

PIB Analysis 18th and 19th July 2020

UN ECOSOC

Context

The Prime Minister delivered a keynote address virtually at this year's **High-Level Segment** of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

Details

- This was the first address by the PM to the broader UN membership since India's election as a **non-permanent member of the Security Council** on 17th June, for the **term 2021-22**.
- The **theme** of the High-Level Segment of the ECOSOC this year is **"Multilateralism after COVID19: What kind of UN do we need at the 75th anniversary"**.
- This year coincides with the **75th Anniversary of the founding of the UN**.
- This was the second time that the Prime Minister addressed the ECOSOC.
- He had earlier delivered the keynote address at the **70th anniversary of the ECOSOC in January 2016**.

Highlights of PM's address

- PM reiterated India's call for a **'reformed multilateralism'** in a post-COVID-19 world, which reflects the **realities of the contemporary world**.
- **On SDGs**
 - PM recalled India's long association with the ECOSOC and the UN's developmental work, including for the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
 - He noted that India's developmental motto of **'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas, Sabka Vishwas'** resonates with the core **SDG principle** of **'leaving no one behind'**.
 - The Prime Minister pointed out that India's success in improving the **socio-economic indicators** of its vast population has a significant impact on **global SDG targets**.
- **On Development Efforts**
 - He spoke about India's ongoing **development efforts**, including for improving access to **sanitation** through the **"Swachh Bharat Abhiyan"**.
 - **Empowering women** and ensuring **financial inclusion**

- Expansion of **availability of housing** and **healthcare** through flagship schemes such as the “**Housing for All**” programme and the “**Ayushman Bharat**” scheme.
- **On Environment and Disaster Management**
 - The Prime Minister also highlighted India’s focus on **environmental sustainability** and **biodiversity conservation**.
 - He recalled India’s leading role in the establishment of the **International Solar Alliance** and the **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure**.
- **On Regional Cooperation**
 - Speaking about **India’s role** in its region as a **first responder**, the Prime Minister recalled the **support** provided by the Indian government and **Indian pharma companies** for ensuring **medicine supplies** to different countries.
 - He also highlighted coordination for a joint response strategy among **SAARC countries**.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

Context

The **enrollment** of farmers under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for Kharif-2020 season is going on in full swing in various States and UTs of the country.

Highlights

- The Government of India has made enrolment **free for all** the farmers.
- Farmers can get their food crops (cereals and oilseeds) insured at a **minimal premium rate of 2%**, and **commercial and horticulture crops at 5%** Kharif -2020.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has taken a slew of steps to create **awareness among the farmers** about the Scheme.
- Different activities such as **local level awareness meetings**, display of banners and posters at important locations, distribution of pamphlets, IEC Vans, advertisements in local and national newspapers, Mass Media Campaign among others, are being conducted to **create awareness at the grassroots level**.

Benefits of PMFBY

- The Scheme ensures **protection of crop loss** for the entire cropping cycle, from **pre-sowing to post-harvest activities**.
- The PM Fasal Bima Yojana is designed to protect farmers from **natural calamities, pest or insect attack and diseases**, and help them get back on their feet by providing **financial support through claim settlement**.
- Farmers are encouraged to enrol for the Scheme at the earliest to avail the coverage against **prevented sowing** due to any **unforeseen calamity**.
- In addition, there is **comprehensive risk coverage** against drought, floods, inundation, landslides, unseasonable rainfall, hailstorm, natural fires, and cyclone for the **standing crop** as well as coverage against hailstorm, cyclone and unseasonal rainfall **for post-harvest crop**.

Revamped PMFBY

- In February 2020, the Government of India approved revamping of PMFBY in order to address **some previous challenges** in the implementation of the crop insurance scheme.
- The scheme has **been made voluntary** for all the farmers **from Kharif-2020 onwards**. Earlier, the scheme was compulsory for all the loanee farmers
- Now, **farmers with loan dues** can opt out of the scheme by submitting a simple declaration to their bank branch seven days before the cut-off date of enrolment.

To read more about PMFBY [CLICK HERE](#)

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone

Context

Zonal Master Plan(ZMP) of Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone , prepared by the Government of Uttarakhand and appraised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, has been accorded approval by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change(MoEF&CC)

Background

- The **Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone** notification from **Gaumukh to Uttarakashi** covering an area of 4179.59 sq. kilometer was issued by the MoEF&CC on 18th December 2012.
- It was done keeping in view the **requirements of the local people** without affecting their **rights and privileges** and also **ensuring eco-friendly development** for their **livelihood security**.

- The notification was **subsequently amended** on 16th April, 2018 in consultation with the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways, GOI; Government of Uttarakhand and Indian Road Congress.
- The Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone notification **mandated** the **State Government of Uttarakhand to prepare ZMP** to be implemented under the supervision of the Monitoring Committee.

Details

- The ZMP is based on a **watershed approach** and includes **governance** in the area of **forest and wildlife, watershed management, irrigation, energy, tourism, public health and sanitation, road infrastructure**, etc.
- The approval of ZMP will give a **boost to conservation** and **ecology** of the area.
- It will also help in **undertaking developmental activities** as permitted under ZMP.
- The approval will also pave way for faster execution of the **Char Dham Project**.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Char Dham All Weather Road Project

Context

The **Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways** recently reviewed the Char Dham road project

Details

- The Char dham Project proposes to connect **Yamunotri, Gangotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath** which host Chaardham Yatra in the State of Uttarakhand.
- The **all-weather Char dham Road** has in all 53 projects of 826 km length, involving an investment of Rs 12000 crore.
- The projects under Char Dham Programme include **widening of existing roads** along with **adequate/sufficient slope protection** by way of erection of retaining walls and breast walls and by deploying drapery system, netting, anchoring, reinforced wall etc.
- The projects also include **mitigation measures/ stabilisation** of chronic landslide & sinking spots/zones as standalone projects or part of road widening projects to **avoid landslides and safety of road users**.
- **Bioengineering** methods like **hydroseeding** are being used for **vegetative growth** on fragile slopes for their stability.

