

7 PM COMPILATION

22nd - 28th June, 2020

Features of 7 PM compilation

- ❖ Comprehensive coverage of a given current topic
- ❖ Provide you all the information you need to frame a good answer
- ❖ Critical analysis, comparative analysis, legal/constitutional provisions, current issues and challenges and best practices around the world
- ❖ Written in lucid language and point format
- ❖ Wide use of charts, diagrams and info graphics
- ❖ Best-in class coverage, critically acclaimed by aspirants
- ❖ Out of the box thinking for value edition
- ❖ Best cost-benefit ratio according to successful aspirants

One Sun One World One Grid: A journey of ironies?

Topics: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Subtopics: Climate Change

India needs to review its 2013 Cyber Security Policy

Topics: Basics of Cyber Security

Subtopics: Cyber Security

Quad, China and the Indo-Pacific churn

Topics: India and its Neighborhood- Relations

Subtopics: India – China Relations

On China trade sanctions: India can serve its national security much better by rapidly expanding its economy

Topics: India and its Neighborhood- Relations

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India Needs a New Rural-Centric Development model.

Topics: Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

Subtopics: Growth and Development

In post- Covid world, growth of business must not be at expense of societal well-being.

Topics: Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment

Subtopics: Growth and Development

Draft EIA Notification is an attempt to weaken regulation, silence affected communities

Topics: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Subtopics: Environmental Impact Assessment

One Sun One World One Grid: A journey of ironies?

Source– [DowntoEarth](#)

Introduction

Electricity can be generated round the clock from the sun as it sets in one part of the world but rises in another part. In fact, the Sun never sets for the entire Earth.

To reap this advantage and ensure availability of electricity across the globe, the mantra of **'One Sun One World One Grid'** was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in October 2018 while addressing the inaugural function of the 2nd Global RE-Invest meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the first assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

What is 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) Project?

OSOWOG is India's initiative to build a global ecosystem of interconnected renewable energy resources. The blueprint for the OSOWOG will be developed under the World Bank's technical assistance programme that is implemented to accelerate the deployment of grid connected rooftop solar installations.

OSOWOG is planned to be completed in three phases. The first phase will entail interconnectivity within the Asian continent; the second phase will add Africa and the third phase will globalise the whole project.

The responsibility for developing a long-term vision, implementation plan, road map and institutional framework for implementing 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) lies with the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

What is the need for 'One Sun One World One Grid' Project?

- **Success of International Solar Alliance (ISA):** As a pioneer country in fight against Climate Change, India mooted the idea of ISA in 2015. ISA aims at making solar energy available 24*7 at affordable cost to all. Heads of about 120 nations have affirmed their participation in ISA. OSOWOG will further promote investments and cooperation.
- **24*7 Electricity for All:** Government aims to provide 24*7 electricity to all to ensure uniform economic development. OSOWOG will provide the platform to provide electricity in border and strategic areas like North Eastern State like Arunachal Pradesh, Western Himalayan states and Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
- **Commitment to Multilateralism and Globalization:** As a responsible member of UN, India aims to remove the economic and social disparities across the globe through promoting cooperation and coordination among solar energy rich nations and solar energy scarce nations. OSOWOG would also strengthen the alliance of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- **Case Study: Cyclone Amphan in Odisha and West Bengal.**

Super-cyclone Amphan caused destruction worth USD 13 billion. It caused severe damage to power and communication infrastructure during COVID-19 Pandemic. It hindered the surveillance programmes of the state to contain the Pandemic.

- **Achieving Sustainable Development Goals:** According to UN, more than 781 million people in 2016, or 39% of the world's population, do not have access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking. Goal 7 of the SDGs aims to correct this enormous imbalance by ensuring everyone has access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by the year 2030. To expand energy access, it is crucial to enhance energy efficiency and to invest in renewable energy.

