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1. CODA wins Best Film at Oscars 2022 (March 28, 2022)

The 94th Academy Awards ceremony or Oscars, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), honoured the best films released between March 1 and December 31, 2021, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on March 27, 2022.

Winners List -

- Best picture - CODA. This is the first movie made by a streaming service (APPLE) to win Best Picture Oscar
- Best actress - Jessica Chastain. She got the award for acting in the film The Eyes of Tammy Faye
- Best actor - Will Smith. He got the award for acting in the film King Richard
- Best director - The Power of the Dog. She got the award for directing the film Jane Campion
- Best original song - Music and Lyric by Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell. They got the award for the title track of the film "No Time to Die"
- Best adapted screenplay - CODA
- Best original screenplay - Belfast
- Best international feature - Drive My Car (Japan)
- Best supporting actress - Ariana DeBose. She got the award for acting in the film West Side Story
- Best supporting actor - Troy Kotsur. He got the award for acting in the film CODA
- Best animated feature - Encanto
- Best original score - Hans Zimmer. He got the award for the film Dune

Tamil film, Pebbles, directed by P S Vinodraj, was sent as India's Official Entry at the 94th Academy Awards.

Indian Oscar winners till date-

- Bhanu Athaiya in 1982 received the Oscars for the "Best Costume Design" for the movie "Gandhi"
- Satyajit Ray received an Honorary Oscar for Lifetime Achievement in 1992
- A R Rahman won two Oscars in 2009 for the movie "Slumdog Millionaire" in the category of "Best Original Score" and "Best Original Song for Jai Ho"
- Resul Pookutty in 2009 won the Oscars for "Best Sound Mixing" for the film "Slumdog Millionaire"

- Gulzar in 2009 won the Oscars for “Best Original Song for Jai Ho” for the film “Slumdog Millionaire”

2. Normal International Flights resume from India (March 28, 2022)

Normal International flights from India resumed on 27 March 2022 after a gap of almost two years. International flights were suspended from March 2020 after the corona pandemic.

- six Indian airlines will connect 27 countries and 60 international airlines could provide connectivity to 40 countries.
- Until now, travel to and from India was confined to 37 countries with limited flights under “air bubble” agreements.

Important for Exam

The regulator of the Civil Aviation sector in India : DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation). It comes under the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation

Union Civil Aviation Minister : Mr Jyotiraditya Scindia

Also see the 17 March 2022 post

3. El Salvador declares state of emergency after gang killings (March 28, 2022)

The Central American country of El Salvador parliament has approved the state of emergency that temporarily suspended some constitutional protections in the country following a wave of killings attributed to criminal gangs.

- At least 62 people were reported killed on 26 March in a gang war in the country.
- The Parliament of the country approved the request of the President of El Salvador, President Nayib Bukele, to impose an emergency in the country.

El Salvador

- It is the smallest of the Seven Central American countries of Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Belize.
- **Capital** : San Salvador
- **Currency** : United States Dollar, Bitcoins.
- **President** : Nayib Bukele

4. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visits Nepal after India Visit (March 28, 2022)

The Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Nepal in the last leg of his South Asian tour. He first visited Pakistan and participated in the Summit of the Foreign Minister's of the Organisation of Islamic Countries held in Islamabad, Pakistan. He then visited Afghanistan before making a surprise visit to India. From India, he visited Nepal on 26 March 2022.

- This is the first visit of a high-ranking Chinese official to Nepal since Sher Bahadur Deuba became the Prime Minister of Nepal in July last year.
- China and Nepal signed nine MOU(Memoranda of Understanding)
- Under the economic and technical cooperation, China will increase its annual assistance to Nepal from Rs. 13 billion to Rs. 15 billion.
- Another agreement is on cooperation on the feasibility study of China-Nepal Power Grid interconnection where China will finance the new alignment of the Ratamate-Rasuwadhi- Kerung transmission line.
- China will donate an additional 4 million doses of the Sinovac covid vaccine to Nepal.

Important for Exam

Nepal

It is a landlocked country in South Asia. It is located between India to the east, south, and west and the Tibet area of China to the north.

President of Nepal : Bidhya Devi Bhandari

Prime Minister of Nepal : Sher Bahadur Deuba

Capital of Nepal : Kathmandu

Currency : Nepalese rupee

It has the world's highest mountain peak: **Mount Everest in the Himalayas.**

5. PMGKAY extended till September 2022 (March 28, 2022)

The Government of India has extended the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) scheme for another six months, till September 2022 (Phase VI). The phase V of the scheme was to end on 31 March 2022. This will cover nearly 80 crore beneficiaries across India.

