

PAPER I, II, III - CURRENT AFFAIRS (INDIA) TEST (17.10.2021) PART I & II

1. PM - USA Visit

பிரதமரின் சமீபத்திய அமெரிக்க பயணம்

The significance of PM Modi's visit to the US

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's visit to Washington, and his first in-person meeting with United States (US) President Joe Biden, marks a historic milestone. His seven-year mission to construct a mutually reinforcing strategic partnership between India – the world's largest democracy, the "mother of all democracies" and an emerging power – and the US – the world's oldest democracy, and reigning economic and military superpower – has been successful. The PM has demonstrated his flair for winning the confidence of successive US presidents, from Barack Obama and Donald Trump to Biden now, on a bipartisan basis.

PM Modi's extraordinarily warm meeting with Biden – including a "Mo-Jo" hug – evoked affinity. It was preceded by a remarkable "connect" and meeting with vice-president Kamala Harris, in which PM Modi described the US and India as "natural partners". Harris, suo moto, expressed concern about Pakistan's support for terrorist groups on its soil, and asked Islamabad to take action against these groups so that they don't threaten the security of India and the US, thus making common cause.

Both sides have described the outcomes as a "landmark", "opening a new chapter", "outstanding", and "the demonstration of political will and intent" at all levels – bilateral, regional, and global. They set an upward trajectory for a future-oriented and transformative Indo-US strategic partnership.

As the joint statement proclaims, this partnership is to be a force for global good – of sustainable development, peace, security, and democracy. The outcomes encompass a strong mix of vision and practical action, covering

areas critical to realising India's destiny of becoming a developed, great power by 2030.

Significantly, India and the US celebrated their special bond positing themselves as role models, and encouraged other countries to embrace their shared values of democracy, universal human rights, tolerance, and pluralism. By extension, Quad became a "cordon sanitaire" of democracies, implicitly confronting the forces of terrorism, the climate crisis, cyberattacks, violations of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and international law.

Five drivers of the Indo-US strategic partnership – tradition, technology, trade, trusteeship, and talent – with the Indian-American community as an umbilical cord, were identified. The visit was as important in recouping ground as in making significant gains. Earlier Trump-Modi bonhomie, along with the Biden-Harris campaign pronouncements on Kashmir and Article 370, false human rights narratives by the Left-liberal and pro-Pakistan elements in both countries had caused concern.

The visit also came on the heels of great peril for India, as it waged a war against the Covid-19 pandemic, and fended off Pakistan-backed terrorist attacks in Kashmir, and Chinese aggression in Ladakh. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan preceded the visit, posing new threats to India's security, and raising questions about the US's commitment to the region, to counterterrorism, and to democracy.

PM Modi's visit, therefore, has special salience in putting Indo-US relations on a sound new footing. It is now better equipped to respond to fast developing security threats, along with paving the way for a post-Covid-19 recovery in its efforts to build a \$5-trillion economy.

The joint statement signalled an enduring Indo-US symbiosis to government, academia, the corporate world, and the people of both countries, as well as to neighbours and the larger international community.

The US reaffirmed the "strength of US-India defence relationship", its "unwavering commitment to India as a major defence partner", its military and technological cooperation, co-production and co-development.

On counterterrorism, ticking all the boxes, the US committed "to standing together with India in a shared fight against global and cross-border terrorism" to "concerted action against all terrorist groups", including the Mumbai terrorist attackers and states abetting terrorism. Intelligence-sharing, law enforcement, and cybersecurity cooperation were also pledged.

On Afghanistan, both countries demanded that the region should never be used to threaten or attack any country again, shelter and train terrorists, and plan or finance terrorist attacks. The Taliban was asked to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSC)'s 2593 injunctions.

Biden lauded India's strong leadership during the UNSC presidency and reiterated its support for India's permanent membership in a reformed UNSC, and its entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Modi and Biden pledged the development of an "ambitious shared vision for the future of the trade relationship", renewed negotiations on the Investment Agreement along with building resilient and secure Indo-US supply chains.

The India-US High Technology Cooperation Group was revived to work on "new domains of critical and emerging technologies – space, cyber, health security, semiconductors AI [Artificial Intelligence], 5G, 6G and future generations of telecom tech and Blockchain defining innovation, economic and security landscape of the next century". The Space -related agreement is to be finalised.

There was reciprocal support for Biden's leadership on climate action and PM Modi's renewable energy goal-setting. Mobilising finance for universal energy access in India and deploying critical technologies under the "India-US Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership" were highlighted.

2. POSHAN Abhiyan POSHAN திட்டம்

POSHAN ABHIYAAN

Introduction

Recently, the **Ministry for Women and Child Development** inaugurated **Poshan 2.0** and urged all **Aspirational Districts** to establish a **Poshan Vatika (nutrition garden)** during the **Nutrition Month (Poshan Mah)** from 1st September.

- A month-long celebration of the **POSHAN Abhiyan** mission places special attention on **Severe Acute Malnourished (SAM)** children.

Key Points

About:

- It is an umbrella scheme covering the **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** (Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme For Adolescent Girls, National Creche Scheme).
- It was announced in **Union Budget 2021-22** by merging **supplementary nutrition programmes and the POSHAN Abhiyaan**.
- It was launched to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcome, with renewed focus on **developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition** in the country.

Poshan Maah:

- Month of September is celebrated as POSHAN Maah since 2018 to **improve nutritional outcomes for children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers**.
- It includes a month-long activities focussed on antenatal care, optimal breastfeeding, **Anaemia**, growth monitoring, girls education, diet, **right age of marriage**, hygiene and sanitation and eating healthy (Food Fortification).
- The activities focus on **Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC)** and are based on Jan Andolan Guidelines.
 - SBCC is the strategic use of communication approaches to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs and behaviours.

Poshan Vatika:

- It's main objective is to **ensure supply of nutrition through organically home grown vegetables** and fruits simultaneously ensuring that the soil must also remain healthy.
- Plantation drives for Poshan Vatikas would be taken up by all the stakeholders in the **space available at anganwadis, school premises and gram panchayats**.

POSHAN Abhiyaan:

- Also called National Nutrition Mission, was launched by the government on the occasion of the **International Women's Day** on **8th March, 2018**.
- The Abhiyaan targets to reduce **Stunting, undernutrition, Anemia** (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by **2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively**.
- It also targets to **bring down stunting among children in the age group 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by 2022**.

Scenario of Malnutrition in India:

- According to a 2010 **World Bank** report, India suffered an economic loss of Rs 24,000 crore due to lack of toilets. And that the health impact on the economy was 38 million dollars.
- According to an Assocham study of the year 2018, the **GDP (Gross Domestic Product)** suffered a decline of 4% due to malnutrition.
 - The report also found that **children suffering from malnutrition** after growing up **earn 20% less** than those who have had healthy childhoods.

The number of **SAM children** in the country was earlier **80 lakh**, which has now come down to 10 lakh.

3. India's achievement in Para-Olympics

மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகள் ஒலிம்பிக் போட்டியில் இந்தியர்களின் சாதனை

INDIA'S ACHIEVEMENT IN PARA-OLYMPICS

Key Highlights of Tokyo Paralympics

Name of the Game	Paralympics 2020
Govern By	International Paralympics Committee
Stadium Name	Olympic stadium Tokyo
Paralympics Schedule Date	24 August to 5 September 2021
Motto	United by Emotions

Nations	163
Official Website	www.paralympics.org

Tokyo Paralympics 2021 India

- There are a total of 54 Indian athletes who will play these nine international games at the Tokyo Paralympics 2021.
- A total of 4,537 players are participating in the Paralympics 2020.
- Tokyo Paralympics India's players are governed by the International Paralympic Committee.
- It is playing the 16th Summer Paralympics.

India's medal tally at Paralympics 2020:

India scripted history at Tokyo Paralympics 2020 with its best-ever medal tally of 19 medals, which includes five gold medals, eight silver medals, and six bronze medals. The 19 medals were clinched by Indian para-athletes across five sporting disciplines including shooting, javelin throw, badminton, athletics and archery.

List of Indian Paralympic Medal Winners

Event	Sportsperson	Medal
Women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 event	Avani Lekhara	Gold
F64 Javelin Throw	Sumit Antil	Gold
Badminton men's singles SL3	Pramod Bhagat	Gold
P4 mixed 50m air pistol SH1	Manish Narwal	Gold
Badminton men's singles SH6 -final	Krishna Nagar	Gold
Class 4 Table Tennis	Bhavina Patel	Silver
Badminton men's singles SL4 event	Suhas Yathiraj	Silver
T64 High Jump	Praveen Kumar	Silver

T42 High Jump	Mariyappan Thangavelu	Silver
F46 Javelin Throw	Devendra Jhajharia	Silver
F56 Discus Throw	Yogesh Kathuniya	Silver
T-47 High Jump	Nishad Kumar	Silver
P4 mixed 50m air pistol SH1	Singhraj Adana	Silver
F46 Javelin Throw	Sundar Singh Gurjar	Bronze
Men's 10m air pistol SH1	Singhraj Adhana	Bronze
T42 High Jump	Sharad Kumar	Bronze
R8 Women's 50m Rifle 3P SH1	Avani Lekhara	Bronze
Men's individual recurve archery	Harvinder Singh	Bronze
Badminton men's singles SL3	Manoj Sarkar	Bronze

4. National Automobile Scrappage Policy - 2021

தேசிய பழைய வாகன நீக்க கொள்கை - 2021

NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE SCRAPPAGE POLICY - 2021

Introduction:

Recently, the Prime Minister while addressing the Investor Summit in Gujarat via video conferencing launched the [Vehicle Scrapping Policy](#)/National Automobile Scrappage Policy.

