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1. Release of over Rs 2 lakh cr as GST compensation to States for FY 2020-21 (April 28, 2022)

The Finance Ministry has said that an amount of Rs 2 lakh 78 thousand crore has been released to the states as GST compensation for the financial year 2020-21.

- The ministry has so far released 7 lakh 35 thousand crore rupees to the States including the assistance released on back-to-back basis.
- Presently only Rs 78 thousand 704 crore compensation for the year 2021-22 is pending due to insufficient amount in the fund, which is equivalent to four months' compensation.
- Normally, compensation for ten months of April to January of any financial year is released during that year and the compensation of February and March is released only in the next financial year.
- The GST compensation for eight out of the ten months of 2021-22 has already been released to the states and the pending amount will also be released after the cess amount is deposited in the Compensation Fund.
- At the time of the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax, GST, a constitutional amendment provided that Parliament would, by law, provide compensation to the States for the loss of revenue due to the introduction of the GST, for a period of five years.

2. SC fixes final hearing on Sedition Law (April 28, 2022)

Supreme Court to give final hearing on May 5 on petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the offence of sedition under Section 124A of IPC.

- A three-member bench of CJI NV Ramana has fixed May 5 for hearing all the petitions related to this case together.
- Attorney General K.K. Venugopal is assisting the court in the case in the capacity of his constitutional office.
- The CJI had said sedition or Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code was prone to misuse by the government.
- **Sedition Law**
- Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code provides for the punishment of sedition.
- The Indian Penal Code (IPC) was enacted in 1860 during the British Raj.
- The then British government in India feared that religious preachers from the Indian subcontinent would wage war against the government.
- Throughout the British Raj, this section was used to suppress activists in favour of national independence, including Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, both found guilty and imprisoned.

- In 1973, sedition was made a cognizable offence for the first time in India during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- A cognizable offence means arrest without a warrant.
- **Constitutional validity**
- After independence, it was found unconstitutional by two high courts, as it violates freedom of expression.
- The Supreme Court upheld its validity in Kedar Nath Singh v State of Bihar (1962).

3. Union Cabinet approves upgradation of communication to 4G in Naxalite areas (April 28, 2022)

The Union Cabinet approved the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) project to upgrade 2G mobile services to 4G at security locations in areas affected by Left Wing Extremism.

- This will enable better internet and data services in these LWE affected areas.
- The project envisages upgradation of 2,542 mobile towers to provide 4G services in LWE areas at a cost of Rs 2,426 crore in 10 states including Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Maharashtra.
- All the sites will be upgraded by BSNL at a cost of Rs 2,426 crores.
- The Union Cabinet also approved the Revised Cost Estimate on "Setting up of India Post Payments Bank".
- The facility of India Post Payments Bank will be available in all 1.56 lakh branches of post offices, for which an additional Rs 820 crore will be spent.
- This proposal is in line with the goal of providing mobile connectivity in rural areas and facilitating the delivery of various e-governance services, banking services, tele-medicine, tele-education etc. through mobile broadband in these areas.
- The Cabinet also gave its approval for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between India and Chile for cooperation in the field of disabilities.

4. Cabinet approves opening of Indian Mission in Lithuania (April 28, 2022)

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the opening of a new Indian Mission in Lithuania in 2022.

- It will help expand India's diplomatic footprint, deepen political ties and strategic cooperation, enable the growth of bilateral trade, investment and economic engagement.
- It will facilitate stronger people-to-people contacts, allow more sustained political access in multilateral fora and help mobilise support for India's foreign policy objectives.
- The Indian Mission in Lithuania will better assist the Indian community and protect their interests.

- This will have a direct impact in increasing domestic production and employment in line with our goal of self-reliant India.

- **India - Lithuania**

- India recognized Lithuania (along with the other Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia) on 7 September 1991 following the acceptance of their independence by the then USSR.
- India's diplomatic relations with Lithuania were established on 25 February 1992.
- The Lithuanian language, the oldest surviving Indo-European language, has great similarities with Sanskrit, so it reflects ancient links with India.

5. India Tops The World In Real-Time Payment Volumes In 2021 (April 28, 2022)

According to the ACI Worldwide Report on Real-time Transactions, India's real-time transactions are ranked first in the world.

- In the year 2021, India's real-time transactions have grown to 48.6 billion.
- China ranks second after India with 18 billion real time transactions.
- India's transaction volume is more than seven times that of the US, UK, Canada, Germany and France combined (7.5 billion).
- Brazil, Thailand and South Korea lag behind India and China in terms of real-time transactions of 8.7 billion, 9.7 billion and 7.4 billion respectively.
- This research has found that more than half (52.71 percent) of consumers worldwide use mobile wallets.
- Real-time payment transactions worldwide crossed 118.3 billion in the year 2021, a growth of 64.5% on a year-on-year basis.
- **Reason to increase in real-time transactions**
- The rise in the use of digital payments during the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the growth of QR code payments and UPI-based mobile payment apps among merchants, propelled real-time payments into 2021.
- Consumers are moving from cash to digital real-time payment methods, which means that the share of real-time payments in total payment volume will exceed 70% in 2026.

