

Daily Current Affairs 18/06/2021

1. Union Cabinet approves “Deep Ocean Mission”

Why in News



- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** has approved the proposal of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** on "Deep Ocean Mission".
- It explores the Deep Ocean for resources and develops deep sea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources.
- MoES will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.

Key Points

About "Deep Ocean Mission":

- Deep Ocean Mission will be a mission mode project to support the **Blue Economy Initiatives** of the Government of India.
- The estimated cost of the Mission will be Rs. 4077 crore for a period of 5 years to be implemented in a phase-wise manner.
- This mission will make India one among the handful of powerful nations that already have dedicated ocean studies and missions, including the **US, Japan, France, Russia and China.**

Major Components of the Deep Ocean Mission:

- Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining, and Manned Submersible
- Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
- Technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity
- Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration
- Energy and freshwater from the Ocean
- Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology

Significance of Mission:

- Oceans, which cover 70 percent of the globe, remain a key part of our life. About 95 percent of the Deep Ocean remains unexplored.

- For India, with its three sides surrounded by the oceans and around 30 percent of the country's population living in coastal areas, the ocean is a major economic factor supporting fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, livelihoods and blue trade.
- India's 7517 km long coastline is home to nine coastal states and 1382 islands.
- Considering the importance of the oceans on sustainability, the United Nations has declared the decade, 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

About Blue Economy:

- The blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.

Other Blue Economy Initiatives:

- Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology (O-SMART) Scheme
- India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development
- Sagarmala Project
- National Fisheries Policy
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management

2. MoU for development of Sea Plane services in India Why in News



MOU FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SEAPLANE SERVICES IN INDIA BETWEEN MOPSW AND MOCA

Objective:
MoPSW will develop Aerodromes/Waterfront infrastructure in coordination with MoCA, DGCA and AAI for commencing seaplane operations

- Seaplane routes will be identified by Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, MoCA, SDCL and all States/other agencies
- MoCA to bid and select potential airline operators
- Seaplane operations will be under **RCS-UDAN Scheme**

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** and **Ministry of Civil Aviation** for development of Sea Plane services in India was signed. **Note:** India's first sea plane service between Kevadia and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad started operation in October 2020, under Sagarmala Sea plane Services.

Key Points

- This MoU envisages **development of Non Scheduled/Scheduled operation of seaplane services** within territorial jurisdiction of India under **RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik scheme** of government of India.
- As per MoU, a Co-ordination Committee with officials of Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) and Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is to be set up for timely completion of operationalisation of Seaplane services at various locations.

- MoCA, MoPSW, SDCL (Sagarmala Development Company Limited) will consider operationalising Seaplane operating routes as identified/suggested by all agencies.
- It will enhance seamless connectivity across the nation by promoting eco-friendly transportation through Sea planes and to boost the tourism industry.

About UDAN Scheme:

- **RCS-UDAN, "Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik"** is a Government of India's flagship program which aims to provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on regional routes.
- This **Regional Connectivity Scheme** offers a unique opportunity to a common man to fly at an affordable price.
- The UDAN Scheme is a key component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (India) on 15 June 2016.

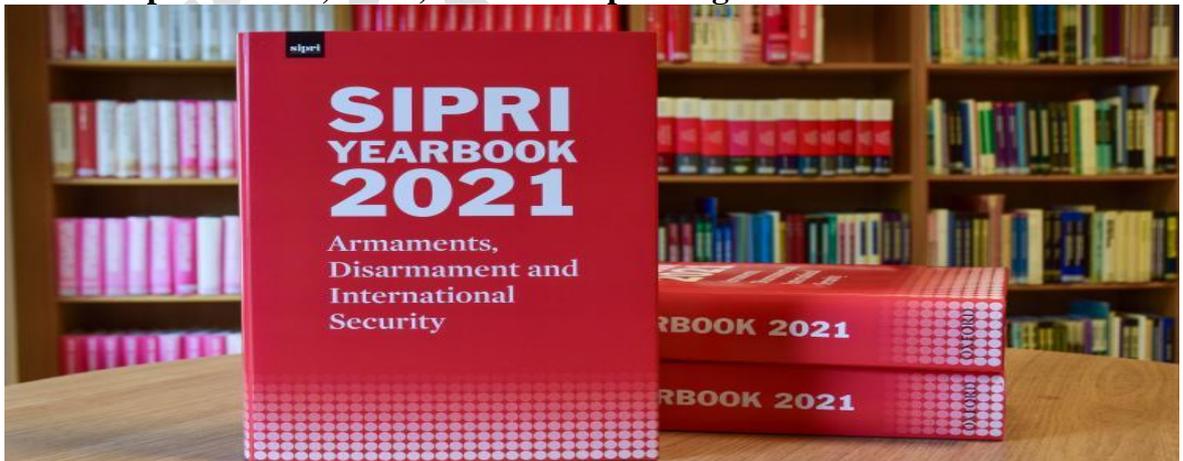
About UDAN 4.1:

- The UDAN 4.1 scheme focuses on connecting smaller airports, along with special helicopter and sea plane routes.