- All these measures shall safeguard the highway and habitation against natural calamity.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration

Context

The Government launched the revamped PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration.

Background

- The Government of India instituted "**The Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration**" in the year **2006** to **acknowledge, recognize and reward** the **extraordinary and innovative work** done by Districts/ Organizations of the Central and State Governments.
- The Scheme was **restructured in 2014** for recognizing the **performance of District Collectors** in **Priority Programmes, Innovations and Aspirational Districts**.
- It was further **restructured in 2020** to recognize the performance of District Collectors towards **economic development** of the District.
- For the year 2020, the scope of the awards has been expanded to identify areas of **overall outcome-oriented performance** in the districts across sectors.

Highlights

- The Scheme has been revamped to **recognize the performance** of the **District Collectors** towards **outcome indicators, economic development, peoples' participation and redressal of public grievances**.
- Nominations have been called in **four major categories** – **District Performance Indicators Programme, Innovation General Category, Aspirational Districts Program and Namami Gange Program**.
- In all 15 Awards would be conferred under the Scheme in 2020.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

PM SVANidhi

Context

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the **Mobile Application of PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)**

Details

- The App aims to provide user friendly **digital interface for Lending Institutions (LIs)** and their **field functionaries** for sourcing and processing loan applications of street vendors under the Scheme.
- It will enable field **functionaries** of LIs like Banking Correspondents (BCs) and Agents of Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)/ Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs), who have **proximity with the street vendors**, to ensure **maximum coverage of the Scheme**.
- It is a step towards boosting the use of **digital technology**.
- It is believed that launch of Mobile App will give **impetus to the implementation strategy** of the Scheme besides **promoting paperless digital access of micro-credit** facilities by the **Street Vendors**.

To read more about PM SVANidhi Portal [CLICK HERE](#)

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

India-US Strategic Energy Partnership

Context

U.S. Secretary of Energy and Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas co-chaired a virtual ministerial meeting of the **U.S.-India Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)** to **review progress, highlight major accomplishments, and prioritize new areas for cooperation**.

Background

- It was established in April 2018 recognizing the strategic importance of energy to the **U.S.-India bilateral relationship**.
- The SEP builds upon **long standing energy partnership** and sets the stage for meaningful engagements through robust **government-to-government** cooperation and **industry engagement**.
- This was the **2nd Ministerial Meeting** of SEP.
- The SEP also supports USG efforts under the **AsiaEDGE initiative**, which establishes India as a **strong energy partner** in the Indo-Pacific region.

- Both the countries are also leading joint **research and development (R&D)** through the **U.S.-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy-Research (PACE-R)** on smart grids and energy storage to increase resilience and reliability of the electric grid.

The SEP organizes inter-agency engagement on both sides across **four primary pillars** of cooperation:

- (1) Power and Energy Efficiency;**
- (2) Oil and Gas;**
- (3) Renewable Energy; and**
- (4) Sustainable Growth.**

Through these pillars, the United States and India are working to:

- **Strengthen and modernize** the power grid and distribution utilities for clean, affordable, and reliable **energy access**
- Improve efficiency, flexibility, and environmental performance in the **power sector**
- Promote inclusive and sustainable **economic growth** through long-term **energy development**
- **Enhance energy security** through oil and gas trade, and infrastructure investment
- Advance the development, deployment, and integration of **renewable energy**
- **Expand access to finance** for renewable energy projects
- **Reduce market barriers** to energy trade and investment.

Highlights of Ministerial

- **Enhancing Energy Security**
 - MOU to begin cooperation on **Strategic Petroleum Reserves** operation and maintenance, including exchange of information and best practices.
- **Harnessing Innovation**
 - Public-private **Hydrogen Task Force** to help scale up technologies to produce hydrogen from renewable energy and fossil fuel sources
 - MOU to collaborate on India's first-ever **Solar Decathlon® India in 2021**
 - Newly launched **South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE)**, supported by USAID, for joint research on development and deployment of **advanced clean technologies**.
 - Exploring possible cooperation through joint activities and information exchange on **sustainable biofuel production and use**, in particular, bioethanol, renewable diesel, other advanced biofuels.
- **Modernizing the Power System**

- Both are collaborating on the deployment and integration of **renewable energy** and **new technologies into the grid** and **modernizing the power distribution** sector.
- Agreed to collaborate on **advanced high-efficiency coal technologies** with **low-to-zero emissions** through **carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS)**, focusing on USDOE's **Coal FIRST (Flexible, Innovative, Resilient, Small, Transformative)** initiative to develop 21st Century coal energy systems.
- Both announced new areas of research on **transformational power generation** based on **supercritical CO₂ (sCO₂)** power cycles and **advanced coal technologies** for **power generation and hydrogen production**.
- **Enhancing Energy Efficiency and Conservation**
 - USAID and Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) jointly initiated a new activity, “**Retrofit of Air Conditioning to Improve Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency**” (RAISE) for healthy and energy efficient buildings. The initiative will be scaled in public sector buildings.
- **Promoting Energy Trade and Investment**
 - The **bilateral hydrocarbon trade** touched **US\$ 9.2 billion during 2019-20**, marking a 93% increase since 2017-18, and affirmed to promote greater hydrocarbon trade between the two countries.
- **Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth**
 - Enhancing **long-term energy development** and plans and strategies through adoption of best practices and methodologies in **energy data management**
 - Capacity building in **energy modeling** and **promotion of low carbon technologies**.
 - **USAID and NITI Aayog** recently launched the **India Energy Modeling Forum** to build a network of modeling communities and its linkage with Government for analytical work and policy making exercise.
- **Empowering Women in the Energy Sector**
 - USAID launched the **South Asia Women in Energy (SAWIE)** platform focused on the **power sector** and both are working to incorporate **gender-focused activities** across the technical pillars.
 - The Ministers committed to **addressing gender diversity, gender mainstreaming**, and promoting **women's entrepreneurship** across the **energy sector** through the SEP platform.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

Context

Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs participated in the **3rd G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG)** meeting under the **Saudi Arabian Presidency**.

