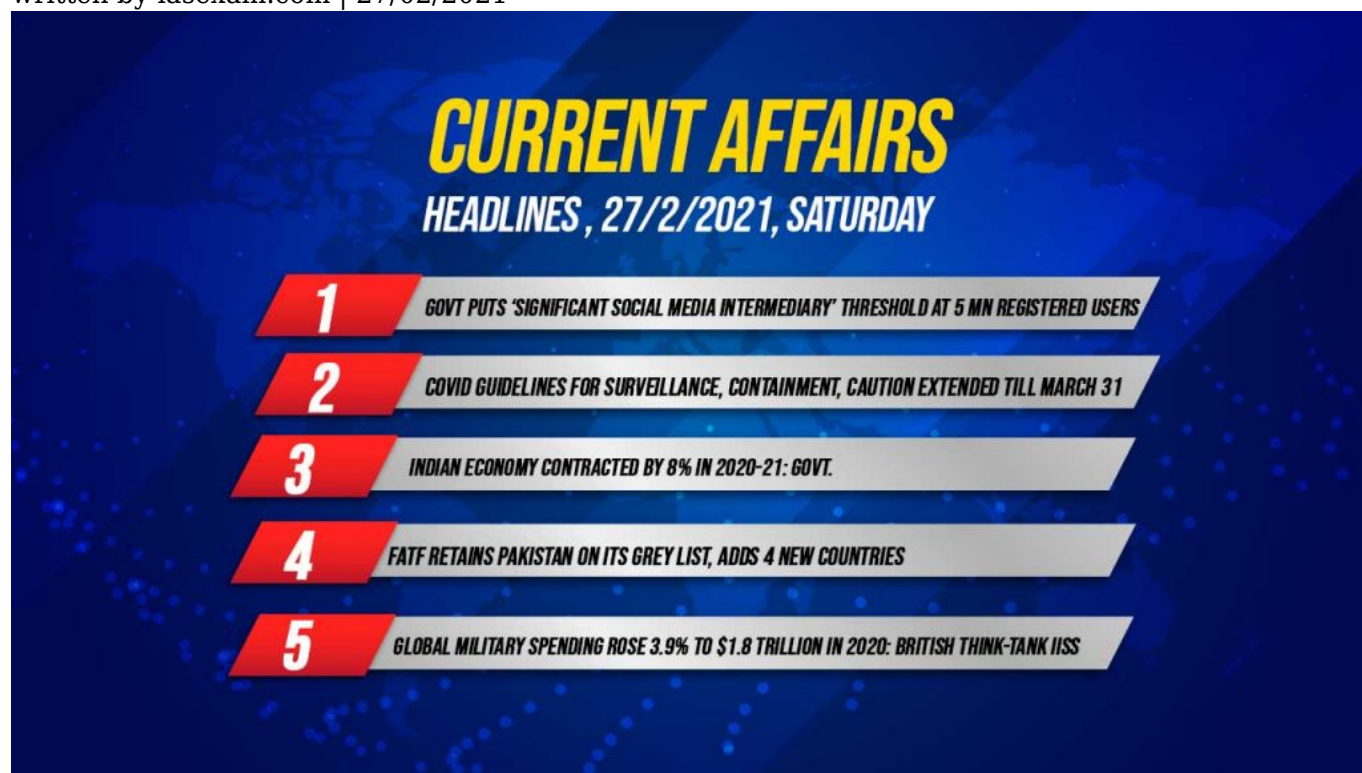


Headlines at a Glance - 27th February 2021

written by iasexam.com | 27/02/2021



Govt puts 'significant social media intermediary' threshold at 5 mn registered users

The government recently specified 5 million registered users in India as the threshold for a social media intermediary to be considered a significant social media intermediary as mentioned in the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021. The rules make a distinction between social media intermediaries and significant social media intermediaries, who have a large number of users. The government had said on Thursday, while notifying the Rules, that it will specify the threshold of the user base that will distinguish between the two. Large social media firms including Facebook and Twitter said they are studying the rules. Several experts pointed out that some provisions of the new rules, notified by the government on Thursday, would be in conflict with the proposed personal data protection legislation that is currently with a Joint Parliamentary Committee. The rules require companies to store data of individuals using their platforms up to 180 days, after any cancellation or withdrawal of their registration with the platform.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*

COVID Guidelines for Surveillance, Containment, Caution extended till March 31

As the ministry of home affairs extended the Covid-19 guidelines till March 31 on Friday in view of the surge in daily cases, home secretary Ajay Bhalla wrote to states and Union territories to exercise caution and ensure strict surveillance. The ministry has also advised states and Union territories to

step up the pace of vaccination of the target population against the viral disease in order to break the chain of transmission. In line with the guidelines, the ministry said, the states need to ensure that containment zones continue to be demarcated carefully and prescribed containment measures are strictly followed within these zones. Covid-19-appropriate behaviour must be promoted and strictly enforced and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) prescribed in respect of various permitted activities must be followed scrupulously, the ministry emphasised. The move comes in the backdrop of rising cases in several states, especially Maharashtra and Kerala, that have pushed the country's infection tally past 11.06 million. After witnessing a substantial decline, the share of active cases at 155,986 has again gone up marginally to 1.41%.

SOURCE: *Hindustan Times*

Indian economy contracted by 8% in 2020-21: Govt.

The growth in India's real GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at -8 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 4.0 per cent in 2019-20, said the government recently as part of its second advance estimates of the economic growth. The government had projected a GDP contraction of 7.7 per cent in its first advance estimate. Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2020-21 is likely to attain a level of Rs 134.09 trillion, as against the First Revised Estimate of GDP for the year 2019-20 of Rs 145.66 trillion, according to the data released on Feb 26, 2021. The per capita income in real terms during 2020-21 is estimated to attain a level of Rs 85,929 as compared to Rs 94,566 in the year 2019-20. GDP at Current Prices or Nominal GDP in the year 2020-21 is estimated to attain a level of Rs 195.86 trillion, as against Rs 203.51 trillion in 2019-20, showing a growth rate of -3.8 percent. Agriculture sector is estimated to see a growth of 3 per cent in 2020-21. However, it will be lower than 4.3 per cent growth recorded in 2019-20.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*

FATF retains Pakistan on its grey list, adds 4 new countries

Global terror watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Thursday announced that Pakistan will continue to remain on its grey list due to failure to comply with all the points of a plan of action set by it to combat terror financing. The FATF said that there had been serious deficiency on the part of Pakistan in checking terror financing and hence it will continue to remain on the "increased monitoring list", another name for the "Grey List". The Paris-based FATF had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later on due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The FATF said that Pakistan courts must give effective, decisive and proportionate punishment to those involved in terrorism, a statement which comes close on the heels of Pakistan Supreme Court's acquittal of terrorist Omar Saeed Sheikh, the main accused in the 2002 murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl.

SOURCE: *India Today*

Global military spending rose 3.9% to \$1.8 trillion in 2020: British think-tank IISS

Global military spending, driven in part by Chinese naval expansion, reached record levels last year

despite the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing economic contraction, a British think-tank said. The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said military spending reached US\$1.8 trillion (S\$2.3 trillion) last year – a 3.9 per cent increase in real terms over figures for 2019. The United States remained the world's largest defence spender last year, IISS said, accounting for 40 per cent or US\$738 billion. China, by comparison, accounted for 10.6 per cent or US\$193.3 billion. Beijing's military spending was the driving force behind growth in Asia's overall defence expenditure, and accounted for 25 per cent of the continent's spending last year.

Asia's upward trend in military expenditure continued last year, albeit at a slightly slower pace than in 2019.

SOURCE: *The Hindu*