Sagarmala Sea plane Services:

- Sagarmala Seaplane Services is a project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- This project is being initiated under a Special Purpose Vehicle framework through airline operators.
- The project execution and implementation would be through **Sagarmala Development Company Ltd (SDCL)**.

3. SIPRI Report: China, India, Pakistan expanding nuclear arsenal



Why in News

- Swedish think tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) launched the findings of *SIPRI Yearbook 2021*, which assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security.

Key Points

- **India** has an estimated **156 nuclear warheads** at the start of 2021 compared to 150 at the start of last year.
- Pakistan- 165 nuclear warheads
- China- 350 nuclear warheads
- Russia- 6255 nuclear warheads
- USA- 5550 nuclear warheads
- **The U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea** - together possessed an estimated **13,080 nuclear weapons** at the start of 2021.
- **The U.S. and Russia** together possessed over **90%** of global nuclear weapons.

Note:

- **India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, China and Australia** were the five largest **importers** of major arms in the world between 2016 and 2020.
- Saudi Arabia had 11 percent share and **India 9.5 percent** in the global **imports** of the major arms in this time period.

Treaties Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Testing:

- Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

India's Nuclear Weapon Program:

- India tested its first nuclear device in May 1974.
- However, India has a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) allowing it to participate in global civilian nuclear technology commerce.
- India was admitted as a member into the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016 and Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017.

4. 5th edition of VivaTech

Why in News



- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the 5th edition of VivaTech 2021.

Key Points

About VivaTech:

- VivaTech is one of the largest digital and startup events in Europe, held in Paris every year since 2016.
- It is jointly organized by Publicis Groupe – a prominent advertising and marketing conglomerate and Les Echos – a leading French media group.
- It brings together stakeholders in technology innovation and the startup ecosystem and includes exhibitions, awards, panel discussions and startup contests.

Key Points of the speech:

- **Infosys** is providing tech support for the French Open tournament and collaboration involving French companies like Atos, Capgemini and India's **TCS and Wipro** as examples of IT talent of the two countries serving companies and citizens all over the world.
- India's universal and unique **bio-metric digital identity system - Aadhar** - helped to provide timely financial support to the poor.
- Two public digital education programmes- **Swayam and Diksha** - in quick time to help students.
- Indigenous IT platform, **Arogya-Setu** enabled effective contact tracing.
- The **COWIN digital platform** has already helped ensure vaccines to millions.
- The Prime Minister enumerated initiatives like **state-of-the-art public digital infrastructure, five hundred and twenty three thousand kilometres of fibre optic network linking One hundred and fifty six thousand village councils**, public wi-fi networks across the country.
- There are state-of-the-art innovation labs in Seven Thousand Five Hundred schools under the **Atal Innovation Mission**.

5. IIT Bombay hosts Conference of BRICS Network Universities as part of 13th BRICS Summit



Why in News

- A three day virtual Conference of BRICS Network Universities on the **theme of electric mobility** was hosted by IIT Bombay.

- This conference was part of the engagements that **India** is hosting under the education stream during its **Chairship of the 13th BRICS Summit this year.**

Key Points

- Eighteen experts from Brazil, Russia, India, China and S. Africa talked about various aspects of electric mobility like traffic management, hydrogen technology, hybrid vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and linkage between e-mobility and livelihoods.

About BRICS Network University:

- It is a union of higher education institutions of the five BRICS member countries, formed with the objective of enhancing educational cooperation in general, and especially in the realm of research and innovation.
- IIT Bombay is the lead institution of India for the BRICS Network University.

Note: The **13th BRICS Summit** will be held under India's Chairship in 2021, and it will be the third time India will host the BRICS Summit after 2012 and 2016.

- The theme for India's Chairship for 2021 would be '**BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus**'.

Facts about BRICS:

- **Formation:** 2009
- **Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

6. Madhya Pradesh to launch 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan'



Government of Madhya Pradesh

Why in News

- In Madhya Pradesh, 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan' means free from corona with the help of a youth power campaign will be launched to make people aware about the COVID pandemic.

Key Points

About 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan':

- This campaign will be run by the Higher Education and Technical Education Department in collaboration with the Public Health and Family Welfare Department.

- In the Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti Abhiyan, college teachers and around 16 lakh students will be made aware of corona infection by learning Covid appropriate behavior and vaccination.

Facts about Madhya Pradesh:

- **Capital:** Bhopal
- **Governor:** Anandiben Patel
- **Chief Minister:** Shivraj Singh Chouhan

7. Microsoft names CEO Satya Nadella as chairman



Why in News

- Microsoft Corporation named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Satya Nadella as its new chairman.

Key Points

- Satya Nadella, succeeds John Thompson, who will return to the role of lead independent director.
- Nadella, the company's third CEO, will also be the third chairman in Microsoft's history, following Gates and Thompson.

Facts about Microsoft: Microsoft is an American multinational technology company.

- **Founded:** April 4, 1975
- **Founders:** Bill Gates, Paul Allen
- **Headquarters:** United States
- **CEO:** Satya Nadella

Source: The Hindu