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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD


We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.



It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.



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‘Dhyana Mandir to be built at Alluri birthplace’

PM attends his 125th birth anniversary fete

RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS
BHIMAVARAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said an Alluri Dhyana Mandir would be constructed at Mogallu, the birthplace of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju, in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Modi, along with Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and Union Minister for Tourism and Culture G. Kishan Reddy, kick-started the year-long 125th birth anniversary celebrations of *Manyam Veerudu* Alluri Sitarama Raju, here.

The Prime Minister virtually unveiled the 30-foot bronze statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju at ASR Nagar.



Narendra Modi paying respects to an elderly person at an event in Bhimavaram on Monday. ■PTI

Addressing a meeting at Chinna Amaram village in Kalla Mandal, Mr. Modi recalled the services of Alluri and other tribal leaders who sacrificed their lives in the freedom struggle. The sacrifices of the great leaders would be taken door-to-door. “We are celebrating the 125th Jayanthi celebrations of Sitarama Raju as part of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. I am fortunate to attend the

celebrations along with his family members,” he said.

Mr. Modi felicitated Alluri Srirama Raju, great-grandson of Alluri Sitarama Raju, and Bodi Dora, great-grandson of Mallu Dora, who participated in the freedom struggle in the forests.

There was a huge applause from the public when Mr. Modi said in Telugu, *Manyam Veerudu Alluri. Maa nayakudu Alluri Sitarama*

Raju. Telugu veera levara, deeksha booni saagara. Maha nayakudu puttina yee nelameeda kalusu kovatam adrushtam.

“We are celebrating the 100 years of the Rampa rebellion which will be observed across the country. The memorials of Alluri will be constructed at Pandrangi and Chintapalli villages,” the Prime Minister said.

Recalling the sacrifices of Potti Sriramulu, Pingali Venkaiah, Kanneganti Hanumanthu, Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu and Vuyyalawada Narasimha Reddy, Mr. Modi exhorted the youth to join hands and come forward to fulfil the dreams of the freedom fighters.

Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy said in Andhra Pradesh one district was named after Alluri Sitarama Raju, ASR District, during the reorganisation of districts.

A chaotic world, the perils of multilateralism

Instead, bilateral engagements may be much more productive at this point in history



T.P. SREENIVASAN

Today at a Quad summit, tomorrow at a BRICS summit and the day after at a G-7 summit is a statesman's dream come true. The exchange of ideas with world leaders, seeking common ground on burning issues and recalibrating our policy accordingly are at the heart of diplomacy. But at a time when the world is trying to grapple with the impact of unprecedented problems which arose in the first two decades of the 21st century, the various intergovernmental organisations and groupings, which are undergoing fundamental changes, may not be fertile places for building peace. The time is not opportune for collective bargaining when countries are holding their cards close to their chest and scheming for positions of advantage. The least common denominators are so shallow that joint statements read like a string of diverse statements without any political glue. Bilateral engagements may be much more productive at this point in history.

In-built contradictions

The 14th virtual BRICS summit hosted by China (June 23-24) was a clear attempt by China to hijack the grouping, going by a blueprint it has prepared for the new world order. Curiously, BRICS was not meant to be a political grouping when the acronym, BRIC, was coined by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill in 2001 to categorise Brazil, Russia, India and China, which were expected to collectively dominate global growth by 2050. Seeing the possibility of developing a non-western global economic system, China welcomed the idea of BRICS as the nucleus of

a new economic grouping and invested energy and resources in building it. The others, joined later by South Africa, were also attracted by the idea of creating a catalyst for an alternative to the Bretton Woods Institutions.

The composition of the group had its own contradictions right from the beginning. Two permanent members of the Security Council together with three aspirants to permanent membership appeared like two carnivores and three herbivores invited to the same meal with little possibility for a change in menu. But the grouping focused on possibilities of cooperation among them by developing institutions such as the New Development Bank, the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement and cooperation in certain sectors. The fundamental question of support for the three countries to secure permanent membership was fossilised on China's position that the role of the developing countries should be enhanced, implying that there shall be no expansion of the permanent membership of the Security Council. Russia's support for India also got diluted as a result. Even at the best of times, the BRICS partnership did not result in support for its three partners.

There has been a sea change

The situation in BRICS had undergone a sea change by the time the BRICS summit was held virtually under the presidency of China towards the end of June. The entire fragile framework of limited cooperation was shattered with the bloodshed at Galwan, when China unilaterally sought to alter the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and, even worse, halted the process of disengagement from certain sectors. The treaties, agreements and agreed procedures are required to be rewritten to form the basis of future cooperation. If Pakistan's raising bilateral issues and the Kashmir issue on every occasion merited a boycott

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of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), India, attending a BRICS meeting under the chairmanship of China was a major concession. The only justification for India's attendance was that it did not want to miss a conclave that could determine the dynamics of the future course in the Indo-Pacific. But both China and Russia do not favour even the change of nomenclature of the region from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific.

Russia-China link

The joint statement of BRICS was of 7,500 words, none of which seemed to indicate the beginning of a new relationship within BRICS. The change of Russia was even more dramatically different since February 2022. Neither the Soviet Union nor Russia had supported India against China since 1962, because of the "brother and the friend" syndrome. Russia showed some inclination to facilitate a discussion between India and China, but after February 2022, Russia is legally obliged to take the Chinese side in any future showdown between India and China. If Russia had agreed to end the war and begin negotiations with Ukraine and China had disengaged from areas occupied in 2020, it would have marked a change for the better. With Russia continuing its war in Ukraine and China continuing to occupy Indian territory in Ladakh, there was little credibility in many of the words they used in the Joint Communiqué. Words such as responsive, effective, transparent, democratic, objective, ac-

tion oriented and credible sound hollow as they come from Russia and China, which have violated every one of them.

