

Week 4 Current Affairs Update

22nd - 30th November 2020

EVENTS

NATIONAL

POLITY

J&K'S ROSHNI ACT



Date: 24th November 2020

The J&K administration has published a list of Roshni Act beneficiaries.

Key Points:

- The beneficiaries include former Ministers, and retired civil servants.
- The law was declared null and void recently by the Government.
- There are allegations related to irregularities in the implementation of the Jammu and Kashmir States Land (vesting of ownership to the occupants) Act, also known as Roshni Act, which has now been declared null and void.
- Roshini Act 2001 sought to regularise unauthorised land.
- The Act envisaged the transfer of ownership rights of state land to its occupants, subject to the payment of a cost, as determined by the government.
- The government said the revenue generated would be spent on commissioning hydroelectric power projects, hence the name “Roshni”.

SPACE

ISRO'S SHUKRAYAAN



Date: 28th November 2020

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has short-listed 20 space-based experiment proposals for its proposed Venus orbiter mission ‘Shukrayaan’.

Key Points:

- Shukrayaan it is a mission to study Venus for more than four years.
- Objective of the mission is to Investigate the surface processes and shallow subsurface stratigraphy; and solar wind interaction with Venusian Ionosphere, and studying the structure, composition and dynamics of the atmosphere.
- The satellite is planned to be launched onboard GSLV Mk II rocket.
- The proposed orbit is expected to be around 500 x 60,000 km around Venus. This orbit is likely to be reduced gradually, over several months to a lower apoapsis (farthest point).

DEFENCE

VARUNASTRA – HEAVYWEIGHT TORPEDO



Date: 25th November 2020

The first Production unit of Varunastra which is the Heavyweight Torpedo (HWT) was delivered to the Indian Navy.

Key Points:

- The announcement for the same was made by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).
- The Varunastra is developed by the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL) of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

- For the mass production of Varunastra, the Defence Ministry had awarded a contract of Rs 1,187 crore.
- The Varunastra is a ship-launched, heavyweight, electrically-propelled anti-submarine torpedo.
- It has the capability to target quiet submarines and can be fired from all ASW ships capable of firing heavyweight torpedoes.
- Its operational range is 40 km and the maximum depth is 400 metres.
- It is known to be the only torpedo in the world to have a GPS-based locating aid.

LAND-ATTACK VERSION OF BRAHMOS MISSILE



Date: 26th November 2020

The Indian Army successfully test-fired the land-attack version of Brahmos supersonic missile.

Key Points:

- The test-firing operation took place from Andaman and Nicobar Islands where it successfully hit its target, which was on another island.
- This the land-attack version of Brahmos supersonic missile's range has been extended to 450 km.
- Its speed is also increased to 2.8 Mach which is three times the speed of sound.
- The missile is developed by DRDO and NPOM of Russia.

EDUCATION

ATAL FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (FDPS)

46 online ATAL Faculty Development Programmes inaugurated



Date: 26th November 2020

The Ministry of Education recently inaugurated 46 online AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs).

Key Points:

- The Programme has been launched to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in emerging areas in technology.
- The FDPs will be conducted in 22 Indian states according to the new National Education Policy (2020).
- Objective of the programs is to provide quality technical education in India and to promote research and entrepreneurship through training in various emerging fields. IITs, IIITs, NITs CU and research labs are organizing these ATAL FDPs.

TRADE & COMMERCE

MEGA FOOD PARK IN PUNJAB



Date: 26th November 2020

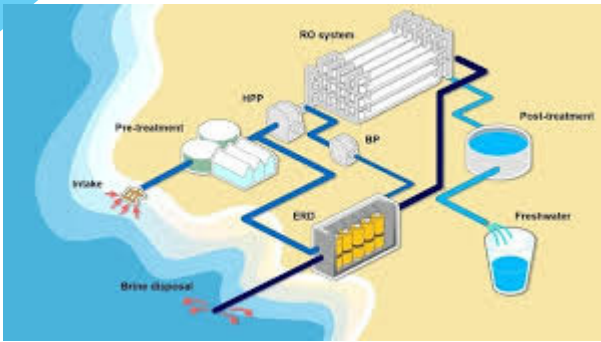
Union Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has virtually inaugurated the Rs 107.83 crore mega food park at Phagwara in Kapurthala district of Punjab.