6. Myanmar court sentences Suu Kyi to 5 years in jail for corruption (April 27, 2022)

A court in military-ruled Myanmar found deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi guilty of corruption and sentenced her to five years in jail.

- The case was the first of 11 corruption charges against the Nobel laureate, each carrying a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

- A Myanmar junta court accused the 76-year-old leader of accepting a bribe of \$600,000 cash and gold bars.
- He has already been sentenced to six years in prison in other cases and is facing 10 more corruption charges.
- Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since February 2021, when a military coup toppled her elected government.

- **About Aung San Suu Kyi**

- Aung San Suu Kyi born on June 19, 1945, Rangoon, Burma is politician and opposition leader of Myanmar.
- She was the winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1991.
- She has held several government positions since 2016, including that of state counsellor, which essentially made her the de facto leader of the country.
- She was sidelined when the military seized power in February 2021.

7. 86% of india's adult population fully vaccinated against covid-19 (April 27, 2022)

According to the ministry of Health and Family Welfare over 86 percent of the adult population is now fully vaccinated in the country against covid-19.

- The country's COVID vaccination coverage has crossed the 188 crore mark.
- more than 19 lakh vaccine doses were administered till 26 April.
- So far, more than three crore 18 lakh vaccine doses have been administered to the age group of 12 to 14 years.
- Over two crore 72 lakh precautionary doses have been given to identified categories of beneficiaries including health care workers, frontline workers and people above 18 years of age.
- All people over the age of 18 who have completed nine months of taking the second dose are eligible for a precautionary dose.

- **first phase covid-19 vaccination**

- The nationwide vaccination campaign was launched on January 16 last year, in which health workers were vaccinated in the first phase.
- The vaccination of frontline workers started from February 2 last year.

- **second phase of Covid-19 vaccination**

- The second phase of Covid-19 vaccination commenced on March 1 last year for people over 60 years of age and those aged 45 and above with specified comorbidity conditions.

- **vaccination for all people aged**

- India started vaccination for all people above 45 years of age from 1st April last year.
- The government decided to expand its vaccination campaign by allowing everyone over the age of 18.
- **third phase of covid-19 vaccination**
- The third phase of vaccination began on January 3 for adolescents in the age group of 15-18 years.

8. Maximum all India power demand met crosses 201 Gigawatt (April 27, 2022)

According to the Ministry of Power the maximum power demand crossed 201 GW (GigaWatt) on April 26.

- Last year on July 7, 2021, the maximum power demand was recorded at 200.53 GW.
- The increasing demand for electricity is expected to accelerate economic growth in the country.
- In March this year, the demand for energy has registered a growth of about 8.9 percent.
- The demand is expected to reach around 215 to 220 GW in May-June, the ministry said.
- Government taking measures to enhance efficiency in coal transport to power plants.
- The ministry urged all the stakeholders at the central and state level to work for uninterrupted power supply.
- Domestic electricity demand is expected to double by 2040.
- India's installed capacity at present is about 400GW, of which coal, or thermal power, makes up more than 200GW.
- The world's major coal producers are China, America, Australia, Indonesia, India.
- The coal producing regions of India include Raniganj, Jharia, Dhanbad and Bokaro in Jharkhand.

9. India set a Guinness World Record by hoisting 78,220 tricolours simultaneously (April 26, 2022)

According to the Union Ministry of Culture, India has registered its name in the Guinness Book of World Records for the highest number of simultaneous hoisting of the national flag.

- On 23 April 2022, India achieved this feat by waving 78 thousand 220 tricolours together in the Veer Kunwar Singh Vijayotsava program at Dulour Maidan, Jagdishpur in Bhojpur district of Bihar.
- The Veer Kunwar Singh Vijayotsav program was organised by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Culture under the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

- For this record, bands were worn to physically identify the attendees, and the entire event was video-recorded.
- Earlier this world record was held by Pakistan when around 56,000 Pakistani flags were hoisted at a ceremony in Lahore in 2004.

10. Twitter confirms sale of company to Elon Musk for \$44 billion (April 26, 2022)

One of the world's biggest deals in the tech world, billionaire Elon Musk, has taken control of Twitter. He has signed an agreement to buy Twitter for about \$ 44 billion.

- The deal has given the Tesla CEO ownership of the company with 217 million users.
- Musk will have to pay \$ 54.20 (Rs 4148) for every share of Twitter.
- Twitter plays an influential role in shaping the political and media agenda on both sides of the Atlantic.

• About Elon Musk

- He was born on 28 June 1971 Pretoria, South Africa
- Mr. Musk is the world's wealthiest person, according to Forbes, with a nearly \$279 billion fortune.
- Mr. Musk began making his fortune in 1999, when he sold Zip2, an online mapping and business directory, to Compaq for \$307 million.
- He used its stock to become PayPal, an Internet service that went beyond banks and allowed consumers to pay businesses directly.
- That same year, Musk founded Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX.
- The company developed cost-effective reusable rockets.
- In 2004, Musk invested in Tesla, then in a startup trying to build electric cars.
- Eventually he was made CEO of Tesla and led the company to astronomical success as the world's most valuable automaker and largest seller of electric vehicles.