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Online Sales : Mob. 9582219047, onlinesale@chronicleindia.in

Corporate Office : Chronicle Publications (P) Ltd.

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Printed and Published by **Mrinal Ojha** for Chronicle Publications Pvt. Ltd. at H-31, Green Park Extn., First Floor, New Delhi- 110 016 and Printed at Ratna Offset, C-101, Shed Okhala Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-110020 **Editor N.N. Ojha**

India-Australia: Natural Partners in a Multipolar Indo-Pacific Region

The strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific region has shifted dramatically. In its key emphasis area of the Indo-Pacific, Australia seeks a more comprehensive security strategy and powerful military weapons. To oppose aggressive China, Canberra has increased and broadened its engagement with friends and partners, including greater cooperation with the QUAD countries and a trilateral security treaty with AUKUS (Australia–United Kingdom–United States). In this context, India and Australia may work together in a variety of areas, including maritime security, defence, and technology, etc.

■ Satish Kumar Karna

On April 2, 2022, India and Australia signed the “Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AusInd ECTA),” which will open one of the world’s largest economic doors.

The agreement covers goods, services, trade remedies, rules of origin, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical trade barriers, customs procedures and trade facilitation, as well as legal and institutional matters like as dispute settlement and temporary movement of natural persons.

Further, India and Australia have agreed to upgrade their bilateral relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership after engaging on a variety of subjects.

Significance of Indo-Pacific

Geo-Political Significance

- The Indo-Pacific region is still a contentious political construct in the making. Australia and the US appear to have a similar geographic perspective on the Indo-Pacific, which includes both the original Asia-Pacific region and India. Geographic understandings in Japan and India, on the other hand, are significantly broader, including two continents—Asia and Africa—and two oceans—the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is unconcerned with the region’s physical boundaries as long as it keeps its primacy in future regional architecture.
- Regardless of how the geographical limit is defined, China is a major actor in the Indo-Pacific region.

Strategic Significance

- The political wrangling over the geographical construct indicates the Indo-geopolitical Pacific’s importance. The Indo-Pacific region is home to the world’s most populous country (China), the world’s most populous democracy (India), and the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country (Pakistan, Indonesia).
- The Indo-Pacific is home to seven of the world’s ten largest standing militaries, and one-third of all global shipping passes through the South China Sea alone. As

a result, “the Indo-Pacific is the single most significant region for America’s future,” as the US administration has stated.

- The sole goal of the US emphasis on the Indo-Pacific concept and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific policy, according to Chinese authorities, is to restrict China’s ascent.
- If US-China strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific becomes highly tense, all other governments, particularly traditional US allies Australia, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Thailand, may be forced to choose sides between the US and China, or choose between security and economic growth.

Military Significance

- Military-wise, the Indo-Pacific is rife with flashpoints that might spark armed conflict. Kim Jong Un, the leader of North Korea, has refused to resume discussions with the United States.
- Taiwan’s pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party won both the presidential and legislative elections in January 2020 by a landslide. Any pro-independence movement led by the Democratic Progressive Party on the mainland might fan the flames of nationalism and force Beijing into a corner. To make matters worse, if cross-strait military tensions escalate, the US will not sit idly by. Conflicts between the two nuclear powers might spell the end of the world.
- Furthermore, as evidenced by the recent standoff between Indonesia and China in the waters surrounding the Natuna islands in early 2020, territorial and maritime issues in the East and South China Seas could flare up at any time.
- According to a Chinese newspaper, China strengthened its navy’s force projection capabilities by building its second aircraft carrier in 2019, while the US conducted 85 military maneuvers in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the South China Sea.
- In 2020, the Indo-Pacific, particularly the South China Sea, is very likely to see increased security competition and rivalry between the United States and China.

Sustainable Urbanization in India: Challenges & Opportunities

Sustainable development has been characterized as development that meets current needs without jeopardizing future generations' ability to meet their own. Sustainable urbanization, on the other hand, necessitates a balance between urban development and environmental conservation, with a focus on equity in employment, housing, basic services, social infrastructure, and transportation in metropolitan regions. Cities are economic growth engines. India must ensure that as it urbanizes, its cities provide a good standard of living and allow job generation. These requirements are critical if India is to achieve its goals of being a \$5 trillion economy by 2025 and a \$10 trillion economy by 2030.

On the 18th and 19th April 2022, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) of the Government of India hosted the 'Smart Cities: Smart Urbanization' event in Surat, Gujarat.

Cities across India are facing serious issues in dealing with high heat and increased cooling demand. UNEP and RMI are launching an Urban Cooling Program in collaboration with MoHUA and NIUA to give on-the-ground technical assistance to Indian cities facing these dual difficulties.