Key Points:

- So far, 37 mega food parks have been sanctioned across the country, of which 20 have started functioning.
- The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has been implementing the Mega Food Park Scheme in the country since 2008.
- It aims at providing a mechanism to link agricultural production to the market by bringing together farmers, processors and retailers.
- These food parks give a major boost to the food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of the supply chain with particular focus on perishables.

SOCIAL

MAHARASHTRA SETS UP DESALINATION PLANT



Date: 26th November 2020

Maharashtra announced the setting up of a desalination plant in Mumbai. It is now the fourth state in India to experiment with the idea.

Key Points

- A desalination plant turns salt water into water that is fit to drink.
- The most commonly used technology used for the process is reverse osmosis where an external pressure is applied to push solvents from an area of high-solute concentration to an area of low-solute concentration through a membrane.
- The microscopic pores in the membranes allow water molecules through but leave salt and most other impurities behind, releasing clean water from the other side.
- Desalination is an expensive way of generating drinking water as it requires a high amount of energy.
- The other problem is the disposal of the by-product — highly concentrated brine — of the desalination process.
- While in most places brine is pumped back into the sea, there have been rising complaints that it ends up severely damaging the local ecology around the plant.

NATIONAL PORTAL FOR TRANSGENDER PERSONS



Date: 27th November 2020

The 'National Portal for Transgender Persons' was launched by Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot.

Key Points:

- This portal will help the transgender to apply for an identity card and a certificate in an online manner.
- The portal is developed under Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020.
- The portal will help 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.

GARIMA GREH: A SHELTER HOME FOR TRANSGENDER PERSONS



Date: 27th November 2020

A 'Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons' was recently e-inaugurated in Vadodara, Gujarat by the Ministry for Social Justice & Empowerment

Key Points:

- Under the Scheme of 'Shelter Home for Transgender Persons', the ministry has decided to set up shelter homes for transgender persons who have been forced to leave their homes or abandoned by the family.
- This is the first such home in Vadodara.
- By March 31st, 2021, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Patna, Kolkata, Jaipur, Raipur, Bhubaneswar and Manipur will also have such homes to be called "Garima Greh" with a capacity for 25 persons.
- They will be run by transgender community-led organisations.
- These shelters will also provide skill training to connect the community members with livelihood opportunities.

REPORTS & INDICES

REPORT ON NATIONAL NUTRITION MISSION: NITI AAYOG



Date: 26th November 2020

Recently, the NITI Aayog has released “Accelerating Progress On Nutrition In India: What Will It Take”. It is the third progress report on the National Nutrition Mission or the Poshan Abhiyaan.

Key Points:

- The third progress report (October 2019-April 2020) takes into account the status on the ground and implementation challenges encountered at various levels through large scale datasets.
- These datasets are the NFHS-4 and Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS).
- According to the report, India’s targets are conservative on stunting as compared to the global target defined by the World Health Assembly (WHA). It is a prevalence rate of 5% of stunting as opposed to India’s goal of reducing stunting levels to 13.3% by 2022.
- The targets of reducing prevalence levels of anaemia among pregnant women from 50.3% (2016) to 34.4% (2022) and among adolescent girls from 52.9% (2016) to 39.66% are also considered to be conservative as compared to the WHA’s target of halving prevalence levels.
- In the wake of the pandemic, experts warn that deepening poverty and hunger may delay achieving the goals defined under the Mission.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

‘ABHAYAM APP’ – ANDHRA PRADESH



Date: 25th November 2020

The Andhra Pradesh Government launched 'Abhayam App' for the safety of women travellers through Auto and Taxi.

Key Points:

With the help of this app, women will be able to raise an alarm during any emergency case.

The 'Abhayam App' is basically a first IoT based women safety project app.

During the first phase, 1000 autos and rickshaws are equipped with GPS and IoT based devices which are linked to this app in Visakhapatnam.

The transport department of the state will manage the operation of the app.

INTERNATIONAL VERSION OF THE UMANG APPLICATION



Date: 24th November 2020

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology launched the International version of the UMANG application.