PMGKY is the world's largest food security programme which was launched in April 2020 to provide relief to the poor and migrant population suffering due to the corona -19 induced lockdown and the consequent hardship faced by them.

Features of the PMGKAY

- PMGKAY is a part of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) to help the poor fight the battle against Covid-19.
- Its nodal Ministry is the Ministry of Finance.

- Under this scheme, the government Provides additional free of cost 5 kg per person per month food-grains (rice/wheat) to around 80 crore beneficiaries of National Food Security Act (NFSA) including the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) beneficiaries.
- The scheme is fully funded by the government of India
- The Government has spent approximately Rs. 2.60 Lakh Crore so far and another Rs. 80,000 Crore will be spent over the next 6 months till September 2022 taking the total expenditure under PM-GKAY to nearly Rs. 3.40 Lakh Crore
- The Government of India had allocated about 759 Lakh Million Tonnes (LMT) of free foodgrains under the PM-GKAY till Phase V. With another 244 LMT of free foodgrains under this extension (Phase VI), the aggregate allocation of free foodgrains under the PM-GKAY now stands at 1,003 LMT of foodgrains.
- The PMGKAY has now been linked with One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan where migrant workers can get the benefit of the scheme through any ration shops in India.

Phases of the PMGKAY Scheme

Phase I from April to June 2020

Phase II from July to November 2020

Phase III from December 2020 to May 2021 to June 2021

Phase IV from July 2021 to November 2021

Phase V from December 2021 to March 2021

Phase VI from April 2022 to September 2022

Important Government Scheme

National Food Security act (NFSA)

The Public distribution system in India is covered under the National Food security act 2013. It covers 75% of the rural population and 50% Urban areas.

- Food Grains are provided to beneficiaries in two categories, Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Household (PHH).
- The Antodaya Anna Yojana beneficiaries get 35 kg of foodgrains per month and the Priority Household gets 5kg per person per month .
- The beneficiary gets rice/wheat or coarse cereals at a highly subsidised price .

For One Nation One Ration Card scheme kindly see 2 February 2022 post

6. WHO Global centre for Traditional medicine in India (March 26, 2022)

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has signed an agreement with the government of India to set up a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM) in Jamnagar, Gujarat. The

Agreement was signed on 25 March 2022 in Geneva by the Secretary, Ministry of Ayush Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, and Director General, WHO Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

- The Government of India will invest \$250 million in the center .
- The primary objective of GCTM is to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology and improve overall health of the communities' world over.
- The WHO centre will be under the Ministry of AYUSH.
- It is the only such centre on traditional medicine of WHO in the world.

Traditional Medicine

- According to the WHO, Traditional medicine is the sum total of the knowledge, skill, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.

AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy)

- The Ministry of AYUSH was set up on the 9th of November 2014 to revive the knowledge of traditional Indian systems of medicine.
- It focuses on education and research in the fields of Ayurveda, Yoga Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy.
- Minister of AYUSH: **Sarbananda Sonowal**

World Health Organisation (WHO)

- The World Health Organisation is a specialised agency of the United Nations which was founded on 7 April, 1948.
- Every year 7 April is celebrated as "World Health Day".
- Headquarters of WHO : Geneva, Switzerland
- Director General of WHO : Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of Ethiopia .
- He was elected as WHO director General in 2017 and later re-elected in 2022 for a period of 5 years.

7. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visits India (March 25, 2022)

The Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi reached India on 25 March 2022, He is the most senior Chinese official to visit India after the border clash in Galwan, Ladakh which led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers and 4 Chinese soldiers in June 2020. Since the Galwan clash, troops of both countries have been deployed on the Line of Actual control along the border.

- Wang Yi came to India after his visit to Pakistan, Afghanistan and he will also visit Nepal from India.

- India sharply criticised Wang's comment in the Organisation of Islamic States foreign ministers meeting held in Islamabad, where he supported Pakistan's stance on Kashmir.
- Wang last visited India for the Special Representative-level border talks with his Indian counterpart Ajit Kumar Doval in December 2019.
- The visit of Wang Yi is seen as an attempt by the Chinese leadership to ensure the participation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the forthcoming BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) summit to be held in China in 2022.
- Also both countries are close to Russia and there is pressure on both the countries from western countries to isolate Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.
- Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar has identified three "mutuals" to normalise the strained ties between India and China. Three "mutuals" are mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests.
- The Chinese by supporting Pakistan on Kashmir issue and its deployment of troops along the borders with India is seen by India as going against the three "mutuals" identified by S. Jaishankar.