The way China brought in 13 like-minded countries through the back door for a high-level dialogue on global development smacked of unfair means to expand the group with their friends. China pushed for expansion at the summit itself even at a time when BRICS had no credible global agenda. China showed no enthusiasm to bring India into the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) even after India met the criteria of a liberalised economy. Repeating sentences from old BRICS documents as though there was no change in the world has not contributed to the solidarity of BRICS. China seems to think that BRICS would be an extension of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was designed to dominate the world by getting small and weak countries in a debt trap. The Sri Lankan experience has exposed the Chinese strategy; it has been India, not China, which has come to the rescue of Sri Lanka.

On the G7 meet

India's presence at G7 meetings are not rare and Germany invited the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, to attend the G7 summit in Bavaria (June 26-28) even when there were rumours that in the clamour about democracy and religious freedom and India's neutrality in the Ukraine war, India might be excluded. The G7 made its own statement on the Ukraine war on expected lines and India was only involved in other issues such as environment, energy, climate, food security, health, gender equality and democracy. But the G7 was so preoccupied with its increasing involvement in the war through the supply of money, sophisticated weapons, etc., that other issues were cursorily treated. The imposition of sanctions has been difficult without the cooperation of all countries; the European nations

were pressured to impose sanctions against Russia even if it was not in their own interest. Since it was a war summit, it did not produce any results on other major issues. Curtailing energy supplies from Russia would hurt Germany, France, Japan and others, but they could not get any exemption.

Mr. Modi's presence at the G7 summit enabled him to pursue several vital projects with G7 countries, but they will have to be pursued away from the theatre of war – an issue that has fully occupied the G7 countries. India's gain has been the opportunity it got to interact with world leaders, though it was tinged with the disappointment that India, as a Quad member, did not condemn Russia's action in Ukraine.

At the UAE

The limited gains of India at the BRICS and G7 summits have been in contrast with the enthusiastic welcome Mr. Modi received in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which the Prime Minister visited for a few hours. Apart from paying his respects to the late President of the UAE, Mr. Modi must have smoothed the ruffled feathers of the UAE and other West Asian countries, which were hurt by the totally objectionable remarks made by two former spokespersons of the ruling party. The few hours of bilateral meetings in the UAE were more productive for Mr. Modi than the days he spent at the two summits.

Multilateral negotiations will be increasingly difficult in the present chaotic global situation. It is only by working bilaterally with potential allies that India can attain the status of a pole in the new world with steadfast friends and followers.

T.P. Sreenivasan is a former Indian Ambassador with long experience in multilateral diplomacy. He is presently Mentor and Adjunct Professor of Eminence at the Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Mumbai

EXPLAINER

The need for space sustainability

How does orbital crowding, space debris work against the sustainability of outer space? What is the U.K.'s Astro Carta model?

HARINI MADHUSUDAN

The story so far: On June 23, the U.K. hosted the fourth summit for Space Sustainability in London in collaboration with the Secure World Foundation. In line with the ambitious U.K. National Space Strategy, George Freeman, the Minister of Science, announced a new 'Plan for Space Sustainability.' According to him, this plan aims to "set a global commercial framework for the insurability, the licensing and the regulation of commercial satellites." It also aims to reduce the cost for those who comply with the best sustainability standards and thus encourages a thriving ecosystem for the industry.

What does sustainability in outer space mean?

The earth's orbital environment has more than tripled in the past decade. As the cost of missions reduce and the number of players increase, the complexity of missions and slot allotment issues also increase. With the emergence of large constellations and complex satellites, there is a risk of collisions and interference with radio frequencies. As the outer space is considered a shared natural resource, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in 2019 adopted a set of 21 voluntary, non-binding guidelines to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

One of the hot issues when it comes to space sustainability is orbital crowding. It poses a direct threat to the operations and safety of a mission and is likely to

cause legal and insurance-related conflicts. Space debris is another prominent issue. After the completion of a mission, an 'end-of-life protocol' requires space objects to be moved to the graveyard orbit or to a low altitude. Neither of the options are sustainable in the long run. Other causes of concern are solar and magnetic storms which potentially damage communication systems. Such space weather threats need to be addressed along with the efforts to identify the terrestrial carbon footprint of outer space missions.

Long-term sustainability looks toward space research and development of technology to ensure the reuse and recycling of satellites at every stage. The U.K. plan proposes active debris removal and in-orbit servicing.

What does the U.K. plan for space sustainability entail?

The U.K. calls for an "Astro Carta" for space sustainability, based on the Artemis Accords model for sustainable space exploration. The U.K. Space Sustainability plan mentions four primary elements: to review the regulatory framework of the U.K.'s orbital activity; to work with organisations such as the G-7 and the UN to emphasise international engagement on space sustainability; to try and develop safety and quality-related metrics that quantify the sustainability of activities; and, to induce additional funding of \$6.1 million on active debris removal. The U.K. also confirmed investments in its National Space Surveillance and Tracking Programme, which works on collision



assessment services for U.K.-licensed satellite operators.

Post-Brexit, the U.K. space programme has been transformed. It now hopes to drive the sustainability factor internationally and provide an opportunity for the private sector to develop models that enhance operations' safety and reduce debris footprint. The U.K. aims to draw investments not only from government investors but also from others.

Where does India stand on space sustainability?

The headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (In-SPACe) was formally inaugurated last month. One can expect an increased role of the private sector in India's space activities. India hosts promising start-ups like Agnikul and Skyroot, which are developing launch vehicles for small payloads and Dhruva Space, which works on high-tech solar panels for satellites and satellite deployers. India is well on its way to create a subsystem that addresses global

sustainability questions.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has initiated 'Project NETRA' to monitor space debris. The domestic surveillance system would provide first-hand information on the status of debris, which would aid further planning on protecting space assets. In April 2022, India and the U.S. signed a new pact for monitoring space objects at the 2+2 dialogue. The controlled anti-satellite weapons (ASAT) tests and the risk of collisions must be collectively addressed.