Key Points:

- The version is launched in countries like the UK, US, Australia, Canada, Netherlands, UAE, Australia, Singapore and New Zealand.
- The version is launched on the occasion of completion of three years of UMANG App.
- UMANG signifies Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance.

- To launch this international version, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology collaborated with the Ministry of External Affairs.
- The aim behind launching an international version of UMANG App is to promote Indian culture in the rest of the world.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

10TH NATIONAL SCIENCE FILM FESTIVAL



Date: 27th November 2020

The 10th edition of the National Science Film Festival was held in a virtual mode amidst the Coronavirus pandemic.

Key Points:

- The festival was organized by Vigyan Prasar in partnership with Tripura State Council of Science and Technology.
- The festival showcased the science-based films made by professionals, amateur and student filmmakers.
- These films were based on various themes like Science and technology, environment, agriculture, renewable energy, water management, health and drugs and technological innovations.
- The National Science Film Festival is held with an aim to promote science culture in India.

SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

RE-INVEST 2020



Date: 27th November 2020

The 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-Invest 2020) was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Key Points:

- The summit was organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- The summit observed the discussions related to renewables and future energy choices along with various exhibitions from manufacturers, developers, investors and innovators.
- The summit was organized to provide an international platform for investment promotion in the renewable energy sector and to increase the development and deployment of renewable energy.
- The summit also built relations between Indian energy stakeholders and the global investment community.
- The theme for RE-Invest 2020: ‘Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition’.

33RD PRAGATI INTERACTION BY PM MODI



Date: 29th November 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired and interacted with the 33rd PRAGATI Meet.

Key Points:

- The PRAGATI stands for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation. It allows pro-active governance and timely implementation of projects along with addressing the grievances of a common man.
- The meet was held to review the projects and programmes undertaken by PRAGATI.
- During this meet projects worth Rs 1.41 lakh crore were reviewed which are conducted in 10 states and UTs of India. These projects are held in Odisha, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir and Dadar and Nagar Haveli.
- The dignitaries also discussed grievances related to coronavirus, PM Awas Yojana and PM SVANidhi.

ENVIRONMENT

PILIBHIT TIGER RESERVE GETS THE FIRST TX2 AWARD



Date: 28th November 2020

Pilibhit Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh has bagged the first international award, TX2, among the 13 tiger range countries for having doubled the number of tigers in less than the stipulated time.

Key Points:

- In 2014, All India Tiger Estimation had estimated 25 tigers in Pilibhit and 2018 estimation showed an increase by projecting 65 tigers.
- Transboundary Manas Conservation Area straddling the India-Bhutan border has received the TX2 Conservation Excellence Award for 2020.
- Transboundary Manas Conservation Area or TraMCA comprising the 500 sq. km. Manas National Park in Assam and the 1,057-sq. km. Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan.
- TX2 is the global award which was set up in 2010 in St. Petersburg, Russia by international organizations working for tiger conservation like WWF, UNDP, IUCN, Global Tiger Fund (GTF), CATS and The Lion's Share.

AGRICULTURE

SAHAKAR PRAGYA PROGRAMME



Date: 29th November 2020

The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development, Panchayat Raj and Food Processing Industries, Narendra Singh Tomar launched the Sahakar Pragma Programme.

Key Points:

- This programme is launched to train the primary cooperative societies in India.
- This programme includes 45 new training modules of National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
- The training modules will be delivered at Lakshmanrao Inamdar National Cooperative Research and Development Academy (LINAC).
- This programme will help to develop the training capacity of NCDC through a network of eighteen regional training centres.
- The 45 training modules are supported by: NCDC Schemes, 10,000 FPOs, Agri Infra Fund Scheme, PM-FME Scheme, Fisheries Infra Dev Fund Scheme and PM Matsya Sampada Scheme.

BANKING

‘JAGANANNA THODU’- AN INTEREST FREE LOAN SCHEME



Date: 30th November 2020

The Government of Andhra Pradesh launched the ‘Jagananna Thodu’ Scheme.