- **Fulfilment of Commitment under Paris Agreement:** Under its Intended National Determined Contributions (INDC), India aims to achieve 175GW of renewable energy target by 2022 and 20-25% reduction in Emission intensity of GDP by 2020 compared to 2005 levels.
- **Strengthening Neighbourhood First Policy:** Landlocked neighbours such as Nepal and Bhutan are rich in hydroelectric resources. OSOWOG will provide them the requisite platform to export their surplus electricity to electricity deficit nations. Government of India in association with Government of Nepal and Government of Bhutan is developing export-oriented hydro-electric projects such as Arun-III hydropower plant and Mangdechhu hydroelectric project respectively.
- **Countering China's Economic assertiveness:** OSOWOG is seen as India's counter to China's Belt and Road initiative (BRI) that is primarily an economic diplomacy strategy to boost its domestic economy by improving connectivity and cooperation among the current 78 partner countries.

International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was conceived as a coalition of solar-resource-rich countries (which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn) to address their special energy needs.
- The initiative was launched at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris in alliance with Government of France.
- The primary objective of the alliance is to work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- The alliance is a treaty-based inter-governmental organization.
- Presently, it has 122 member countries.
- It aims to mobilize investments more than worth USD 1000 billion by 2030.
- Countries that do not fall within the Tropics can join the alliance and enjoy all benefits as other members, with the exception of voting rights.
- After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states world-wide.

Initiatives under International Solar Alliance (ISA) which promotes the concept of OSOWOG Project

- **Scaling Solar Mini Grids:** The ISA secretariat in support with Deloitte, global advisory firm, is developing a robust implementation plan for the Mini-grids Programme. The ISA secretariat has also drafted and circulated a Model Mini-Grid Policy to National Focal Points
- **Scaling Solar Rooftop:** The ISA secretariat has been working with officials of Peru and Ghana to provide technical support for preparation of roof-top projects. The ISA Secretariat has proposed Embassies/ Missions in India for Rooftop solar under RESCO Model.

Issues with the 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) Project

1. **Geopolitics:** Under COVID-19 uncertainties, the geopolitical implications of projects like OSOWOG are hard to decipher. Under the project, economies will be exposed to this common grid. Any disruption caused due to any bilateral/multilateral issues can potentially affect critical services in multiple continents and countries. Hence, not many countries may be willing to participate.
2. **Globalisation vs de-globalization:** In this era of protectionism, trade-wars and a shift from multilateralism to bilateral and regional agreements, the idea of OSOWOG seems bleak. The coronavirus pandemic has further raised questions on the concept of globalisation. The major issue with renewable energy developers would be to deal

with different governments and different market forces and thus different rules and regulations.

3. **Economic Benefit:** Supply of energy through this integrated grid, in a time zone with a six-hour difference will require thousands of kilometres of transmission of the electricity. The transmission costs may thus outweigh the benefits of land and solar radiation.
4. **Centralised vs distributed generation:** There is a difference in voltage, frequency and specifications of the grid in most regions. Maintaining grid stability with just renewable generation would be technically difficult. OSOWOG does not take into account the overlaps with the solar generation across regions where transmission lines are passing through. Thus, for the remote regions, distributed generation would be preferred over centralised generation.

Therefore, it is important for India to re-look its targets and to focus on developing long-term and complete solutions that can reach the masses.

Way Forward

- The global review undertaken on behalf of the World Bank suggests that the economic benefits of such cross border transmission lines are truly maximised when they are constructed within a political union formed around common objectives, such as the EU or Scandinavia, etc.
- Aggregate technical and commercial losses in countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, etc. are close to 20 per cent. Therefore, the distributed generation can be cheaper and directly serve the people in the hinterlands.
- India should collaborate with China as it has expertise in ultra-high voltage network construction. China has already launched a global transmission grid project under the aegis of the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization, dedicated to promote the sustainable development of energy worldwide.

Question:

Q.1) Examine the importance and challenges therein in the concept of 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) in building a global ecosystem of interconnected renewable energy resources? (10 Marks)

India needs to review its 2013 Cyber Security Policy

Source: orfonline.org

Introduction

National Cyber Security Policy, 2013 was formulated to create a secure cyber ecosystem in the country, generate adequate trust & confidence in IT systems and transactions in cyberspace and thereby enhance adoption of IT in all sectors of the economy.

The incidents of cyber-attacks during COVID-19 Pandemic has increased manifold as the society embraces digital technologies. India is among the top 10 countries facing cyber-attacks. There have been almost three times increase in cases of phishing, spamming and scanning of ICT systems, particularly of critical information infrastructure. The role of hacker group called LAZARUS is well known in carrying out attacks on financial targets in India, Bangladesh and other South Asian countries.