Background

- The meeting was convened to discuss the **global economic outlook** amid evolving **COVID-19 pandemic** crisis along with other **G20 Finance Track priorities** for the year 2020.
- The Finance Minister, in the first session of the meeting, talked about the **G20 Action Plan** in **response to COVID-19** which was endorsed by the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in their previous meeting on 15th April 2020.
- This **G20 Action Plan** lays out a list of **collective commitments** under the **pillars of Health Response, Economic Response, Strong and Sustainable Recovery and International Financial Coordination**, aimed at coordinating G20 efforts to fight the pandemic.

Highlights

- In the second session of the meeting, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors discussed the **developments on G20 Finance Track** deliverables under the Saudi Arabian Presidency.
- India emphasized **two** such deliverables.
- First, enhancing **access to opportunities for Women, Youth and SMEs** is a priority agenda under Saudi Presidency and a **Menu of Policy Options on Access to Opportunities** has been developed by G20 under this agenda.
 - The Menu presents country experiences of G20 members related to policies aimed at: Youth, Women, Informal Economy, Technology & Adult Skills, and Financial Inclusion.
 - India highlighted that this agenda has assumed even greater importance now as the pandemic has most impacted the **vulnerable sections**.
- Second, The **International Taxation agenda** and the intended deliverable of formulating a solution for addressing **challenges related to digital taxation**
 - India emphasised that it is imperative that this consensus based solution should be **simple, inclusive** and based on a **robust economic impact assessment**.

G-20

- **Founded - 1999**
- The G20 (or Group of Twenty) is an **international forum** for the **governments and central bank governors** from **19 countries and the European Union (EU)**.
- The aim is to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of **international financial stability**
- The G20 has expanded its agenda **since 2008** and **heads of government** or heads of state, **as well as finance ministers** and foreign ministers, have **periodically conferred at summits** ever since.
- It seeks to address issues that go beyond the responsibilities of any one organization.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis

Q.1 Consider the following statements :

1. United Nations was founded in 1945
2. The UN is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2 With reference to Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, consider the following statements :

1. It has a uniform premium rate of 2% for all crops
2. The scheme also covers commercial or horticulture crops

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.3 Consider the following statements :

1. Char Dham Road Project proposes to connect Badrinath, Dwarka, Kedarnath and Yamunotri
2. The river Bhagirathi is a tributary of the river Yamuna

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.4 The Coal FIRST initiative commonly seen in news is led by :

- a. European Union
- b. United Nations
- c. United States
- d. G 20

PIB Analysis 20th July 2020

COVID19 and Convalescent Plasma Therapy

Context

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare flagged off a Plasma Donation Campaign at AIIMS Delhi.

Details

- The event was co-organized by Delhi Police.
- Plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients contains **protective antibodies** to the novel SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- It can provide **immunity** to patients of Covid-19 when **transfused**.
- Considering its potential benefit, **convalescent plasma therapy** is provided to those patients who are not responding to conventional treatment.

Plasma

- Plasma is the clear, **yellow-colored liquid portion** of blood that remains after red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets and other **cellular components are removed**.
- It is the single largest component of human blood, **comprising about 55 percent**, and **contains water, salts, enzymes, antibodies and other proteins**.
- Plasma carries out a **variety of functions** in the body, including clotting blood, fighting diseases and other critical functions.

What is Convalescent-Plasma Therapy?

- When a pathogen like novel coronavirus infects, our immune systems produce **antibodies**. The antibodies span out to identify and mark the invading virus.
- **White blood cells** attach the identified intruders, and the body gets rid of the infection.
- The therapy, like **blood transfusion**, harvests the antibody from a recovered patient and ingests into a sick person.
- The blood of a survivor usually has a **high concentration of such antibodies** and when given to a susceptible person, these antibodies circulate in blood, reach tissues and **neutralize the virus**.

How is the treatment given?

- Blood is drawn from a person who has **recovered** from COVID-19 sickness.
- The serum is separated and screened for **virus-neutralizing antibodies**.
- **Convalescent serum**, that is the blood serum **rich in antibodies** for that pathogen, is then administered to a COVID-19 patient.
- The sick acquires **passive immunisation**.
- A person becomes eligible to donate only after 28 days of recovery from COVID-19.

How is it different from vaccination?

- This therapy is akin to passive immunization.
- When a vaccine is administered, the **immune system** produces the **antibodies**.
- Thus, at a later date, when the vaccinated person is infected by that pathogen, the immune system **releases the antibodies** and **neutralises the infection**.
- Vaccination mostly provides **lifelong immunity**.
- In the case of **passive antibody therapy**, the effect lasts only up to the time the antibodies injected remain in the bloodstream.
- The protection given is **temporary**.

How long do the antibodies remain in the recipient?

- After the antibody serum is given, it stays on the recipient for **at least three to four days**.
- During this period, the sick person could recover.
- Research reports from the USA and China indicate that the beneficial effect of transfusion plasma is obtained in the first three to four days and not later.

Challenges

- This therapy is not simple to harness, primarily due to the **difficulty of obtaining** significant amounts of plasma from survivors.
- In diseases like COVID-19, where most of the victims are aged, suffering from other medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and so on, not all recovered patients can donate blood.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

COVID Protection System (COPS) for Workplace

Context

CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur has unveiled the COVID Protection System (COPS) for Workplace

Highlights

- The COPS for Workplace includes contactless **Solar Based Intelligent Mask Automated Dispensing Unit cum Thermal Scanner (IntelliMAST)**, **Touchless Faucet (TouF)** and **360° Car Flusher** .
- It will support **Start-Ups and Entrepreneurs** via technology transfer.
- It will also give a boost to the **Make in India** initiative and PM's call for **AtmaNirbhar Bharat**.

