

Week 3 Current Affairs Update

15th- 21st December 2020

EVENTS

NATIONAL

SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

INDIA WATER IMPACT 2020



Date: 16th December 2020

5th India Water Impact Summit, held recently, saw many experts from India and abroad sharing their insights on the topic of conservation and development.

Key Points:

- Experts and academicians from all over the world discuss and debate issues related to water conservation, water security and river rejuvenation during the summit.
- The event is co-organised by National Mission for Clean Ganga and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies.
- During the event, Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research signed an MOU with cGanga (think-tank of NMCG) for development of sludge management framework in India.
- The cGanga is a think-tank of the National Mission for Clean Ganga.

REPORTS & INDICES

‘VISION 2035: PUBLIC HEALTH SURVEILLANCE IN INDIA’



Date: 16th December 2020

NITI Aayog has published 'Vision 2035: Public Health Surveillance in India'.

Key Points:

- This white paper is developed by NITI Aayog and the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada.
- This white paper defines India's vision of developing public health surveillance by 2035.
- India will be achieving this vision by integrating the three tiered public health system into Ayushman Bharat.
- The white paper elaborates India's vision to make a public health surveillance system more responsive and with accurate prediction ability which will help to strengthen preparedness to take actions at all levels.
- It aims to develop a citizen-friendly public health surveillance system.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

YSR FREE CROP INSURANCE SCHEME

**YSR Free
Crop
Insurance
Scheme**



Date: 17th December 2020

The Government of Andhra Pradesh launched YSR free Crop Insurance Scheme for farmers.

Key Points:

- The scheme is meant for those farmers who lost their crops during Kharif 2019.
- The scheme is said to be beneficial to around 9.48 lacs of farmers.
- Under this scheme, Rs 1,252 crores will be credited directly into bank accounts of 9.48 lacs of farmers.

REPORTS & INDICES

2020 STATE OF THE EDUCATION REPORT FOR INDIA



Date: 17th December 2020

The 'State of the Education Report for India 2020: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), has been launched virtually by UNESCO New Delhi.

Key Points:

- The second edition of the State of Education Report focuses on technical and vocational education and training (TVET).
- India has made considerable progress towards its goal of creating a skilled workforce of 110 million people by 2022, as stated in the National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (NPSDE), released in 2015.
- It is presently training 10 million youth annually.
- The Report outlines a set of ten recommendations that should be adopted to help achieve the stated vision for TVET in the country.

ENVIRONMENT

12TH GRIHA (GREEN RATING FOR INTEGRATED HABITAT ASSESSMENT) SUMMIT



Date: 17th December 2020

The Vice President of India recently inaugurated the 12th GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) Summit.

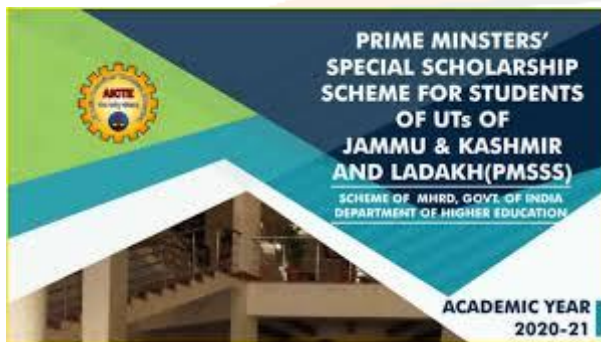
Key Points:

Theme: Rejuvenating Resilient Habitats.

- The summit was organised by the GRIHA Council from Hyderabad to serve as a platform to deliberate on innovative technologies and solutions which shall help in creating robust mechanisms for developing sustainable and resilient solutions.
- The Vice President also launched the SHASHWAT magazine and the book '30 Stories Beyond Buildings' during the event
- According to the World Green Building Council data, buildings and construction account for 39% of energy-related CO2 emissions in the world.
- India called for accelerating the process of total de-carbonization of the built environment.
- It was also opined that roof cooling should be an area of priority for all.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

PRIME MINISTER'S SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME (PMSSS)



Date: 18th December 2020

AICTE has decided to release the instalment of Rs. 20,000/- as maintenance allowance under Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS).