In this light, the government had announced that a new Cyber Security Policy, 2020, will be brought out.

What is a Cyberspace?

Cyberspace is complex environment consisting of interactions between people, software and services, supported by worldwide distribution of information and communication technology (ICT) devices and networks.

Cyberspace is vulnerable to a wide variety of incidents, whether intentional or accidental, manmade or natural, and the data exchanged in the cyber space can be exploited for nefarious purposes by both nation-states and non-state actors.

Information Technology (IT) is one of the critical sectors that rides on and resides in cyberspace. It has emerged as one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy.

Objectives of National Cyber Security Policy, 2013

- **Creation of Secure Cyber Ecosystem:**To create a secure cyber ecosystem in the country, generate adequate trust & confidence in IT systems and transactions in cyberspace and thereby enhance adoption of IT in all sectors of the economy.
- **Compliance to Global Security Standards:**To create an assurance framework for design of security policies and for promotion and enabling actions for compliance to global security standards and best practices by way of conformity assessment (product, process, technology & people).
- **Strengthening the Regulatory Framework:**To strengthen the Regulatory framework for ensuring a Secure Cyberspace ecosystem.
- **NCIIPC:**To enhance the protection and resilience of Nation's critical information infrastructure by operating a 24×7 National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) and mandating security practices related to the design, acquisition, development, use and operation of information resources.
- **Indigenization of Technologies:**To develop suitable indigenous security technologies through frontier technology research, solution oriented research, proof of concept, etc.
- **Testing and Validation:**To improve visibility of the integrity of ICT products and services by establishing infrastructure for testing & validation of security of such products.
- **Human Capacity Development:**To create a workforce of 500,000 professionals skilled in cyber security in the next 5 years through capacity building, skill development and training.

- **Safeguarding Privacy:** To enable protection of information while in process, handling, storage & transit so as to safeguard privacy of citizen's data and for reducing economic losses due to cybercrime or data theft.
- **Cybercrime:** To enable effective prevention, investigation and prosecution of cybercrime and enhancement of law enforcement capabilities through appropriate legislative intervention.

What are Critical Information Infrastructures?

Critical Information Infrastructure (CII) is defined as those facilities, systems or functions whose incapacity or destruction would cause a debilitating impact on national security, governance, economy and social well-being of a nation.

Examples: Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Nuclear Power Plants, Indian Space Research organization (ISRO), Department of Atomic Energy, transport, electricity, etc.

National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) is an organisation of the Government of India created under Sec 70A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (amended 2008). It is designated as the National Nodal Agency in respect of Critical Information Infrastructure Protection.

Types of Cyber Hackers

There are varied kinds of cyber hackers such as — state, non-state, professional, freelancer's groups, so-called "anonymous groups" that operate worldwide and conduct attacks internationally.

Approximately more than one third of all cyber-attacks worldwide are launched from China. They have one of the largest military groups of cyber experts in the world. Countries like North Korea and Pakistan are also very active on their own and work in close collaboration with the Chinese. These countries have been accused of perpetrating state-sponsored attacks for a variety of purposes.

Need to review the National Cyber Security Policy

1. **Advent of revolutionary technologies:** Technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, internet-enabled devices and big data have complicated the cyber-attack ecosystem.
2. **Increasing incidences of cyber-attacks:** There is significant increase in incidents relating to hacking, injecting malware through spam mails and other forms of exploiting vulnerabilities. There was an almost 56% rise in malicious traffic on internet during the lockdown period.
3. **Social transformation and inclusive growth:** In the light of the growth of IT sector in the country, ambitious plans for the rapid social transformation and inclusive growth and given India's prominent role in the global IT sector, creation of a suitable cyber security eco-system in the country, in tune with globally networked environment is necessary.
4. **Border disputes with neighbouring nations:** The border stand-off has further increased worries about enhanced cyber-attacks from China and its close allies. Recently, Australia expressed concerns over Chinese cyber-attacks. The Chinese are in the process of developing technology to penetrate the internet through satellite channels.
5. **Success of Digital India Programme:** With increasing internet penetration and smart phones, the vulnerabilities associated with cyber-attacks increases and may dampen the progress of Digital India Programme. Example: In September 2016, Indian banks faced a similar massive data breach, when 3.2 million debit cards got compromised after fraudsters exploited a vulnerability at Hitachi Payment Systems.