- The Summit will **invite investment for setting up vehicle scrapping infrastructure** under the Vehicle Scrapping Policy.
- The Vehicle Scrapping Policy was **announced in March 2021** by the government.
- The policy is estimated to cover **51 lakh Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) that are above 20 years of age** and another **34 lakh LMVs above 15 years of age**.

HOW PROCESS WILL UNFOLD

A vehicle older than 20 years, if found unfit or registration certificate is not renewed, will be de-registered



Registered owners to hand over such vehicles to a Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility with certificate of the vehicles' registration, their PAN details, and other documents



Scrapper to verify records of the vehicles from database of the stolen vehicles and issue a Certificate of Deposit, mandatory for the owner to avail incentives



The certificate once used will be stamped "Cancelled" by the agency



Government will maintain a database of the vehicles scrapped every year

INCENTIVES FOR VEHICLE OWNERS



Scrap value:
4-6% of ex-showroom price of new vehicle to be given to the owner by the scrapping centre



Tax rebate:
States may be advised to offer a road tax rebate of up to 25% for personal vehicles and up to 15% for commercial vehicles against



Discount on new vehicle:
Vehicle manufacturers will be advised to give 5% discount on new vehicles against a scrapping certificate



Fee waiver:
Registration fees may also be waived for purchase of new vehicle against the scrapping certificate



Key Points

- **Aim:**
 - Reducing the population of old and defective vehicles, bringing down vehicular air pollutants, improving **road and vehicular safety**.
- **Provisions:**
 - **Fitness Test:**
 - Old vehicles will have to pass a fitness test before re-registration and as per the policy government commercial vehicles more than 15 years old and private vehicles which are over 20 years old will be scrapped.
 - Old vehicles will be tested at authorized **Automated Fitness Center** and will not be scrapped merely on the basis of age.

- Emission test, braking system, safety components will be tested and the vehicles which fail in the fitness test will be scrapped.
 - If the **old vehicle passes the test**, the owner can continue to use it, but the **charges for reregistration will be much steeper**.
 - The Union Road and Transport Ministry has also **issued rules for registration procedure for scrapping facilities**, their powers, and scrapping procedure to be followed.
- **Road Tax Rebate:**
 - The state governments may be advised to **offer a road-tax rebate of up to 25% for personal vehicles** and up to **15% for commercial vehicles to provide incentive to owners of old vehicles** to scrap old and unfit vehicles.
 - **Vehicle Discount:**
 - Vehicle manufacturers will also give a **discount of 5% to people who will produce the 'Scrapping Certificate'** and registration fees will be waived off on the purchase of a new vehicle.
 - **Disincentive:**
 - As a disincentive, **increased re-registration fees** would be applicable for **vehicles 15 years or older** from the initial date registration.

Significance:

Creation of Scrap yards:

- It will lead to **creation of more scrap yards** in the country and effective **recovery of waste from old vehicles**.
 - India had to **import 23,000 crore worth of scrap steel** during the last year as India's scrapping is not productive and **India is not able to recover energy and rare earth metals**.
- **Employment:**
 - In the new fitness centers, **35 thousand people will get employment** and an investment of Rs 10,000 crores will be pumped in.

- **Improved Revenue:**
 - This will **boost sales of heavy and medium commercial vehicles** that had been in the contraction zone as a result of economic slowdown triggered by the **bankruptcy of IL&FS** (Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services) and **Covid-19 pandemic**.
 - The government treasury is expected to get around Rs 30,000 to 40,000 crores of money through **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** from this policy.
- **Reduction in Prices:**
 - **Prices of auto components would fall** substantially with the recycling of metal and plastic parts.
 - As scrapped materials will get cheaper the production cost of the vehicle manufacturers will also reduce.
- **Reduce Pollution:**
 - It will play a **major role in modernising the vehicular population** as it will help in **phasing out the unfit and polluting vehicles** across the country and promote a **circular economy** and **waste to wealth campaign**.
 - As **older vehicles pollute the environment 10 to 12 times** more, and estimated that 17 lakh medium and heavy commercial vehicles are more than 15 years old.

5. National Mission on Edible Oils

எண்ணெய் வித்துக்களுக்கான தேசிய திட்டம்

NATIONAL MISSION ON EDIBLE OIL-OIL PALM

Introduction

Recently, the Prime Minister has announced a new national initiative on palm oil production to help increase farm incomes.

- The scheme, called National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), **for self-reliance in edible oil** involves investment of over Rs. 11,000 crore (over a **five year period**).

Key Points

- **Aims:**

- To **harness domestic edible oil prices** that are dictated by expensive palm oil imports.
- To **raise the domestic production of palm oil** by three times to 11 lakh MT by 2025-26.
 - This will involve **raising the area under oil palm cultivation** to 10 lakh hectares by 2025-26 and 16.7 lakh hectares by 2029-30.

- **Features:**

- The **special emphasis of the scheme will be in India's north-eastern states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands** due to the conducive weather conditions in the regions.
- Under the scheme, **oil palm farmers will be provided financial assistance** and will get remuneration under a price and viability formula.

- **Significance of the Scheme:**

- **Reduction in Import dependence:**
 - It is expected to incentivise production of palm oil to reduce dependence on imports and help farmers cash in on the huge market.
 - India is the **largest consumer of vegetable oil in the world**. Of this, palm oil imports are almost 55% of its total vegetable oil imports.
- **Rise in Yields:**
 - India **produces less than half of the roughly 2.4 crore tonnes of edible oil that it consumes annually**. It imports the rest, buying palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, soyoil from Brazil and Argentina, and sunflower oil, mainly from Russia and Ukraine.
 - In India, **94.1% of its palm oil is used in food products**, especially for cooking purposes. This makes palm oil extremely **critical to India's edible oils economy**.

Edible Oil Economy

- There are **two major features**, which have significantly contributed to the development of this sector. One was the **setting up of the Technology Mission on Oilseeds in 1986** which was converted into a **National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP) in 2014**.
 - Further it was merged with [NFSM \(National Food Security Mission\)](#).
- This gave a thrust to Government's efforts for augmenting the production of oilseeds. This is evident by the very impressive **increase in the production of oilseeds from about 11.3 million tons in 1986-87 to 33.22 million tons in 2019-20**.
- The **other dominant feature** which has had significant impact on the present status of edible oilseeds/oil industry has been the **program of liberalization under which the Government's economic policy allows greater freedom to the open market and encourages healthy competition and self regulation** rather than protection and control.
- The **Yellow Revolution** is one of the colour revolutions that was launched to increase the production of Edible oilseeds in the country to meet domestic demand.
- The government has also launched the **Kharif Strategy 2021 for oilseeds**.
 - It will bring an additional 6.37 lakh hectare area under oilseeds and is likely to produce 120.26 lakh quintals of oilseeds and edible oil amounting to 24.36 lakh quintals.
- **Oils Commonly Used in India:** Groundnut, mustard, rapeseed, sesame, safflower, linseed, niger seed, castor are the major traditionally cultivated oilseeds.
 - Soybean and sunflower have also assumed importance in recent years.
 - Coconut is most important amongst the plantation crops.

6. Net-Zero Emissions by 2050

NET-ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2050

Introduction

Recently, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Shell have released a report titled "India: Transforming to a Net-Zero Emissions Energy System".

- It illustrates a pathway to steer the **domestic energy system towards net-zero emissions by 2050**, while achieving India's sustainable **economic development ambitions**.

Key Points

- **Possible yet Challenging:** India needs a suitable policy and innovation-driven context to deploy clean energy technologies on a massive scale.
- **Increase Renewables:** The **share of renewables** in the power mix needs to **increase to 90% for India to meet its net-zero goal**. This is around 11% in 2019-2020.
- **Coal-fired Power Plants:** India must phase out its coal-fired power plants and remove it altogether by 2050.
- **Technology Access:** The availability, or **absence, of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)** would **define the shape of India's energy systems**. If CCS technology were commercially unviable:
 - Biofuels would have to account for 98% of India's oil, compared to a negligible share currently.
 - Over two-thirds of India's industrial and transport energy use would have to be electrified, compared to less than 20% share of electricity in industrial energy use and negligible share in transport energy use as of now.
- **Suggestion by TERI:**
 - **Focus on Energy Efficiency:**
 - Will need **energy efficient buildings, lighting, appliances and industrial practices** to meet the net-zero goal.
 - **Use of Biofuels:**
 - Can help reduce emissions from light commercial vehicles, tractors in agriculture.

- In aviation, the only practical solution for reducing emissions is greater use of biofuels, until hydrogen technology gains scale.
- **Carbon Sequestration:**
 - **India will have to rely on natural and man-made carbon sinks to soak up those emissions.** Trees can capture 0.9 billion tons, the country will need carbon capture technologies to sequester the rest.
- **Carbon Pricing:**
 - India, which already taxes coal and petroleum fuels, should consider putting a tax on emissions to drive change.
- **Deploying lower-carbon Energy:**
 - There are four main types of low-carbon energy: wind, solar, hydro or nuclear power. The first three are renewable, which means these are good for the environment – as natural resources are used (such as wind or sun) to produce electricity.
 - Deploying lower carbon energy would help address both domestic and international climate challenges while simultaneously improving the economic well-being of India’s citizens.

AREAS OF ACTION IN THE NEXT 30 YEARS

Accelerate clean technologies

1. Grow the power sector by a factor of more than four in 30 years, dominated by renewables.
2. Target 13% hydrogen in final energy, including as a fuel for industry and transport.
3. Transform bioenergy, with liquid biofuels surpassing petroleum products by 2040 to fuel industry and transport, including hard-to-abate sectors such as aviation.

Support energy-efficient and lower-carbon choices

4. Invest in processes, technologies and end uses to improve energy intensity per unit of GDP by almost 60% by 2050, a rate of improvement nearly twice historical levels.
5. Adopt economic mechanisms, such as carbon pricing, to drive the reallocation of capital and resources and support the commercialisation of new fuels and technologies.