Key Points:

- The scheme is an interest-free benefit service for small traders and street vendors.
- The fund allotted for this scheme is Rs 905 crores and is said to benefit around 9.05 lakh traders and street vendors.
- Under this scheme, an interest-free loan of Rs 10,000 will be offered to small traders and street vendors in their bank account.
- Also, the QR based smart ID cards will be given to them to avail various benefits.

DEFENCE

SIMBEX-20



Date: 24th November 2020

The 27th edition of India- Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise (SIMBEX-20) recently held.

Key Points:

- It is conducted in the Andaman Sea between the Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- India is represented by INS Rana along with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk. Also, INS Sindhuraj and P8I maritime aircraft are part of this exercise.
- Singapore is represented by 'Formidable' Class frigates 'Intrepid' and 'Steadfast' along with S70B helicopter and Endurance' Class Landing Ship Tank.

DEFENCE MINISTERS MEET OF INDIA AND VIETNAM

Date: 28th November 2020

India and Vietnam held the bilateral defence dialogue in a virtual mode.

Key Points:

- Both the nations discussed ongoing defence sector projects and they assured to deepen cooperation to have the defence industry capability and capacity building.

- They also assured to work collaboratively in UN Peacekeeping Operations.
- India assured to build the institutionalized framework agreement in the near future and also assured to offer guidance to provide training for all three services of the Vietnam defence sector in Indian defence institutions.
- Both the nations signed an agreement for enhancing cooperation in Hydrography.

SEA GUARDIAN DRONES INDUCTED BY THE INDIAN NAVY



Date: 30th November 2020

Recently, two American MQ9B Sea Guardian unarmed drones have been inducted by the Indian Navy.

Key Points:

- The drones would be on lease with India for one year.
- MQ9B Sea Guardian is the maritime variant of the Predator MQ9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).
- It has a maximum endurance of 40 hours and a maximum flying altitude of 40,000 feet.
- It has a 3600 maritime surveillance radar and an optional multimode maritime surface search radar.
- It can be used in operations such as Anti-Surface Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief, Search and Rescue, Law Enforcement (Drug Trafficking, Illegal Immigration and Piracy), etc.
- The drones are meant for carrying out surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region and can be deployed on the China border if asked for and if needed.

ECONOMY

SDG INVESTOR MAP FOR INDIA



Date: 26th November 2020

The Sustainable Development Goal investor map for India is launched by Invest India and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Key Points:

- The goal investor map describes around 18 investment opportunity areas in India.
- The investment opportunity areas focus on 6 critical SDG goals which are defined by the United Nations.
- The six critical SDG goals highlighted in the goal investor map are Healthcare, education, financial services, agriculture and allied activities, renewable energy and alternative and sustainable environment.
- The SDG goal investor map will help India to achieve its target of SDG and will help to reduce the SDG finance gap.

TRANSPORT

SHANGHAI- WORLD'S MOST CONNECTED CITY



Date: 28th November 2020

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) declared that Shanghai is the most connected city in the world.

Key Points:

- The other three other cities such as Beijing, Chengdu and Guangzhou are also the most connected cities in the world at second, third, fourth positions respectively.

- Shanghai has replaced London from this IATA rank spot.
- Now London is marked at 8th position in the most connected cities in the world by IATA.

SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

ASEAN DEFENCE MINISTERS' MEETING PLUS (ADMM-PLUS)



Date: 28th November 2020

Vietnam has invited India for ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM Plus) being hosted by Vietnam in December 2020.

Key Points:

- Consistent with the ADMM guiding principles of open and outward looking, the 2nd ADMM in Singapore in 2007 adopted the Concept Paper to establish the ADMM-Plus.
- The ADMM-Plus is a platform for ASEAN and its eight Dialogue Partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation for peace, stability, and development in the region.
- Eight Dialogue Partners are Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA (collectively referred to as the “Plus Countries”).
- Agreed five areas of practical cooperation under this mechanism are: Maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations and military medicine. In 2013, a new priority area of humanitarian mine action was agreed.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA ANNOUNCES 150 PROJECTS FOR AFGHANISTAN



Date: 28th November 2020

Recently, at the Afghanistan 2020 Conference, India has announced about 150 projects worth USD 80 million.