6. **Right to Privacy:** Right to Privacy being a fundamental right (K.S Puttaswamy Case), puts the responsibility on the government to safeguard the privacy of an individual from various cyber-attacks.

Way Forward

- The National Cyber Coordination Centre urgently needs significant upgrade in all aspects, including technology and manpower.
- The role of the national cyber security coordinator may also need to be reviewed regarding his effectiveness in comprehensively coordinating cyber security issues. Maybe he needs to be empowered.
- There must be single-point of responsibility at the central level.
- Proper coordination is needed between the coordinator and respective regulators.

Heterogeneity of devices and software will increase with more built-in vulnerabilities. Tech and data, due to their very nature, will get more and more geopolitical attention. Therefore, it is better to be prepared now with respect to policy, legal framework, monitoring infra and technology to emerge as safe and a secure digital country.

Question:

Q.1) What are Critical Information Infrastructures? In the light of emergence of various cyber-physical systems and cyber-attacks, discuss the need to review the National Cyber Security Policy, 2013. Also suggest measures to strengthen the policy? (15 Marks)

Quad, China and the Indo-Pacific churn

Source: www.gatewayhouse.in

Introduction

In the wake of COVID-19 catastrophe, China has escalated its actions on various fronts, which seems to be a calculated strategic diversion and risk. In the Indo-Pacific, tensions between China and the U.S., Australia, India and others are building momentum. As a geopolitical partnership, the relevance of the Quad is now proven.

India has distinctively carved a space with its emphasis on the principle of freedom of navigation and respect for the laws of the sea, finding resonance with the central ideas of the Quad.

The COVID-19 Pandemic proved that the old ways of thinking and old policies need to change, and adapt themselves to new power realities and dynamics. This applies in particular to the Indo-Pacific, which is currently the most active region in the global political landscape.

What is Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD)?

Quad is an informal strategic forum among the like-minded democracies across the Indian and the Pacific Ocean. It comprises of the USA, India, Japan and Australia.

The idea was first mooted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it, apparently due to Chinese pressure. The Quadrilateral coalition was formed in 2017 on the lines of ASEAN Summit. However, there are more questions than answers regarding structure, intentions and goals of the Quad at this moment, making it difficult for each member of the Quad to align their combined vision of the grouping with that of their individual visions of the Indo-Pacific.

What constitutes the term 'Indo-Pacific'?

The term 'Indo-Pacific' is a single strategic construct linking the contiguous waters of the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean. The Indo-Pacific construct means different things to different people.

For the US, it extends up to the west coast of India which is also the geographic boundary of the US Indo-Pacific command whereas for India it includes the entire Indian Ocean and the western Pacific Ocean. While the US does not consider China a part of its Indo-Pacific construct, India has gone to great length to highlight it as an inclusive construct for the whole region.

The focus of the Indo Pacific initiative is on connectivity, enhancing maritime security, counterterrorism, non-proliferation and cyber issues. It aims to enhance support for a free, open and inclusive region that fosters universal respect for international law, freedom of navigation and overflight and sustainable development.

India's policy perspective on Indo-Pacific includes "inclusiveness", "openness", "ASEAN centrality" and that the concept was not directed against any country.

Relevance of QUAD

- **To counter China's assertiveness:** It has given way to plain aggressiveness, in speech and action, as witnessed on a whole spectrum of issues:
 - Beijing's resistance to international calls for investigation into the origin and outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and China's culpability in it.
 - Aggressive manoeuvres in the South China Sea through its 9 dash line.
 - Threatening the democratic principles and autonomy of Hong Kong and Taiwan.
 - Trade and technology disputes with the U.S. Example: 5G technology of Huawei.

- Serious tensions with Australia. China has imposed tariffs on Australians meat and barley.
- The still unresolved India-China border standoff, which has resulted in a violent conflict at Galwan Valley in Eastern Ladakh.