Remove unavoidable emissions

6. Capture and store 400 megatonnes of CO₂ using CCS by 2050; construction needs to begin in the near-term.
7. Remove 0.9 gigatonnes of CO₂e/year by 2050; this requires at least 30-40 million hectares of additional forest cover (an area equivalent to Rajasthan) and plant more trees outside of forests.

Net-Zero Emissions

- **About:**

- 'Net zero emissions' refers to achieving an overall balance between **greenhouse gas emissions** produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere.
- First, human-caused emissions (like those from fossil-fueled vehicles and factories) should be reduced as close to zero as possible. Second, any remaining GHGs should be balanced with an equivalent amount of carbon removal, for example by restoring forests.

- **Time-Frame:**

- The time frame for reaching net-zero emissions differs significantly if one is referring to CO₂ alone, or referring to all major GHGs (including methane, nitrous oxide, and HFCs).
 - For non-CO₂ emissions, the net-zero date is later because some of these emissions – such as methane from agricultural sources – are somewhat more difficult to phase out.
 - In scenarios that limit warming to **1.5 degrees C**, carbon dioxide (CO₂) reaches **net-zero on average by 2050**. Total GHG emissions reach net-zero between 2063 and 2068.

- **Global Scenario:**

- As of June 2020, twenty countries and regions have adopted net-zero targets. This list only includes countries that adopted a net-zero target in law or another policy document.
- The **Kingdom of Bhutan is already carbon-negative**, i.e. absorbs more CO₂ than it emits.

- **Indian Scenario:**

- **Emissions:** India's per capita CO₂ emissions – at 1.8 tonnes per person in 2015 – are around a **ninth of those in the USA** and around a **third of the global average of 4.8 tonnes per person**.
 - However, overall, India is now the **planet's third-largest emitter of CO₂**, behind China and the USA.

- **Debate around Commitment:** There is global pressure on India to commit net-zero emissions by 2050.
 - On one hand, few argue that India should pledge to reduce its “net” emissions (emissions minus uptake of emissions) to zero by 2050, backed by a climate law. This will make India “hypercompetitive”, attract investment and create jobs.
 - **For example**, more ambitious policies to promote electric vehicles along with cleaner electricity and hydrogen electrolysis can create jobs in the auto manufacturing industry and in the electricity and construction sectors
 - While, on the other hand, there is a long-standing principle of “**common but differentiated responsibility**” that requires richer countries to lead and argue against any pledge that risks prematurely limiting Indian energy use for development.
- **Sectors that are the largest emitters:**
 - Energy > Industry > Forestry > Transport > Agriculture > Building

7. National Electricity Policy 2021

தேசிய மின்சார கொள்கை 2021

National Electricity Policy 2021

Introduction:0

The draft National Electricity Policy (NEP), 2021 which, under the Electricity Act, 2003 is a guiding policy for planning power generation, supply and investment, has emphasised on increasing private participation, especially in power distribution.

Key features of National Electricity Policy 2021 are the following :

The draft National Electricity Policy (NEP), 2021 which, under the Electricity Act, 2003 is a guiding policy for planning power generation, supply and investment, has emphasised on increasing private participation, especially in power distribution. Key features of National Electricity Policy 2021 are the following :

- ✓ The NEP has introduced power quality, micro grids, pump hydro storage, real time power markets.

- ✓ Draft NEP says, “This sector is marred with many inefficiencies like high AT&C losses, inadequate system planning, poor upkeep and maintenance of equipment etc. which are affecting the financial health of the discoms, and leading poor consumer satisfaction.”
- ✓ NEP has noted that despite the Central government connecting 100 per cent households in the country with the national power supply grid, quality of power and duration remains an issue.
- ✓ There is a need to strengthen the distribution system to ensure 24x7 power supply.
- ✓ Evolve a unified scheme for development of adequate distribution infrastructure wherein central assistance is linked to reform milestones of the states.
- ✓ The Union Budget 2021 announced a revamped reform scheme for discoms, entailing Rs. 3.05 trillion expenditure. The scheme would put the onus on the states to formulate their own action plans and funds would be disbursed accordingly.
- ✓ Public private partnership in electricity distribution is one of the effective ways to improve efficiency, enhance consumer satisfaction and reduce financial losses of the discoms.
- ✓ Franchisee model being one of the PPP models has emerged as a preferred route for introduction of privatisation in the distribution sector. Another variant of the PPP model could be in the form of a sub-licensee power distributor for a particular area.
- ✓ While India is committed to add more capacity through non-fossil sources of generation, coal based generation capacity may still be required to be added in the country, as it continues to be the cheapest source of generation, though compliance to stricter environment norms remains a challenge, particularly for older stations.
- ✓ The draft has been floated in a public forum by the ministry of power on April 28, 2021 for getting comments from stakeholders.

- ✓ The NEP has introduced several new concepts starting from the need of micro grids in remote areas to having a real time power market and need for investment in pump hydro generation.
- ✓ With the rising capacity of renewable energy generation and lack of balancing sources of energy such as gas and large hydro, the NEP has batted for realising the potential of pump hydro storage. The NEP noted that the country has a potential of 96,524 MW of pump hydro storage and of that barely 4,785 MW has been out up.
- ✓ For utilising power generation at the source end and reducing power supply wastage, the NEP has suggested that power distribution companies (discoms) should explore the possibility of micro grids, especially in areas prone to natural disasters. These micro grids should preferably be powered with renewable sources of energy.

8. Aspirational District Programme

9. Digital Communication Policy - 2018

எண்ம தகவல் தொடர்பு கொள்கை - 2018

The National Digital Communications Policy, 2018

Introduction

The Union Cabinet has approved the new telecom policy now named National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP) 2018 and also re-designation of the Telecom Commission as the "Digital Communications Commission".

The new National Digital Communications Policy -2018 will replace the existing National Telecom Policy-2012, to cater to the modern technological advancements such as 5G, IoT, M2M etc. in the Telecom Sector.

Need for National Digital Communications Policy

Having significant capabilities in both telecommunications and software, India stands poised to benefit from harnessing new digital technologies and platforms to unlock productivity, as well as to reach unserved and underserved markets; thus catalysing economic growth and development, generating new-age jobs and livelihoods, and ensuring access to next generation services for its citizens.

India's **demographic profiles vary widely** across various indices such as literacy, economic conditions and urbanisation. It is important to promote policies that increase opportunities for their social and economic development. Accordingly, this policy aims for **universal coverage rather than revenue maximization**.

The **rapid and unprecedented proliferation** of the mobile phone, the internet, social media platforms, and the rapid expansion of digital payments, data consumption and generation across India indicate that the data economy and digital technologies and services are **widespread instruments of access and empowerment** for more than a billion Indian.

It has been broadly estimated that a **10% increase in broadband penetration** in a country could potentially lead to an **over 1% increase in GDP**. Therefore, a consistent policy and principles framework is required to create a vibrant competitive telecom market to strengthen India's long term competitiveness.

In order to expand mobile and broadband connectivity across the country, it is necessary to explore and utilise the opportunities presented by **next generation-networks like 5G and satellite communications**.

As the world prepares for the **fourth industrial revolution**, India needs to be readied to embrace this opportunity through the convergence of a cluster of revolutionary technologies including 5G, the cloud, IOT and data analytics.

India needs to promote and protect fair competition across the communications and digital economy sector.

Given the sector's capital-intensive nature, the Policy aims to attract long-term, high quality and sustainable investments by ensuring that the regulatory structures and processes remain relevant, transparent, accountable and forward-looking.

Additionally, the Policy aims to remove regulatory barriers and reduce the regulatory burden that hampers investments, innovation and consumer interest. The Policy also identifies steps to strengthen the sector's institutional mechanism and legislative framework.

Features of National Digital Communications Policy

It envisages **three Missions**:

Connect India: Creating Robust Digital Communications Infrastructure.
National Broadband Mission (Rashtriya Broadband Abhiyan)- Provide **Universal** broadband connectivity at 50Mbps to every citizen by 2022.

BharatNet- Provide 1 Gbps connectivity to all **Gram Panchayats** of India by 2020 and 10 Gbps by 2022.

GramNet – Connecting all **key rural development institutions** with 10 Mbps upgradeable to 100 Mbps.

NagarNet – Establishing 1 Million public **Wi-Fi Hotspots** in urban areas.

JanWiFi – Establishing 2 Million **Wi-Fi Hotspots** in rural areas.
Enable **100 Mbps broadband** on demand to **all key development institutions** including all educational institutions by 2022.

Fibre First Initiative to take fibre to the home, to enterprises and to key development institutions in Tier I, II and III towns and to rural clusters.
Establishment of a **National Digital Grid** by **National Fibre Authority**.
Strengthening **Satellite Communication** Technologies in India by reviewing SATCOM policy, making available new spectrum bands, streamlining administrative processes for assignment and allocations, clearances and permissions related to satellite communication systems, etc.

Ensuring Customer Satisfaction, Quality of Service and effective Grievance Redressal by establishing **Telecom Ombudsman**, framing a comprehensive policy to encourage the adoption of **environmental and safety standards** and incentivising the use of **renewable energy technologies** in the communications sector.

Propel India: Enabling Next Generation Technologies and Services through Investments, Innovation and IPR generation.

Attract **investments of USD 100 Billion** in the Digital Communications Sector, **expand IoT ecosystem** to 5 Billion connected devices, accelerate transition to Industry 4.0 by 2022.

Creation of innovation led Start-ups in Digital Communications sector.

Creation of **Globally recognized IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights)** in India.

Development of Standard Essential Patents (SEPs) in the field of digital communication technologies.

Train/ Re-skill 1 Million manpower for building New Age Skills.