Key Points:

- An Expert Group was constituted by the Prime Minister for enhancing employment opportunities among youths of J&K and Ladakh and to formulate job opportunities in public and private sectors.
- The scheme is implemented by the J&K Cell of All India Council for Technical Education(AICTE), New Delhi.
- The scheme helps J&K Students to pursue undergraduate studies outside the Union Territory.
- It Aims to build the capacities of the youths of J&K and Ladakh by Educating, Enabling and empowering them to compete in the normal course.
- The youths are supported by way of scholarship in two parts – academic fee and maintenance allowance.

ECONOMY

23RD MEET OF THE FINANCIAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



Date: 17th December 2020

The 23rd meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Key Points:

- The meet was held to review macroeconomic developments and to discuss the issues related to global and national financial stability.
- The dignitaries discussed the policy measures taken by the government of India along with analysis of the activities undertaken by the FSDC Sub Committee chaired by Governor of RBI.
- They held discussions about issues and challenges present in the transition of London Interbank Offer Rate (LIBOR) based contracts and observed that a multipronged strategy involving relevant stakeholder institutions and departments is required for this purpose.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

INDIA'S COMMUNICATION SATELLITE CMS-01



Date: 19th December 2020

India's communication satellite CMS-01 was successfully launched by PSLV-C50 recently from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota.

Key Points:

- CMS-01 is envisaged to provide services in the extended-C Band of the frequency spectrum that will cover the Indian mainland, the Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.
- It provides services like tele-education, tele-medicine, disaster management support and Satellite Internet access.
- It was India's 42nd communication satellite with a mission life of over seven years.
- The satellite will be placed in the specified slot in the geosynchronous orbit.
- Subsequently, it will function as the continuation of GSAT11 launched 11 years back.

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

TWG MEETING HELD BETWEEN INDIA, IRAN, AND UZBEKISTAN



Date: 16th December 2020

The first Trilateral Working Group (TWG) Meeting between India, Iran and Uzbekistan on the joint use of Chabahar Port was held.

Key Points:

- The Meeting was jointly chaired by Secretary (Shipping), Government of India, Deputy Minister of Transport, Uzbekistan and Deputy Transport Minister of Iran.
- During the meeting, the participants discussed joint use of Chabahar Port for trade and transit purposes and enhanced regional connectivity.
- All sides also welcomed India's proposal to hold "Chabahar Day" on the side-lines of the International Maritime Summit scheduled to be hosted by India in January 2021.
- The meeting was held as a follow up of decisions taken during the virtual summit held between Indian Prime Minister and President of Uzbekistan recently.

AWARDS & HONOURS

UNEP CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH AWARD 2020



Date: 16th December 2020

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has announced the recipients of Champions of Earth Award 2020.

Key Points:

- The Champions of Earth Award is termed to be the UN's highest honour in the environment field.
- The award is presented in 5 categories. Following are the winners in each category:
- Policy Leadership category: Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama of Fiji, honoured for his global climate action work and his commitment to climate-responsive national development.
- Inspiration and Action category: Yacouba Sawadogo (Burkina Faso), for teaching farmers his traditional nature-based solution to regenerate their soil and turn barren land into arable land and forest across Africa. Nemonte Nenquimo (Ecuador), has also been awarded in this category for her leadership and unifying work with indigenous communities that halted drilling in Ecuador's Amazon rainforest.
- Science and Innovation category: Dr Fabian Leendertz (Germany), honoured for his discoveries in zoonotic and his work in One Health.
- Entrepreneur Vision category: Mindy Lubber (USA), recognized for her commitment to turning capital markets green by mobilizing top investors and companies and making the business case for climate action and sustainability.
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Professor Robert D. Bullard (USA) who was awarded the Champion of the Earth Lifetime Achievement award for his commitment and service to environmental justice.