To provide in-orbit servicing, ISRO is developing a docking experiment called 'SPADEX'. It looks at docking a satellite on an existing satellite, offering support in re-fuelling and other in-orbit services while enhancing the capability of a satellite. According to Professor P. G. Diwakar at NIAS Bangalore, this would not only ensure the longevity of a mission but would also provide a futuristic option to combine missions/experiments.

What next?

Outer space in the 2020s can no longer be considered a 'space race' because of the cost, when compared to the beginning of this century. Today, any entity (government or private) with the necessary access to resources and technology can invest in outer space. Sustainable practices in outer space would directly help reduce orbital crowding and collision risk while nurturing future technologies. As the natural course of evolution, the Plan for Space Sustainability, which includes private industries, is a timely move. This

would serve as a model for other space programmes.

However, the broad question of sustainability cannot be driven by one country/entity alone. While most National Space Programs set sustainability standards, a collective effort by all space players, with the active role of the UN COPUOS or the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), is needed to set equitable standards for the ease of activities. Many of the measures for sustainability are resource-consuming and expensive for medium-and-small space programs. In this case, private initiatives of sustainability standards would make accessibility more challenging, giving undue advantage to programs with stable investments.

The UK's Astro Carta idea throws light on the need for addressing the principles and rules that guide the activities of entities in outer space. More clarity is required to know the exact framework and guiding principles of the Astro Carta to determine the path it intends to take. India has always emphasised cost-effective and efficient missions with problem-solving applications. Its debris footprint is minuscule; it has 114 debris among the 25,182 pieces, of sizes larger than 10 cm, in the lower earth orbits. The emerging private sector could be encouraged with a set of sustainability guidelines to ensure optimum utilisation of resources and increase the safety and productivity of missions.

The author is a doctoral scholar at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru

THE GIST

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Myanmar hosts first regional meeting since coup

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and counterparts from Mekong Delta nations take part

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BANGKOK

Myanmar's military government on Monday hosted the first high-level regional meeting since the Army took power last year with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and counterparts from Mekong Delta nations.

State broadcaster MRTV reported that Mr. Wang met with his colleagues from Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam at the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation group meeting held under the theme "Solidarity for Peace and Prosperity" in



Fresh link: The Foreign Ministers of China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam in Bagan on Monday. ■ AP

the central city of Bagan, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The TV report showed Mr. Wang and the other Foreign Ministers bumping elbows in a show of solidarity before

the start of the meeting, but did not provide further details.

The grouping is a Chinese-led initiative that includes the countries of the Mekong

Delta, a potential source of regional tensions due to an increasing number of hydroelectric projects that are altering the flow and raising concerns of ecological damage. China has built 10 dams along the upper stretch of the Mekong, the part it calls the Lancang.

China has been criticised for the dams upstream on the Mekong river which affect water levels and downstream fisheries that are important to several Southeast Asian nations' economies.

Military government spokesman Maj. Gen. Zaw Min

Tun said last Friday that the Ministers were expected to sign several agreements. He said that the presence of the Foreign Ministers was a recognition of Myanmar's sovereignty and its government.

China is Myanmar's biggest trading partner and an old ally. Beijing has invested billions of dollars in Myanmar's mines, oil and gas pipelines and other infrastructure and is its major arms supplier, together with Russia. Many in Myanmar suspect China of supporting the military takeover.

‘Oil can touch \$380 if Russia cuts output’

REUTERS

Brent prices could soar to a ‘stratospheric’ \$380 a barrel in ‘the most extreme scenario’ of Russia slashing oil production by 5 million barrels per day (bpd) in retaliation to a price cap being considered by the Group of Seven, analysts at J.P. Morgan wrote in a note.

“The most obvious and likely risk” is Russia not cooperating and retaliating by reducing exports of oil, it said, adding that Moscow can cut output by up to 5 million bpd “without excessively hurting its economic interest”.

“Given the high level of stress in the market, in the worst-case scenario, a 5 million bpd cut could drive oil price to a stratospheric \$380/bbl,” J.P.Morgan said.

Centre stops work on Rajasthan canal project

Says 'lack of consent' by other States



Rajasthan has been demanding the national project status for ERCP for quite some time. ■ FILE PHOTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The proposed Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP), set to benefit 13 districts of Rajasthan through interlinking of three rivers, has taken a political twist following the Centre's directive to stop the work in view of "lack of consent" by other States. The Congress government has termed the Centre's interference undesirable and described it as crossing the line of cooperative federalism.

Rajasthan has been demanding the national project status for ERCP for quite some time, while pointing out that any delay in its implementation would lead to a phenomenal increase in its cost, which was at present estimated at ₹37,200 crore. The ambitious project stipulates transfer of excess water from the Chambal river basin to the regions facing water scarcity.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said at a workshop on ERCP with the Congress leaders here that the objections raised by neighbouring Madhya Pradesh were baseless, as any of the two States could use water from its catchment area as well as 10% of the water received from the catchment areas of the other, after an agreement reached in the Inter-State Water Control Board.

Mr. Gehlot pointed out that M.P. had itself built the Mohanpura dam on the Ne-

waj river, a tributary of Parvati river, and the Kundalia dam on Kalisindh river, because of which about 2.65-lakh hectare irrigation area was developed in that State. The no objection certificate was obtained by M.P. after the construction of dams in 2017.

The Rajasthan government has maintained that M.P.'s objection on ERCP was baseless, as it had got its own projects cleared as per the decision taken in an inter-State meeting in 2005. Rajasthan has also prepared the detailed project report in accordance with the decision and in compliance with the 2010 guidelines of the Central Water Commission.

CM questions move

The Union Jal Shakti Ministry's Secretary has written to the Rajasthan Chief Secretary directing that all kinds of works on the ERCP should be stopped until the issues with M.P. were resolved. Mr. Gehlot asked how the Centre could ask the State government to stop the work when the State was meeting the project cost and utilising its share of water within its own borders.

"Water is a State subject. The Centre is adopting a discriminatory attitude towards Rajasthan and is trying to deprive people of the State of drinking water and farmers of irrigation waters," Mr. Gehlot said.