Secure India: Ensuring Sovereignty, Safety and Security of Digital Communications.

Establish a comprehensive **data protection regime** for digital communications that safeguards the privacy, autonomy and choice of individuals and facilitates India's effective participation in the global digital economy.

Ensure that **net neutrality principles** are upheld and aligned with service requirements, bandwidth availability and network capabilities including next generation access technologies.

Develop and deploy **robust digital communication network** security frameworks.

Build capacity for **security testing** and establish appropriate security standards.

Address security issues relating to encryption and security clearances.

Enforce accountability through appropriate institutional mechanisms to assure citizens of safe and secure digital communications infrastructure and services.

10. QUAD, SCO

QUAD: FIRST SUMMIT

Recently, the leaders of the **four nations of Quad grouping** met digitally for the first-ever virtual summit-level meeting. The outcomes announced by leaders of Quad countries include a vaccine initiative and joint working groups to cooperate on critical technology as well as climate change.

Apart from it, the joint statement of the meeting called for "The Spirit of the Quad" and commitment to an open Indo-Pacific "free from coercion".

In widening the forum's focus away from military security and towards the provision of public goods in the vast Indo-Pacific littoral, the first summit of the Quad has improved its own long-term political prospects.

Therefore, countering any perception that the Quad is merely a "talk-shop", the summit contained both broad substance and deep symbolism.

Significance of Quad Summit

America is Back Policy:

For the US, the early push for the Quad engagement is part of Joe Biden's promise that "America is back" in terms of global leadership, reaffirming regional alliances, and taking on the growing challenge from China.

Earlier, Biden at the Munich Security Conference tried to win back European allies such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, by proposing a transatlantic alliance to counter China.

Maritime Concerns of Japan & Australia:

Due to maritime tensions with China, trade, and telecommunication issues, Australia and Japan are keen on taking the Quad partnership to deeper levels of cooperation.

Quad partners such as Japan and Australia were unhappy over India's decision to stay out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

If Quad emerges as an economic powerhouse, it will be beneficial to the entire region.

Broadening India's Geopolitical Horizons:

For India, the new terms of the Quad will mean more strategic support after a tense year at the LAC with China.

It will also provide a boost for India's pharmaceutical prowess, opportunities for technology partnerships, and more avenues for regional cooperation on development projects and financing infrastructure.

India's insistence on an inclusive approach was in keeping with the sentiments of many smaller countries in the region, which may not take an explicit anti-China position.

This could also pave the way for India to become the manufacturing destination for Quad countries, thus reducing dependence on China.

New Narrative for the Quad:

Quad member countries took the decision to pool their resources (American technology, Japanese finance, Indian production capacity, and Australia's logistics capability) to produce a billion doses of Covid-19 vaccine for distribution in the Indo-Pacific.

Further, the Quad countries agreed to ensure emissions reduction based on the Paris accord as well as cooperate on technology supply chains, 5G networks, and biotechnology.

This would help the four countries develop a new narrative for the Quad.

Associated Issues With the Quad

RECP Operationalization:

For Japan and Australia, China remains the biggest trading partner, a relationship that will only grow once the 15-nation RCEP gets operationalized.

In this context, it would be difficult for Quad members countries like Japan and Australia to strategically align with the US and India.

India's Reservations:

India, given its own ties with China, sensitivities over ongoing LAC disengagement talks, and its other multilateral commitments at the BRICS and SCO groupings, also displayed caution in the Quad engagement.

Anti-China Rhetoric:

Since the first steps towards the Quad's construction in 2007, China has sought to define the regional discourse by describing the forum as the "Asian NATO" and the harbinger of a "new Cold War".

The conflation of the Quad with the annual Malabar naval exercises added to the image of the Quad as a military formation and generated much unease across the Indo-Pacific.

PM Modi at SCO Summit: Security a challenge and root cause is radicalisation, Afghanistan an example

- ✓ The 21st Summit of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** Council of Heads of State was held recently via video Conferencing in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.
- ✓ At the meet the focus was primarily on the ground **situation in Afghanistan** and its global repercussions.

Iran has been accepted as the **ninth full member** of the organisation.

Key Points

India's Stand:

- ✓ It took a **strong stance against radicalisation and extremism**, urging the panel to come up with a **joint approach** and frame a **code of conduct** to stop terror financing and cross-border terrorism.
- ✓ It also stressed upon the **importance of moderate Islam in Central Asia**.
- ✓ Flagged **concerns over the serious humanitarian crisis** unfolding in Afghanistan, noting that the economic woes of the Afghan people are increasing due to the **blockage in financial and trade flows**.
- ✓ Pointed out that the developments in the country could lead to an **uncontrolled flow of drugs, illegal weapons and human trafficking**.
- ✓ It is committed to increasing its connectivity with **Central Asia**. Asserting that there should be respect for the territorial integrity of all countries.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation:

About:

- ✓ It is a **permanent intergovernmental international organisation**. It was **created in 2001**.
- ✓ The **SCO Charter** was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- ✓ It's a **Eurasian political, economic and military organisation** aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- ✓ It is seen as a counterweight to **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, It is a **nine-member economic and security bloc** and has emerged as one of the **largest transregional international organisations**.

Official Languages:

Russian and Chinese.

Permanent Bodies:



SCO Secretariat in Beijing

- ✓ Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.

Chairmanship:

It is by rotation for a year by Member States.

Genesis:

- ✓ Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five.**
- ✓ Shanghai Five (1996) emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.
- ✓ Following the accession of Uzbekistan to the organisation in 2001, **the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.**
- ✓ **India and Pakistan became members in 2017. Iran is the ninth and the newest member of SCO.**
 - **India was made an observer at the SCO in 2005** and has generally participated in the ministerial-level meetings of the grouping which focus mainly on security and economic cooperation in the Eurasian region.

11. Himachal landslide

இமாச்சலபிரதேசம் நிலச்சரிவு

12. 30 years of economic reforms

பொருளாதார சீர்திருத்தத்தின் 30 ஆண்டுகள்

30 YEARS OF ECONOMIC REFORMS

Recently, on the 30th anniversary of the **economic liberalisation reforms**, former Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, raised concerns over the macro-economic stability of the country.

- According to him, the current **economic crisis triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic** is more challenging than during the 1991 economic crisis and the nation would need to recalibrate its priorities to ensure a dignified life for all Indians.

Key Points

1991 Crisis & Reforms:

- **1991 Crisis:** In 1990-91, India faced a severe **Balance of Payments (BOP) crisis**, where its foreign exchange reserves were just adequate to finance 15 days of imports. There were many factors that led to the BOP crisis:
 - **Fiscal Deficit:** The fiscal deficit during 1990-91 was around 8.4% of GDP.
 - **Gulf War I:** In 1990-91, the situation was aggravated by the rise in the price of oil due to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
 - **Rise in Prices:** The inflation rate increased from 6.7% to 16.7% due to a rapid increase in money supply and the country's economic position became worse.
- **Nature and Scope of 1991 Reforms:** In order to get out of the macro-economic crisis in 1991, India launched a New Economic Policy, which was based on LPG or **Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation model**.
 - Then Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh, was the prime architect of the historic 1991 liberalisation.
 - The broad range of reforms under the LPG model included:
 - **Liberalising Industrial Policy:** Abolition of industrial license permit raj, Reduction in import tariffs, etc.
 - **Beginning of Privatisation:** Deregulation of markets, Banking reforms, etc.
 - **Globalisation:** Exchange rate correction, liberalising foreign direct investment and trade policies, Removal of mandatory convertibility cause, etc.

- These reforms are credited and applauded for the high economic growth seen from 1991 to 2011 and substantial reduction of poverty from 2005 to 2015.

10 REFORMS THAT CHANGED INDIA

GST did change the tax regime. But there are other key steps that form the bedrock of India's market-led economy & helped achieve higher growth...

<p>1 NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Industrial licensing was abolished and 18 PSU industries were gradually liberalised > Monopolies And Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969, was abolished 	<p>3 NEW INSTITUTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Securities and Exchange Board of India established > Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority and Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority set up 	<p>population to receive subsidised food grain under the Targeted Public Distribution System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > MGNREGS guaranteed 100 days of wage-employment per year in rural areas
<p>2 FDI & TRADE POLICY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Import licensing was abolished for capital goods & intermediates, which became freely importable in 1993, simultaneously with the switch to a flexible exchange rate regime > India joined the World Trade Organization and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights agreement > Quantitative restrictions on imports of manufactured consumer goods and agricultural products removed in 2001. The policy now allows 100% foreign ownership in many industries and majority ownership in all except banking, insurance, telecommunications and airlines > Current account convertibility introduced in 1994 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Union Budget created 'development finance institutions' and 'bad banks' to fund infrastructure and resolve stressed assets > GST Council established 	<p>8 AADHAAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Aadhaar system provided a single-source offline/online identity verification, boosting the inclusion of programmes like PMJDY, Ayushman Bharat and Ujjwala
	<p>4 GOVERNMENT BORROWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Domestic bond markets created and Clearing Corporation of India is set up 	<p>9 INSOLVENCY & BANKRUPTCY CODE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A comprehensive law, IBC consolidated both consequential aspects of an economic collapse of a debtor – rehabilitation as well as liquidation
	<p>5 INTEREST RATE LIBERALISATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Interest rate controls were dismantled and savings interest rates were deregulated <p>6 BASEL ACCORDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Basel Accords, a series of 3 international banking regulation agreements, adopted <p>7 NFSA & MGNREGS</p> <p>NFSA legally entitled up to 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban</p>	<p>10 MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > MPC was set up with basic objective to maintain price stability and accelerate the economy's growth rate. It has brought monetary policy decision-making in line with global best practices

2021 Crisis:

- The **World Economic Outlook Report 2021**, states that the Indian economy is expected to grow by 12.5% in 2021 and 6.9% in 2022.

