



PLUTUS IAS

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CONTENT BY -JITHIN LAL VJ

1. India-Finland sign MoU on biodiversity conservation

India and Finland signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of biodiversity conservation and environment protection. The agreement was signed by the Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and his counterpart Krista Mikkonen of Finland.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding, the countries will exchange their best practices in areas such as prevention of air and water pollution, waste management, low carbon solutions, sustainable management of natural resources and promotion of circular economy. Also, it will help the countries to develop technological, scientific and management capabilities. It aims to develop bilateral cooperation in the field of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit. This will help in the promotion of sustainable development.

Key Highlights

The Minister of Environment Shri Prakash Javadekar made the following announcements while signing the agreement:

- In 2020, India achieved a voluntary target of reducing its emission intensity of GDP by 21% as compared to 2005 levels.
- India has set a target of achieving 35% of reducing its carbon emissions well before the 2030 target.
- Under the Paris Agreement, India has committed to achieve 40% electric power installation based on non-fossil fuels by 2030. Also, under the agreement, India has committed to create a carbon sink of 2.5 billion to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide.

India-Finland

The diplomatic relations between India and Finland was established in 1949. The bilateral trade between India and Finland was 1.284 billion USD in 2016-17. India mainly exports mineral fuels, electronic goods, mineral oils, cotton, iron and steel, machinery appliances. The major exports of Finland to India are nuclear reactors, pulp of wood, boilers, etc.

India-Finland in Nuclear Energy

In 2014, India and Finland signed 19 agreements. OF these, the countries also signed an agreement on nuclear energy. Under the agreement, the countries agreed to share nuclear radiation, installation and nuclear safety. It includes radioactive waste management as well.

2.PM Modi inaugurates RE-Invest 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment called the RE-Invest. The 3rd Global RE-Invest Renewable Energy Investors Meet & Expo was organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India. It is to be held from 26 – 28 November 2020 on a Virtual Platform. The theme of RE-Invest, 2020 is

Theme: Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition

COVID-19 has caused significant disruption and reduced the speed of development of renewable energy projects as compared to 2019. In spite of the crisis, the installed renewable capacity of India has increased by two and a half times in the last six years according to PM Modi. The Prime Minister inaugurated and addressed the meet virtually.

Significance of Re-Invest

RE-Invest will help the investors to get knowledge about renewable growth. The partner countries of Re-INVEST are Australia, France, Denmark, Germany, UK, Maldives, European Union and US. The partner states are Gujarat, MP, HP, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

Efforts by India

The PM-KUSUM scheme replaced 20 lakhs diesel pumps with solar pumps. India has set an ambitious target of having 175GW of renewable energy by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030. Through these projects India aims to achieve “One sun, One World” of the International Solar Alliance.

Renewable Energy in India

Currently, the renewable capacity of India is at 136 GW. This is 36% of the total capacity of the country. India is one of the largest producers of renewable energy. The GoI has targeted solar projects for houses by 2022.

As of September 2020, 89.22 GW of renewable energy is already operational, projects of 48.21 GW are at various stages of implementation and projects of 25.64 GW capacity are under various stages of bidding. Hydroelectricity is administered separately by the Ministry of Power and not included in MNRE projects.

3.National Portal for Transgender Persons launched

The Government of India has launched the National Portal for Transgender persons. The portal will help the transgender community to apply for identity card and certificate online. It was developed under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020. The major benefit of the portal is that the portal will help the transgenders to obtain the certificate without any physical interface. Also, the portal will help the transgenders to get the identity cards in their self-perceived identity which is an important provision of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Key Features of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

- According to the act, the transgender persons are defined as someone whose gender does not match with their gender assigned during birth.
- The act prevents discrimination against transgenders in education, employment, healthcare, housing and other services.
- It mandates that the persons will be recognised as transgenders based on the identity cards. The identity cards are issued by the District Magistrates.
- It enforces a minor right of residence. This compels the transgenders below 18 years to cohabit with their family.
- According to the act, it is the right of the transgenders to undergo sex reassignment surgeries. Also, it is their right to claim other health facilities.

National Council for Transgender Persons

The council advises the central government on the formulation of programmes, policies, legislation and projects. It monitors and evaluates impact of the policies and programmes designed for full participation of transgender persons. It redresses grievances of transgender persons. The chairperson of the council is the Minister of Social and Justice Empowerment. The council will also include five members from transgender community, a member from NITI Aayog, National commission for Women, National Human Rights Commission. It also includes representatives from Union Territories and states on a rotational basis.

1.The World Health Assembly of WHO has designated 2020 as which year?

- [A] The International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife**
- [B] The International Year of Doctors**
- [C] The International Year of Health Professionals**
- [D] The International Year of Population control**

Correct Answer: A [The International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife]

Notes:

The World Health Assembly has designated 2020 as 'the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife'. According to the WHO, the world needs 18 million more health workers to achieve universal health coverage by the year 2030 and approximately 9 million health workers of the world are nurses and midwives. The World Health Assembly, which is the decision making body of the World Health Organization (WHO), holds the assembly at Geneva, Switzerland every year and it determines the policies of WHO.

2.The entire government of which country resigned recently after the constitutional amendments announced by its President?

- [A] China**
- [B] France**
- [C] Russia**
- [D] Germany**

Correct Answer: C [Russia]

Notes:

After the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin announced certain constitutional amendments that would extend his powers beyond the Presidency, the entire government of Russia resigned. This also includes the Prime Minister of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev.

Putin made this announcement during his annual state of the nation address. He also proposed Mikhail Mishustin, the head of Russia's tax service as the next Prime Minister. The leaving Prime Minister Medvedev may take on the position of deputy head of Russia's Security Council.

3.Which country has recently re-joined the Commonwealth as its 54th member country?

- [A] Maldives**
- [B] Nepal**

[C] Afghanistan

[D] Bhutan

Correct Answer: A [Maldives]

Notes:

Maldives officially re-joined the Commonwealth on February 1, 2020 and became the 54th member of the Commonwealth Union.

The President of Maldives, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih had applied for re-joining the bloc in December 2018. The country has been admitted after the official assessment and consultations made by the organisation. The country is set to be a part of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Rwanda, to be held in June 2020. Maldives joined the Commonwealth in 1982 and withdrew its membership in the year 2016.

4. Israel's Elbit Systems recently signed an MoU with which Indian company for developing an unmanned aerial vehicle?

[A] Hindustan Aeronautics Limited

[B] Defence Research and Development Organisation

[C] Bharat Electronics Limited

[D] Indian Space Research Organisation

Correct Answer: A [Hindustan Aeronautics Limited]

Notes:

During the on-going exhibition DefExpo-2020, an MoU was signed between Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Israel's Elbit Systems, for joint development of an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

The agreement aims at analysing the feasibility of developing an UAV, which performs vertical take-off and landing, for maritime and land-based military operations. The proposed UAV will cut down the huge costs associated with maintenance of manned helicopters. The vehicles with greater potential, will also be more efficient in military operations. The Indian armed forces could deploy them for operating in unsafe areas or for surveillance missions.

5. The storm 'Ciara' recently hit several countries of which continent?

[A] Asia

[B] Europe

[C] Australia

[D] North America

Correct Answer: B [Europe]

Notes:

European countries witnessed a devastating storm named 'Ciara', which caused huge damage and killed as many as six people. The hurricane-force winds and heavy rains damaged several thousand buildings in the region.

The storm moved on near Germany, after hitting Britain and Ireland. It was called as 'Ciara' by the Irish weather service and dubbed as 'Sabine' in Germany. Flood warnings are given and flight operations are suspended in the countries.

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