REPORTS & INDICES

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2020

Miles to go

Though India improved its absolute value of the Human Development Index (0.645 in 2019 from 0.642 the previous year), it dropped a place in the overall ranking

Country	HDI rank (2019)	Change from 2018
Russia	52	-3
Sri Lanka	72	1
Brazil	84	0
China	85	2
South Africa	114	1
India	131	-2
Bangladesh	133	1
Nepal	142	1
Pakistan	154	0

Date: 17th December 2020

The report of Human Development Index 2020 was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Key Points:

- As per the report, India stood at the rank position of 131st among 189 countries. India's score in this index is 0.640.
- India ranked 130th position in 2019.
- The index is topped by Norway.
- The second and third ranks are secured by Ireland and Switzerland respectively.
- The lowest rank of 189th is obtained by Niger with the lowest score of 0.394.
- The theme for Human Development Index 2020: Human Development and Anthropocene.

SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

INDIA AND BANGLADESH VIRTUAL SUMMIT



Date: 18th December 2020

India and Bangladesh held a virtual summit which was led by PM Narendra Modi and PM of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina.

Key Points:

- The summit was held to discuss bilateral relations between both nations and to strengthen cooperation in the post COVID era.
- Both dignitaries inaugurated Haldibari-Chilahati rail link which will connect borders of both nations.
- They inaugurated a commemorative stamp on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- They also inaugurated a Bangabandhu-Bapu Digital Exhibition which observes the celebration of the life of Mahatma Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

AWARDS & HONOURS

YOUNG CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH 2020



Date: 18th December 2020

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced the awards for Young Champions of the Earth Awards 2020.

Key Points:

- A 29-year-old Indian entrepreneur, Vidhut Mohan, has been recognised as one of the seven winners of the prestigious award.
- The Young Champions of the Earth is given to global change-makers, for using innovative ideas and ambitious action to help solve some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.
- The prize is awarded every year to seven entrepreneurs under the age of 30 with bold ideas for sustainable environmental change.
- Other Winners are:
 - Nzambi Matee from Kenya
 - Xiaoyuan Ren from China
 - Lefteris Arapakis from Greece
 - Niria Alicia Garcia from the US
 - Max Hidalgo Quinto from Peru
 - Fatemah Alzelzela from Kuwait

REPORTS & INDICES

HUMAN FREEDOM INDEX 2020



Date: 19th December 2020

The American think tank Cato Institute and Fraser Institute in Canada released the Human Freedom Index 2020.

Key Points:

- The index is the worldwide ranking of civil, economic and personal freedom.
- As per the index, India is ranked at 111th position among 162 countries.
- The first rank is marked by New Zealand.
- The second and third position is marked by Switzerland and Hong Kong respectively.
- The last position of 162nd is marked by Syria.

DEFENCE

35TH INDIA-INDONESIA CORPAT



Date: 19th December 2020

The Indian Navy and Indonesian Navy held the 35th edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) exercise.

Key Points:

- The 35th IND-INDO CORPAT will help the Indian Navy to consolidate interoperability and develop strong coordination across Indo Pacific.
- India was represented by INS Kulish, which is an indigenously built missile corvette and P8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA).

- Indonesian Navy was represented by Naval Ship KRI Cut Nyak Dien, a Kapitan Pattimura class corvette and Indonesian Navy's MPA.
- The exercise helps to have interoperability between Indian and Indonesian Navies and helps to prevent illegal activities related to fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy.

ART & CULTURE

HAWKER CULTURE IN SINGAPORE INCLUDED IN UNESCO LIST



Date: 19th December 2020

Hawker Culture in Singapore has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity at the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) that was held online.

Key Points:

- Hawker Culture in Singapore is a living heritage shared by those who prepare hawker food and those who dine and mingle over hawker food in community dining spaces called hawker centres.
- It reflects Singapore's multicultural identity as a people and nation, and resonates strongly with Singaporeans across all races and social strata.
- UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage is made up of those intangible heritage elements that help demonstrate diversity of cultural heritage and raise awareness about its importance.



PEOPLE

NATIONAL

APPOINTMENTS

NAGENDRAA PARAKH



Date: 16th December 2020

Why in news: Appointed to head the newly formed department called the Corporation Finance Investigation Department (CFID) setup by SEBI.