Recent Developments

Sustainable Cities India Program

- The World Economic Forum and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) recently signed an MoU to collaborate on a jointly designed 'Sustainable Cities India program,' which will aim to create an enabling environment for cities to generate decarbonization solutions across the energy, transportation, and built environment sectors.
- This project is important since it comes after India's Honourable Prime Minister announced at COP26 his intention to become net zero by 2070 as a climate mitigation response.
- The 'Sustainable Cities India program' aims to help cities decarbonize in a systematic and long-term manner, reducing emissions while also ensuring resilient and equitable urban ecosystems. Over the course of two years, the Forum and NIUA will adapt the Forum's City Sprint approach and Toolbox of Solutions for decarbonization in five to seven Indian cities.

City Sprint Process

- It is a series of multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder workshops engaging leaders from business, government, and civil society to facilitate decarbonization, particularly through clean electricity and circularity.
- The City Sprint process makes use of the Toolbox of Solutions, a digital platform with over 200 examples of clean electrification, efficiency, and smart infrastructure best practices and case studies from over 110 cities around the

world, including buildings, energy systems, and mobility.

- The City Sprint approach will also allow cities to test pilot solutions, and India will be able to add 10 to 40 best practice case studies to the Toolbox of Solutions, which will be presented around the world depending on the findings.

Need for Urbanization

- Urbanization refers to the large-scale migration of people from rural to urban areas.
- There are five primary reasons why people move to cities: education, jobs, entertainment, economic prospects, and improved medical services.
- Agriculture is also more mechanical now than it was in the past, and it is becoming less profitable.
- The terms of commerce are no longer favorable for agriculturists to continue their centuries-old profession. The monsoon's whims, poor market conditions, middlemen's exploitation, and a lack of options for value addition of agro-based products are just a few of the issues that are making agriculture unprofitable.
- People are choosing metropolitan regions for better living because they are becoming the centers of development and contributing to poverty reduction.

Sustainable urbanization is required to:

- Improving global health and limiting the spread of infectious illnesses, as well as strengthening resilience to respond and adapt to disasters, economic shocks, and extreme weather.
- Increasing women's economic empowerment and access to services while reducing gender-based violence, and
- Improving agricultural development and food security by building rural-urban links..

Challenges and Opportunities

Economic

- Cities and towns account for only 2% of total land area yet generate 70% of GDP, making them the primary engines and drivers of growth. However, this rapid urbanization

Nutritional Security in India

Shifting from Food Security to Nutritional Security by 2030

Nutrition is increasingly being recognised as a critical part of the development landscape. Undernutrition has health implications that are passed down through generations and erodes socio-economic justice, adding to the burden on developing and impoverished countries. Hunger and nutrition must be tackled together to effectively address the challenges of diet-related health issues, disparities in clinical care, Government food assistance programmes and policies, public health investments.

■ **Sharmila Senthil Kumar**

In the month of February 2022, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Isha Foundation of Sadhguru signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for creating awareness and outreach on sustainable food and nutritional security in India.

It assumes significance as adequate nutrition is a basic human need. Only if people can satisfy their nutritional requirements on a regular basis, and use and utilize adequate and safe food with the respective energy, protein, vitamin and mineral content, is one of the most important pre-condition for an active, healthy and decent life.

Achieving nutritional security in the context of the burgeoning population, climate change, diminishing land and water resources, environmental degradation, and changing incomes and diets will require not just approaches to sustainably producing more food, but also smarter ways of producing food, dealing with food waste, and promoting improved nutritional outcomes.

India and Nutritional Security

India with 2.5 per cent of the global land mass and 16 per cent of the global population recognized the importance of human resources as the engines powering national development and gave high priority to improvement of the health and nutritional status of the population.

Article 47 of the Constitution of India states that, “the State shall regard raising the level of nutrition and standard of living of its people and improvement in public health among its primary duties.” Globally, India accounts for the highest proportion of stunted (31 per cent) and wasted children (51 per cent) and under five deaths (16 per cent).

Despite the decline in extreme poverty in India from 45.9 per cent to 13.4 per cent between 1993 and 2015 (defined at USD1.9 per capita per day at the 2011 purchasing power parity rate (PPP)), India still suffers from a high malnutrition burden. Undernutrition in childhood leads to long-term physical underdevelopment, reduces the development of learning skills, and, as a consequence, affects productivity and increases morbidity and mortality.

Addressing Nutritional Issue

The approaches to tackling the problem of malnutrition have been classified into the following: direct nutrition specific interventions and multi-sectoral approach.

Direct Nutrition-Specific Interventions: It is based on the link between food insecurity and under-nutrition; there is a close link between hunger and different forms of malnutrition. These include pro-nutrition policies and programmes that directly affect the nutritional outcomes of populations.

The Multi-Sectoral Approach: It can address the key determinants of under-nutrition such as income and agricultural production which have a direct impact on food security. Another important determinant is women’s education, which is a significant factor in reducing malnutrition. Besides, safe drinking water supply and access to sanitation facilities can address the cycle of infectious diseases and malnutrition.

