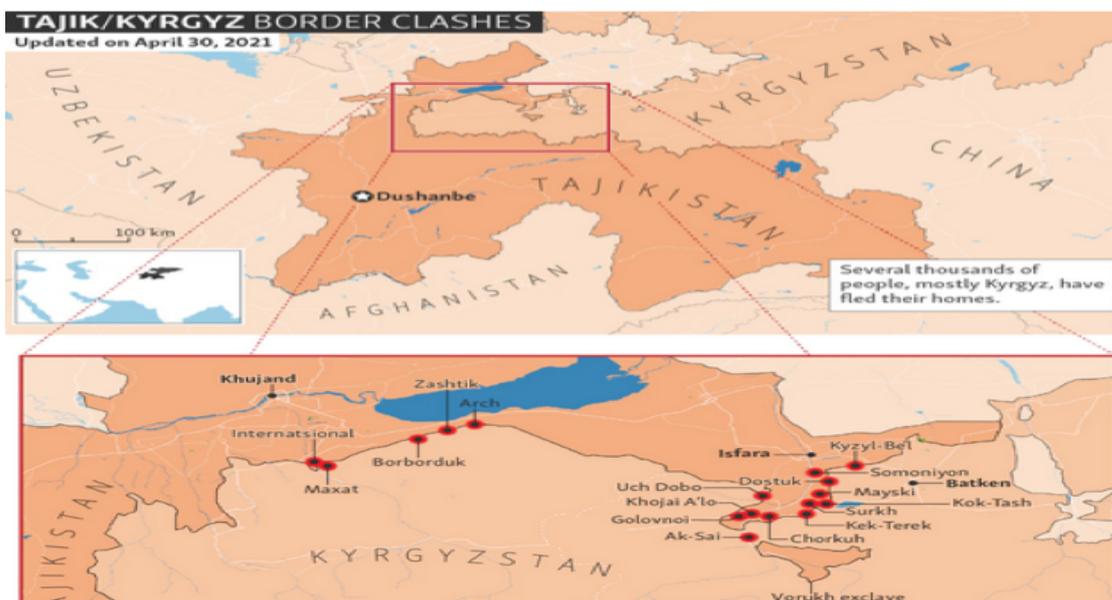
6. International Relation

6.1. Kyrgyzstan- Tajikistan issue

- A ceasefire on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan largely held recently following a day of intense fighting between the two ex-Soviet Central Asian neighbours that killed 39 people and wounded more than 175.
- More than 7,000 Kyrgyz residents have been evacuated from the area engulfed by the fighting as troops from the two countries exchanged gunfire around a water supply facility near the village of Kok-Tash, located in western Kyrgyzstan on the border with Tajikistan.
- Both nations have claimed the area around the water supply facility in Kok-Tash, a dispute dating back decades to when they were both part of the Soviet Union.

Dispute

- The current configuration of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is the product of Soviet mapmakers drawing the dividing lines for Soviet republics.
- After the U.S.S.R. collapsed in late 1991, these became the borders of independent countries.
- Roads and waterways crisscross this border in many places and only some 504 kilometers of the approximately 970-kilometer Kyrgyz-Tajik frontier has been demarcated.
- This latest incident started when a small group of Tajik citizens were seen on the evening of April 28 trying to set up a monitoring camera at a water intake station at Kok-Tash.
- The intake station releases water into canals going to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.
- Kyrgyz citizens confronted the Tajiks about the action. Angry words led to scuffles and then to stones being thrown, with people from Kok-Tash and nearby Khoja A'lo joining the fight.
- Tajiks had been watching the intake station since April 17, when Kyrgyz workers were seen making repairs.
- The Tajiks lodged a protest that they had not been previously informed.



Current affairs Worksheet (4th May 2021)

Factual sheet for Quick revision

Topic	Description	Update
Env	Global Forest Goals Report 2021 Indian state of forest report (Order)	
SnT	Python-5 & Derby missile Light Combat Aircraft Tejas MACS 1407 Drug pricing	
Economy	CSR detail provisions (Activities) CGST Vs SGST Vs IGST	
Polity	ESMA Act Central Vista project International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Refugee convention	
IR	Kok-Tash location	