India needs to scale up direct nutrition interventions

Preconception nutrition, maternal nutrition and child feeding practices in the first 1,000 days of life need priority



SHEILA C. VIR

As India launches the celebrations of its 75th anniversary of Independence, there is much to be proud about; significant advances have been made in science, technology, and medicine, adding to the country's ancient, traditional, and civilisational knowledge base, wisdom and wealth.

Still, it is disconcerting that even after seven decades of Independence, India is afflicted by public health issues such as child malnutrition (35.5% stunted, 67.1% anaemic) attributing to 68.2% of under-five child mortality. Poor nutrition not only adversely impacts health and survival but also leads to diminished learning capacity, and poor school performance. And in adulthood, it means reduced earnings and increased risks of chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.

The good news is that the Government appears determined to set it right – with an aggressive push to the National Nutrition Mission (NNM), rebranding it the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition, or POSHAN Abhiyaan. It has the objective of reducing malnutrition in women, children and adolescent girls.

The Ministry of Women and Child (MWCD) continues to be the nodal Ministry implementing the

NNM with a vision to align different ministries to work in tandem on the “window of opportunity” of the first 1,000 days in life (270 days of pregnancy and 730 days; 0-24 months). Global and Indian evidence fully supports this strategy, which prevents the largely irreversible stunting occurring by two years of age. POSHAN Abhiyaan (now referred as POSHAN 2.0) rightly places a special emphasis on selected high impact essential nutrition interventions, combined with nutrition-sensitive interventions, which indirectly impact mother, infant and young child nutrition, such as improving coverage of maternal-child health services, enhancing women empowerment, availability, and access to improved water, sanitation, and hygiene and enhancing homestead food production for a diversified diet.

NFHS data is a pointer

Data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 2019-21, as compared to NFHS-4 2015-16, reveals a substantial improvement in a period of four to five years in several proxy indicators of women's empowerment, for which the Government deserves credit. There is a substantial increase in antenatal service attendance (58.6 to 70.0%); women having their own saving bank accounts (63.0 to 78.6%); women owning mobile phones that they themselves use (45.9 % to 54.0%); women married before 18 years of age (26.8 % to 23.3 %); women with 10 or more years of schooling (35.7 % to 41.0%), and access to clean fuel for cooking (43.8 % to 68.6%).

But, alarmingly, during this period, the country has not pro-



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gressed well in terms of direct nutrition interventions. Preconception nutrition, maternal nutrition, and appropriate infant and child feeding remain to be effectively addressed. India has 20% to 30% undernutrition even in the first six months of life when exclusive breastfeeding is the only nourishment required. Neither maternal nutrition care interventions nor infant and young child feeding practices have shown the desired improvement. A maternal nutrition policy is still awaited.

Despite a policy on infant and young child feeding, and a ban on sale of commercial milk for infant feeding, there has only been a marginal improvement in the practice of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF). Child undernutrition in the first three months remains high. Creating awareness on EBF, promoting the technique of appropriate holding, latching and manually emptying the breast are crucial for the optimal transfer of breast milk to a baby. Recent evidence from the Centre for Technology Alternatives for Rural Areas (CTARA), IIT Mumbai team indicates that well-planned breastfeeding counselling given to pregnant women during antenatal checkup prior to delivery and in

follow up frequent home visits makes a significant difference. The daily weight gain of a baby was noted to average 30 to 35 grams per day and underweight prevalence rate reduced by almost two thirds.

Another key intervention

NFHS-5 also confirms a gap in another nutrition intervention – complementary feeding practices, i.e., complementing semi-solid feeding with continuation of breast milk from six months onwards. Poor complementary feeding is often due to a lack of awareness to start feeding at six to eight months, what and how to feed appropriately family food items, how frequently, and in what quantity. The fact that 20% of children in higher socio-economic groups are also stunted indicates poor knowledge in food selection and feeding practices and a child's ability to swallow mashed feed. Where are we going wrong?

So, creating awareness at the right time with the right tools and techniques regarding special care in the first 1,000 days deserves very high priority. We must act now, and invest finances and energy in a mission mode. The Prime Minister can give a major boost to POSHAN 2.0, like he did to Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, using his 'Mann Ki Baat' programme.

There is a pressing need to revisit the system spearheading POSHAN 2.0 and overhaul it to remove any flaws in its implementation. We need to see if we are using opportunity of service delivery contacts with mother-child in the first 1,000 days to the optimum. There is a need to revisit the nodal system for nutrition programme ex-

isting since 1975, the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) under the Ministry of Women and Child and examine whether it is the right system for reaching mother-child in the first 1000 days of life. By depending on the ICDS, we are in fact missing the frequent contacts with pregnant mothers and children that the public health sector provides during antenatal care services and child immunisation services. There is also a need to explore whether there is an alternative way to distribute the ICDS supplied supplementary nutrition as Take- Home Ration packets through the Public Distribution (PDS) and free the anganwadi workers of the ICDS to undertake timely counselling on appropriate maternal and child feeding practices.

We need to systematically review the status, and develop and test a new system that would combine the human resource of ICDS and health from village to the district and State levels. This would address the mismatch that exists on focussing on delivery of services in the first 1000 days of life for preventing child undernutrition by having an effective accountable system.

It is time to think out of the box, and overcome systemic flaws and our dependence on the antiquated system of the 1970s that is slowing down the processes. Moreover, mass media or TV shows could organise discourses on care in the first 1,000 days to reach mothers outside the public health system.

Dr. Sheila C. Vir is a public health nutrition expert and the editor of the book, 'Public Health Nutrition in Developing Countries'

The problem with our university vision

Instead of taking local conditions and market demands into account, India tries to ape the West



MILIND KUMAR SHARMA

It has now become an annual ritual in India to discuss the international rankings of higher education institutions (HEI) only when global ranking systems such as the coveted QS World University Rankings are announced. The QS World University Rankings rank HEIs on the following components: academic reputation (40%), employer reputation (10%), faculty student ratio (20%), citations per faculty (20%), international faculty ratio (5%) and international student ratio (5%). The international research network and employment outcomes were 0% for this edition.

