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1 Status paper on Resource Efficiency & Circular Economy

CONTEXT:

- NITI Aayog unveiled the "Status Paper and Way Forward on Resource Efficiency & Circular Economy" and "Four Sectoral Strategy Papers on Resource Efficiency on Steel, Aluminium, Construction & Demolition Waste, Secondary Materials Management in Electrical & Electronics Sector".
- This event was hosted in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the European Union delegation to India.

ABOUT:

- NITI Ayog had undertaken the role of a facilitator to mainstream the approaches and measures related in the direction of resource efficient and circular Indian Economy.
- This was also in line with the Government's commitment to the goals of sustainability.
- The status paper brings out 30 recommendations out of which 14 recommendations have identified as priority actions. It also spelt out a few notable actions for transformation of RE Ecosystem in India. These are:
 - Formulation of a National Policy on RE/CE
 - Establishment of Bureau of Resource Efficiency (BRE)
 - Mainstreaming RE&CE in existing flagship missions
 - A Modern Recycling Industry with level playing between primary and secondary producers
 - R&D for development of scalable technologies for RE & C
 - Development and promotion of skill and capacity building programmes for informal sector

Resource efficiency

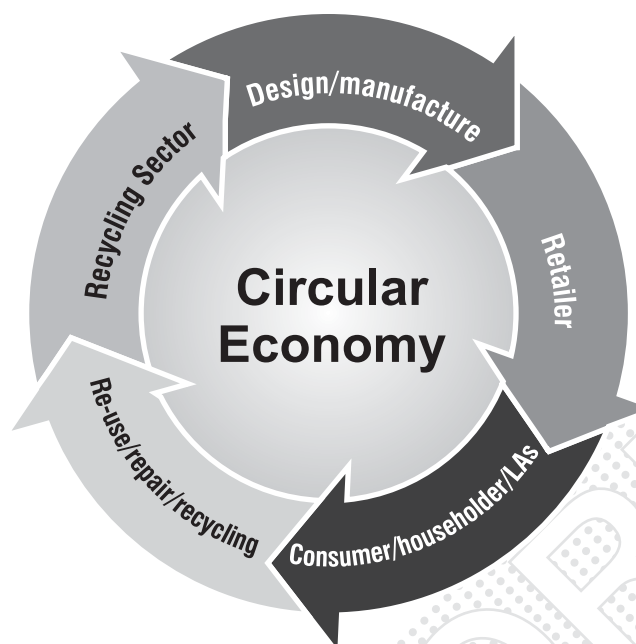
- It means using the Earth's limited resources in a sustainable manner while minimising impacts on the environment. It allows us to create more with less and to deliver greater value with less input.

Circular Economy

- Looking beyond the current take-make-dispose extractive industrial model, a circular economy aims to redefine growth, focusing on positive society-wide benefits. It entails gradually decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources, and designing waste out of the system.
- Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural, and social capital. It is based on three principles:



- Design out waste and pollution
- Keep products and materials in use
- Regenerate natural systems



2 Safety in Mines

CONTEXT:

- Cabinet approves MoU between India and Australia on the safety in Mines, Testing and Research Station.

ABOUT:

- The MoU will help in establishing a partnership between DGMS and SIMTARS for: Implementation of risk based safety management system, providing training organising, conference, seminar and other technical meetings, setting up occupations safety and health academy and national mine disaster centre, and Modernising R&D laboratory of DGMS. The memorandum of understanding will become operative from the date of signing and remain in effect for three years.

Implementation strategy:

- The memorandum of understanding will become operative from the date of signing and remain in effect for three years.

Background:

- Mining accident rates in Australia is the lowest in the world. Australia has pioneered in conceptualising and implementing risk based Safety Management Plans for the mining sector using the technique of hazard identification and risk assessment. SIMTARS is known to have exclusive expertise in Mines Safety Management Systems.

The Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS)

- ▶ The Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) is an agency of the India which administers the provisions of the government of India Mines Act, 1952 and, the Rules and Regulations framed there under.
- ▶ As per Constitution of India, occupational safety, welfare and health of workers employed in mines (Coal, Metalliferous and oil-mines) are the concern of the Central Government, under the Union Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- ▶ DGMS carries out the mandates of the Mine Act at all mining and mineral processing operations in the India, regardless of size, number of employees, commodity mined, or method of extraction.
- ▶ The organization has its headquarters at Dhanbad (Jharkhand) and is headed by Director-General of Mines Safety.
- ▶ Their mission is of continuous improvement of 'safety and health standards, practices and performances' in mines and oil-fields of India.
- ▶ They implement 'pro-active safety and health strategies', and continuously improve their processes. They ensure 'effective use of resources' and behavioural change in its personnel.

3

UNNATI

CONTEXT:

- Recently, ISRO'S UNNATI-- Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme has been inaugurated in Bengaluru.

ABOUT:

- UNNATI, a capacity building programme on Nanosatellite development, is an initiative by ISRO to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50).
- The programme provides opportunities to the participating developing countries to strengthen in assembling, integrating and testing of Nanosatellite.
- UNNATI programme is planned to be conducted for 3 years by U.R. Rao Satellite Centre of ISRO in 3 batches and will target to benefit officials of 45 countries.