The COPS is a conglomeration of the following technologies:

1. Solar Based Intelligent Mask Automated Dispensing Unit cum Thermal Scanner (IntelliMAST)

- It is an Intelligent surveillance kiosk which **identifies the body temperature** and whether an individual is **wearing Face Mask** or not through customised Software solutions.
- The information about an **employee not wearing a Face Mask** is provided to the **Administration** for Cashless **delivery of the Mask** and later deduction of the price from the Salary.
- The **in-built Thermal Scanner** detects probable **rise in Body Temperature** through forehead scanning and via audio visual **alerts the Security Guards**.
- It will help ensure **safety of supervising staff** and **implementation of precautionary measures** in any large organization.
- It is backed up by **Solar Power** for uninterrupted Power Supply during blackouts.

2. Touchless Faucet (TouF)

- The system dispenses **Liquid Soap and Water** from the same Faucet with a time-gap of 30 seconds
- The Faucet can be very easily mounted on top of any Wash-Basin and is available in Plug and Play mode for very easy installation.

- This domestic variant of the Dispensing system will help in **arresting the contamination** and help in further **containing the spread** of infection among the family members, for any asymptomatic individual.

3. 360° Car Flusher

- It is a **Sodium Hypochlorite Water Screen** which uses specialised **Nozzle Design** to ensure that the Sanitizer Diffused Water is evenly spread over and under the Car Body/Wheels with adequate Water Force and coverage.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

- CSIR was **established** by the Government of India in **September 1942** as an **autonomous body**.
- It is known for its cutting edge **R&D knowledge base** in diverse S&T areas and is a contemporary **R&D organization**.
- **President** - Prime Minister of India

The Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute

(also known as **CSIR-CMERI** Durgapur or **CMERI** Durgapur)

- It is a public **engineering research and development** institution in Durgapur, West Bengal
- It is a **constituent laboratory** of the **CSIR**
- This institute is the only **national level research institute** in the field of **mechanical engineering** in India.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis

Q.1 Consider the following statements:

1. Any person recovered from COVID-19 can donate his plasma
2. Plasma Therapy can provide lifelong immunity

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2 Consider the following statements:

1. CSIR is a statutory body and is an apex R&D organization
2. The Minister of Science and Technology is the ex-officio Vice-President of CSIR

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

PIB Analysis 21st July 2020

Zoram Mega Food Park in Mizoram

Context

Union Minister of Food Processing Industries inaugurated the Zoram Mega Food Park Ltd at **Kolasib in Mizoram** through a virtual conference.

Details

- The Food Park is located near **National Highway 54**
- It will help in overcoming the **transportation constraints** and will soon become a major milestone for the **storage and processing** of high variety of foods, spices, fruits and vegetables grown in the region.
- It is spread over **55 acres** and is expected to **benefit more than 25,000 farmers**.
- It is also expected to provide **employment opportunities** to over 5,000 people in the region.
- This is the **first Mega Food Park** in the state of Mizoram.
- The **North-East region** has the potential to become the **Organic Destination of the world** due to its **rich agricultural and horticultural produce**.

About Mega Food Parks

- The scheme was **launched in 2008** and under this, the government provides **financial assistance** (up to Rs. 50 crores per food park) to set up **modern infrastructure** facilities for food processing.
- The Scheme of Mega Food Park aims at providing a **mechanism to link agricultural production** to the **market** by bringing together farmers, processors and retailers.
- It ensures maximizing **value addition, minimizing wastage, increasing farmers income and creating employment opportunities** particularly in the rural sector.
- The Mega Food Park Scheme is based on the “**Cluster**” **approach** and envisages creation of **state of art support infrastructure** for setting up of modern food processing units with well-established supply chains.
- In the last six years, 37 Mega Food Parks have been approved and 18 of them are already in operation.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Manodarpan- an initiative of HRD Ministry

Context

The Union HRD Minister launched **Manodarpan**, an initiative to provide **psychosocial support** to students for their **Mental Health and Well-being**.

Background

- The present pandemic situation has taken a huge sudden toll in the **lifestyle of children**.
- With schools closed and public movement restricted, they are confined within the four walls of their homes leading to **huge psychological stress**.
- For many children it has been very challenging to adapt to new methods of instruction(online) and maintain concentration and attention.

Details

- **MANODARPAN** – will cover a wide range of activities to provide **Psychosocial Support** to students for their **Mental Health & Well-being** during the COVID outbreak and beyond.
- It has been included in the **ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN**, as a part of strengthening human capital and increasing productivity and efficient reform and initiatives for the Education sector.
- The initiative will help in keeping a **healthy lifestyle** and **lead a stress free life**.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

India's first of its kind public EV Charging Plaza

Context

India's first public **EV (Electric Vehicle)** charging plaza was inaugurated at **Chelmsford Club** in New Delhi.

Background

- **EESL** is spearheading the **EV ecosystem development** in India by undertaking demand aggregation for **procuring EVs** and identifying innovative business models for implementation of **Public Charging Station (PCS)**.

Details

- **EESL in collaboration with NDMC** has established India's first of its kind public EV Charging Plaza in Central Delhi.
- It focuses on **enhancing energy efficiency** and **promoting e-mobility**.
- This plaza will host **5 Electric Vehicle Chargers** of different specifications therefore ensuring its **compatibility** with a wide range of electric vehicles
- The charging plaza, with its compatibility with a wide range of electric vehicles will greatly **spur e-mobility adoption**.
- This would make **EV charging hassle free** and convenient for the consumers, thereby making **e-mobility adoption an attractive proposition**.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

RAISE Initiative

Context

The Union Power Minister launched “**Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency**” (**RAISE**) national program.