Government Programmes and Initiatives

To overcome the nutritional issue, the Central Government launched the National Nutrition Strategy (2017) which aims to reduce the prevalence of underweight children (0-3 years) by three percentage points every year by 2022 from NHFS 2015-16 estimates. The government has also taken significant steps to combat under- and malnutrition over the past two decades, such as through the introduction of mid-day meals at schools, anganwadi systems to provide rations to pregnant and lactating mothers, and subsidised grain for those living below the poverty line through a public distribution system. The National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, aims to ensure food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable through its associated schemes and programmes, making access to food a legal right.

Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme: Earlier known as ‘National Programme for Mid-Day Meal in Schools’ is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes. This Scheme covers all school children studying in Classes I-VIII in Government and Government-aided Schools. There is also evidence to

- Weapons of Mass Destruction Amendment Bill, 2022
- WHO's Air Quality Database 2022
- Protected Cultivation
- Oxfam Releases 'First Crisis, Then Catastrophe' Report
- Fourth India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue
- Draft Battery Swapping Policy

Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022

On 6th April, 2022, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 was passed by the Lok Sabha. It seeks to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005.

Need

- The 2005 Act only prohibited the manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The new legislation prohibits the financing of such weapons.
- Further, with advancements in technologies, new kinds of threats have emerged that were not sufficiently catered for in the existing legislation. These notably include developments in the field of drones or unauthorised work

in biomedical labs that could maliciously be used for terrorist activity. Therefore, the Amendment keeps pace with evolving threats.

DEFINITION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION(WMD) UNDER INDIA'S 2005 ACT

- **"Biological weapons"** as "microbial or other biological agents, or toxins of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes; and weapons, equipment or delivery systems specially designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict";
- **"Chemical weapons"** as "toxic chemicals and their precursors" except where used for peaceful, protective, and certain specified military and law enforcement purposes; "munitions and devices specifically designed to cause death or other harm through the toxic properties of those toxic chemicals"; and any equipment specifically designed for use in connection with the employment of these munitions and devices.

INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OVER USE OF WMDs

- **Geneva Protocol (1925):** It banned the use of chemical and biological weapons
- **Biological Weapons Convention 1972:** It effectively prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons. I
- **Chemical Weapons Convention (1992):** The treaty entered into force on 29 April 1997, and prohibits the large-scale use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of chemical weapons and their precursors, except for very limited purposes (research, medical, pharmaceutical or protective).

Objects and Reasons of the Bill



Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful

Activities) Amendment Bill will align India with global requirements

Bill seeks to insert a new Section 12A in the existing law which states that 'no person shall finance any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947, or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems'

The original Act, passed in 2005, only banned manufacture of weapons of mass destruction

"In recent times, regulations relating to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems by International organisations have expanded... There is a need to amend the said Act to provide against the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems so as to fulfil our International obligations"



Interview

An Exclusive Interview with

Mr. KASHISH MATTA

27th Rank in Madhya Pradesh Judicial Services Examination - 2019



C.S.C. : *Achieving top slot in the Judicial Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.*

Kashish: Thanks to almighty, my parents and my mentor Alok Kumar Ranjan Sir.

C.S.C. : *Can you recall the exact moment when you realised the importance of Judicial Services?*

Kashish: The dream to join judicial service was always there in the back of my mind from the initial phase of law school. However, it took concrete form from fourth year of law school.

C.S.C. : *Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make a career in Judicial Services?*

Kashish: I took starting steps in the direction of Judicial Services Examination during the final year of my law school.

C.S.C. : *Judicial Service a planned decision or your parent's wish? Did you keep in mind some time frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts?*

Kashish: It was my own self-made decision to pursue law and prepare for Judicial Services Examination. However, my family always supported and encouraged me to follow my passion.

C.S.C. : *What was your first step when you were really serious about making a career in Judicial Services?*

Kashish: The first step was to get right guidance and a solid road-map to reach my desired destination, i.e., to clear Judicial Services Examination.

C.S.C. : *In how many attempts have you achieved this success? How do you visualise your preparation/previous attempts?*

Kashish: It was my 3rd attempt.

C.S.C. : *Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal, i.e., Career in Judicial Services?*

Kashish: No, I prepared only for Judicial Services.

C.S.C. : *While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Judicial Services?*

Kashish: The faith of public in the Institution of Judiciary and the pious function of justice dispensation continued to inspire me at every stage of this preparation.

C.S.C. : *What's important and what's not? Share your thoughts and opinions.*

Kashish: The following are important:

1. Regular revision of concepts and notes.
2. Keeping oneself upgraded about legal updates and recent developments.
3. Keeping oneself motivated and enthusiastic throughout the journey.

C.S.C. : *'Time Management' is a key factor while preparing as well as in writing examination papers. Did you come across such a problem during this period? If yes, then how did you manage things?*

Kashish: Time management is a key-factor in clearing any examination. Completing the whole question-paper within limited time-frame and with qualitative answers is required to clear the examination.

