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## **1. Exercise NCC Yogdan**

### **Why in the News?**

- Recently, the National Cadet Corps (NCC) launched “Exercise NCC Yogdan” to offer a helping hand to the civil authorities fighting against COVID-19.

### **Exercise NCC Yogdan:**

- The tasks envisaged for NCC Cadets Include:
- Manning of helpline or call centres,
- Distribution of relief materials, medicines, food and essential commodities,
- Community assistance, data management and queue and traffic management

### **Guidelines:**

- Cadets should not be employed in handling law and order situations or for active military duties or at hot spots.
- Only Senior Division volunteer cadets above 18 years of age will be employed.
- They should be employed in small cohesive groups of eight to 20 under the supervision of Permanent Instructor Staff or and an Associate NCC Officer.

### **NCC:**

- The NCC, which operates under the Ministry of Defence is the largest uniformed youth organisation of the Country.
- It has been engaged in conducting Various Social Service and Community Development Activities.

## **2. Counter-cyclical Capital Buffers (CCyB)**

### **Why in News?**

- The RBI has announced that banks need not activate countercyclical capital buffers (CCyB) amid slowdown due to COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Countercyclical Capital Buffer (CCyB):**

- A capital buffer is a mandatory capital that financial institutions are required to hold in addition to other Minimum Capital Requirements.
- CCyB is the capital to be kept by a bank to meet business cycle related risks. It is aimed to protect the banking sector against losses from changes in economic conditions.
- Banks may face difficulties in phases like recession when the loan amount doesn't return.

- To meet such situations, banks should have own additional capital. This is an important theme of the Basel III norms.

### **CCyB Framework in India:**

- The framework on CCyB was put in place by the RBI in terms of guidelines issued in 2015 wherein it was advised that the CCyB would be activated as and when the circumstances warranted.
- The framework envisages the credit-to-GDP gap as the main indicator, which is used in conjunction with other supplementary indicators.
- It requires banks to build up a buffer of capital in good times, which may be used to maintain flow of credit to the real sector in difficult times.
- The buffer was also meant to restrict the banking sector from indiscriminate lending in the periods of excess credit growth, which have often been associated with the building up of system-wide risk.

### **3. National Corona Survey**

#### **Why in News?**

- Union Minister released the COVID 19 National Preparedness Survey 2020.

#### **National Preparedness Survey on COVID-19 (National Corona Survey):**

- The survey was conducted in 410 districts within 3 working days to attain a bird's eye view of the governance challenges of the nation while coping with the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Objectives of the Survey:**

- To develop a comparative analysis of COVID 19 preparedness across States.
- To highlight the main priorities and constraints of COVID 19 preparedness, as they are perceived by the civil servants working in the field.
- To access enabling factors in making institutional/logistics/hospital preparedness, etc.
- To capture trends to identify systemic and process related deficiencies, in combating COVID 19 in the districts of India.
- The survey was conducted across all districts of India, with responses from 410 civil servants who are providing field level leadership. District Collectors and IAS officers of (2014-2018) batches who have served as Assistant Secretaries in Government of India participated in the survey.

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#### **4. NASA's Mars Helicopter - Perseverance program**

##### **Why in News?**

- NASA's Mars Helicopter, which will be attached to NASA's Mars Rover named Perseverance during the mission, has successfully completed its testing stages.
- It will be the first aircraft to be flown on any other planet in human history.

##### **Highlights:**

- With NASA eyeing Mars as the first habitable planet for humans after Earth, its Mars 2020 mission to reach its surface and establish a human base there is in full swing.
- The testing phase marked the last time that the rotors of the helicopter have been operated on Earth and the next flight to be taken by the helicopter will be straight on Mars.
- NASA has used a twin-rotor mechanism to make it fly. The helicopter derives its energy from the sun through solar panels.
- Once on Mars, the helicopter will remain encapsulated until the mission managers determine an acceptable area to conduct test flights. The Mars helicopter comes as a part of a larger initiative in the shape of a rover named Perseverance.

##### **Perseverance Program:**

- Perseverance is supposed to take-off for Mars in the middle of July onboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V 541 rocket next year. It will then land on the red planet on February 18, 2021.
- NASA's Mars Exploration Program is aimed at looking for signs of any microbial life on the planet as well as characterizing the planet's climate and geology.
- The knowledge garnered through this will eventually help in any future human establishments on Mars.
- Perseverance carries a special commemorative plate that holds small silicon chips bearing the names of more than 10.9 million people who participated in NASA's "Send Your Name to Mars" campaign.
- Perseverance will have other duties as well. Chief among them will be to collect and cache samples for a future return to Earth, where scientists will be able to analyse them in detail in well-equipped labs.

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## **5. Corona Bonds**

### **Why in News?**

- Italian Prime Minister has proposed Corona bonds to be issued by European Union (EU) to deal with the situation created by Covid-19.

### **About Corono Bonds:**

- These bonds are joint debt issued to member states of the EU.
- This would be mutualised debt, taken collectively by all member states of the EU.
- The funds would come from the European Investment Bank.

### **Reaction of E.U Countries:**

- Countries like Italy, Spain which have suffered huge deaths due to Covid-19 are demanding such kind of economic measures from the EU to meet the extraordinary situation.
- But, Germany, Netherlands, Austria and Finland, also known as the "**Frugal Four**", the fiscally conservative EU states have opposed such type of idea.