8. Exercise Cold Response of NATO (March 25, 2022)

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is undertaking a large-scale military exercise in Norway code named Cold Response 2022. The military exercise is organised by **Norway** every two years.
- About 30,000 troops from 27 countries from Europe and North America are participating in the exercise which are being held in March and April 2022.
- The exercise assumed significance after the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.
- The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has announced that he will visit Norway on 25 March 2022 to witness the exercise just after the NATO, EU, G-7 summit meeting in Brussels on 24 March 2022.

Important for Exam

NATO

It is a military alliance which was set up after the signing of the Washington Treaty on 4 April 1949 in Washington, United States of America.

- It was set up to combat threats from the communist countries led by the Soviet Union in Europe. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia is considered as the successor state of the Soviet Union and Russia is seen as a threat by NATO.
- Initially there were 12 member countries but at present there are 30 member countries.
- Headquarters of the NATO : Brussels, Belgium**
- Member** : Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg,

Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

9. G-7,EU,NATO holds emergency meeting on Russia Ukraine Conflict (March 25, 2022)

In an unprecedented move the Western countries leader held an extraordinary summit meeting in Brussels, Belgium on 24 March 2022 to put pressure on the Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine.

- The Group of 7 or G-7 ,European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was held back to back on 24 March 2022.
- The three back to back summit meeting which was attended by the President of Joe Biden is an attempt by the western countries to show solidarity to Ukraine and to present a united stand against Russia.

Highlights of the meeting

- NATO leaders agreed to help Ukraine protect itself against any chemical, biological or nuclear attacks by Russia.
- NATO, which has already increased its troop deployment to 40,000 along the eastern border of Russia from the Baltic to the Black Sea, has agreed to set up new combat units in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia.
- The alliance also warned China not to support Russia's war effort or to take any actions that will help Russia circumvent the western sanctions on Russia.
- NATO turned down Ukrainian requests to defend Ukraine's skies by imposing a no-fly zone and said again, it will not send troops to Ukraine for fear of being dragged into a full-on military confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia.

EU Meeting

- At the European Union summit meeting ,the United States promised to supply the EU with 15 billion cubic metres more of liquefied natural gas this year than had been planned before so as to curb the European bloc's reliance on Russian gas.
- Russia supplies 40% of the EU's gas needs and more than a quarter of its oil imports. Those most dependent on this supply - in particular Germany - are reluctant to take a step that would have a major economic impact.

President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy also addressed the leaders via videoconference.

Russia does not want Ukraine to become a member of either the European Union or NATO. It fears if Ukraine joins these western blocs then the security of Russia will be compromised.

Important for Exam

European Union

- It is a political and Economic group of 27 European countries .

- The European Economic Community was launched in 1957 and it became the European Union in 1993 with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty.
- Member countries of EU : Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

Headquarters of the European Union : Brussels

G-7 or Group of Seven countries

The G7 (Group of Seven) is an organisation of the world's seven largest advanced economies, which dominate global trade and the international financial system.

- They are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- Russia joined in 1998, creating the G8, but was excluded in 2014 for its annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine .
- It has no permanent secretariat .
- The 2021 summit meeting was held in England
- The 2022 summit meeting will be held in Germany .

10. Danish Siddiqui families files case against Taliban in International Criminal Court (March 23, 2022)

The family of the slain Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui has filed a case against the Taliban in the International Criminal Court (ICC) pleading for an investigation into the circumstances leading to his death in Afghanistan on 16 July 2021.

The family is seeking legal action against high level Taliban leaders and commanders accusing them of torturing and killing Siddiqui because he was an Indian.

Danish Siddiqui was a Pulitzer prize winning journalist working for Reuters news agency in Afghanistan. He was killed when Taliban attacked the Afghan special forces with which Danish was travelling in Kandahar province's Spin Boldak district, a town near Afghanistan Pakistan Border.

Taliban has denied that it tortured and killed Danish Siddiqui.

The International Criminal Court has been engaged in an ongoing investigation on international crimes, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, in Afghanistan, over which it has jurisdiction after Afghanistan's government acceded to the Rome treaty 1998.

India is not a member of the International Criminal Court.

International Criminal Court(ICC)

It was set up in July 2002 under the Rome treaty of 1998.

- It is the only permanent court to prosecute persons for crimes **against humanity, genocide, war crimes and crimes of aggression.**
- At present 123 countries are its members. The United States, China, and Israel are not its members.
- The court's jurisdiction extends to offences that occurred after July 1, 2002, that were committed either in a state that has ratified the agreement or by a national of such a state or the case which was referred to it by the United Nations Security Council.
- The Headquarters of ICC: **The Hague, Netherlands**
- ICC is different from the International Court of Justice (ICJ). ICJ is a United Nations court which hears disputes involving the member states of the United Nations.