C.S.C. : *List some of the magazines, newspapers, and books which you read for General Studies' preparation?*

Kashish: (1) News Paper - Indian Express
(2) Website - Live Law

C.S.C. : *How did you prepare yourself for Interview?*

Kashish: I appeared in few Mock Interviews before the actual interview. It helped me in finding out short-comings and improving the same.

C.S.C. : *What is the importance of medium of examination for exams like Judicial Services Examination?*

Kashish: One must opt for that medium in which one is comfortable to express and communicate.

C.S.C. : *Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation?*

Kashish: The family support is instrumental in achieving the desired goal. A person from humble back-ground also has equal chances to succeed in the competitive examinations.

C.S.C. : *According to a recent report published by reputed survey agency, Civil Services Chronicle is the largest read Career & Competition magazine. What is your opinion?*

Kashish: Yes, it is a resourceful magazine; a good consolidation of relevant knowledge and current-events.

C.S.C. : *To whom would you like to give the credit for your success?*

Kashish: To my parents, my family (especially my nephew, master Divyam), my friends and my mentor - Shri Alok Kumar Ranjan Sir along with entire Team of Ambition Law Institute, Delhi.

C.S.C. : *Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants?*

Kashish: I strongly suggest every aspirant to have an immense faith in his or her capability and pursue their dreams with full vigour and to never come under pressure and do not give up.

C.S.C. : *Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.* ■ ■

India's Unstable Neighbourhood: Strategic and Economic Implications

Winner: Gaurav Kumar

Decolonization of South Asia was done in the mid of the 20th century. It led to the emergence of post-colonial states like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, etc. Most of the post-colonial states in South Asia faced instability at home. The trend of instability still continues in the states of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Nepal, etc. It is well said that one country can't become great with its dwarf neighbours. Thus, for India to become a major power pole in world politics, its neighbourhood should be healthy.

Recent political instability in Pakistan, the economic crisis in Sri Lanka, the Anti-India campaign in Maldives and Nepal, the hardening of the Taliban in Afghanistan, increasing Chinese footprints in India's neighbours, etc. have posed a serious strategic and economic threat to India. In current scenario, the increasing crisis in neighbourhoods has become India's one of the biggest foreign policy challenges.

Instability in India's Neighbourhood

Instability in India's neighbourhood can be categorized into - Real and Constructive. It means one of them is due to structural imbalances and another one is created by the vested interests. Real instability is largely due to structural problems in the concerned state. For example, Pakistan is unstable due to an imbalance of power structure where the Army enjoys much more power than the civilian government. Probably, that's why the late Stephen Cohen, an expert on South Asia, in his book 'The Idea of Pakistan' says - "All countries have an army but Pakistan's army has a country". Additionally, Pakistan also follows discriminatory provisions in its Constitution that debar non-Muslims to become prime minister and president of Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan misses the significance of inclusivity that has the potential to create stable political affairs.

Similarly, China also suffers from the same issue. In the case of China, we can refresh the statement of Stephen Cohen - 'All countries have political parties that form the government of the day through electoracy. But, the political party in China, the Communist Party of China has a country'. That's why China functions in an absolute manner. There are no competing political parties that could keep a check on tyranny. Its implications are seen in Doklam, Galwan, and the South China Sea.

However, some of India's neighbours face constructive instability. It means instability is either created by external forces or by internal politics. For example, currently, Sri Lanka is facing an economic crisis along with nepotism in domestic politics where almost all-important offices are occupied by the Rajapaksha family. Similarly, the forex reserve of Nepal is shrinking. Political instability still continues

in Nepal over the development of the Constitution amid the influence of China. A footprint of the new Cold War is witnessed in Myanmar where the civilian government was toppled by the Tatmadaw (Myanmar's military). Similarly, an anti-India campaign was started in the island nation to incite hatred against the country.

Strategic Implications of Instability

Stable neighbourhood matters in the process of making a country great from a strategic point of view. India is a rising power in Asia but the biggest challenge is its unstable neighbourhoods. The decline of democracy around the Indian borders poses a serious strategic thrust in realizing India's idea of world order and impedes India's growth in geopolitics.

Apart from this, terrorism is another by-product of unstable neighbourhoods. Instability leads to unemployment and subsequently, it becomes easy to radicalize youth for terrorism as we have seen in the case of Ajmal Kasab in the context of the Mumbai Attack in 2008. Additionally, it created a loop of further deterioration in bilateral relations between the two countries.

On the other hand, when the neighbourhood is stable, it helps in eradicating terrorism through cooperation. For example, Bangladesh under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina and Myanmar helped India in countering terrorism in the north-eastern states of India through mutual cooperation. Similarly, India-Nepal has an open border. It provides an advantage in stability and possibly harms in case of instabilities.

12th Essay Competition

Topic for July 2022 Issue of CSC

Changing Contours of India's Foreign Policy: Imperatives and Implications

Instructions for Chronicle Essay Competition

Participate in CSC English Magazine's essay writing competition and win a prize money of Rs. 1000/-. The best essay gets published in the magazine and on our website every month.