Key Points:

- The conference was attended by Afghanistan's President, United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) officials and representatives of other countries.
- Also, the USA has decided to reduce its troop presence in Afghanistan to about 2,500 by January 2021.
- India will launch phase-IV of high-impact community development projects, which include around 150 projects worth USD 80 million.
- It has signed an agreement for building the Shahtoot dam, which would provide safe drinking water to 2 million residents of Kabul city.
- It builds on the 202 km Pul-e-Khumri transmission line of 2009, through which India provides power to the city.

HEALTHCARE

ELECTRONIC VACCINE INTELLIGENCE NETWORK



Date: 29th November 2020

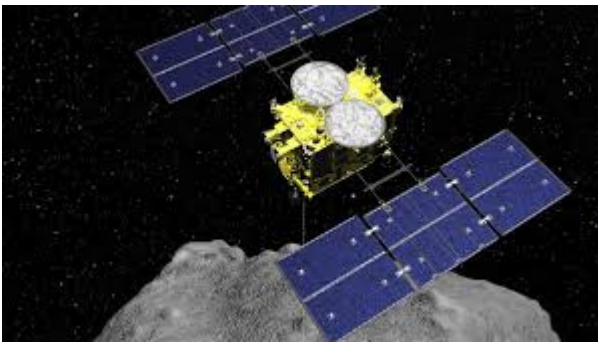
The Indian government is using eVIN (Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network) in association with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to identify primary beneficiaries and vaccine distribution networks.

Key Points:

- eVIN is an indigenously developed technology.
- It digitises vaccine stocks and monitors the temperature of the cold chain through a smartphone application.
- The innovative eVIN was first launched across 12 states in 2015 to support better vaccine logistics management at cold chain points.
- eVIN supports the central government's Universal Immunization Programme by providing real-time information on vaccine stocks and flows, and storage temperatures across all cold chain points across states and UTs.

SPACE

JAPAN'S HAYABUSA2 SPACECRAFT



Date: 30th November 2020

Japan's Hayabusa2 spacecraft left the asteroid Ryugu a year ago and is expected to reach Earth and drop a capsule containing the precious samples in southern Australia on December 6.

Key Points:

- The soil samples and data from the asteroid could provide clues to the origins of the solar system.
- Hayabusa2 project is an asteroid sample-return mission operated by the Japanese space agency, JAXA.
- It was launched on 3 December 2014 and rendezvoused with Ryugu on 27 June 2018.
- It carried multiple science payloads for remote sensing, sampling, and four small rovers that will investigate the asteroid surface to inform the environmental and geological context of the samples collected.



PEOPLE

NATIONAL

APPOINTMENTS

GC MURMU



Date: 28th November 2020

Why in news: Elected as External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union.

Key Points:

- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India GC Murmu has been elected as External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) for a three-year term.
- He has been the external auditor of various international organisations including the World Health Organization and the Food & Agriculture Organization.
- The IPU comprises national parliaments of 179 countries as members and 13 Associate Members. It has a permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.
- The CAG of India has earlier been named on the UN Board of Auditors from 1993 to 1999 and recently from 2014 to 2020.

OBITUARY

AHMED PATEL



Date: 26th November 2020

Congress Veteran and Rajya Sabha MP Ahmed Patel passes away at 71 due to post-COVID complications.

Key Points:

- Ahmed Patel was one of the most prominent leaders of Congress and was considered to be a close confidant and political advisor of Congress President Sonia Gandhi.
- Mr Patel started his political career by contesting local body elections in Gujarat's Bharuch district in 1976. Later on with his rise within the party, he was allotted charge of the Congress' organisational structure both in Gujarat and at the Centre.
- He was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1985.
- Ahmed Patel also played a key role in setting up the Narmada Management Authority to oversee the Sardar Sarovar Project.

AWARDS & HONOURS

VINISHA UMASHANKAR



Date: 28th November 2020

Why in news: Won the prestigious Children's Climate Prize.

Key Points:

- Vinisha Umashankar a 14-year-old class 9th student from Tamil Nadu has won the prestigious Children's Climate Prize.
- She has been awarded for designing a mobile ironing cart that uses solar panels to power a steam iron box instead of using conventional charcoal.
- She would receive the prize amount of Rs. 8.64 lakh and medal from the Sweden-based Children's Climate Foundation.
- One of the world's largest international climate awards for young innovators, this is the fifth edition of the award.