Background

- **Poor air quality** has been a concern in India for quite some time and has become more important in light of the **COVID pandemic**.
- As people return to their **offices and public spaces**, maintaining good indoor air quality is essential for **occupant comfort, well-being, productivity** and the overall **public health**.
- As a **pilot project EESL** has undertaken a retrofitting of its office air-conditioning and ventilation system.

Details

- “**Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor air quality for Safety and Efficiency**” is developed for **healthy and energy efficient buildings**, in

partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) **MAITREE program**.

- It can potentially alleviate the issue of **bad air quality in workspaces** across the nation and pioneer ways to make them **healthier and greener**.
- The pilot focused on **improving indoor air quality (IAQ), thermal comfort, and energy efficiency (EE)** in EESL office's air conditioning system.
- As per EESL, the pilot project has shown very impressive results – about **80% improvement in Air Quality** parameters with almost no implementation hassles.

Both **RAISE Initiative** and **EV Charging Plaza** reaffirms the pledge for **ecological preservation** and building a **resilient energy sector**, undertaken by EESL and other key stakeholders during the “**#iCommit**” campaign held on **World Environment Day**.

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)

- It is an energy service company of the Government of India and is the **world's largest public ESCO**.
- It is **100% government-owned**, a joint venture of state-owned NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, REC Limited and POWERGRID.

The ‘#iCommit’ initiative

- Launched on **World Environment Day**
- It is a clarion call to all stakeholders and individuals to continue moving towards **energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability** to create a robust and **resilient energy system** in the future.
- iCommit initiative is centered around the idea of building an **energy resilient future**.
- **Driven by EESL**, it is uniting a diverse set of players such as Governments, Corporate, Multilateral and Bilateral Organizations, Think Tanks and Individuals.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

DekhoApna Desh Series

Context

The Ministry of Tourism organised a Webinar titled, “The Mystical Triangle- Maheshwar, Mandu & Omkareshwar” under Dekho Apna Desh Series

Details



- **Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series** is an effort to showcase **India's rich diversity** under **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** and it is continuously spreading the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat through **virtual platforms**.
- The Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series is presented with support of **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)** of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).

Highlights

- The webinar showcased the **richness of the destinations** covered under the **mystical triangle** and acquainted the viewers with the serene, captivating getaways in the **State of Madhya Pradesh** namely Maheshwar, Mandu & Omkareshwar.
- **Maheshwar**
 - The Town lies on the north bank of the **Narmada River**. It was the capital of the Malwa during the Maratha Holkar.
 - The city got its name after **Lord Shiva/ Maheshwara**, it also finds a mention in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharatha.
- **Mandu**
 - Located in Dhar district of State of Madhya Pradesh, it is also known by the name of **Mandavgarh**, Shadiabad (**City of Joy**).
 - It is about 98km away from Indore and at an elevation of 633 meters.
 - Mandu is mainly known for the **love story** of **Sultan Baz Bahadur and Rani Roopmati**.
 - **Baz Bahadur's Palace** built in the 16th-century is famous for its large courtyards encompassed by large halls and high terraces.
- **Omkareshwar**
 - It is a spiritual town in Madhya Pradesh, 78kms away from Indore.
 - Omkareshwar has 33 deities and 108 impressive **shivling** in divine form and this is the only **Jyotirlinga** which is situated on the **north bank of Narmada**.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

- The initiative 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' was announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister on **31st October, 2015** on the occasion of the **140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.
- Through this innovative measure, the knowledge of the **culture, traditions and practices** of different states & UTs will lead to an enhanced understanding and **bonding between the states**, thereby strengthening the **unity and integrity of India**.
- The broad objectives of the initiative are as follows:
 - i. **To CELEBRATE the Unity in Diversity** of our Nation and to maintain and strengthen the fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the

- people of our Country
- ii. **To PROMOTE** the **spirit of national integration** through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian States and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between States
 - iii. **To SHOWCASE** the **rich heritage and culture**, customs and traditions of either State for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity
 - iv. **TO ESTABLISH** long-term **engagements** and
 - v. **TO CREATE** an **environment** which promotes learning between States by sharing best practices and experiences.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Consumer Protection Act, 2019

Context

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 came into force on 20th July 2020.

Highlights

- This new Act will **empower consumers** and help them in **protecting their rights** through its various notified **Rules and provisions** like Consumer Protection Councils, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions, Mediation, Product Liability and punishment for manufacture or sale of products containing adulterant / spurious goods.

Provisions

- Establishment of the **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)** to **promote, protect and enforce** the **rights of consumers**.
 - The CCPA will be empowered to **conduct investigations** into violations of consumer rights and institute complaints / prosecution, order recall of unsafe goods and services, order discontinuance of unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements.
 - It can **impose penalties** on manufacturers/endorsers/publishers of **misleading advertisements**.
- **For E-Commerce Platforms**
 - The rules for **prevention of unfair trade** practice by **e-commerce platforms** will also be covered under this Act.
 - Under the act **every e-commerce entity** is required to **provide information** relating to return, refund, exchange, warranty and

guarantee, delivery and shipment, etc. **including country of origin** which are necessary for enabling the consumer to make an **informed decision** at the pre-purchase stage on its platform.

- e-commerce platforms have to acknowledge the receipt of any **consumer complaint** within forty-eight hours and redress the complaint within one month from the date of receipt under this Act.

- **Consumer Dispute Adjudication Process**

- The Act provides for **simplifying the consumer dispute adjudication process** in the **consumer commissions**.
- It includes empowerment of the **State and District Commissions** to review their own orders, enabling a consumer to **file complaints electronically** and file **complaints in consumer Commissions** that have jurisdiction over the place of his residence.
- **Videoconferencing for hearing** and deemed **admissibility of complaints** if the question of admissibility is not decided within the specified period of 21 days.
- **Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism** of Mediation has been provided in the new Act.
- This will simplify the adjudication process.