However, the pandemic has massive unemployment in the informal sector and poverty is increasing after decades of decline.

- The **social sectors of health and education have lagged behind** and not kept pace with our economic progress.

Too many lives and livelihoods have been lost that should not have been, during the pandemic.

- Inspector Raj is set to make a comeback through the **policy for e-commerce** entities.
- India is back to the old habits of borrowing excessively or **extracting money (in form of dividends) from the RBI** to finance the fiscal deficit.
- The **migrant labour crisis** has laid bare the gaps in the growth model.
- India foreign trade policy is again suspecting trade liberalisation, as India has already decided to opt-out of the 16-nation **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** trade deal.

13. DICGC Bill DICGC மசோதா

DICGC Bill, 2021

Recently, the Union Cabinet has cleared the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) Bill, 2021**.

The failure of banks such as **Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank, Yes Bank** and **Lakshmi Vilas Bank** reignited the debate on the low level of insurance against the deposits held by customers in Indian banks.

Key Points

Coverage:

- The bill will cover **98.3% of depositors and 50.9% of deposit value** in the banking system, way above the global level of 80% and 20-30%, respectively.
- It will cover **all types of banks**, which also include **regional rural banks** and **co-operative banks**.
- It will cover **banks already under moratorium** and those that could come under moratorium.

- **Moratorium** is a legally authorized period of delay in the performance of a legal obligation or the payment of a debt.

Insurance Cover:

- It will provide funds up to Rs 5 lakh to an account holder within 90 days in the event of a bank coming under the moratorium imposed by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
 - Earlier, account holders had to wait for years till the liquidation or restructuring of a distressed lender to get their deposits that are insured against default.
 - The Rs 5-lakh deposit insurance cover was **raised from Rs 1 lakh in 2020**.

The Damodaran Committee on 'Customer Services in Banks' (2011) had recommended a five-time increase in the cap to Rs. 5 lakh due to rising income levels and increasing size of individual bank deposits.

- Within the first 45 days of the bank being put under moratorium, the DICGC would collect all information relating to deposit accounts. In the next 45 days, it will review the information and repay depositors within a maximum of 90 days.

Insurance Premium:

- It permits raising the deposit insurance premium by 20% immediately, and maximum by 50%.

The premium is paid by banks to the DICGC. The Insured banks pay advance insurance premiums to the corporation semi-annually within two months from the beginning of each financial half year, based on their deposits as at the end of previous half year.

- It has been raised from 10 paise for every Rs 100 deposit, to 12 paise and a limit of 15 paise has been imposed.
- This is only an enabling provision and the determination of an increase in the premium payable would involve consultations with the RBI and require government approval.

14. PM's 75th Independence Day Speech

பிரதமரின் 75வது ஆண்டு சுதந்திர தின உரை

PM'S 75TH INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH

Introduction

Commemorating the **75th Independence Day**, Prime Minister announced a slew of measures/initiatives and called for **making the next 25 years a glorious one for India**.

- A day before Independence Day, the Prime minister also declared 14th August would now be observed as **Partition Horrors Remembrance Day**.

Key Points

- **Gati Shakti Master Plan:**
 - It is a Rs.100 lakh-crore project for **developing 'holistic infrastructure'**.
 - It will help **raise the global profile of local manufacturers** and help them compete with their counterparts worldwide. It also **raises possibilities of new future [economic zones](#)**.
 - It will be a **source of employment** opportunities for the youth in future.
- **National Hydrogen Mission:**
 - The **National Hydrogen Mission** and the **green hydrogen** sector will give India a quantum jump in meeting its climate targets.
 - **Green hydrogen** is produced by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen using an electrolyzer powered by electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.
 - It will also **help India to become energy independent**. Today India spends over Rs 12 lakh crore on importing energy.
- **Rice Fortification Plan:**
 - The rice distributed under various government schemes will be **fortified** by 2024. It includes the **Public Distribution System (PDS)**, **[Mid-Day Meals](#)** in schools and **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)**.

- It is a significant initiative as the country has high levels of malnutrition among women and children.
 - According to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, **every second woman in the country is anaemic and every third child is stunted.**
 - India ranks 94 out of 107 countries and is in the 'serious hunger' category on the **Global Hunger Index (GHI).**
- Six states, including Maharashtra and Gujarat, **have started distributing fortified rice as part of the pilot scheme.**
 - Food fortification or enrichment is the process of **adding micronutrients to food.**
- **Vande Bharat Trains:**
 - **75 Vande Bharat' trains** will connect different parts of the country in 75 weeks to mark the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'.
 - Vande Bharat, the **indigenous semi-high speed train** set, is being given a boost, with the Railways gearing to roll out at least 10 of them, linking around 40 cities, by August 2022 to commemorate 75 years of Independence.
- **Sainik Schools for Girls:**
 - All Sainik Schools in the country will now be open for girls also. At present, **33 Sainik schools are operating in the country.**
 - Sainik schools are **run by the Sainik Schools Society which is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence.**
 - The aim of establishing Sainik schools was **to prepare the students from an early age for their entry into the Indian armed forces.**
- **E-commerce platform for Self-Help Groups:**
 - This digital platform will **connect the products of women Self-Help Groups with people in far flung areas of the country as well as abroad** and it will have far-reaching consequences.
 - The government will create an e-commerce platform to ensure a huge market in the country and abroad for their products.
 - More than eight crore women in the villages are associated with Self-Help Groups and they design top-end products.
- **Partition Horrors Remembrance Day:**

- **14th August** would now be observed as **Partition Horrors Remembrance Day**.
- This day will remind Indians of the **need to remove the poison of social divisions, disharmony** and further **strengthen the spirit of oneness, social harmony and human empowerment**.

15. Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

ஆயுஷ்மான் பாரத் டிஜிட்டல் திட்டம்

AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION

Introduction

Recently, the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** was launched by the Prime Minister through a video conference.

- The nationwide rollout of the project coincides with the **National Health Authority (NHA)** celebrating the third anniversary of **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)**.
- **Ayushman Bharat** is a flagship scheme of India which was launched as recommended by the **National Health Policy 2017**, to achieve the vision of **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - It aims to provide **digital health IDs** for all Indian citizens to help hospitals, insurance firms, and citizens access health records electronically when required.
 - The **pilot project of the Mission** had been announced by the Prime Minister from the ramparts of the **Red Fort on 15th August 2020**.
 - The project is being **implemented in the pilot phase in six States & Union Territories**.
- **Features of the Mission:**
 - **Health ID:**
 - It will be issued **for every citizen** that will also work as their health account. This **health account** will contain details of every

test, every disease, the doctors visited, the medicines taken and the diagnosis.

- Health ID is **free of cost, voluntary**. It will help in doing analysis of health data and lead to better planning, budgeting and implementation for health programs.
- **Healthcare Facilities & Professionals' Registry:**
 - The other major component of the programme is creating a **Healthcare Professionals' Registry (HPR)** and **Healthcare Facilities Registry (HFR)**, allowing easy electronic access to medical professionals and health infrastructure.
 - The HPR will be a comprehensive repository of all healthcare professionals involved in delivering healthcare services across both modern and traditional systems of medicine.
 - The HFR database will have records of all the country's health facilities.
- **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission Sandbox:**
 - The Sandbox, created as a part of the mission, **will act as a framework for technology and product testing** that will help organisations, including private players intending to be a part of the **national digital health ecosystem** become a **Health Information Provider or Health Information User** or efficiently link with building blocks of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.
- **Implementing Agency:**
 - **National Health Authority (NHA)** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Expected Benefits:**
 - Ensure [ease of doing business](#) for doctors and hospitals and healthcare service providers.
 - **Enable access and exchange of longitudinal health records** of citizens with their consent.
 - **Create integration within the digital health ecosystem**, similar to the role played by the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** in revolutionising payments.

16. **PMFME Scheme**
PMFME திட்டம்
17. **United in Science 2021 report**
அறிவியலால் ஒன்றிணைவோம் அறிக்கை 2021
18. **e-Shram**
19. **PLI Scheme**
PLI திட்டம்
20. **NHEM**
21. **Financial Inclusion**
நிதி உள்ளடக்கம்
22. **SMILE Scheme**
SMILE திட்டம்
23. **G-SAP**
24. **15th Finance Commission Report**
15வது நிதிக்குழு அறிக்கை

15th Finance Commission Recommendations: Resource Allocation

Key Points

- **Vertical Devolution (Devolution of Taxes of the Union to States):**

It has recommended **maintaining the vertical devolution at 41%** - the same as in its **interim report for 2020-21**.

It is **at the same level of 42% of the divisible pool** as recommended by the **14th Finance Commission**.

- It has **made the required adjustment of about 1%** due to the changed status of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir into the new **Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir**.

Horizontal Devolution (Allocation Between the States):

For horizontal devolution, it has suggested **12.5% weightage to demographic**

performance, 45% to income, 15% each to population and area, 10% to forest and ecology and 2.5% to tax and fiscal efforts.

Revenue Deficit Grants to States:

- Revenue deficit grants **emanate from the requirement to meet the fiscal needs of the States** on their revenue accounts that remain to be met, even after considering their own tax and non-tax resources and tax devolution to them.
- Revenue Deficit is **defined as** the difference between revenue or current expenditure and revenue receipts, that includes tax and non-tax.
- It has recommended post-devolution **revenue deficit grants amounting to about Rs. 3 trillion over the five-year period** ending FY26.

The **number of states qualifying** for the revenue deficit grants **decreases from 17 in FY22**, the first year of the award period to 6 in FY26, the last year.

- **Performance Based Incentives and Grants to States:**

These grants **revolve around four main themes**.

The first is the **social sector**, where it has focused on **health and education**.