While it is heartening to see that the number of Indian institutes among the top 1,000 globally has risen to 27 from 22 last year, and that the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, has moved up 31 places to emerge as the highest ranked Indian institute in the 2023 edition, there is no serious debate on the abysmal performance of Indian universities barring the Institutes of Eminence (IOE). IOEs occupy a special place as they are granted more academic and administrative autonomy, and public IOEs get additional funding. Therefore, their dominance in the top 500 in the QS World University Rankings comes as no surprise.

Step-motherly treatment

Among the other HEIs too, there is great inequality. As per the All-India Survey on Higher Education (2019-20), 184 of the 1,043 HEIs in the country are centrally funded institutions. The Indian government generously allocates financial resources to these institutions. However, the financial support provided by State governments to State HEIs is far from adequate even though the number of under-graduate students is largest in State public universities (13,97,527) followed by State open universities (9,22,944) of the total students' enrollment. State-sponsored HEIs barely manage to pay salaries and pensions.

While the number of universities increased by almost 30.5% in 2019-



The IIT Madras campus in Chennai . ■VELANKANNI RAJ B.

20 compared to 2015-16, academic and administrative infrastructure has not been strengthened commensurate to this growth. The lackadaisical attitude we see in filling up faculty positions has further worsened the quality of teaching and research in HEIs. In fact, quality education and the world class research output that policymakers expect from State public universities remain elusive as these HEIs have never had financial and other resources to attain academic and professional growth.

On the other hand, the institutions that are generously funded by the Centre perform better than their State-sponsored counterparts on all academic performance indicators – faculty strength, modernised laboratories, building infrastructure, digitised libraries, sponsored research project grants, computing facilities, etc. Therefore, that the State-funded HEIs would not perform well in these rankings was a forgone conclusion. It is a consequence of the unequal and unfair system in the Indian higher education system, where State-sponsored HEIs are provided step-motherly treatment and positioned poorly vis-à-vis centrally funded institutions. No ranking system seems to ra-

tionally rank institutions after examining their administrative challenges, infrastructural constraints and financial predicaments; they only pay attention to performance metrics based on academic strengths and other achievements. For India to perform better on these rankings, we need to pay more attention to the State HEIs.

The NEP vision

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has envisaged all HEIs to become multidisciplinary institutions by 2040. The aim is to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education, including vocational education, from 26.3% in 2018 to 50% by 2035. The NEP also aims to ensure that by 2030, there is at least one large multidisciplinary HEI in or near every district. This means that single-stream specialised institutions will eventually be phased out.

However, the fact that prominent multidisciplinary universities such as Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, the University of Hyderabad, and Jamia Millia Islamia have slipped in the QS World University Rankings should compel national think tanks to revisit the NEP's pro-

posal in this regard. A close study of the QS World University Rankings reveals that single-stream specialised HEIs such as the Indian Institutes of Technology and IISc have performed better than their multidisciplinary counterparts. Eight IITs (Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Roorkee, Guwahati and Indore) are placed among the top 500 globally, in addition to IISc, Bangalore. IIT-Indore ranked highest among the second-generation IITs by securing the 396th position and IIT-BHU made its maiden presence in the 651-700 band.

A plan in the NEP for multidisciplinary education and research universities is also being contemplated in order to achieve the highest global standards in quality education. While everyone is demanding multidisciplinary education, the performance of the specialised HEIs in the QS World Rankings bears testimony to their superiority over multidisciplinary/multi-faculty institutions. The idea of converting a specialised institution into a multi-faculty university does not seem to augur well for an economy driven by specialist professionals. It would be perplexing if the IITs decided to offer courses in physical education and medicine or the National Law Universities ran undergraduate degree programmes in mechanical engineering.

It is crucial to emphasise here that nobody is averse to the idea of multidisciplinary/multi-faculty education if there is a 15% to 20% flexibility in the total academic strength. But converting all HEIs into multidisciplinary institutions is not an idea that holds water given the unique conditions and demands in India. No study or data support the idea of transforming specialised institutions into multidisciplinary/multi-faculty universities either. Such an idea may have worked in the West where HEIs invest substantial resources in multidisciplinary research through private and public research grants and funding. But a 'one size fits all' approach may not be of help to India. The need of the hour is to build and develop our higher education system while taking into account Indian conditions and market demands.

Milind Kumar Sharma is professor at Department of Production & Industrial Engineering, MBM University, Jodhpur, erstwhile, MBM Engineering College, Jodhpur. Views are personal

Centre said to take steps to tackle rupee volatility

‘As oil prices rise, CAD will go up too’

REUTERS

NEW DELHI

India was trying to ‘address volatility’ in the Indian rupee that has tumbled to record lows against the dollar in recent weeks, a government official said on Monday, amid concerns of a widening trade deficit and sell-off of assets by foreign investors.

The rupee has plunged 6% against the dollar this year, weighed down by broad strength in the green-back and as investors retreated from the domestic share markets.

Meanwhile, India’s trade gap touched a monthly record of \$24.3 billion in May, hurt by higher commodity prices. “When oil prices are this high, obviously CAD



(current account deficit) will go up,” the official, who did not want to be named, told reporters. “Last several years, India has been bridging CAD with capital flows. This year there is headwinds on capital flows,” the official added.

The rupee ended Monday at 78.95 to the dollar, close to a record low it touched last week.

Exports grow 16.8%, imports surge 51% widening trade deficit

Coal, gold purchases expand June trade shortfall to a new record of \$25.63 billion

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

India's merchandise trade deficit hit a fresh high of \$25.63 billion in June as imports surged 51% to \$63.6 billion, significantly outpacing the 16.8% rise in exports, preliminary trade data show.

The previous record trade gap was May's \$24.3 billion.