- **Penalties and Liabilities**

- The Act provides for **punishment** by a competent court for **manufacture or sale of adulterant/spurious goods**.
- The court may, in case of first conviction, **suspend any licence** issued to the person for a period of up to two years, and in case of second or subsequent conviction, **cancel the licence**.
- The New Act introduces the **concept of product liability** and brings within its scope, **the product manufacturer, product service provider** and **product seller**, for any claim for **compensation**.

- **Central Consumer Protection Council Rules**

- They are provided for constitution of **the Central Consumer Protection Council**, an **advisory body** on consumer issues, **headed by the Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** with the Minister of State as Vice Chairperson and 34 other members from different fields.
- The Council, which has a **three-year tenure**, will have Minister-in-charge of consumer affairs from **two States from each region**- North, South, East, West, and NER.
- There is also provision for having **working groups** from amongst the members for specific tasks.

This Act will prove to be a significant tool in protecting consumer rights in the country.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis



Q.1 Consider the following statements :

1. Zoram Mega Food Park will be the first Mega Food Park in the North-East Region
2. Tropic of Cancer passes through Mizoram

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2 Manodarpan, an initiative to provide psychosocial support to students for their Mental Health and Well-being is launched by

- a. NITI Aayog
- b. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- c. Ministry of Human Resource Development
- d. Ministry of Women and Child Development

Q.3 With reference to Consumer Protection Act ,2019, consider the following statements :

1. It provides for penalties for misleading advertisements
2. E-commerce platforms are excluded from its ambit

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.4 Consider the following pairs

Famous place

Pandharpur
Tiruchirappalli
Omakreshwar

River

Chambal
Cauvery
Narmada

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

PIB Analysis 22nd July 2020

Sero-prevalence Study

Context

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had commissioned a sero-surveillance study in Delhi.

Details

- The study has been done by the **National Center for Disease Control [NCDC]** in collaboration with Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi, following a rigorous **multi-stage sampling** study design.
- For all the 11 districts of Delhi, survey teams were formed.
- **Blood samples** were collected from selected individuals after taking written informed consent.
- Then their **sera were tested for IgG antibodies** and **infection using COVID KAVACH ELISA** approved by Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR).
- It is **one of the largest sero-prevalence studies** conducted in the country using the **ELISA testing**.
- The tests done help in **identification of presence of antibodies** in the general population.
- The test performed is not a diagnostic test but only **provides information about past infection** due to SARS CoV-2 in individuals who test positive.

Results

- The results of the sero-prevalence study show that on an average, **across Delhi, the prevalence of IgG antibodies is 23.48 %**.
- The study also indicates that a **large number** of infected persons remain **asymptomatic**.
- This implies the following:
 1. Nearly six months into the epidemic, **only 23.48%** of the people **are affected in Delhi**, which has several pockets of dense population.
 - a. This can be attributed to the **proactive efforts** taken by the Government to prevent the spread of infection including **prompt lockdown**, effective **containment and surveillance measures**, including **contact tracing** and tracking, as well as citizen's compliance to COVID Appropriate Behaviours.
 2. However, a **significant proportion** of the population is **still vulnerable**.
 - a. Therefore, the **containment measures** need to continue with the same rigour.
 - b. Non-pharmacological interventions such as **physical distancing**, use of **face mask/cover, hand hygiene, cough etiquette** and avoidance of crowded places etc., must be followed strictly.

Antibody testing repeatedly done over time i.e. **sero-surveillance**, generates important evidence for assessing the spread of the pandemic from time to time.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

Private Train Project

Context

The Ministry of Railways organized a Pre application conference on Private Train Project.

Details

- The Ministry of Railways invited 12 Requests for Qualifications for **private participation** in **operation of passenger train services** over **109** Origin Destination pairs of routes.
- It involves the introduction of **151 modern Trains** (Rakes) which shall be in **addition to the existing trains** operated on the network.
- This is the **first initiative of private investment** for running Passenger Trains over Indian Railway Network.
- The project would entail private sector investment of about **Rs 30,000 crore**.
- The private entities for undertaking the project will be selected through a **two-stage competitive bidding process** comprising Request for Qualification (RFQ) and Request for Proposal (RFP).

Benefits

- The initiative is aimed towards **improving the availability of transportation services** to the people of this Nation.
- Introduction of **modern technology** and services would improve the **overall travel experience** of passengers.
- Multiple operators in train operations will **create competition** and **improve service delivery**.
- This initiative is also intended at **reducing the demand supply deficit** in the passenger transportation sector.
- It will **boost revenues** and **increase job opportunities**.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

DDT and Malaria Control Program

Context

HIL (India) Limited, a PSU under the **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers**, supplied 20.60 Metric tonne of DDT to **South Africa** for their Malaria control program.

Background

- **HIL (India)** is the **sole manufacturer** of **DDT globally**.
- The company was incorporated in **1954** to **manufacture and supply DDT** to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for **malaria control program**.
- In the year 2019-20, the product was supplied to 20 States in the country.
- The Company also **exports** the product to **many African countries**.

Highlights

- The Department of Health, **South Africa** shall be utilising DDT in three provinces adjoining Mozambique.
- The region is highly affected with Malaria and it has reported **maximum morbidity and mortality** due to the disease in recent years.
- Malaria continues to be one of the **major public health problems** globally.
- **Spraying of insecticides** inside the human habitants i.e. Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) has proven to be an effective mosquito control tool.
- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** recommends **DDT** as one of the efficient IRS chemicals **to curb malaria mosquito menace** and it is widely used by Southern African countries like South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique etc. and India.

Malaria

- Malaria is caused by **Plasmodium parasites**.
- The parasites are spread to people through the bites of infected **female Anopheles mosquitoes**, called "**malaria vectors**."
- According to **WHO**, in **2018**, there were an estimated **228 million cases** of malaria worldwide.
- The estimated number of malaria deaths stood at 405 000 in 2018.
- **Children aged under 5 years** are the **most vulnerable** group affected by malaria.
- The **WHO African Region** continues to carry a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. (roughly 93%)
- In the **South East Asia Region**, **India** accounts for the majority of cases and death.