Second is the **rural economy**, where it has focused on **agriculture and the maintenance of rural roads**.

The rural economy plays a significant role in the country as it **encompasses two-thirds of the country's population, 70% of the total workforce and 46% of national income**.

- Third, **governance and administrative reforms** under which it has recommended grants for **judiciary, statistics and aspirational districts and blocks**.
- Fourth, it has developed a **performance-based incentive system for the power sector**, which is not linked to grants but provides an important, additional borrowing window for States.

Fiscal Space for Centre:

- Total **15th Finance Commission transfers (devolution + grants)** constitutes about **34% of estimated Gross Revenue Receipts** to the Union, **leaving adequate fiscal space** to meet its resource

requirements and spending obligations on national development priorities.

Grants to Local Governments:

- Along with grants for municipal services and local government bodies, it includes **performance-based grants for incubation of new cities** and **health grants** to local governments.
- In grants for Urban local bodies, **basic grants are proposed only for cities/towns having a population of less than a million.** For **Million-Plus cities**, 100% of the grants are performance-linked through the **Million-Plus Cities Challenge Fund (MCF).**

MCF amount is linked to the performance of these cities in **improving their air quality** and meeting the service level benchmarks for **urban drinking water supply, sanitation and solid waste management.**

Criticism

- **Performance based incentives disincentivizes independent decision-making.** Any conditions on the state's ability to borrow will have an adverse effect on the spending by the state, particularly on development thus, **undermines cooperative fiscal federalism.**
- **It does not hold the Union government accountable for its own fiscal prudence** and dilutes the joint responsibility that the Union and States have.

25. Asset Reconstruction Company / BAD Bank

சொத்து புனரமைப்பு நிறுவனம் / BAD வங்கி

26. India Energy Outlook 2021

இந்திய ளரிசக்தி அறிக்கை 2021

India Energy Outlook 2021

Key Points

- **Third Largest Energy Consumer by 2030:**
 - India will make up the biggest share of energy demand growth at 25% over the next two decades, as it **overtakes the [European Union](#)** as the world's third-biggest energy consumer by 2030.

Presently, **India** is the **fourth-largest** global energy consumer behind **China**, the **United States** and the **European Union**.

- India's **energy consumption** is **expected to nearly double** as the nation's **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** expands to an estimated USD 8.6 trillion by 2040 under its current national policy scenario.
- **Prior** to the global **pandemic**, India's energy demand was **projected to increase** by almost **50% between 2019 and 2030**, but growth over this period is **now closer to 35%**.
- **Industrialisation is a Major Driving Force:**
 - Over the last three decades, India accounted for about **10% of World Growth in Industrial Value-added** [in **Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)** terms].
 - **By 2040**, India is set to account for almost **20% of Global Growth in Industrial value-added**, and to lead global growth in industrial final energy consumption, especially in steelmaking.
- **Reliance on Imports:**
 - India's growing energy needs will make it **more reliant on fossil fuel imports** as its **domestic oil and gas production has been stagnant** for years despite government policies to promote petroleum exploration and production and renewable energy.
 - Rising oil demand **could double India's oil import bill** to about USD 181 billion by 2030 and nearly treble it to USD 255 billion by 2040 compared with 2019.

Oil Demand:

- India's **oil demand** is seen **rising by 74% to 8.7 million barrels per day by 2040** under the existing policies scenario.
- A **five-fold increase in per capita car ownership** will result in India leading the oil demand growth in the world.
- Its **net dependence on oil imports** - taking into account both the import of crude oil and the export of oil products - **increases to more than 90%**

by 2040 from the current 75% as domestic consumption rises much more than production.

Gas Demand:

- India will become the **fastest-growing market for Natural gas**, with demand **more than tripling by 2040**.
- Natural gas **import dependency** increased from **20% in 2010** to almost **50% in 2019** and is set to grow further to **more than 60% in 2040**.

Coal Demand:

- **Coal currently dominates India's electricity sector**, accounting for over 70% of overall generation.
- **Coal demand is seen rising to 772 million tonnes in 2040** from the current 590.

Renewables Energy Resources Demand:

India's share in the **growth in renewable energy** is the **second-largest** in the world, **after China**.

27. NITI Aayog's Strategy of Flood Management

வெள்ள மேலாண்மை குறித்த நிதி ஆயோக்கின் அறிக்கை

NITI AAYOG'S STRATEGY OF FLOOD MANAGEMENT

A NITI Aayog report has suggested effective and long-lasting strategies for flood control and management that involve structural and non-structural measures along with the use of modern technologies.

The report stressed on adopting less expensive non-structural measures like flood forecasting, flood plain zoning, flood proofing to accommodate high spat of water in majority of the places.

The report of the committee constituted for Formulation of Strategy for Flood Management Works in Entire Country and River Management Activities and Works Related to Border Areas (2021-26) further said the room of the river should be provided by taking up the measures like creating wetlands, lakes and check dams.

The committee, headed by Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar, also proposed National Water Model for India which can be built with the help of some scalable models.

The committee is of the view to provide priority to non-structural measures to mitigate the floods and shall go for long term and medium-term structural measures when and where those are unavoidable.

"In majority of the places, less expensive non-structural measures like flood forecasting, flood plain zoning, flood proofing etc should be adopted to accommodate high spat of water," the report said.

It also stressed on the use of advanced technology like artificial intelligence, satellites, remote sensing and GIS for flood forecasting and warning systems.

"The committee has also proposed to extend the Flood Management and Border Area Programme (FMBAP) for the period of 2021-26, co-terminus with the period of 15th Finance Commission with the provision of inclusion of new projects for funding under the scheme," the report said.

According to the report, some changes like revisions in monetary limits for appraisal of flood control schemes etc have been suggested in the scheme for its successful implementation.

"The committee has also advocated the formation of Flood Management Plans which can also help in rescue and relief works during and after the floods" it said.

The report also pitched for the policy to provide flood cushion in the existing dams to accommodate peak time flood so that the tragedy like Kerala floods doesn't repeat itself.

It also pointed out that the construction of embankments/levees should be taken up as the medium-term measures to provide protection to the railway lines, national highways, valuable assets or international boundary.

Noting that the long-term structural measures like dams, reservoirs, detention basins etc have been used in few cases, the report said the long-term measures should be taken up in the cases where there is compulsion for protection of larger area, population or assets.

28. Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi
பிரதம மந்திரியின் ஸ்வஸ்தியா சரக்ஷா நிதி

29. National Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report
தேசிய காலநிலை பாதிப்பு மதிப்பீட்டு அறிக்கை

NATIONAL CLIMATE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Introduction

The Department of Science and Technology has released a report titled 'The Report Climate Vulnerability Assessment for Adaptation Planning in India Using a Common Framework'.

Key Points

▪ About the Report:

- It identifies the most vulnerable states and districts in India with respect to current climate risk and key drivers of vulnerability.
- It aids in prioritizing adaptation investment, developing and implementing adaptation programs.
- The assessment is unique as it uses a common framework across the states & union territory to make them comparable thereby **empowering the decision-making capabilities** at the policy and administrative levels.
- Some **key indicators** for the assessment include percentage of population living below the poverty line; income share from natural resources; the proportion of marginal and small landholdings, women's participation in the workforce; density of healthcare workers etc.
- It is **part of the capacity building programme** under the two missions of the **National Action Plan on Climate Change** (total 8 missions).
 - National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)
 - National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change (NMSKCC).

▪ Key Findings of the Report:

- **Highly Vulnerable States:** It identified Jharkhand, Mizoram, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal as states highly vulnerable to climate change.
- **Lower-middle Vulnerable States:** Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Sikkim and Punjab.
- **Low Vulnerable States:** Uttarakhand, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Nagaland, Goa and Maharashtra.
- **Highly Vulnerable Districts:** Among all states, Assam, Bihar, and Jharkhand have over 60% districts in the category of highly vulnerable districts.
 - Vulnerability scores in all the districts of India lies in a very small range. It shows that **all districts & states are somewhat vulnerable with respect to current climate risk in India.**

Significance of the Findings:

- The assessments can be used for India's reporting on the **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** under the [Paris Agreement](#).
 - NDCs embody efforts by each country to **reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.**
- These assessments will help support India's National Action Plan on Climate Change.
- It will contribute to the development of more targeted climate change projects and will support the implementation of the **State Action Plans on Climate Change.**
- It will help in developing adaptation projects for the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and [funds from multilateral and bilateral agencies](#).
- It will also **benefit climate-vulnerable communities** across India through development of better-designed climate change adaptation projects.

30. State of the Global Climate - 2020

உலகளாவிய காலநிலை நிலை - 2020

31. Micro Finance Regulations - RBI

இந்திய ரிசர்வ் வங்கியின் குறு நிதி சீரமைப்பு

32. Cyber Surveillance - PEGASUS

CYBER SURVEILLANCE - PEGASUS

Key Points

About Pegasus:

- It is a type of malicious software or **malware classified as a spyware.**

It is **designed to gain access to devices, without the knowledge of users**, and gather personal information and relay it back to whoever it is that is using the software to spy.

- Pegasus has been **developed by the Israeli firm NSO Group** that was set up in 2010.
- The earliest version of Pegasus discovered, which was captured by researchers in 2016, **infected phones through what is called spear-phishing** - text messages or emails that trick a target into clicking on a malicious link.
- Since then, however, NSO's attack capabilities have become more advanced. Pegasus infections can be achieved through so-called "**zero-click**" attacks, which do not require any interaction from the phone's owner in order to succeed.
- These will often exploit "zero-day" vulnerabilities, which are flaws or bugs in an operating system that the mobile phone's manufacturer does not yet know about and so has not been able to fix.

Targets:

- Human Rights activists, journalists and lawyers around the world have been targeted with phone malware sold to authoritarian governments by an Israeli surveillance firm.