- **Word Limit:** 1500 words
- **Last Date for Submission:** 31 May, 2022
- Editorial team has the discretion of selecting/editing the essays.
- Kindly send your name, address and your bank account details (account holder's name, account number, bank and branch, IFSC code) for online transfer of your prize money.
- You can send your essay via e-mail or by post.
- **Email Address:** cscenglish@chronicleindia.in
- **Postal Address:** Chronicle Publications (P) Ltd., A-27D, Sector 16, Noida-201301 (U.P.)



Polity & Governance

- Policy for Use of Land Acquired under Coal Bearing Areas Act 1957
- Protection and Enforcement of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill 2022
- Nidhi (Amendment) Rules 2022
- National Financial Reporting Authority
- National Panchayati Raj Day

Judiciary

- Supreme Court Moots Deeper Scrutiny before Award of Death Penalty
- Supreme Court Upholds FCRA Amendments Impacting NGO Funding
- Supreme Court Propose NGT Bench in Each State

Plans/Policies

- Continuation of Revamped Rasthriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan
- Guidelines for Implementation of Modernisation of Prison Project

Reports

- CAG Report on Functioning of Unique Identification Authority of India

News Snippets

Polity & Governance

Policy for Use of Land Acquired under Coal Bearing Areas Act 1957

On 13th April, 2022, the Union Cabinet approved the policy for use of land acquired under the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957.

The policy provides a clear policy framework for the utilisation of those lands which are no longer suitable or economically viable for coal mining activities.

Salient Features

- The policy provides for the utilisation of such land for the purpose of development and setting up infrastructure relating to coal and energy.
- It provides a clear policy framework for the utilisation of the following types of lands acquired under the CBA Act:
 - ♦ Lands no longer suitable or economically viable for coal mining activities
 - ♦ Lands from which coal has been mined out / de-coaled and such land has been reclaimed.
- Government coal companies, such as Coal India Ltd. (CIL) and its subsidiaries shall remain owners of these lands acquired under the CBA Act and the policy allows only leasing of the land for the specified purposes given in the policy.
- Government coal companies can deploy private capital in joint projects for coal and energy-related infrastructure development activities.
- The government company which owns the land would lease such land for a specific period and the entities for leasing shall be selected through a transparent, fair and competitive bid process and mechanism in order to achieve optimal value.



Impact

Social

- **Investment in Backward Areas:** It will unlock land for various coal and energy infrastructure development activities that would encourage investment in backward areas of the country.
- **Addressing Displacement Issue:** It will also address the demand of the displaced families as they always prefer to stay as close as possible to their original residential places.

Economic

- **Employment Generation:** The establishment of various coal and energy-related infrastructure would lead to the generation of a large number of direct and indirect employments.
- **Cost Reduction:** It will help in reducing its cost of operations as it will be able to set up coal related infrastructure and other projects such as solar plant on its own land by adopting different business models in partnership with private sector.
- **Boost to Coal Gasification:** It will make coal gasification projects viable as coal need not be transported to distant places.



Indian Society

- SC Directives on Rehabilitation of 'Children in Street Situation'

Social Justice

- Hattis of Himachal Pradesh

Indian Society

SC Directives on Rehabilitation of 'Children in Street Situation'

On 24th April, 2022, the Supreme Court directed the States and Union Territories (UTs) that have not yet framed their own policies to rehabilitate children in street situation (CISS).

About the Directives

- States and UTs could follow the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) standard operating procedure (SOP) until they devised their own.
- Web portal of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) needs to be updated with the required material by concerned authorities and that this needs to be done without fail.
- The suggestions which were made by NCPCR need to be implemented by governments of states and UTs, subject to certain modifications made by state governments.
- NCPCR is directed to conduct periodical reviews preferably once a month to monitor the implementation of the suggestions.
- The Court directed the district magistrates in every state to rope in the special juvenile police units, district legal service authorities (DLSA) and other voluntary organization to identify the children who are living on streets either with or without families and those that beg during the day but at night return to the nearby slums.

Street Children

- Street children as defined by United Nations (UN) are children working/living on the street, whose families are on the street or children who've run away from their families and are living on the streets.
- Street children are a result of a combination of following factors-unemployment, poverty, violence at home, family disintegration, lack of shelter, rural-urban migration, displacement due to floods, drought.

- NITI Aayog and UNICEF India Sign SoI on SDGs Focusing on Children
- National Conference on Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals

Plans/Policies

- Extension of PM SVANidhi Scheme
- Revised Draft of Health Data Management Policy
- Ambedkar Centres of Excellence Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan Scheme

Reports

- World Bank Paper on Poverty in India

News Snippets

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child broadly mentions the right to protection from exploitation and abuse, right to an adequate standard of living and nutrition to ensure proper development, and protection from bonded labour, right to education, right to adoption as well as right to name and nationality.
- According to the NCPCR, Maharashtra has the highest number of children living in the streets.