DDT

- **Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane**, commonly known as DDT, is a colorless,

tasteless chemical compound.

- **Originally** developed as an **insecticide**, it became infamous for its **environmental impacts and other health concerns**.
- DDT's **insecticidal action** was discovered by the Swiss chemist **Paul Hermann Müller** in 1939.
- DDT was used in the **second half of World War II** to **control malaria and typhus** among civilians and troops.
- Müller was awarded the **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine** in 1948 "for his discovery of the high efficiency of DDT as a contact poison against several arthropods".
- A worldwide **ban on agricultural use** was formalized under the **Stockholm Convention** on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
- However its use in **disease vector control** continues, because of its effectiveness in reducing **malarial infections**.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis

Q.1 World Malaria Report is published by:

- a. World Economic Forum
- b. World Health Organization
- c. Oxfam International
- d. Medecins Sans Frontieres

Q.2 Consider the following statements :

1. India is the sole manufacturer of DDT globally
2. Malaria is spread by Aedes Aegypti mosquitoes

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

PIB Analysis 23rd July 2020

India Ideas Summit 2020

Context

The Prime Minister delivered the keynote address at the India Ideas Summit

About the Summit



- The Summit is being hosted by the **US-India Business Council (USIBC)**.
- The theme for this year's Summit is '**Building a Better Future**'.
- 2020 marks the **45th anniversary** of USIBC.

Highlights

- **Global economic resilience through stronger domestic economic capacities**
 - The Prime Minister talked about the need to place the **poor and the vulnerable** at the **core of the growth agenda**.
 - He underlined that '**Ease of Living**' is as important as '**Ease of Business**'.
- **India offers a perfect combination of openness, opportunities and options**
 - He highlighted efforts taken in the last six years to make Indian economy more **open and reform oriented**.
 - The reforms have ensured **competitiveness, enhanced transparency**, expanded **digitization, greater innovation** and more **policy stability**.
 - He also mentioned opportunities in the **frontier technologies** of 5G, Big Data analytics, Quantum Computing, Block-chain and Internet of Things.
- **Extensive opportunities to invest across sectors**
 - He listed several sectors which **offer tremendous opportunities** to invest, viz. the **energy sector; health sector, infrastructure** creation including building houses, roads, highways and ports; **civil aviation** etc.
 - India is also raising the **FDI cap** for investment in defence sector to **74%**, two defence corridors have been established to encourage production of defense equipment and platforms
 - India has raised the FDI cap for investment in **insurance to 49%** and **100% FDI** is permitted for investment in **insurance intermediaries**.
- **Rising investments in India**
 - He highlighted India's rise in **Ease of Doing Business** rankings of the World Bank.
 - He underlined that each year, India is reaching record highs in FDI, adding that FDI inflows in India in 2019-20 were 74 billion dollars, which is an increase of 20% over the previous year.
- **Best time to invest in India**

- Calling USA and India as **natural partners**, he said this partnership can play an important role in helping the **world bounce back faster after the pandemic**.
- He noted that India's rise means a rise in trade opportunities with a nation that can be trusted, a rise in **global integration** with increasing openness, a rise in **competitiveness** with **access to a market** which offers scale, and a rise in **returns on investment** with the availability of **skilled human resources**.
- Reaching out to the American investors, he said that there has never been a better time to invest in India.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course START FREE TRIAL

Vriksharopan Abhiyan

Context

Union Home Minister launched the **Tree Plantation Campaign** "Vriksharopan Abhiyan" of the Ministry of Coal.

Vriksharopan Abhiyan

- The campaign was organized by the **Ministry of Coal** involving all Coal/Lignite PSUs.
- The tree plantation campaign was conducted at more than **130 locations** spread in 38 Districts of 10 coal/lignite bearing States **through Video Conferencing**.
- The Home Minister laid the Foundation stone of **6 Eco Parks/ Tourism sites**.
- The **eco-parks/tourism sites** would provide avenues for **recreation, adventure, water sport, bird watching etc.** for the people residing in nearby areas and may also be integrated to form part of the **tourism circuit**.
- These sites are being planned to generate **revenue** for self-sustenance and create **employment potential** for local people.

Going Green Initiative

- It is the key thrust area of the coal sector involving **maximization of green cover** through **ecological reclamation** of mined out areas and overburden dumps, plantation in and around mines and avenue plantation at suitable places.
- Ministry's Going Green initiative will kick start through active participation of coal/lignite PSUs as well as private miners.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

Union Internationale Des Chemins / International Union of Railways (UIC)

Context

DG - Railway Protection Force has been nominated as the **Vice-Chairman** of the UIC Security Platform for the period July 2020 - July 2022.

Background

- RPF, on behalf of **Indian Railways**, has always been an **active member of the UIC** security platform and contributed to discussions, deliberations, exchange of ideas and best practices since long.
- It has also organized **UIC Security Conferences** in 2006 and 2015 in New Delhi.
- RPF involves itself in **working groups, forums and meetings** and its contribution in working of UIC security platform has been appreciated by UIC leadership since long.

International Union of Railways (UIC)

- UIC (**Union Internationale Des Chemins**) is a French word the meaning of which in English is International Union of Railways.
- It is **headquartered in Paris**.
- The **UIC Security Platform** is empowered to **develop and formulate** analysis and **policy** positions on behalf of the **rail sector** in matters relating to **security of persons, property and installations**.
- The security platform **promotes the exchange of information** and **experience** among the **security agencies of UIC** members and proposes common interest **projects and activities** in the field of railway security as dictated by requirement of members or external events.
- The **COVID-19 Task Force** setup by UIC security platform has proved to be very useful in **exchange of ideas, precautions to be taken, restoration efforts** and experience sharing during the current pandemic.

