



INNOVATIVE IAS

Daily News Analysis

26th December 2019

General studies-2

SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019–20

Why in news?

- NITI Aayog, the policy think tank of Government will launch the second edition of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2019–20 on 30 December 2019 at NITI Aayog, New Delhi.

Key points:

- The first edition of SDG India Index was launched in December 2018. It was the first tool developed by any large country to monitor progress towards achieving SDGs at sub-national level.
- NITI Aayog has the mandate of overseeing adoption as well as monitoring of SDGs in India, at the national and sub-national level.

About SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019–20

- The SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019 documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories (UTs) towards implementing the 2030 SDG targets. Besides indicating where the States and UTs currently are on SDG implementation, the Index and Dashboard also charts distance to be travelled to reach SDG targets.
- It has been developed by Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) in collaboration with United Nations in India, and Global Green Growth Institute.
- Index and Dashboard 2019 covers 16 out of 17 SDGs and a qualitative assessment on Goal 17. This marks an improvement over 2018 Index, which covered only 13 goals. On the basis of progress made, the Index ranks all States and UTs on 100 indicators drawn from MoSPI's National Indicator Framework, comprising of 306 indicators.

Sign boards in Chinese language

Why in news?

- Union Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel informed that sign boards in Chinese language have been put up at five Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protected Archaeological Sites located in Uttar Pradesh (UP). ASI Sites Include- (1) Sarnath, (2) the Buddhist relics at ChaukhandiStupa, (3) Kushinagar and the Mahaparinirvana Temple, (4) Piparahwa and (5) Shravasti.



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Key points:

- Tourism Ministry had earlier instructed ASI that sign boards of foreign languages will be installed at all iconic archaeological sites, keeping in mind the convenience of foreign travellers.
- Objective of this initiative is to increase the footfall of both both foreign as well as domestic tourists under Prime Minister's Vision 2020.
- Progress: In this series of effort by Tourism Ministry, the work of installing sign boards in Sinhali language has been completed in November 2019 in view of the large number of Sri Lankan tourists visiting Sanchi.
- Condition: Sign boards of foreign languages will be installed where over 1 lakh tourists from a particular country visit those places every year. A total of 5 such foreign country languages can be included in it.
- Way Ahead: In order to increase number of domestic tourists, Tourism Ministry is considering various cultural fairs and other events through which people of India will get to know country in a better way.

About Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- It is an Indian government agency that was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham who was also the first Director-General of ASI. It is attached to Union Ministry of Culture. It is responsible for archaeological research as well as conservation & preservation of cultural monuments in India.

Akashvani

Why in News?

- Centre government is planning to revamp 'All India Radio' officially known as 'Akashvani' by introducing Digital Radio in India by 2024, when the country will be technologically-equipped for it.

Significance

- All India Radio is an institution which is a part of people's lives in form of music, news or entertainment and with AIR news commanding huge credibility, as being one of the largest news gathering and dissemination apparatus in world, there is a needs for AIR to stay ahead of competition from private players.
- Therefore, once Digital Radio is launch by 2024, there will be more clarity as the audio of digital radio will be more clear, and with digital radio having higher reach Akashvani will be heard for longer range. There will also be four times more stations.



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About All India Radio (AIR)

- AIR was established in 1936 and is officially known as Akashvani since 1956. It is the national public radio broadcaster of India and is a division of PrasarBharati, which is India's largest public broadcasting agency. AIR is sister service of PrasarBharati's Doordarshan television Network.

ShaheedUdham Singh

Why in News?

Nation is paying homage to great revolutionary, ShaheedUdham Singh, a well-known freedom fighter from Punjab on his 120th birth anniversary being celebrated on 26 December 2019.

Key points:

He was born on this day in 1899 in Sangrur district of Punjab. He belonged to Ghadar party and was best known for avenging the JallianwalaBagh massacre by assassinating Michael O' Dwyer.