While exports increased to almost \$38 billion last month, overseas purchases of goods, including coal and gold, swelled imports.

Coal imports more than tripled, while imports of gold grew over 169% to exceed \$2.6 billion. And petroleum imports rose 94.2%.

The value of non-petro-



Slow lane: Four of India's top 10 export items, including engineering goods, saw a contraction last month. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

leum imports was \$42.84 billion in June, reflecting a growth of 36.4%, while non-oil and non-gold, silver and precious metals imports rose 31.7% to \$36.7 billion.

"Despite an expected fall

in the gold imports, the merchandise trade deficit widened further to a worrying \$25.6 billion... with a sequential dip in exports and a rise in the non-gold imports relative to May," said ICRA

chief economist Aditi Nayar.

"With a steady uptick in the size of the merchandise trade deficit over the course of the quarter, we expect the current account deficit to more than double to \$30 billion in Q1 of 2022-23, from the modest \$13 billion in the previous quarter," she said.

Key exports slide

Four of India's top 10 export items saw a contraction.

Engineering goods, a major growth driver in the last year, slid 1.6%, drugs and pharmaceuticals fell 1.3%, cotton yarn and handloom products shrank 22.5% and plastic and linoleum contracted 23.2%.

Govt. said to hold firm on deficit target

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's macroeconomic fundamentals were strong enough to deal with global challenges, official sources said on Monday, adding that the central government was committed to sticking to the fiscal deficit target of 6.4% of the GDP for the current fiscal.

The government was taking steps to deal with the spiralling crude oil prices in the international market, the sources said.

India meets close to 85% of its oil demand through imports and a weaker rupee makes imports costlier.

Prices of commodities, including crude oil, are ruling high due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Govt. to review oil export tax on forex rate, oil price

It will reassess windfall tax fortnightly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The government will review the just introduced windfall tax on domestically produced crude oil and fuel exports every two weeks based on foreign currency rates and international oil prices, but no levels have been fixed for its recall, top officials said on Monday.

Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said the \$40 per barrel level of oil prices being talked about for a rollback of the levy is unrealistic, considering the international oil rates currently.

“There is a way we will monitor it every 2 weeks, depending on the foreign currency rates and depending on where international prices are,” Mr. Bajaj said.



“What is the dollar to rupee, the international price of diesel, crude, what is the domestic cost of crude, we’ll keep reviewing it. You can decipher it yourself once we review it.”

The government last week slapped an export tax on petrol, diesel and jet fuel (ATF) and imposed a windfall tax on crude oil produced locally.

Hotels can't force customers to pay service charge: Centre

'No such amount can be added to bill'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) issued guidelines here on Monday asking hotels and restaurants not to collect service charge from customers. These establishments should not add service charge automatically or by default to the food bill, the guidelines say.

The guidelines, issued by Nidhi Khare, Chief Commissioner, CCPA, adds that if any consumer finds that a hotel or restaurant is violating the guidelines, he or she may make a request to remove the service charge from the bill amount or lodge a complaint with the National Consumer Helpline. Complaints can be filed with the Consumer Commission too or with the District Collector.

"No hotel or restaurant shall force a consumer to pay service charge and shall clearly inform the consumer that service charge is voluntary, optional and at consumer's discretion," the Consumer Affairs Ministry said in an official release. "No restriction on entry or



The National Consumer Helpline has got complaints against the levy. ■ ISTOCK

provision of services based on collection of service charge shall be imposed on consumers. Service charge shall not be collected by adding it along with the food bill and levying GST on the total amount," it added.

Inherent in price

The Ministry said the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has received a number of complaints by consumers against levying of service charge.

The guidelines added that component of service is inherent in the price of food and beverages offered by the restaurant or hotel.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 10

Centre gives direction on service charge to hotels

“Pricing of the product thus covers both the goods and services component. There is no restriction on hotels or restaurants to set the prices at which they want to offer food or beverages to consumers. Thus, placing an order involves consent to pay the prices of food items displayed in the menu along with applicable taxes.

Charging anything other than the said amount would amount to unfair trade practice under the Act,” the guidelines added.

“No hotel or restaurant shall add service charge automatically or by default in the bill. Service charge shall not be collected from consumers by any other name,” the guidelines said.

Oil slips as recession fears balance tight supply

Traders worry about slowing demand

REUTERS

LONDON

Oil edged lower on Monday as fears of a global recession that would hit demand overshadowed concerns of tight supply amid lower OPEC output, unrest in Libya and sanctions on Russia.

Figures on Friday showed Euro zone inflation hit yet another record high in June, firming the case for rapid European Central Bank rate increases starting this month.

U.S. consumer sentiment hit a record low in June.

Brent crude fell 25 cents, or 0.2%, to \$111.38 a barrel at 1015 GMT, after falling over \$1 in early trade.