Some Key Challenges Faced by Street Children

- Missing care and protection of responsible adult
- Forced to work to eat every day
- Work in risky occupations on streets and are highly vulnerable to physical injury, abuse and exploitation
- Poor health and illness due to poor living condition
- Psycho-social stresses due to loneliness
- Exposure to drug and substance abuse
- Low level of access to medical care or education
- Lack of Identity to link with Social Security Schemes
- Lack of shelter to live in protected environment

PRELIMS FACTS

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 came into force from January 15, 2016 and repeals the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.
- The Act seeks to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children as ratified by India on December 11, 1992.
- It specifies procedural safeguards in cases of children in conflict with law. It seeks to address challenges in the existing Act such as delays in adoption processes, high pendency of cases, accountability of institutions, etc.
- It further seeks to address children in the 16-18 age group, in conflict with law, as an increased incidence of crimes committed by them have been reported over the past few years.



Heritage Art & Culture

Art & Culture

- Indian National Calendar
- International Day for Monuments and Sites 2022
- Gangaur Festival

Art & Culture

Indian National Calendar

Recently, National Conference and Exhibition on 'The National Calendar of India' was held at different places of the country as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

It aims to make the youth aware about the Indian National Calendar.

About National Calendar

- The National Calendar is based on the Saka Era with Chaitra as its first month and a normal year of 365 days was adopted from 22 March 1957 along with the Gregorian calendar for the following official purposes: (i) Gazette of India, (ii) news broadcast by All India Radio, (iii) calendars issued by the Government of India and (iv) Government communications addressed to the members of the public.

Adoption

- The Calendar Reform Committee introduced the Saka Calendar in 1957 as part of the Indian Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac.
- The **Calendar Reform Committee** was headed by renowned astrophysicist Dr. Meghnad Saha, and under his leadership the committee sought to designate a nationally accepted accurate calendar for use in government offices.
- The committee examined a large number of calendaring systems prevalent in different parts of the country and came up with the Saka Calendar to be appropriate and the best candidate for national calendar.
- Official usage of the Saka Calendar was mandated to start from March 22, 1957 or Chaitra 1, 1879 in terms of the Saka Era or Sakabda.

- Photo Exhibition on the Baolis
- Madhavpur Ghed Fair
- Chennakeshava Temple
- Kodava Takke Language

History

- Bicentenary Year of Mirat-ul-Akhbar
- Megalithic Jars unearthed in Assam

Personality

- Guru Teg Bahadur
- Alluri Sitaram Raju

News Snippets

Significance

- The Saka Calendar bears a deep connect with the history of India.
- Its creation and usage is steeped in the Golden era of the Maurya and Gupta rule. The adoption of the Saka Calendar as the National Calendar of India is a tribute to the advanced intellectual capabilities of the old time.
- The Saka Calendar is recognized beyond Indian borders, in countries where the influence of Indian culture is prominent.
- It is used by the Hindus of prominent South East Asian countries like Java, Bali and Indonesia.
- Bali celebrated Nyepi, translated as the 'Day of Silence', on March 22 or Saka New Year.
- Nepal's accepted calendar, Nepal Samvat is clearly an evolution of the Saka Calendar.

International Day for Monuments and Sites 2022

Every year, 18th April is celebrated as International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as 'World Heritage Day'.

- In 1982, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) established 18 April as the International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day, followed by UNESCO's adoption during its 22nd General Conference, the same year.
- The aim of celebrating this day is to spread awareness about the cultural heritage and diversity on the planet.
- The theme for World Heritage Day 2022 is "**Heritage and Climate**".

World Heritage Sites

- A World Heritage site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

ECONOMY WATCH

Agriculture

- One Health Pilot Project

Plan/Policies

- Mission Integrated Bio-refineries
- Purchasing Managers' Index
- All India Household Consumer Expenditure Survey to be Resumed

Banking and Finance

- Digital Banking Units
- India Post Payments Bank launches 'Fincluvation'
- Reciprocal Cross Holdings
- Hike in Marginal Cost of Funds-Based Lending Rate and its Impact

Infrastructure

- Coal Gasification

Industry

- MSME Sustainable (ZED) Certification Scheme
- Design Linked Incentive Scheme
- TRAI's Recommendation on 5G Spectrum

Reports

- RBI's Report on Currency and Finance 2021-2022

News Snippets

Agriculture

One Health Pilot Project

Recently, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, launched 'One Health' pilot project in Uttarakhand to implement the One Health Framework by One Health Support Unit.

The key objective of the Unit is to develop a national One Health roadmap based on the learnings of the pilot project implementation.

