



December - 12

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The US has stalled appointments of members in the appellate body of WTO's dispute settlement system.
 - So, WTO members were unable to reach consensus on a proposal to address concerns regarding the functioning of the appellate body.
- ❖ Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched “Green Good Deeds” initiative to protect environment and promote good living in the country.
- ❖ Alliance Air, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air India, flagged-off its first flight operations between Guwahati to Dimapur, Dimapur to Imphal under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – UdeDeshKaAamNagrik).

NATIONAL

UNDP Report – India ranks 129 in HDI

- ❖ India climbed one spot to 129 among 189 countries in the 2019 human development index (HDI).
- ❖ In 2018, India ranked 130.
- ❖ This report was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- ❖ The rankings were listed based on the assessment of poverty, education, life expectancy and access to health care.
- ❖ The rankings were listed by the report titled “Beyond Income, Beyond Averages, Beyond Today: Inequalities in Human Development in 21st century”.
- ❖ Norway, Switzerland, Ireland occupied the top three positions in that order.

Highlights

- ❖ The report also shows that from 1990 to 2018 life expectancy at birth increased by 11.6 years and per capita income rose by over 250 percent.
- ❖ The report also dwells on the issue of social exclusion and gender bias.
- ❖ In India, 27.1 crore people were lifted out of poverty from 2005-06 to 2015-16.
- ❖ India ranked 122 in the Gender Development Index.
- ❖ However, according to the report, India is the largest country constituting to 41% of world's poor.

- ❖ In the Inequality-Adjusted HDI (IHDI), India's position drops by one position to 130.
- ❖ The IHDI indicates percentage loss in HDI due to inequalities.
- ❖ India has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.501, ranking it 122 out of 162 countries in the 2018 index.

Ups and downs	Country	2017 Rank	2018 Rank
	India	130	129
Among India's neighbours Sri Lanka moved up five rungs on the HDI ladder while Maldives fell three ranks. While Pakistan slipped two spots, Bangladesh moved up one	Brazil	79	79
	China	86	85
	Russia	49	49
	South Africa	113	113
	Pakistan	150	152
	Afghanistan	168	170
	Sri Lanka	76	71
	Bhutan	134	134
	Nepal	149	147
	Bangladesh	136	135
	Maldives	101	104
Source: Human Development Report, UN			

The top five	
Norway	
Switzerland	
Ireland	
Germany	
Hong Kong	
India & the neighbourhood	
	Ranking
Sri Lanka	71
India	129
Bhutan	134
Bangladesh	135
Pakistan	152
Afghanistan	170

Recycling of Ships Bill - 2019

- ❖ Parliament passed the 'Recycling of Ships Bill 2019' for Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships in India.
- ❖ It joins together the existing Shipbreaking Code (revised), 2013 and the provisions of the Hong Kong Convention, 2009.
- ❖ Ships to be recycled in India will need to obtain a 'Ready for Recycling Certificate' in accordance with the Hong Kong Convention.

Key Features

- ❖ It will raise brand value of India's Ships Recycling Yards located at Alang (Gujarat), Mumbai Port, Kolkata Port & Azhikkal (Kerala).
- ❖ 10% of country's Secondary steel needs will be met in an eco-friendly manner.
- ❖ Secondary steel is an outcome of Recycling of Ships.

INTERNATIONAL

India & Australia hold third 2+2 dialogue

- ❖ The third India-Australia Secretary-level 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi.

- ❖ The 2+2 is a format of dialogue where the defense and foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.
- ❖ The 2+2 dialogue between India and Australia at the Secretary-level was started in the year 2017.
- ❖ Currently, apart from Australia, India has a 2+2 ministerial mechanism with the US and Japan.



ECONOMY

NIIF and Canada pension fund

- ❖ Canada's largest pension fund Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) has agreed to invest about \$600 million in National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) through the NIIF Master Fund.
- ❖ The government had set up the NIIF in 2015 with 40000 crore rupees as an investment vehicle for funding commercially viable both Greenfield and Brownfield.
- ❖ It is India's first sovereign wealth fund.
- ❖ NIIF funds are registered as Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Guidelines for Licencing of Small Finance Banks

- ❖ Reserve Bank of India has released final Guidelines for 'on tap' Licencing for Small Finance Banks (SFBs).
- ❖ RBI had issued in-principle approval to ten applicants for SFB in 2015.

- ❖ An “on-tap” facility would mean the RBI will accept applications and grant licences for banks throughout the year.