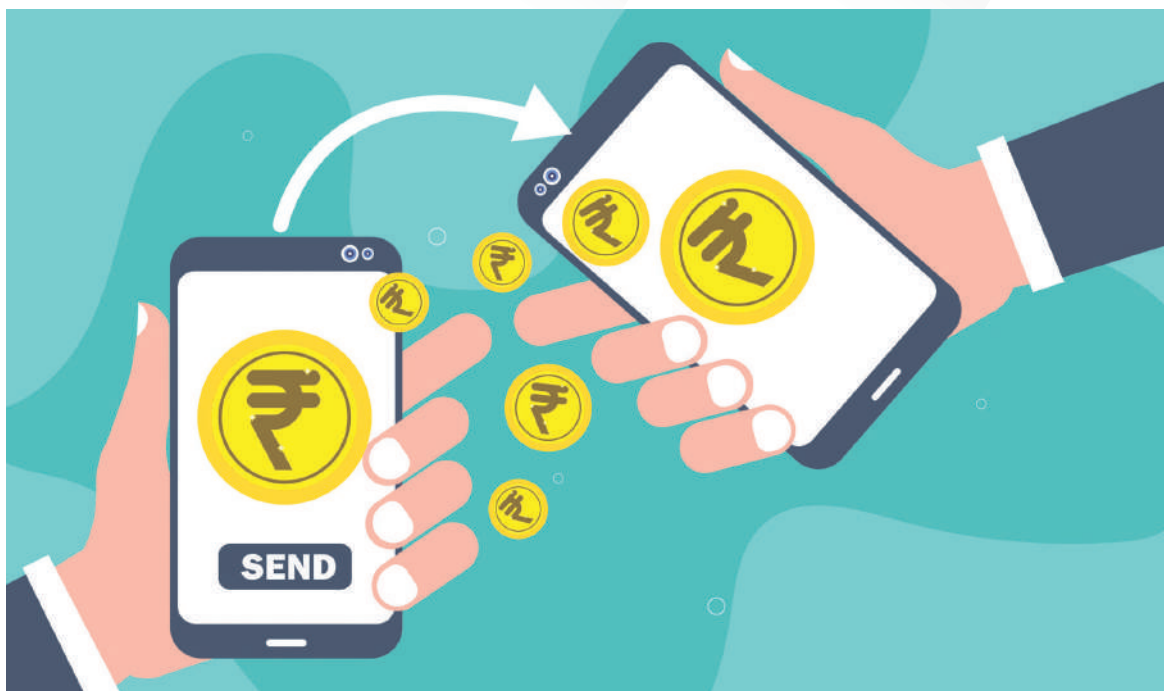
“The risk is tilted to the downside as traders are concerned about slowing oil



demand due to a strong possibility of an economic recession taking place in the U.S. and in other parts of the world,” said Naeem Aslam of Avatrade.

Brent came close this year to an all-time high of \$147 a barrel reached in 2008 as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine added to supply concerns.

Despite concern of a recession, tight supply is limiting losses.



CACHE

UPI: the dawn of digital fintech nirvana

This virtual payment interface is an Indian technological success story, one which enables us to move around with an empty pocket barring a smartphone

THE GIST

■ The UPI was launched in 2016 and is operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It operates on top of the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) which was created by the NPCI for immediate fund transfers.

■ The primary reason for the popularity of UPI is that it accepts transactions as small as one rupee and for merchants, the absence of MDR that they have to pay to their banks.

■ The ecosystem in which UPI thrives is not to be missed: the presence of high-speed internet in many parts of the country, technologies that power a smartphone, cloud computing and modern software engineering technologies that fulfil a transaction in a few seconds.

S. VARAHASIMHAN

If you own a smartphone, you have most probably done UPI-based payments using BHIM or some other mobile application. The Unified Payments Interface or the UPI, processed ₹10,41,520 crore worth of transactions just in May of this year in India. More than 40% of all retail digital payments (non-cash and non-paper payments) in India happen through UPI now.

The functioning of UPI

The UPI was launched in 2016 and is operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). The NPCI was formed in 2009 as an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) with the goal to create a robust payment and settlement infrastructure. UPI operates on top of the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) which was created by the NPCI for immediate fund transfers. UPI based payments function broadly through three steps. First, one's bank account is mapped to a Virtual Payment Address (VPA). A VPA eliminates the risk of mentioning account details in every transaction. It can be created in a couple of minutes using a UPI app. The only prerequisite is that your bank account be linked to a mobile number. Secondly, a Payment Service Provider (typically a bank) takes care of the to-and-fro transactions to this VPA (and hence to the underlying bank account) and finally, the UPI software orchestrates the fund movement from a customer's VPA to a target VPA and completes the transaction.

This transaction is different from paying with a debit card or credit card as it does not involve a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR). The MDR is a fee that the recipient bank collects from the merchant. For UPI transactions, there is no MDR (like in the case of the Indian government's Rupay

card which also does not have an MDR) and hence there is no price to be paid by the merchant.

A ubiquitous payment system

The popularity of UPI is evident – from tiny roadside shops to large brands, many merchants accept UPI-based payments. The primary reason for this penetration is that UPI accepts transactions as small as one rupee and for merchants, the absence of MDR that they have to pay to their banks is a significant incentive to accept UPI payments. Also, just your smartphone being the only device needed to complete a transaction makes the process as simple as it can get, instead of using devices like the Point-of-Sale card-swiping machines. If there is no extra price to be paid by customer or merchant, how does NPCI manage the cost of running the infrastructure for UPI? Is it sustainable in the long run to continue without MDR to fund the infrastructure? The answer can be that cost savings from the reduction in hassles and overheads for banks (by supporting UPI) will be used to bear the cost of operating UPI in the long run.

In 2019, Google requested the U.S. Federal Reserve to develop a solution similar to India's UPI citing the thoughtful planning, design and implementation behind it

The ecosystem in which UPI thrives is not to be missed: the presence of high-speed internet in many parts of the country, technologies that power a smartphone, cloud computing and modern software engineering technologies that fulfil a transaction in a few seconds. The security of a UPI transaction is tied to the user's authentication with the mobile phone – there is a mobile personal identification number (MPIN) for

the UPI application and there is one more layer of security when the bank's online transaction PIN is to be keyed in as part of every UPI transaction. If you block a mobile number due to theft, for example, then UPI transactions on that mobile number will also be halted.

Continuous innovation

The NPCI has come up with multiple new innovations over the past few years: recurring payments for monthly bills, international payments, linking UPI to credit cards, I23PAY that allows people without smartphones but with only ordinary mobile phones to use UPI using missed calls, allowing one-time payment by letting a merchant generate a QR (Quick Response) code that is valid for just that specific transaction and many more features. The dynamic QR code is a great boost to security and trust because there is no risk of someone having tampered with a static QR code (a static QR code is what is widely prevalent now and we see it on the wall in many shops). The merchant generates a QR code specific to that transaction amount and the customer pays through UPI by scanning the QR code.

The UPI is a phenomenal Indian technological success story. In 2019, Google requested the U.S. Federal Reserve to develop a solution similar to India's UPI citing the thoughtful planning, design and implementation behind it.