- He was present in JallianwalaBagh, Amritsar on the fateful Baisakhi festival (festival of harvest) on 13 April 1919, where about 20,000 unarmed men, women and children gathered and General Dyer arrived with his troops, sealed the only exit to park and opened fire without any warning on unarmed crowd. Many people lost their lives in horrific massacre.
- He made his way to England arrived there in 1933 to execute Michael O'Dwyer, who was then governor of Punjab responsible for brutal JallianwalaBagh massacre. He opened fire at Michael O'Dwyer in Caxton Hall in London, killing him on spot in March 1940. Udham Singh was then hanged four months later at Pentonville Prison and his mortal remains were handed over to India in 1974.

Good Governance Index

Why in News?

- On December 25, 2019, Government of India launched Good Governance Index. Tamil Nadu topped in Good Governance Index.

Key points:

- The States and Union Territories were divided into 3 groups namely Big states, North East and hill states and union territories.
- Tamil Nadu topped in Good Governance Index in the "Big States" category. It was followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. The report also said that among the big states the poor performers were Odisha, Bihar, Goa and Uttar Pradesh. Jharkhand was ranked the last in good governance index.
- In the North East and hill states category, Himachal Pradesh ranked first. It was followed by Uttarakhand, Tripura, Mizoram and Sikkim. The bad performers of the category include Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.



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Agricultural ranking

- In Agricultural and allied ranking, the best performing states were Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Daman and Diu. In order to frame agricultural rating parameters such as food grain production, milk and meat production, horticulture produce and crop insurance were considered.

Commerce and Industries

- Under the category of commerce and industries, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand were the top performers.

MOU between India and Brazil

Why in news?

- Union Cabinet has given its approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Republic of India and Federative Republic of Brazil on Bioenergy Cooperation.

Background

- In 2016, during the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President of Brazil in India, the two sides agreed to cooperate on research and development (R&D) of renewable energies, and in field of 2nd-generation biofuels.
- Therefore, in this regard, an MoU was also signed between two sides to provide a framework to cooperate as well as to promote investment in biofuel, bioelectricity and biogas supply-chains including industrial conversion, feedstock, distribution and end use sectors

India-Brazil Energy Demand

- Brazil is one of the most important trading partners of India in entire Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region.
- Both countries are also major consumers of energy in world. Brazil is currently world's 2nd largest producer and consumer of biofuels.
- Moreover, biofuels and bioelectricity accounts for 18% of Brazil's energy mix. India having strong focus in area of bio-fuels, has set a target to achieve 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of biodiesel in diesel by 2030. For this purpose India has also announced new policy on Biofuels in 2018.

General studies-3

Polio markers

Why in News?

- The Pakistan Government decided to import Polio markers from India recently. The Govt had suspended the trade with New Delhi for months after abrogation of Article 370.



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Key points:

- There are three countries in the world where Polio is still endemic. It includes Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan.
- As of December 2019, there have been 111 documented cases of wild polio virus in Pakistan.
- In 2014, Pakistan had the highest number of polio cases in the world. The country has recently decided to import polio markers from India. The cabinet has provided one-time permission for the import.
- The polio markers are used to mark the fingers of the children after they are vaccinated with vaccines that are approved by the WHO.

Polio

- The disease is caused by Poliovirus. In 1995, India launched Global Polio Eradication initiative of WHO that aims at 100% coverage. With the programme successfully implemented, India has completely eradicated Polio. The last case of Polio was reported in 2011 in India.

AtalBhujalYojana

Why in news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched AtalBhujalYojana (ABY), a scheme for sustainable management of ground water resources, in New Delhi.
- The scheme was launched on the occasion of 95th birth anniversary former Prime Minister Late AtalBihari Vajpayee. On the occasion, the 8.8-kilometre long Strategic Tunnel under Rohtang Pass was also named after late AtalBihari Vajpayee.

AtalBhujalYojana (ABY):

- Objective: Since, groundwater contributes nearly 65% of India's total irrigated area, with ABY, the Central Government seeks to promote Panchayat led ground water management and behavioural change with primary focus on demand side management. The scheme will also help in supplying water to every house hold by 2024.
- Nodal Agency: Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- Implementation: The scheme will be implemented in identified areas covering 8,350 villages in 78 districts of 7 states- Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. The implementation period for plan is over a period of five years from 2020 to 2025.