- Indian ministers, government officials and opposition leaders also figure in the list of people whose phones may have been compromised by the spyware.
- In 2019, **WhatsApp filed a lawsuit** in the US court against Israel's NSO Group, alleging that the firm was incorporating **cyber-attacks** on the application by infecting mobile devices with malicious software.

Recent Steps Taken in India:

- **Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative:** It was launched in 2018 with an aim to spread awareness about cybercrime and building capacity for safety measures for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT staff across all government departments.
- **National Cyber security Coordination Centre (NCCC):** In 2017, the NCCC was developed to scan internet traffic and communication metadata (which are little snippets of information hidden inside each communication) coming into the country to detect real-time cyber threats.
- **Cyber Swachhta Kendra:** In 2017, this platform was introduced for internet users to clean their computers and devices by wiping out viruses and malware.
- **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C):** I4C was recently inaugurated by the government.
- National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal has also been launched pan India.
- **Computer Emergency Response Team - India (CERT-IN):** It is the nodal agency which deals with cybersecurity threats like hacking and phishing.
- **Legislation:**
 - **Information Technology Act, 2000.**
 - **Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019.**

International Mechanisms:

- **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**: It is a specialized agency within the United Nations which plays a leading role in the standardization and development of telecommunications and cyber security issues.
- **Budapest Convention on Cybercrime**: It is an international treaty that seeks to address Internet and computer crime (cybercrime) by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and increasing cooperation among nations. It came into force on 1st July 2004.

India is not a signatory to this convention.

33. Climate change action plan 2021-2025 by World Bank Group

உலக வங்கி குழுமத்தின் காலநிலை மாற்றம் செயல் திட்டம் 2021 – 2025

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN 2021-2025 BY WORLD BANK GROUP

Introduction:

The World Bank Group today announced its new Climate Change Action Plan that aims to deliver record levels of climate finance to developing countries, reduce emissions, strengthen adaptation, and align financial flows with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The Action Plan for 2021-25 broadens World Bank Group efforts from investing in “green” projects to helping countries fully integrate their climate and development goals. The Plan also comes as countries seek sustainable pathways out of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our new Action Plan will identify and prioritize action on the most impactful mitigation and adaptation opportunities, and we will drive our climate finance accordingly. This means helping the largest emitters flatten the emissions curve and helping countries achieve successful adaptation and resilience to climate change,” said **World Bank Group President David Malpass**. *“We will be delivering climate finance at record levels and seeking solutions that achieve the most impact.”*

Key highlights of the Action Plan include:

- Providing major increases in climate finance. The World Bank is already the largest multilateral provider of climate finance for developing

countries. The Plan includes a commitment to increase delivery to an average of 35% of total World Bank Group financing for climate over the duration of the Plan. At least 50% percent of International Development Association (IDA) and International Bank for Reconstruction and Developing (IBRD) climate finance will support adaptation.

- Identifying and prioritizing opportunities for high-impact climate action to inform future World Bank Group climate engagements and investments. A new core diagnostic tool, the Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR), will help countries align climate action and development efforts and absorb new climate-related technologies as they emerge.
- Boosting support to countries for implementing and updating their Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies pursuant to the Paris Agreement; and adjusting incentives by reducing subsidies for and increasing taxation of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Catalyzing and mobilizing private capital for climate action; stepped up efforts to develop carbon credit markets, green bonds and loan markets in countries; and support for global public goods in the poorest countries through IDA funds as well as other sources.
- Prioritizing action in key systems—energy; agriculture, food, water, and land; cities; transport; and manufacturing—that must be transformed to address climate change, achieve a resilient and low-carbon future, and support the protection of natural capital and biodiversity. The Action Plan will place a strong emphasis on supporting a “just transition” out of coal.
- Aligning all World Bank Group financing flows with the objectives of the Paris Agreement to support countries’ climate commitments. The World Bank - comprising of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Development Association (IDA) - will align all new operations starting July 1, 2023. For the World Bank Group’s private sector development arms, IFC and MIGA, 85 percent of Board approved real sector operations will be aligned starting July 1, 2023, and 100 percent of these operations starting July 1, 2025, two fiscal years later.

The World Bank Group will regularly update its Board on the implementation of the Action Plan.

The new Action Plan builds on the World Bank Group's achievements under its first Climate Change Action Plan, which delivered over \$83 billion in climate finance over five years, including a record \$21.4 billion in 2020.

34. NIPUN Bharat
NIPUN பாரத்

35. National Monetization Pipeline
தேசிய பணமாக்கல் திட்டம்

National Monetisation Pipeline

Key Points

About the NMP:

- ✓ It aims to unlock value in brownfield projects by engaging the private sector, transferring to them revenue rights and not ownership in the projects, and using the funds generated for infrastructure creation across the country.
- ✓ The NMP has been announced to provide a **clear framework for monetisation** and give potential investors a ready list of assets to generate investment interest.
- ✓ **Union Budget 2021-22** has identified monetisation of operating public infrastructure assets as a key means for sustainable infrastructure financing.
- ✓ Currently, **only assets of central government line ministries and Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in infrastructure sectors** have been included.
- ✓ The government has stressed that these are brownfield assets, which **have been "de-risked" from execution risks**, and therefore should encourage private investment.

- ✓ **Roads, railways and power sector assets will comprise over 66% of the total estimated value of the assets to be monetised**, with the remaining upcoming sectors including telecom, mining, aviation, ports, natural gas and petroleum product pipelines, warehouses and stadiums.

In terms of annual phasing by value, 15% of assets with an indicative value of Rs 0.88 lakh crore are envisaged for rollout in the current financial year.

- ✓ **The NMP will run co-terminus with the Rs 100 lakh crore **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)** announced in December 2019.**
 - The estimated amount to be raised through monetisation is around 14% of the proposed outlay for the Centre of Rs 43 lakh crore under NIP.
 - NIP will enable a forward outlook on infrastructure projects which will create jobs, improve ease of living, and provide equitable access to infrastructure for all, thereby making growth more inclusive. **NIP includes economic and social infrastructure projects.**
 - Other Initiatives for Infrastructure Development include Scheme of Financial Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure, Industrial corridors, etc.

Associated Challenges:

- ✓ **Lack of identifiable revenue streams** in various assets.
- ✓ **The slow pace of privatisation in government companies** including Air India and BPCL.

Further, less-than-encouraging bids in the recently launched PPP initiative in trains indicate that attracting private investors' interest is not that easy.

Asset-specific Challenges:

- ✓ **Low Level of capacity utilisation** in gas and petroleum pipeline networks.

- ✓ Regulated tariffs in power sector assets.
- ✓ Low interest among investors in national highways below four lanes.
- ✓ Konkan Railway, for instance, has multiple stakeholders, including state governments, which own stake in the entity.

36. IPCC - 6th Assessment Report

IPCC யின் வெது மதிப்பீட்டு அறிக்கை

IPCC- 6TH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Introduction

Recently, the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** released the first part of its **Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)** titled **Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis**.

- It is prepared by the scientists of **Working Group-I**. The **two remaining parts would be released in 2022**.
- It noted that global **net-zero by 2050** was the **minimum required to keep the temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius**.
- It sets the stage for the **Conference of Parties (CoP)₂₆** conference in **November 2021**.



Key Points

- **Average Surface Temperature:**
 - The average surface temperature of the Earth will **cross 1.5 °C over pre-industrial levels in the next 20 years** (By 2040) and **2°C by the middle of the century** without sharp reduction of emissions.
 - In 2018, the IPCC's **Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C** had estimated that two-fifths of the global population lived in regions with warming above 1.5°C.
 - The **last decade was hotter than any period of time in the past 1,25,000 years**. Global surface temperature was 1.09°C higher in the decade between 2011-2020 than between 1850-1900.
 - This is the **first time** that the IPCC has said that the **1.5°C warming was inevitable even in the best-case scenario**.

- **Carbon dioxide (CO₂) Concentrations:**
 - They are the **highest in at least two million years**. Humans have emitted 2,400 billion tonnes of CO₂ since the late 1800s.
 - Most of this can be **attributed to human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels**.
 - The effect of human activities has **warmed the climate at a rate unprecedented in 2,000 years**.
 - The world has already **depleted 86% of its available [carbon budget](#)**.

- **Impact of Global Warming:**
 - **Sea- Level Rise:**
 - **Sea-level rise has tripled compared with 1901-1971**. The Arctic Sea ice is the lowest it has been in 1,000 years.
 - Coastal areas will see continued sea-level rise throughout the 21st century, resulting in **coastal erosion and more frequent and severe flooding in low-lying areas**.
 - About 50% of the sea level rise is **due to thermal expansion** (when water heats up, it expands, thus warmer oceans simply occupy more space).
 - **Precipitation & Drought:**

- Every additional 0.5 °C of warming will **increase hot extremes, extreme precipitation and [drought](#)**. Additional warming will also weaken the Earth's carbon sinks present in plants, soils, and the ocean.
- **Heat Extremes:**
 - Heat extremes have increased while cold extremes have decreased, and these trends will continue over the coming decades over Asia.
- **Retreating Snowline & Melting Glaciers:**
 - Global Warming will have a **serious impact on mountain ranges across the world, including the Himalayas**.
 - The freezing level of mountains are likely to change and snowlines will retreat over the coming decades.
 - Retreating snowlines and melting glaciers is a cause for alarm as **this can cause a change in the water cycle, the precipitation patterns, increased floods as well as an increased scarcity of water** in the future in the states across the Himalayas.
 - The level of temperature rise in the mountains and glacial melt is unprecedented in 2,000 years. The retreat of glaciers is now attributed to anthropogenic factors and human influence.
- **Indian Sub-continent Specific Findings:**
 - **Heatwaves:** [Heatwaves](#) and humid heat stress **will be more intense and frequent during the 21st century** over South Asia.
 - **Monsoon:** Changes in monsoon precipitation are also expected, with both annual and summer monsoon precipitation projected to increase.
 - The [South West Monsoon](#) has **declined** over the past few decades **because of the increase of [aerosols](#)**, but **once this reduces, we will experience heavy monsoon rainfall**.
 - **Sea Temperature:** The **Indian Ocean**, which includes the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, has **warmed faster than the global average**.
 - The **sea surface temperature over Indian ocean is likely to increase by 1 to 2 °C** when there is 1.5°C to 2°C global warming.