INTERNATIONAL

APPOINTMENTS

GREG BARCLAY



Date: 26th November 2020

Why in news: Elected as the chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Key Points:

- New Zealand's Greg Barclay has been appointed as the new independent Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- Barclay will be replacing Shashank Manohar who had stepped down from the post earlier in 2020 and will replace Imran Khwaja, who is currently the interim chairman.
- Greg Barclay has been a director of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) since 2012 and has also served as the director of ICC Mens' Cricket World Cup 2015.

OBITUARY

DIEGO MARADONA



Date: 26th November 2020

Football legend from Argentina, Diego Maradona passed away. He was 60-years old.

Key Points:

- Diego Maradona, the star footballer had begun his professional career at the age of 16 with Argentinos Juniors.
- He later went on to become one of the greatest players ever to play football.
- Maradona represented Boca Juniors, Napoli, Barcelona, Newell's Old Boys as a player.
- He was also considered the main player in taking Argentina to the country's second World Cup title in 1986.

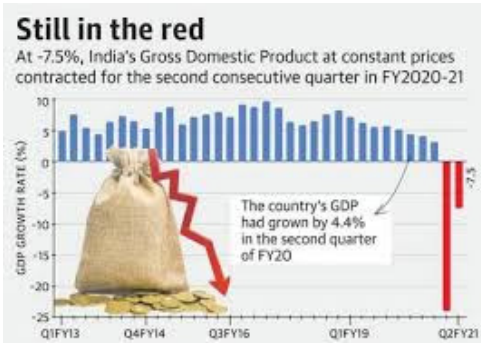


ISSUES

NATIONAL

ECONOMY

INDIA'S GDP CONTRACTS 7.5% IN SECOND QUARTER



Date: 28th November 2020

Key Highlights:

- As per estimates released by the National Statistical Office, India's GDP contracted 7.5% in the second quarter of 2020-21. In the first quarter, India had recorded 23.9% decline.
- India has now entered a technical recession with two successive quarters of negative growth.
- Agriculture, which was the only sector to record growth between April and June this year, grew at the same pace of 3.4% in the second quarter.
- But it remained a weak quarter for several sectors, including mining, services such as retail trade and hotels, construction and financial services.
- While the 7.5% contraction in GDP came as a positive surprise, there are concerns about a decline in government spending and the worsening fate of two key sectors compared to the first quarter.

POLITY

PROTEST AGAINST RESETTLEMENT OF BRU TRIBALS



Date: 28th November 2020

Key Highlights:

- Recently, parts of north Tripura witnessed violent protests over the proposed resettlement of Bru tribals.
- In January 2020, a quadrilateral agreement was signed by the Centre, the two state governments and Bru representatives to allow Brus to permanently settle in Tripura.
- The state has planned 12 resettlement spots across six districts with 300 families each in Tripura.
- The Centre has announced a special development project with funding of Rs. 600 crore.
- This agreement led to protests from Bengali and Mizo groups in Tripura.
- They claim that settling thousands of migrants permanently in North Tripura district of Kanchanpur would lead to demographic imbalance, exert pressure on local resources and potentially lead to law and order problems.

INTERNATIONAL

SOCIAL

GERMANY'S NEW BOARDROOM QUOTA FOR WOMEN



Date: 26th November 2020

Key Highlights:

- Germany is planning to impose a mandatory quota for the number of women working in senior management positions in the country's listed firms.
- This historic move is being seen as the next step in narrowing the gap of sexual inequality in the country.
- As per the agreed-upon provisions in case executive boards of listed companies have more than three members, one of them must be a woman.

- Companies in which the federal government has a stake will require a supervisory board quota of at least 30 percent and minimum participation in executive boards.
- Since 2015, Germany, which is Europe's biggest economy, has had a voluntary quota of 30 percent for women on supervisory boards.