UPI brings us one step closer to the age of digital fintech nirvana.

From the dawn of civilisation, man has always accumulated and hoarded; however, UPI enables one to move around with an empty pocket barring a smartphone; it makes us un-learn to carry a wallet but be assured that we can pay when we want to.

The author is a senior employee at a software product MNC in Chennai

Australia to give minerals to Indian EV makers

India will try to source lithium, cobalt

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Australia is all set to supply critical minerals required for India's electric vehicles, solar power projects and other strategic areas, said Canberra's Minister for Resources and Minister for Northern Australia Madeleine King on Monday. Welcoming India's Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines Prahlad Joshi, Ms. King said Australia will commit \$5.8 million to the three-year India-Australia Critical Minerals Investment Partnership.

"Australia has the resources to help India fulfil its ambitions to lower emissions and meet growing demand for critical minerals to help India's space and defence industries, and the manufacture of solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles," said Ms. King, following her first meeting with the Indian counterpart since the Albanese government was elected in May this year.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, soon after his May

23 election victory, had participated in the Quad Summit in Tokyo along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, where all sides pledged to focus on green and sustainable forms of energy. Australia's Defence Minister Richard Marles visited India during June 20-23.

Presenting the emerging outline of India-Australia collaboration in the critical minerals sector, Mr. Joshi referred to the recently signed MoU between Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL) and the Critical Minerals Facilitation Office (CMFO) of Australia that will try to source lithium and cobalt from Australia and said, "Both CMFO and the Indian JV KABIL will jointly fund the due diligence process with an initial total amount of U.S. \$6 million. Once due diligence is completed and potential projects are identified, we will explore investment opportunities through different methods as envisaged in the MoU."

EXPLAINER

Enforcing the single-use plastic ban

How will the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules be implemented? What has been the response to the move?

JACOB KOSHY

The story so far: A ban on the use of single-use plastics that was notified by the Union Environment Ministry on August 2021 came into effect on July 1 this year. The notification said national and State-level control rooms would be set up to check illegal manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of banned single use plastic items. The Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, will also prohibit manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less than 120 microns with effect from December 31, 2022.

What is single-use plastic?

The Centre defines it as an object made of plastic that is intended to be used "only once" before being disposed off or recycled. For the purposes of the ban, there is a list of 21 items that come under the definition of single-use plastic including ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, thermocol for decoration, plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 microns, stirrers.

Mineral water bottles or plastic bottles of aerated drinks are unaffected by the ban, though, in popular imagination, they are representative of 'plastic pollution.'

These objects were listed by the Environment Ministry in August when it notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021. Single-use plastic items such as these had "low utility and high littering potential," it noted. Plastic

packaging waste, a major contributor to the much larger problem of plastic waste pollution, isn't yet covered under the phase-out of single-use plastic items. Mineral water bottles or plastic bottles of aerated drinks are unaffected by the ban, though, in popular imagination, they are representative of 'plastic pollution.'

How will the ban be implemented?

So far 32 States/UTs have reportedly constituted a dedicated Task Force to eliminate the use of single-use plastics. Of these 14 states/UTs and 12 Central Ministries, as of March, had developed action plans describing how they would be enforcing this.

A few States, for example Maharashtra, already have legislation banning the manufacture and storage of such plastic. But implementing it wasn't always successful as there was regular supply from States where such bans were not in force. An all-India ban, it's hoped, would make enforcement more effective.

According to the Environment Protection (EP) Act, violating the ban could invite "punitive action". Manufacturers and distributors of single-use plastic goods were directed to have zero inventory by June 30, according to officials in the Union Environment Ministry. The EP Act says that violating the ban could invite a five-year imprisonment and a fine of upto ₹1 lakh, or both. If the violations are repeated, it could mean additional fines up to ₹5000 for each day. There are different penalties for companies, organisations, and government departments under the EP Act.

What is the history of the single use plastic ban in India?

The Environment Ministry told the Rajya Sabha last July of its plan to phase out some categories of single use plastic by 2022. A draft outlining the manner in which the ban

was to be implemented was issued in March and involved amending the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. Before the amendments came into force, the Plastic Waste Management Rules only prohibited the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags and plastic sheets less than 50 microns in thickness in the country. There is a ban on sachets using plastic material used for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala. Since October 2021, there is a ban on the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic less than 75 microns as opposed to 50 microns under the earlier version of the rules. At the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly in 2019, India piloted a resolution on addressing single-use plastic products pollution.

Is there popular support for the ban?

The All India Plastic Manufacturers Association has said that the ban would shutter 88,000 units in the plastic manufacturing business. These employ close to a million people and contribute to exports worth ₹25,000 crore. Fast Moving Consumer Goods companies (FMCG) would be severely affected by the the ban due to their dependence on plastic straws, plates. Their replacements, industry representatives say, are available but cost much more than their plastic alternatives. There is also limited capacity in India to provide biodegradable replacements. Average and prominent consumer goods companies have written to the government requesting a six-month extension before the ban takes effect and that companies that are likely to go out of business be compensated. The government has, however, signalled its firm commitment to the ban. Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said the government had multiple consultations with the industry since 2018. Stakeholders had nearly a year to



find alternatives to the use of such plastic and that industries should work to introduce new technologies and alternatives to preserve livelihoods of those who worked in plastic manufacturing industries, he added.

What is the environmental damage from single-use plastic?

Unlike thicker and denser plastic material, single-use plastic objects being light and flexible are less amenable to being recycled. While 99% of plastic is recycled, they constitute heavier plastics that are likely to be collected by ragpickers and plastic waste recyclers. Single use plastics do not provide an incentive enough for the effort needed to collect them and hence they lie around, leach their toxins into the soil and cause environmental damage in both land and sea.

Complete overhaul: The government has banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of all identified single-use plastic items with effect from July 1. ♦♦♦

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
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A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
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E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
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M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
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O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
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A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.