Major Highlights

- Key activities to be undertaken as part of the pilot project-
- Institutionalizing the mechanism for data collection on disease outbreaks;
- Prevalence, management, and development of targeted surveillance plan;
- Integrating network of laboratories;
- Developing and implementing communication strategy across sectors; and
- Integration of the data with the digital architecture of the National Digital Livestock Mission.
- An Inter-ministerial One Health committee has been established that will help in the One Health Support Unit's implementation.
- The implementation of the One Health Support Unit would be led by an inter-ministerial One Health committee chaired by the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.
- The Unit's main goal is to create a national One Health

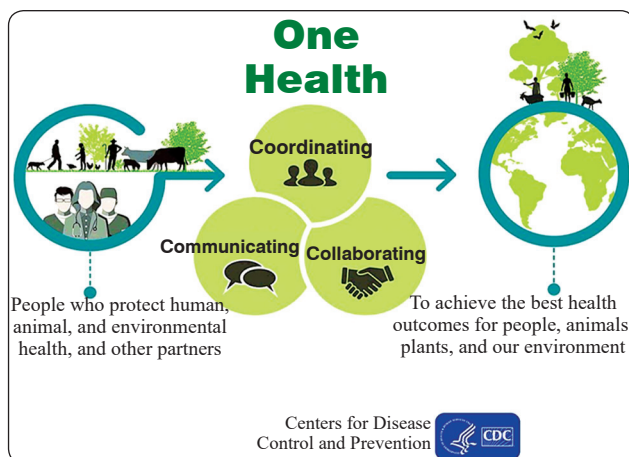
roadmap based on the lessons learned during the pilot project's deployment.

Significance

- **Creation of One Health Framework:** It will support the creation of the One Health Framework for India and help build strong social infrastructure that supports the health of the people and the planet.
- **Health Improvement:** It will work with stakeholders from various sectors to improve livestock health, human health, wildlife health, and environmental health through technology and finance.

About One Health Approach

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), One Health is an approach that recognizes that the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Space Science

- New Research on Jupiter's Moon Europa
- Study on Blue Stragglers
- Scientists Detect the Most Distant Astronomical Object Ever

New Technology & Innovations

- Plasma-based Green Disinfectant
- Space Bricks

Biotechnology

- Genetically Modified Mosquitoes for Controlling Vector-borne Diseases

Government Policy/Initiative

- iDEX-Prime and DISC 6 Launched during DefConnect 2.0

Basic Science

- 5500 New Viruses Identified

News Snippets

Space Science

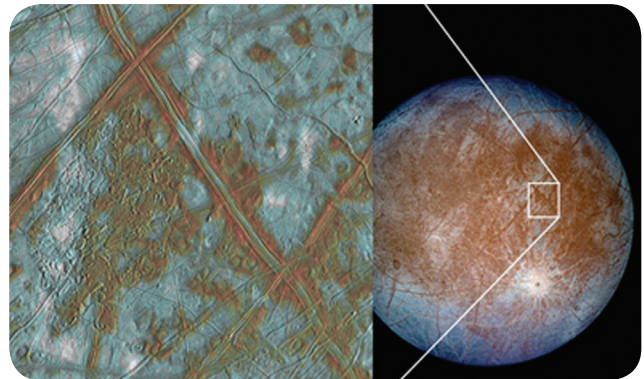
New Research on Jupiter's Moon Europa

Recently, a team of researchers said that one of Jupiter's moons, Europa, a prime candidate for life in the solar system, might have an abundance of water pockets beneath formations called double ridges.

- The researchers found that the double ridges found on Europa's surface are similar to those seen on Earth's Greenland ice sheet.
- Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that if a similar process is responsible for the formation of double ridges there, it could indicate that shallow liquid water is present over Europa's ice shell at all times and in all places.

About Europa

- **Size:** Europa is slightly smaller than Earth's moon and its diameter is about one-quarter that of the Earth.
- **Possibility of Life:** Though having very thin oxygen atmosphere, Europa is considered one of the most promising places in the solar system to find present-day environments that are suitable for life beyond the Earth.
- **Water:** Scientists believe Europa's ice shell is 15-25 km thick and is floating on an ocean, which is estimated to be 60-150 km deep.
- Europa, underneath its icy surface, probably contains twice the amount of water in all of the Earth's oceans.



Pic: Europa (Image Source: NASA)

Future Missions

- NASA is expected to launch its Europa Clipper in 2024.
- The module will orbit Jupiter and conduct multiple close flybys to Europa to gather data on the moon's atmosphere, surface and its interior.

Implications

- The shallow water pockets beneath the double ridge increase the potential habitability of the moon.
- The ice shell, which is potentially miles thick, has been a difficult prospect for scientists to sample. But according to the new evidence gathered by the team of scientists, the ice shell is believed to be less of a barrier and more of a dynamic system.
- This means that the ice shell does not behave like an inert block of ice, but rather undergoes a variety of geological and hydrological processes.
- If the mechanism we see in Greenland is how these things happen on Europa, it suggests there's water everywhere.



ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Climate Change

- Expanding Heat Resilience

Disaster Management

- New Study on Forest Fires

Biodiversity

- 20th Meeting of National Tiger Conservation Authority

Sustainable Development

- Renewable Energy Capacity Addition in 2021
- Imbalance in Nitrogen Availability

Reports/Indices

- State Energy and Climate Index
- Global Wind Report 2022

News Snippets

Climate Change

Expanding Heat Resilience

Recently, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a non-profit, released a report, titled 'Expanding Heat Resilience Across India: Heat Action Plan Highlights 2022'.