Guidelines

- ❖ Capital requirement: The minimum paid-up voting equity capital / net worth requirement shall be ₹ 200 crores.
- ❖ Scheduled bank status to SFBs: SFBs will be given scheduled bank status immediately upon commencement of operations.
- ❖ Payments Banks conversion to SFBs: The payment banks can apply for conversion into SFB after 5 years of operations.

	PAYMENTS BANKS	SMALL BANKS
WHO CAN PROMOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Prepaid card issuers, telecom companies, NBFCs, business correspondents, supermarket chains, corporates, realty sector co-ops & PSUs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Individuals/professionals with 10 years experience in finance, NBFCs, microfinance cos, local area banks
WHAT THEY MUST DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Have a minimum capital of Rs 100cr > Maintain 75% of deposits in govt bonds > Maintain 25% of deposits in other banks > Have at least 26% investment by Indians > Get listed if net worth crosses Rs 500cr > Have 25% of branches in unbanked areas > Be fully networked and technology driven > Have Rs 1 lakh cap for deposits in one a/c 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Have a minimum capital of Rs 200cr > Extend 75% of loans to priority sector > Have 25% of branches in unbanked areas > Maintain reserve requirements > Cap loans to individuals and groups at 10% and 15% of net worth > Have a business correspondent network
WHAT THEY CAN DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Offer internet banking > Sell mutual funds, insurance, pensions > Offer bill payment service for customers > Have ATMs and business correspondents (BC) > Can function as BC of another bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Sell forex to customers > Sell mutual funds, insurance, pensions > Can convert into a full-fledged bank > Expand across the country
WHAT THEY CAN'T DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Offer credit cards > Extend loans > Handle cross-border remittances > Accept NRI Deposits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Extend large loans > Float subsidiaries > Cannot deal in sophisticated financial products

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

New Head on Generation technology on Indian Railways

- ❖ The Indian Railways has introduced New Head on Generation technology.
- ❖ It is an environment friendly and energy efficient solution in passenger trains to address noise and air pollution.
- ❖ The Railways has developed and improvised converter that are to be fitted in electric locomotives.
- ❖ These converters can replace diesel generators as well.
- ❖ The converters make the locomotives suitable to run-on head-on generation technology.



- ❖ Huge noise making fume emitting power generators will be replaced by silent generators.
- ❖ Germany transferred this technology to the Indian Coach Factories.

ENVIRONMENT

COP25 Climate Summit

- ❖ The 25th edition of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or COP25 has conducted in Madrid, Spain.
- ❖ The prime objective of the conference is to complete the rule-book to the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Finally, 75 countries committed to deliver 2050 net zero emissions strategies by 2020.
- ❖ It will consider the following reports
 - Annual Emissions Gap Report, produced by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
 - a series of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Climate Change Performance Index

- ❖ It is designed by the German environmental and development organisation Germanwatch.
- ❖ The Index measures renewable energy share, emissions and climate policies of 57 countries and the European Union.
- ❖ India for the first time was ranked 9th in the ranking provided.
- ❖ The United States was included in the worst-performing countries for the first time.
- ❖ The top position was bagged by Sweden while China ranked 30th.
- ❖ However, no country could meet 100% of all standards, so the first three places in this list are vacant.
- ❖ The list has been started from the fourth position, where Sweden is on the top of the list.

Background

- ❖ 2015 Paris Agreement will become effective in 2020 to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (comes to an end in 2020).

- ❖ The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan in 1997 and entered into force in 2005.
- ❖ Kyoto Protocol has the target of reducing emissions by at least 18% by the industrialized countries.

STATES

Draj Bridge in Rajouri, J&K

- ❖ Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Girish Chandra Murmu, inaugurated Draj Bridge in Rajouri, J&K.
- ❖ It is an important bridge for the military as well as for socio-economic development of J&K's Rajouri District as a whole.
- ❖ The important bridge has been constructed by 31 Task Force under Project Sampark of Border Roads Organisation (BRO).



Jharkhand's Mahuamilan station

- ❖ Jharkhand's Mahuamilan station of East Central Railway (ECZ) zone has become 5500th station to get free wifi facility.
- ❖ The RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. (RCIL) has provided free WiFi at 5,500 stations across country.

[About RailTel](#)



- ❖ RailTel is the digital arm of Indian Railways.
- ❖ RailTel is a 'Miniratna' enterprise that focuses on providing broadband and VPN services.

MISCELLANEOUS

WADA banned Russia from International sports events

- ❖ World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) executive committee has banned Russia from Olympics (2020 - Tokyo & 2022 - Beijing), world championships events for 4 years.
- ❖ WADA had first found evidence of mass doping in Russian athletics in 2015.
- ❖ Russian athletes can still compete at major international sporting events without their flag or anthem.