Key Points:

- SEBI has set up a specialised department Corporation Finance Investigation Department (CFID) to tackle initial public offering (IPO) proceed fraud, diversion of funds, bank loans and resources by company promoters.
- The new department will be headed by Nagendraa Parakh.
- Currently, Nagendraa Parakh (Executive Director of SEBI) is heading the Market Intermediaries Regulation and Supervision Department (MIRSD).

SHASHI SHEKHAR VEMPATI



Date: 18th December 2020

Why in news: Elected as Vice President of Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU).

Key Points:

- Shashi Shekhar Vempati has been elected as the Vice President of Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) for a period of three years.
- He is the CEO of Prasar Bharti.
- Prasar Bharati is India's largest public broadcasting agency.
- The Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-based Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), is one of the largest broadcasting associations in the world.

Raja Chari



Date: 18th December 2020

Why in news: Selected to be the Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission by NASA and European Space Agency.

Key Points:

- Raja Chari is among the three astronauts selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the European Space Agency (ESA) to fly to the International Space Station (ISS) as part of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission.
- The Indian-American will command the mission, which is expected to launch in the fall of 2021.
- Earlier this year in January, Chari became one of the 11 astronauts to join NASA's ranks.
- The new graduates completed more than two years of basic training and became the first to graduate from NASA's Artemis programme. Under the programme, NASA wants to send the next man and first woman to the Moon by 2024.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

US IMPOSES SANCTIONS ON TURKEY OVER S-400 AIR DEFENCE MISSILE SYSTEM



Date: 17th December 2020

Key Highlights:

- The United States has imposed sanctions on Turkey on Monday over its acquisition of Russian S-400 air defence systems.
- The S-400 Triumf is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia.
- It is the most dangerous operationally deployed modern long-range SAM (MLR SAM) in the world, considered much ahead of the US-developed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD).
- The system can engage all types of aerial targets including aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles – UAV, ballistic and cruise missiles – within the range of 400km, at an altitude of up to 30km. The system can track 100 airborne targets and engage six of them simultaneously.
- The defence system integrates multifunction radar, autonomous detection and targeting systems, anti-aircraft missile systems, launchers, and command and control centre. It is capable of firing three types of missiles to create a layered defence.

COVID-19 TRIGGERED MUCORMYCOSIS



Date: 16th December 2020

Key Highlights:

- Recently, doctors have witnessed increased cases of Covid-19 triggered Mucormycosis. The reduced immunity of Covid-19 patients makes them more susceptible to this fungal infection.
- Mucormycosis is also called Black Fungus or Zygomycosis.
- It is a serious but rare fungal infection caused by a group of molds called mucormycetes.
- It occurs through inhalation, inoculation, or ingestion of spores from the environment.
- Mucormycosis does not spread between people or between people and animals.
- It usually occurs in people who have health problems or take medicines that lower the body's ability to fight germs and sickness.



IDEAS

NATIONAL

BANKING & FINANCE

DAKPAY: NEW DIGITAL PAYMENT APP



Date: 16th December 2020

Key Features:

Department of Posts and India Post Payments Bank unveiled a new digital payment app DakPay.

DakPay is a suite of digital financial and assisted banking services provided by India Post & IPPB through the trusted Postal ('Dak') network across the nation to cater to the financial needs ('Pay') of various sections of the society.

DakPay UPI app allows users to create UPI ID and link multiple accounts across banks in a single mobile app.

The app facilitates instant money transfers, QR based payments in merchant stores and online shopping on e-commerce websites.

SPACE

GEMINIDS METEOR SHOWER



Date: 17th December 2020

Key Features:

- The Geminids meteor shower was in the news recently.
- It is believed to be the strongest of the year which is active from December 4 to December 20.
- The Geminids meteor showers are unique because their origin does not lie in a comet, but what is believed to be an asteroid or an extinct comet.
- The Geminids emerge from 3200 Phaethon, which meteor scientists consider to be an asteroid.
- Meteors are bits of rock and ice that are ejected from comets as they manoeuvre around their orbits around the sun.
- When a meteor reaches the Earth, it is called a meteorite and a series of meteorites, when encountered at once, is termed a meteor shower.



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