Key Highlights

- **Heat Stress:** As climate change leads to more frequent, intense and longer heat waves, extreme hot weather is already a major health threat for vulnerable communities.
- Heat stress refers to physiological ailments and symptoms caused by exposure to high temperatures and often humidity.
- Heat stress already affects 68 million people worldwide as of 2021.
- Temperatures touched the 40°C mark in March across large parts of central and western India. Many cities are reeling under heatwaves.
- Extreme temperatures are being recorded in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, states with no history of heatwaves.
- The number of states affected by heatwaves stood at 28 in 2019, up from 19 the year before.
- **Increasing Heat Resilience:** There is an urgent need to invest in strengthening resilience to heat. India's cities and districts must speed up efforts to protect the vulnerable as summer builds up this year. Such investment offers immense benefits.
- The report stressed the need to build resilience at the city level in addition to state initiatives. City leaders can employ local means of communication to reach the public.
- Municipal corporations can design programmes that cater to their communities and provide early planning, coordination, capacity building, surveillance and other measures to deal with climate change.

- **Heat Action Plans (HAPs):** The report highlighted heat action plans made by a few states like Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra, etc.
- These plans follow the success of Ahmedabad's heat action plan introduced in 2013 - the first such initiative developed in south Asia.
- HAPs are comprehensive extreme heat early warning systems and preparedness plans.
- HAPs have the key objectives of improving public awareness and community outreach; facilitating inter-agency coordination; context-specific capacity building among health care professionals; reducing heat exposure; and promoting adaptive measures.

Recommendations

- The report recommends that a state's heat action plans should incorporate five core elements:
- Community outreach to build awareness;
- Early warning systems to alert the public;
- Training of health care workers;
- Focussing on the vulnerable population such as farmers, construction workers, traffic police; and
- Implementing adaptive measures such as providing drinking water, cooling centres, gardens, shade spaces during extreme heat days.

Disaster Management

New Study on Forest Fires

Recently, the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) released a study, titled 'Managing Forest Fires in a Changing Climate'.

- The study presents a micro-level assessment of forest fires by identifying the states most vulnerable to high-intensity forest fires and their district hotspots while taking into consideration the warming and varying climate.



WORLD WATCH

International Relations

- 2nd India-Nordic Summit
- India-EU Trade and Technology Council

International Relations

2nd India-Nordic Summit

On 4th May, 2022, India's Prime Minister participated in the 2nd India-Nordic Summit along with Prime Ministers of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Key Highlights

Multilateralism and International Cooperation

- The leaders agreed that pressing challenges such as tackling climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, biodiversity loss and increasing food and energy insecurity across the world required international cooperation, a collective response and global solidarity.

Rules based International Order

- India and the Nordic countries affirmed their support for a rules based international order and for multilateral institutions and their commitment to work towards making them more inclusive, transparent, and accountable with the aim of addressing global challenges more effectively.
- This included working towards reform of the United Nations, including of the Security Council, to make it more effective, transparent and accountable, and the reform of the World Trade Organisation, as well as strengthening collaboration on global health issues, including pandemic preparedness and response.
- The Nordic Countries reiterated their support for India's Permanent Membership of a reformed and expanded Security Council.

Climate Change

- The leaders agreed to work together to fight and address climate change and to protect the natural environment in accordance with the Paris Agreement, the forthcoming Global Biodiversity Framework and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Raisina Dialogue 2022
- First Meeting of Inter-Ministerial Coordination Group

World Issues

- European Union Digital Services Act
- Maldives bans 'India Out' Campaign
- UK-Rwanda Asylum Plan

News Snippets

- The Summit noted that the acceleration of the global green transition to combat climate change is one of the greatest and most imminent global challenges.

Environmental Sustainability

- The leaders discussed collaboration on environmental sustainability including clean water, clean air and circular economy, which is critically important, not only to maintain and support biodiversity, water and wildlife, but also as a basis for food security, human health and prosperity.

Blue Economy

- Agreeing on the significance of Blue Economy, the leaders discussed the potential of stimulating business cooperation and investments in sustainable ocean industries in India and the Nordic countries, including in the maritime, marine, and offshore wind sectors.

Innovation

- The Summit welcomed the India's commitment to innovation and digital initiatives. Several synergies related to India's rich pool of talent as well as growing innovation environments were identified.
- There was a shared interest in stimulating investment in innovative and sustainable solutions as well as identifying new opportunities in sectors such as food processing and agriculture, health projects and life-sciences.

Digitalisation

- The Summit noted that technology can contribute to better and more meaningful lives and assist in solving shared global challenges. The Nordic countries want to continue to engage and work for a more inclusive, sustainable and human-centered technological development.
- Nordic know-how in harmony with initiatives such as Made in India supports digitalisation efforts and ensures that the technological future belongs to all citizens, everywhere.