Nanosatellites

- ▶ The term "nanosatellite" or "nanosat" is applied to an artificial satellite with a wet mass between 1 and 10 kg .
- ▶ Designs and proposed designs of these types may be launched individually, or they may have multiple nanosatellites working together or in formation, in which case, sometimes the term "satellite swarm" or "fractionated spacecraft" may be applied.
- ▶ With continued advances in the miniaturization and capability increase of electronic technology and the use of satellite constellations, nanosatellites are increasingly capable of performing commercial missions that previously required microsattellites.
- ▶ For example, a 6U CubeSat standard has been proposed to enable a constellation of 35 8 kg (18 lb) Earth-imaging satellites to replace a constellation of five 156 kg (344 lb) RapidEye Earth-imaging satellites, at the same mission cost, with significantly increased revisit times: every area of the globe can be imaged every 3.5 hours rather than the once per 24 hours with the RapidEye

constellation. More rapid revisit times are a significant improvement for nations performing disaster response, which was the purpose of the RapidEye constellation.

- ▶ Additionally, the nanosat option would allow more nations to own their own satellite for off-peak (non-disaster) imaging data collection. As costs lower and production times shorten, nanosatellites are becoming increasingly feasible ventures for companies.

4 The National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC)

CONTEXT:

- National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) has been inaugurated in Mumbai on January 19, 2019.

ABOUT:

- The development of the Museum was guided by the Museum Advisory Committee headed by Shyam Benegal. An innovation Committee headed by Prasoon Joshi provided an upgrade to the NMIC.
- The museum depicts the journey of over a century of Indian cinema in a story telling mode with the help of visuals, graphics, artifacts, interactive exhibits and multimedia expositions.
- The Museum is housed in two buildings – the New Museum Building and the 19th century historic palace Gulshan Mahal – in the Films Division campus in Mumbai.
- The Gulshan Mahal is an ASI Grade-II Heritage Structure which has been restored as part of the NMIC project.
- It is divided into 9 sections, namely, the Origin of Cinema, Cinema comes to India, Indian Silent Film, Advent of Sound, the Studio Era, the impact of World War II, Creative Resonance, New Wave and Beyond and Regional Cinema.

Four Exhibition Halls

- **Gandhi & Cinema:** It not only depicts the movies made on the life Mahatma Gandhi but also showcases the deep impact his life had on cinema.
- **Children's Film Studio:** It gives visitors, particularly children, an opportunity to explore the science, technology and art behind filmmaking. It offers hands on experience on various facets associated with making cinema like camera, light, shooting, experience of acting, etc. – presented in an interactive format. The exhibits displayed include chroma studio, immersive experience zone, stop-motion animation studio, virtual makeover studio, etc.
- **Technology, creativity & Indian cinema:** It showcases the creative use of technology by Indian film makers over the years to produce cinematographic impact on the silver screen.
- **Cinema across India:** It showcases the charismatic kaleidoscopic presence of the vibrant cinematographic culture across India.

5 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas

CONTEXT:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth inaugurated the plenary session of the 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas at Deendayal Hastkala Sankul in Varanasi.

ABOUT

- Theme of this year's PBD was "Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India".
- The mega event was organised by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in association with Uttar Pradesh government.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:

- ▶ The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915
- ▶ It is celebrated to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the development of India. During the event Pravasi Bharatiya Samman are also given.
- ▶ The day was formally established in 2003 and is sponsored by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region of India.
- ▶ The decision to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was taken in accordance with recommendations of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora set up by India Government under the chairmanship of L M Singhvi.

6**Baba Kalyani Group Report on SEZ Policy****CONTEXT:**

- Commerce Ministry invites suggestions on Baba Kalyani Group Report on SEZ Policy.

BACKGROUND

- The Union Government has set the target of creating 100 million jobs and achieving 25 per cent of GDP from the manufacturing sector by 2022, as a part of its flagship 'Make in India' programme. The Government also plans to increase manufacturing value to USD 1.2 trillion by 2025.
- While these are ambitious plans to propel India into a growth trajectory, it requires an evaluation of existing policy frameworks to catalyse manufacturing sector growth. At the same time, the policy needs to be compiled with the relevant WTO regulations.

ABOUT

- In June 2018, Baba Kalyani committee was tasked to make special economic zone (SEZ) policy compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules after the US challenged India's export subsidy programme at the multilateral trade body.
- India's SEZ Policy was implemented from April 1, 2000. Subsequently, the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 was enacted.
- The commerce ministry has been consistently lobbying with the finance ministry to exempt units in the SEZs from the minimum alternate tax (MAT), imposed on them in 2011.

Key objectives of the committee included:

- To evaluate the SEZ policy and make it WTO compatible.
- To suggest measures for maximising utilisation of vacant land in SEZs.
- To suggest changes in the SEZ policy based on international experience.

