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NITI Aayog releases SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21

Why in the News?

- NITI Aayog has released the **third edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2020–21**.
- NITI Aayog launched the report titled, ‘**SDG India Index and Dashboard 2020–21: Partnerships in the Decade of Action**’.
- The index documents the progress made by India’s States and Union Territories towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets.
- The SDG India Index 2020–21, developed in collaboration with the United Nations in India, tracks progress of all States and UTs on 115 indicators that are aligned to MoSPI’s National Indicator Framework (NIF).
- The 115 indicators incorporate 16 out of 17 SDGs, with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17, and cover 70 SDG targets.



Key Points Methodology

- The SDG India Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and Union Territory.
- Overall State and UT scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure aggregate performance of the sub-national unit based on its performance across the 16 SDGs.

Methodology

Based on globally accepted SDSN methodology



- These scores range between 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the 2030 targets. The higher the score of a State/UT, the greater the distance to target achieved.

- States and Union Territories are classified as below based on their SDG India Index score:
Aspirant: 0–49
Performer: 50–64
Front-Runner: 65–99
Achiever: 100



Overall Results and Findings

- The country's overall SDG score improved by 6 points—from 60 in 2019 to 66 in 2020–21.
- This positive stride towards achieving the targets is largely driven by exemplary country-wide performance in Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and Goal 7(Affordable and Clean Energy), where the composite Goal scores are 83 and 92, respectively.
- Kerala has the top rank with a score of 75** followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu with 74 points.
- Bihar has emerged as the worst performer with the lowest score of 52** followed by Jharkhand with score of 56.
- In Union Territories: Chandigarh has topped the list with the score of 79.**

Rank	States
75	Kerala
74	Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu
72	Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Uttarakhand
71	Sikkim
70	Maharashtra
61	Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, Odisha
60	Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh
57	Assam
56	Jharkhand
52	Bihar

- **Note:** Mizoram, Haryana, and Uttarakhand are the top gainers in 2020–21 in terms of improvement in score from 2019, with an increase of 12, 10 and 8 points, respectively.

RDSO becomes the first Institution to be declared SDO under "One Nation One Standard" mission on BIS

Why in the News?

- **RDSO (Research Design & Standards Organization)** of Indian Railways has become the first Institution to be declared **SDO (Standard Developing Organization)** under "One Nation One Standard" mission on **BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards)** which is Institution under Department of Consumer Affairs.
- RDSO took the initiative to seek recognition as a Standard Developing Organization (SDO) under the **BIS SDO Recognition Scheme**.



Key Points

- **RDSO**, Lucknow, which is the sole R&D Wing of the Ministry of Railways, is one of India's leading Standard formulating Body undertaking standardization work for the railway sector.
- The **recognition is valid for 3 years** and will require renewal after completion of the validity period.

About the BIS SDO Recognition Scheme:

- To attain "Nation One Standard" vision of Govt. of India, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Standards Body, has launched a scheme which provides for "Recognition of SDO".

- Through this scheme, BIS aims at aggregating and integrating the existing capabilities and dedicated domain specific expertise available with various organizations in the country engaged in standards development in their specific sectors, and enable convergence of all standard development activities in the country resulting in “One National Standard for One Subject”.

About BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards):

- The Bureau of Indian Standards is the national Standards Body of India working under the aegis of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Government of India. It was established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 which came into effect on 23 December 1986.

Other Initiatives of BIS:

- Portal for Consumer Engagement
- BIS-Care App
- COVID-19 Standards
- Quality Control Orders

Union Cabinet approves Agreement on Mass Media Cooperation SCO

Why in the News?

- The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for signing and ratification of an agreement on "Cooperation in the field of Mass Media" between all the member states of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- The agreement, which was signed in June, 2019, would provide an opportunity to the member states to share best practices and new innovations in the field of mass media.



Key Points

Main areas of cooperation:

- Creation of favorable conditions for wide and mutual distribution of information through mass media in order to further deepen the knowledge about the lives of the peoples of their states.
- Cooperation among the editorial offices of the mass media of their states, as well as among relevant ministries, agencies.

- It will assist in broadcasting of television and radio programmes and those, distributed legally within the territory of the state of the other side.
- The agreement will encourage the exchange of experience and specialists in the field of mass media, provide mutual assistance in training media professionals and encourage cooperation among the educational and scientific research institutions.



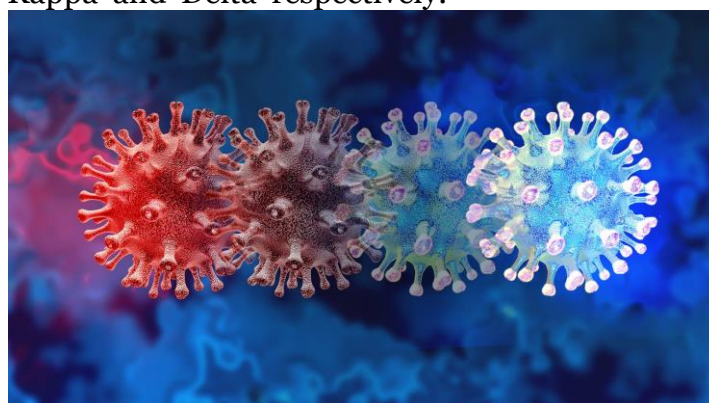
Facts about SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic and security alliance.

- **Formed:** 15 June 2001
- **Members:** China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India & Pakistan.
- **Headquarter:** Beijing, China
- India became a full member of the SCO in 2017. Prior to that, India had an observer status, which was granted to it in 2005.

WHO names COVID-19 variants first found in India as 'Kappa' and 'Delta'

Why in the News?

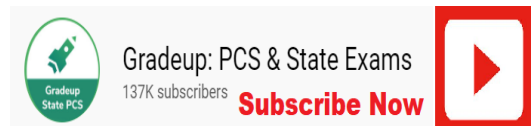
- **The World Health Organisation (WHO)** announced the B.1.617.1 and B.1.617.2 variants of the COVID-19, first identified in India, have been named as 'Kappa' and 'Delta' respectively.



Key Points

- They will not replace existing scientific names, but are aimed to help in public discussion of Variants of Concern (VOCs) & Variants of Interest (VOIs).

Other COVID-19 variants:



- The B.1.1.7 COVID-19 strain which was first detected in the UK will be known as 'Alpha'.
- The COVID-19 strains that were found in the US are 'Epsilon' and 'Iota'.
- The B.1.351 variant detected in South Africa is now called 'Beta'.
- P.1 variant which was first found in Brazil is 'Gamma' and the P.2 variant is 'Zeta'.

Justice (Retd) Arun Kumar Mishra takes charge as NHRC Chairman

Why in the News?

- Justice Arun Kumar Mishra (Retd) took charge as the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).



Key Points

- **Arun Kumar Mishra** retired from the Supreme Court in August 2020.
- About National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):** It is a statutory public body constituted on 12 October 1993 as per provisions of Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

Jagjit Pavadia elected as president of International Narcotics Control Board

Why in the News?

- Jagjit Pavadia, former Narcotics Commissioner of India, has been elected president of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB).
- She succeeds Cornelis P. De Johncheere.



Key Points

- **Jagjit Pavadia** is the first Indian to be heading the Vienna-based organization and the second woman to hold this office.
- She has been a member of the INCB since 2015. She was elected first vice-president of the Board in 2016.

About International Narcotics Control Board (INCB):

- INCB is an independent, quasi-judicial expert body established by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 by merging two bodies: the Permanent Central Narcotics Board and the Drug Supervisory Body.
- Its headquarters is Vienna, Austria.

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