Two major components of AtalJalYojana:

(1) Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building Component- for strengthening institutional

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arrangements for sustainable ground water management in States. It envisages active participation of communities in various activities such as-

- Water budgeting- water management tool that assists communities for the proper management of water resources, by estimating the amount of water a landscape will require.
- Monitoring and disseminating ground water data
- Formation of Water User Associations
- Preparation/ implementation of gram panchayat-wise water security plans
- Information, Education and communication (IEC) activities, relating to sustainable ground water management.

(2) Incentive Component for incentivising the States– for achievements in improved groundwater management practices such as implementation of management interventions through convergence of ongoing schemes, adopting demand side management practices among others.

Funding: Union Cabinet had recently approved Rs.6,000crore rupees for AtalBhujalYojana. Out of total outlay of Rs.6000 crore, 50% shall be in form of World Bank loan (will be repaid by Government of India) and remaining 50% shall be through Central Assistance from regular budgetary support. The entire funding component including World Bank's loan and Central Assistance shall be passed on to States as Grants.

Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya

- The Prime Minister of India paid tribute to Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya on his 158th birth anniversary (25th December, 2019).
- Born on 25th December 1861, in Allahabad (now Prayagraj) in Uttar Pradesh, Malviya played a key role in the Indian independence struggle against British rule and founded the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in 1916.
- He is also remembered for his role in ending the Indian indenture system, especially in the Caribbean.
- Indentured labour was a system of bonded labour that was instituted following the abolition of slavery in 1833.
- Indentured labour were recruited to work on sugar, cotton and tea plantations, and rail construction projects in British colonies in West Indies, Africa and South East Asia.
- He popularized the term 'SatyamevJayate'. However, the phrase originally belongs to the Mundaka Upanishad. The term now is the national motto of India.
- He was given the title of 'Mahamana' by Rabindranath Tagore and the second President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan gave him the status of a 'Karmayogi'.
- Devnagri was introduced in the British-Indian courts because of Malviya's efforts with the British government. This is still considered as one of his greatest achievements.
- Madan Mohan Malviya was expelled from the Brahmin community for expressing his views on caste discrimination and Brahmanical patriarchy. He worked immensely for Hindu-Muslim unity. He is known to have given famous speeches on communal harmony.
- He helped establish the Hindu Mahasabha ("Great Society of Hindus") in 1906, which



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brought diverse local Hindu nationalist movements together.

- Malaviya's consciousness toward the public led to the launch of his own Hindi-language weekly, the Abhyudaya (1907); the Leader of Allahabad, an English-language daily (1909); and the Hindi monthly the Maryada (1910). He also served as the chairman of the board of Hindustan times and facilitated the launch of its Hindi edition.
- He died on 12th November, 1946, at the age of 84.

The migratory insect - locust

- The migratory insect - locust has swarmed the northern parts of Gujarat, causing significant damage to agriculture.
- The locusts, known as tiddis locally, destroyed standing crops of castor, cumin, jatropha, cotton, and potato, and fodder grass in around 20 talukas.
- Gujarat has not witnessed such an invasion of locusts since 1993-94.
- The locusts emerged in February 2019 from Sudan and Eritrea in Africa's Red Sea Coast and travelled through Saudi Arabia and Iran to enter Pakistan, where they invaded the Sindh province and from there they moved into Rajasthan and Gujarat, where south western monsoon had prolonged this time.
- The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) had issued an alert of a massive locust attack in South Asia covering Pakistan and India.
- The Locust Warning Organization (LWO) in Jodhpur also noticed the swarms and predicted their trajectory across the international border.

Locust

- A locust is a large, mainly tropical grasshopper with strong powers of flight. They differ from ordinary grasshoppers in their ability to change behaviour (gregarize) and form swarms that can migrate over large distances.
- Locusts are generally seen during the months of June and July as the insects are active from summer to the rainy season.
- Locusts have a high capacity to multiply, form groups, migrate over relatively large distances (they can fly up to 150 km per day). They can rapidly reproduce and increase some 20-fold in three months.
- Threat to Vegetation: Locust adults can eat their own weight every day, i.e. about two grams of fresh vegetation per day. A very small swarm eats as much in one day as about 35,000 people, posing a devastating threat to crops and food security.
- FAO provides information on the general locust situation to the global community and gives timely warnings and forecasts to those countries in danger of invasion.
- Locust Warning Organisation (LWO), Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, is responsible for monitoring, survey and control of Desert Locust in Scheduled Desert Areas mainly in the States of Rajasthan and Gujarat.