- To merge the SEZ policy with other Government schemes such as coastal economic zones, Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor, national industrial manufacturing zones and food and textiles parks.

Key Highlights of the report

- If India is to become a US \$5 trillion economy by 2025, then the current environment of manufacturing competitiveness and services has to undergo a basic paradigm shift.
- The report notes that the success seen by services sectors like IT and ITES (IT enabled services) has to be promoted in other services sector like health care, financial services, legal, repair and design services..

7

Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

CONTEXT:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).

ABOUT:

- The National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal shall be situated at New Delhi. GSTAT shall be presided over by its President and shall consist of one Technical Member (Centre) and one Technical Member (State).
- Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal is the forum of second appeal in GST laws and the first common forum of dispute resolution between Centre and States.
- The appeals against the orders in first appeals issued by the Appellate Authorities under the Central and State GST Acts lie before the GST Appellate Tribunal, which is common under the Central as well as State GST Acts.
- Being a common forum, GST Appellate Tribunal will ensure that there is uniformity in redressal of disputes arising under GST, and therefore, in implementation of GST across the country.
- Chapter XVIII of the CGST Act provides for the Appeal and Review Mechanism for dispute resolution under the GST Regime.
- Section 109 of this Chapter under CGST Act empowers the Central Government to constitute, on the recommendation of Council, by notification, with effect from such date as may be specified therein, an Appellate Tribunal known as the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by the Appellate Authority or the Revisional Authority.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- ▶ It is an indirect tax (or consumption tax) levied in India on the supply of goods and services. GST is levied at every step in the production process, but is meant to be refunded to all parties in the various stages of production other than the final consumer.
- ▶ Goods and services are divided into five tax slabs for collection of tax - 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. However, Petroleum products, alcoholic drinks, electricity, are not taxed under GST and instead are taxed separately by the individual state governments, as per the previous tax regime.
- ▶ The tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India. The tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments.

- ▶ GST is meant to replace a slew of indirect taxes with a unified tax and is therefore expected to reshape the country's 2.4 trillion dollar economy, but not without criticism.

GST Council

- ▶ GST Council is the governing body of GST having 33 members. GST Council is an apex member committee to modify, reconcile or to procure any law or act or regulation based on the context of goods and services tax in India. The council is headed by the union finance minister assisted with the finance minister of all the states of India. The GST council is responsible for any revision or enactment of rule or any rate changes of the goods and services in India.

Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN)

- ▶ The GSTN software is developed by Infosys Technologies and the Information Technology network that provides the computing resources is maintained by the NIC.
- ▶ "Goods and Services Tax" Network (GSTN) is a nonprofit organisation formed for creating a sophisticated network, accessible to stakeholders, government and taxpayers to access information from a single source (portal).

8

Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC

CONTEXT:

- Cabinet approves Amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the facility.

Salient features:

- Due to heightened financial risk and volatility in global economy, short term swap requirements of SAARC countries could be higher than the agreed lines.
- The incorporation of 'Standby Swap' within the approved SAARC Swap Framework would provide necessary flexibility to the Framework and would enable India to provide a prompt response to the current request from SAARC member countries for availing the swap amount exceeding the present limit prescribed under the SAARC Swap Framework.

SAARC Swap Framework:

- ▶ The Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries was formulated with the intention to provide a line of funding for short term foreign exchange requirements or to meet the balance of payments crises till longer-term arrangements are made or the issue is resolved in the short-term itself.
- ▶ It was approved by the Government of India on March 1st, 2012.
- ▶ Under the framework RBI offers swaps of varying sizes to each SAARC Member countries depending on their two months import requirement, not exceeding US\$ 2 billion in total, in USD, Euro or INR.

9 INS Kohassa

CONTEXT

- Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur was commissioned as INS Kohassa by Admiral Sunil Lanba

ABOUT

- INS Kohassa has been named after a White-Bellied Sea Eagle, which is a large bird of prey, endemic to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- NAS Shibpur was established in 2001 as a Forward Operating Air Base (FOAB) for enhanced surveillance in North Andaman.
- The close proximity of Coco Islands (Myanmar) and wide expanse of Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) makes the base a very vital asset
- NAS Shibpur was identified by NITI Aayog as one of the 'Early Bird' project as part of holistic island development. Towards this, IN has been ready in all respects to facilitate civil flight operations from NAS Shibpur.

10 National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)

CONTEXT:

- The ICAR has recently launched an ambitious National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).

ABOUT

- The National Agricultural Higher Education Project has been formulated by the ICAR in partnership with the World Bank with a focus to improve and sustain quality of higher education in agriculture.
- The project has been launched for a period of four years with 50:50 cost sharing basis with the World Bank.
- The objective of the National Agricultural Higher Education Project for India is to support participating agricultural universities and ICAR in providing more relevant and higher quality education to Agricultural University students.
- There are three components to the project:
 - First component is support to agricultural universities. This component will finance investments by participating AUs to improve the quality and relevance of agricultural education and research toward agricultural transformation.
 - Second component-Investments in ICAR for Leadership in Agricultural Higher Education.
 - Third component-Project Management and Learning.

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