- In the Indian Ocean, the sea temperature is heating at a higher rate than other areas, and therefore may influence other regions.
- **Net- Zero Emissions:**
 - **About:**
 - It means that **all man-made greenhouse gas emissions must be removed from the atmosphere through reduction measures**, thus reducing the Earth's net climate balance, after removal via natural and artificial sink, to zero.
 - This way humankind would be **carbon neutral and global temperature would stabilise.**
 - **Current Situation:**
 - Several countries, **more than 100, have already announced their intentions to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.** These include major emitters like the United States, China and the **European Union.**
 - **India, the third largest emitter in the world,** has been holding out, arguing that it was already doing much more than it was required to do, performing better, in relative terms, than other countries.
 - Any further burden would **jeopardise its continuing efforts to pull its millions out of poverty.**
 - IPCC has informed that a global net-zero by 2050 was the minimum required to keep the temperature rise to 1.5°C. **Without India, this would not be possible.**
 - Even **China, the world's biggest emitter,** has a **[net-zero goal for 2060.](#)**

37. **Kigali Amendment**
கிகாலி சட்டத்திருத்தம்

KIGALI AMENDMENT

Introduction

Recently, the Union Government approved the ratification of the [Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol](#) on phasing down climate-damaging refrigerant Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

- It comes close on the heels of similar decisions by the United States and China, the world's largest producers and consumers of HFCs. 122 countries had ratified the Kigali Amendment by the end of July 2021.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The United States, China and India are in separate groups of countries, with different time schedules to phase out their HFCs and replace them with climate-friendly alternatives.
 - India has to reduce its HFC use by 80% by the year 2047, while China and the United States have to achieve the same target by the year 2045 and 2034 respectively.
 - India will complete its phasedown of HFCs in four steps from 2032 onwards with a cumulative reduction of 10% in 2032, 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and 80% in 2047.
 - **Amendments** to the existing legislation framework, the **Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Rules** to allow appropriate control of the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons to ensure compliance with the Kigali Amendment **will be done by mid-2024.**

Background:

- The **1989 Montreal Protocol** is not a climate agreement. It is instead aimed at protecting the earth from [Ozone-Depleting Substances \(ODSs\)](#) like the Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), that were earlier used in the air-conditioning and refrigerant industry.

- The widespread use of CFCs had caused a hole in the Ozone layer of the atmosphere, which allowed some harmful radiation to reach the earth. These radiations were considered potential health hazards.
- The Montreal Protocol led to the replacement of CFCs with Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) which do not destroy the Ozone layer.
- But they were later found to be extremely potent in causing [Global Warming](#). So, the HFCs solved one problem, but were contributing in a major way to another.
- But these could not be eliminated under the original provisions of Montreal Protocol which was meant to phase-out ODSs only.
- The Kigali Amendment enabled the Montreal Protocol to mandate the elimination of HFCs as well.
 - In October 2016, with the United States' leadership, 197 countries adopted an amendment to phase down HFCs under the Montreal Protocol in Kigali, Rwanda.
- **Kigali Amendment to Montreal Protocol:**
 - The Kigali Amendment aims for the **phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)** by cutting their production and consumption.
 - The goal is to achieve **over 80% reduction in HFC consumption by 2047.**
 - Given their zero impact on the depletion of the ozone layer, HFCs are currently used as replacements of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in air conditioning, refrigeration and foam insulation, however they are powerful greenhouse gases.
 - **Under the amendment :**
 - Developed countries will reduce HFC consumption beginning in 2019.
 - Most developing countries will freeze consumption in 2024,
 - Some developing countries including India with unique circumstances will freeze consumption in 2028.
 - The plan also provides financing to certain countries, to help them transition to climate-friendly alternatives.

- With the Kigali Amendment, the **Montreal Protocol has become an even more powerful instrument** against global warming.
- **Significance:**
 - This important instrument is crucial to **achieving the target of restraining the increase in global temperatures to 2 degree Celsius** from pre-industrial times.
 - As pointed out by a recent report of the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**, the average temperature of the planet has already risen by about 1.1 degree Celsius.
 - The collective action is expected to **prevent emissions of upto 105 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gases helping to avoid up to 0.5 degree Celsius** of global temperature rise by 2100, while continuing to protect the ozone layer.
 - Because **HFCs** were not ozone-depleting, they were not controlled substances under the Montreal Protocol. They were part of the problematic greenhouse gases whose emissions are **sought to be curtailed through climate change instruments such as the [Kyoto Protocol of 1997](#) and the [2015 Paris Agreement](#)**.
 - But the Montreal Protocol has been a far more effective and successful agreement than the climate change instruments. It has already resulted in the phase-out of 98.6% of ozone-depleting substances. The remaining 1.4% are the HCFCs that are in the process of being transitioned.
- **Significance for India:**
 - **India became a party to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in June 1992** and since then has ratified the amendments to the Montreal Protocol. **India has successfully met the phase-out targets of all the Ozone Depleting Substances** as per the Montreal Protocol Schedule.
 - India is **one of the first countries in the world to launch a cooling action plan in 2019**. This comprehensive plan is aimed at reducing cooling demand, enabling refrigerant transition, enhancing energy efficiency and better technology options with a 20-year time horizon.
 - **The signing of the Kigali Amendment is a cue for the markets to make a faster transition from HFCs to cleaner gases.**

- It would boost domestic manufacturing and employment generation goals.
- The ratification would signify that India is ready to compete in the market for low-Global Warming Potential GWP (climate-friendly) refrigerants, which will spur domestic innovation and attract international investments.
- The decision would pave the way for India to achieve its climate change mitigation goals and cooling commitments. India is among a small group of countries on track to meet its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.

38. **Samagraha Siksha Scheme**
சாமகிரகா கல்வித்திட்டம்

39. **NALSA**

40. **Recent developments regarding to tribunals**
தீர்ப்பாயங்கள் குறித்த சமீபத்திய தகவல்கள்

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING TO TRIBUNALS

Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021

Key Points

Issues Raised by SC:

- **Unconstitutional Legislative Overriding:** There was lack of discussion over the bill, and the government has re-enacted the very same provisions struck down by the Court in the **Madras Bar Association case (2021)**. It amounts to "unconstitutional legislative overriding" of the judgement passed by the SC.
- **Repeated Violation of SC Orders:** The Centre is not following the repeated directions issued by the Court to ensure the proper functioning of the Tribunals. The provisions in the ordinance regarding conditions of service and tenure of Tribunal Members and Chairpersons were struck down by the Supreme Court.

- **Security of Tenure:** The Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021 bars appointments to tribunals of persons below 50 years of age. It **undermines the length/security of tenure.**
- **Undermines the Separation of Powers:** The bill allows the **Central Government to take a decision** on the recommendations made by the selection Committee, preferably within three months from the date of such recommendation.

Section 3(7) of the bill mandates the recommendation of a panel of two names by the search-cum selection committee to the Central Government, violating the principles of separation of powers and judicial independence.

- **Vacant Positions in Tribunals:** India now has 16 tribunals including the National Green Tribunal, the Armed Forces Appellate Tribunal, the Debt Recovery Tribunal among others which also suffer from **crippling vacancies.**

Existence of large number of vacancies of Members and Chairpersons and the inordinate delay caused in filling them up has resulted in weakening of the tribunals.

- **Detrimental to the Decision-making Process:** These cases will be transferred to High Courts or commercial civil courts immediately.

The lack of specialisation in regular courts could be detrimental to the decision-making process.

For example, the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT)** exclusively heard decisions appealing against decisions of the censor board, which requires expertise in art and cinema.

Further, the **dissolution of certain tribunals** and appellate bodies, and the transfer of their functions to High Courts can be criticized on the grounds that Indian courts are **already overburdened** with their existing caseload.

About the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021:

- **Dissolution of Existing Bodies:** The Bill seeks to dissolve certain appellate bodies and transfer their functions to other existing judicial

bodies. For example, the disputes heard by the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal** will be addressed by the **High Court**.

- **Merging of Existing Bodies:** The Finance Act, 2017 merged **tribunals** based on domain. For example, the **Competition Appellate Tribunal** has been merged with the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal**.
- **Search-cum-selection Committees:** The Chairperson and Members of the Tribunals will be appointed by the central government on the recommendation of a Search-cum-Selection Committee. The Committee will consist of:
 - The **Chief Justice of India, or a Supreme Court Judge** nominated by him, as the **Chairperson** (with casting vote).
 - **Two Secretaries** nominated by the central governments.
 - The **sitting or outgoing Chairperson**, or a retired Supreme Court Judge, or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court, and
 - The **Secretary of the Ministry** under which the Tribunal is constituted (with no voting right).
- **State Administrative Tribunals:** It will have separate search-cum-selection committees with the **Chief Justice of the High Court** of the concerned state, as the Chairman (with a casting vote).
- **Eligibility and Term of Office:** The Bill provides for a four-year term of office (subject to the upper age limit of 70 years for the Chairperson, and 67 years for members).

Further, it specifies a minimum age requirement of 50 years for appointment of a chairperson or a member.

- **Removal of Tribunal Members:** It states that the central government shall, on the recommendation of the Search-cum-Selection Committee, remove from office any Chairperson or a Member.