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Amur falcons

- Amur falcons, the world's longest travelling raptors start travelling with the onset of winters.
- The raptors breed in southeastern Siberia and northern China, and migrate in millions across India and then over the Indian Ocean to southern Africa before returning to Mongolia and Siberia. Their 22,000-kilometre migratory route is one of the longest amongst all avian species.
- They get their name from the Amur River that forms the border between Russia and China.
- Doyang Lake in Nagaland is better known as a stopover for the Amur falcons during their annual migration from their breeding grounds to warmer South Africa. Thus, Nagaland is also known as the "Falcon Capital of the World,".
- The birds are the least concern under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, but the species is protected under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and the Convention on Migratory Species, to which India is a signatory (which means it is mandatory to protect the birds).

Hoolock Gibbon

- The tailless Hoolock Gibbon is the only ape found in India.
- The primate is native to eastern Bangladesh, Northeast India and Southwest China.

The Hoolock Gibbon is categorised into two types:

Western hoolock gibbon:

- It inhabits in all the states of the north-east, restricted between the south of the Brahmaputra river and east of the Dibang river. And outside India, it is found in eastern Bangladesh and north-west Myanmar.
- It is listed as Endangered under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

Eastern hoolock gibbon:

- It inhabits specific pockets of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam in India, and in southern China and north-east Myanmar outside India.
- It is listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Redlist.
- In India, both the species are listed on Schedule 1 of the Indian (Wildlife) Protection Act 1972.

Him Darshan Express

- The Indian Railways has started a seven coach glass-enclosed vistadome train (Him Darshan Express) on the heritage Kalka-Shimla route. The train will provide passengers a panoramic view of the hilly region.
- Luxurious coaches with glass ceiling are termed as Vistadome coaches. These have see-through window screens.



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- The Kalka Shimla railway line was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 2008 and was listed under "Mountain Railways of India". It has been a great tourist attraction since then.
- The Mountain Railway of India, besides Kalka - Shimla Railway, consists of two other railways:
 - The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway located in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal (Northeast India)
 - The Nilgiri Mountain Railways located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu (South India).
- The Kalka Shimla Railway is a 96.6 kilometer long, single track working rail link built in the mid-19th century to connect Shimla.

University for transgender community

India's first university for transgender community will be opened in Fazilnagar block of Kushinagar district in Uttar Pradesh. It is the first of its kind University in country, where transgender community members will be able to get education.

Key Highlights

- The university is being built by AkhilBhartiyaKinnarSikshaSeva Trust (All-India transgender education service trust). The university will facilitate its members to study right from class 1 to Post Graduate (PG) and even do research and get PhD degree.
- Members of the transgender community will get education and will be able to give a new direction to the country. From 15 January 2020, two children who are brought up by community members will get admission and from February and March 2020 other classes will start.

Typhoon Phanfone

- The Philippines was hit by typhoon Phanfone on 25th December 2019.
- Typhoon Phanfone is known as Ursula in the local language in the Philippines.
- It is the second typhoon after typhoon Kammuri which hit the Philippines recently.
- Phanfone is following a similar path as Super Typhoon Haiyan, which had hit the country in 2013.

Typhoon is a region-specific name of the Tropical Cyclone (swirling system of clouds and thunderstorms that originates over tropical or subtropical oceans).

- The Philippines is the first major landmass facing the Pacific cyclone belt. It is hit by about 20 storms and typhoons each year.
- Tropical Cyclone
- Cyclone is the formation of a very low-pressure system with very high-speed winds revolving around it. Factors like wind speed, wind direction, temperature and humidity contribute to the development of cyclones.
- Cyclones are called 'Hurricanes' in the North Atlantic and Eastern Pacific, 'Typhoons' in South-East Asia and China and 'Tropical Cyclones' in the South-West Pacific and Indian Ocean Region.