POLITY

NEW VILLAGE IN BHUTAN CLAIMED BY CHINA



Date: 27th November 2020

Key Highlights:

- Recently, Chinese media claimed that a new border village built by China near Bhutan was on Chinese territory.
- The released images of the village show its location on territory disputed by Bhutan and China.
- The village of Pangda has been newly built and authorities in Yadong county (an administrative region) of Southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region have confirmed that 27 households with 124 people voluntarily moved from Shangdui village to Pangda village in September 2020.
- It is for the first time since 2017 that a Chinese residential area has been noticed near the Doklam region, which is strategically important for India.
- Bhutan has officially denied the presence of any Chinese village in its territory.
- China also blames India for the unsettled China-Bhutan border and stalled negotiations by creating the illusion that China is encroaching on Bhutanese territory.



IDIEAS

NATIONAL

ENVIRONMENT

INDIA CLIMATE CHANGE KNOWLEDGE PORTAL



Date: 28th November 2020

Key Features:

- India Climate Change Knowledge Portal was recently launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The portal will have all the major steps the Government is taking at both national and international levels to address the climate change issues.
- It will be a single-point information resource that provides information on the different climate initiatives taken by various Ministries enabling users to access updated status on these initiatives.
- According to the Central government, India has practically achieved its pre-2020 climate action targets.

BLUE TIDE PHENOMENON OBSERVED IN MAHARASHTRA



Date: 28th November 2020

Key Features:

- Over the last few days, visitors to beaches in Maharashtra have witnessed the fluorescent bluish glow when the waves hit the shoreline.
- The phenomenon is called 'blue tide'.
- It appears when bioluminescent marine life makes the sea appear a deep shade of blue.

- It occurs when phytoplankton (microscopic marine plants), commonly known as dinoflagellates, produce light through chemical reactions in proteins.
- Waves disturb these unicellular microorganisms and make them release blue light.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

BRAIN FINGERPRINTING



Date: 27th November 2020

Key Features:

- The accused in Hathras rape case will undergo brain fingerprinting.
- Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature Profiling (BEOSP) is also known as brain fingerprinting.
- It is a neuro psychological method of interrogation in which the accused's participation in the crime is investigated by studying their brain's response.
- The BEOSP test is carried out via a process known as electroencephalogram, conducted to study the electrical behaviour of the human brain.
- Under this test, the consent of the accused is first taken and they are then made to wear caps with dozens of electrodes attached to them.
- The accused are then shown visuals or played audio clips related to the crime to check if there is any triggering of neurons in their brains which then generate brainwaves.
- The test results are then studied to determine the participation of the accused in a crime.

INTERNATIONAL

SPACE

CHINA'S CHANG'E-5 LUNAR MISSION



Date: 26th November 2020

Key Features:

- China's Chang'e-5 lunar mission recently became the first probe in over four decades to attempt to bring back samples of lunar rock from the unexplored portion of the Moon. The spacecraft is set to return to Earth around December 15, 2020.
- Chang'e-5 probe is the Chinese National Space Administration's (CNSA) lunar sample return mission.
- Goal: To land in the Mons Rumker region of the moon, where it will operate for one lunar day, which is two weeks long and return a 2 kg sample of the lunar rock possibly by digging about 2 metres deep into the surface of the Moon.
- The mission comprises a lunar orbiter, a lander and an ascent probe that will lift the lunar samples back into orbit and return them back to Earth.
- The probe is named after the Chinese Moon goddess who is traditionally accompanied by a white or jade rabbit.

ECONOMY

NEGATIVE-YIELD BONDS



Date: 27th November 2020

Key Features:

- Recently, China sold negative-yield debt for the first time, and this saw a high demand from investors across Europe.
- As yields in Europe are even lower, there was a huge demand for the 4-billion-euro bonds issued by China.
- Negative-yield bonds are debt instruments that offer to pay the investor a maturity amount lower than the purchase price of the bond.
- These are generally issued by central banks or governments, and investors pay interest to the borrower to keep their money with them.
- Negative-yield bonds attract investments during times of stress and uncertainty as investors look to protect their capital from significant erosion.
- At a time when the world is battling the Covid-19 pandemic and interest rates in developed markets across Europe are much lower, investors are looking for relatively better-yielding debt instruments to safeguard their interests.