IAS Prelims 2020 Course
START FREE TRIAL

Comet NEOWISE

Context

Nehru Science Centre in its 'Lockdown Lecture' series organised 'Comet NEOWISE – A Primer' to discuss the exploration aspects related to comets.

Comet Neowise

- Officially known as **C/2020F3**, it is the brightest comet that can be seen in the sky and will be visible across the globe as it is closest to the earth these days.
- The Neowise, once it disappears will be visible only after **6800 years**.
- 'Comet Neowise' was first spotted by **NASA's** spacecraft mission **Near-Earth Object Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer (NEOWISE)** on 27 March 2020 and hence the name NEOWISE.

Comets

- Comets are **icy small bodies** which consist mostly of **rocky materials, dust and ice**.
- As they come closer to the sun there is **evaporation of volatile contents** from these comets.
- When they start melting, the particles **start glowing** by the reflected sunlight.
- This makes the '**dust tail**' of Comets.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis

Q.1 Consider the following statements :

1. Ease of Doing Business Index/Report is published by World Bank
2. 'Protecting minority investors' is also a component to calculate scores

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2 'Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer' is an infrared wavelength astronomical space telescope launched by :

- a. ISRO
- b. NASA
- c. ROSCOSMOS
- d. JAXA

PIB Analysis 24th July 2020

Study in India Programme

Context

The Ministry of HRD conducted the first ever **Indian Scholastic Assessment (Ind-SAT) Test 2020** under its '**Study in India**' programme.

Details

Nearly **five thousand candidates** from Nepal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Sri-Lanka, Kenya, Zambia, Indonesia and Mauritius appeared for the exam conducted in the **proctored internet mode** by the **National Testing Agency**.

Indian Scholastic Assessment Test (Ind-SAT)

- Ind-SAT is an exam for grant of **scholarships and admissions to foreign students** for studying in select **Indian universities** under the Study in India programme.
- The exam is designed to gauge the **scholastic capability** of students applying to study in India.
- The **Ind-SAT scores** will serve as a **criterion to shortlist** the meritorious students for the allocation of scholarships for undergraduate as well as post graduate programmes under 'Study in India' programme.

Study in India

- It is an **initiative of MHRD** under which **foreign students** come to study in 116 select **higher education institutions** in India for **undergraduate and postgraduate** programmes.
- The selection of the students is based on their **merit in the class 12 / school leaving exam**.
- About top 2000 students are given **scholarships**, while some others are given fee discounts by the institutions.
- Around 780 students had taken admission under the programme during its first year - 2018-19.
- In the second year this number rose to about 3200.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Largest Solar Power Plant of Navy Commissioned

Context

Indian Navy commissioned a 3 MW Solar Power Plant at **Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, Kerala**.

Highlights

- The solar plant is the **largest in the Indian Navy** and has an estimated **life of 25 years**.
- All components have been **indigenously sourced**, including 9180 highly efficient monocrystalline solar panels employing the latest technology.
- The project has been executed by **Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation Ltd (KELTRON)**.
- Despite heavy monsoons and restrictions due to COVID-19, all concerned agencies executed the work in a time bound manner.
- The Solar Power Plant project will help Naval Station Ezhimala in **reducing the carbon footprint**.
- **Surplus power** generated will also feed the **KSEB electricity grid**.

It is one of the many initiatives undertaken by INA towards a **clean and green environment**.

This is in line with the Govt of India initiative of '**National Solar Mission**' to achieve **100GW of solar power by 2022**.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Hydrogen-CNG (H-CNG)

Context

The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has issued draft notification seeking comments and suggestions from the public and all stakeholders for inclusion of Hydrogen enriched CNG as an **automotive fuel**.

CNG and H-CNG

- CNG is compressed natural gas and is mainly **composed of methane**.
- CNG emits **less air pollutants** - carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter than **petrol or diesel**.
- H-CNG is a **blend of hydrogen and CNG**.
- The **ideal hydrogen concentration** in H-CNG is around **18%**.
- Worldwide hydrogen is **being blended (20-30%)** with **natural gas** and then

compressed to dispense into vehicles.

Benefits

- The use of next generation technology such as hydrogen-CNG can **lower emissions**, while **promoting green** fuel for automobiles in the country.
- **US, Brazil, Canada, South Korea** have all **conducted trials** and found that they get a **reduction in emissions from buses** using H-CNG, according to an Environment Pollution Prevention and Control Authority (EPCA) report.
- Compared to conventional CNG, use of H-CNG can **reduce emission of carbon monoxide up to 70%**.
- It can also help achieve up to **5% savings in fuel** as per tests by the Automotive Research Association of India and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL).
- H-CNG is a promising technology and can be set up in **different locations**, such as **petrol pumps or bus depots**.
- The **most promising aspect** of this technology is that it will allow for the **utilisation of the existing infrastructure** of CNG buses as well as the **piping network** and **dispensing station**.

Therefore it is seen as the next-gen CNG for cleaner air.

[IAS Prelims 2020 Course](#)
[START FREE TRIAL](#)

Women Officers In Indian Army

Context

Ministry of Defence has issued the formal Government Sanction Letter for grant of **Permanent Commission (PC)** to Women Officers in the Indian Army.

Highlights

- The order specifies grant of PC to **Short Service Commissioned (SSC)** Women Officers in all ten streams of the **Indian Army**.
- It paves the way for empowering Women Officers to shoulder larger roles in the organisation.

MCQs based on PIB Analysis

Q.1 Consider the following statements :

1. Aim of National Solar Mission is to achieve 140 GW of solar power by 2025
2. Rewa solar Power Plant in Madhya Pradesh is the Asia's largest solar power plant

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q.2 Consider the following statements :

1. CNG is made by compressing natural gas, which is mainly composed of ethane
2. H-CNG cannot utilise CNG's pipeline and dispensing infrastructure

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 Only
- b. 2 Only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2