- **To ensure rule-based order and respect for international law:**The four countries shares a vision to ensure a free and open international order based on the rule of law in the Indo- Pacific.
- **Success of India's 'Act East Policy' and USA's 'Asia Pivot':**Both the democracies are struggling to ensure that their influence in the ASEAN region and South China Sea remains intact through their Act East policy and Asia Pivot. Free and inclusive South China Sea is the key to the success of these policies.
- **Sustainable Development in the Indian Ocean Region:**India, as a mistress of the Indian Ocean, holds the responsibility to act as the net security provider in the Indian Ocean region. India along with likeminded countries needs to counter China's String of Pearls strategy and 'debt-trap' diplomacy.

Issues with QUAD

- **Narrow Definition:** Thinking of the Quad in narrow terms—cooperation solely and exclusively involving the US, Japan, India and Australia—misses a far more important trend in regional security dynamics.
- **Military alliance against China:**QUAD should not be seen as a military alliance against China. This may hinder other smaller nations that are in conflict with China to join the meetings of QUAD in future. The idea of Quad as a military alliance to contain China is very provocative, divisive and unnecessary.
- **Disengagements:**Stopgap sub-unions and disengagements at various levels in the Quad have raised questions as to whether the group can transcend into a productive mini-lateral arrangement from a forum of inhibition.
- **Individual visions of the Indo-Pacific:** It would be difficult for each member of the QUAD to align their combined vision of the grouping with that of their individual visions of the Indo-Pacific.
- **Over-dependence on China:**The economies of India and Australia are heavily dependent on China. India imports 70% of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients

(API's) from China. On the other hand, China offers a large market for Australian exports of iron ore, aluminium, uranium, meat and dairy products, etc.

Challenges for India

- **Dilemma of alignment vs autonomy:** New Delhi seeks to ensure a nimble-footed balance in the Indo-Pacific between alignment and autonomy. India's increasing tangible cooperation with the QUAD should not be seen as a threat to its strategic autonomy at the international stage.
- **Fear of provoking China:** China already sees QUAD as a security structure to contain China. India shares the longest disputed boundary with China and thus needs to find a proper balance.
- **Decoupling the Quad and the Indo-Pacific:** New Delhi has drawn conceptual and structural policy demarcations between the Quad and the Indo-Pacific. Instead, Quad is the need to view the Indo-Pacific as a strategic continuum rather than an assemblage of sub-regionally divided goals, partnerships and alignments.

Specific measures for QUAD to become an effective coalition

- **Promoting plurilateral dialogues:** The Quad needs to refine its approach towards ASEAN. None of ASEAN's ten members are inclined to join the group but several may be open to forging 'side relationships'. Plurilateral dialogues must be promoted such as India-Australia-Indonesia, India-Japan-Indonesia, etc.
- **Economic and technological cooperation:** To enhance its diplomatic and strategic gravitas, the Quad should work seriously on strengthening its pillar of economic and technological cooperation. Example: Fast-tracking FTA between India and USA.
- **Expanding Naval Exercises:** The desirable inclusion of Australia in the upcoming Malabar Exercise should be an essential take-away from the successful New Delhi-Canberra virtual summit.
- **Leveraging European powers strength:** They have assets such as political strength, diplomatic acumen, existing naval and maritime connections, and a reservoir of know-how, technology and capital, which can be leveraged.
- **Increasing level of engagements within the members of QUAD:** The level of engagement needs to be elevated to at least one meeting at the foreign secretary and foreign minister levels every year. The ministers should consider issuing joint statements post meetings.

Conclusion

India does not see the Indo-Pacific region as a strategy or as a club of limited members. Nor as a grouping that seeks to dominate. Indo-pacific strategy is not about cornering or sidelining China in the region, India also stands for a positive vision of the Indo-Pacific that harps on ASEAN centrality and emphasises inclusivity with South East Asia as a core area in the region.

The tensions building in the Indo-Pacific, due to the COVID-19 crisis and other underlying issues, send a clear message – neither appeasement nor bravado but fortitude and resilience are necessary. In this context, QUAD must transform and re-purpose itself in order to truly achieve the free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region as well as the true aspirations of democratic nations.

Question:

Q.1) What is Quad? How is the India's definition of Indo-Pacific different from that of USA? What challenges does India face as a member of Quad and also suggest measures for strengthening Quad? (15 Marks)

On China trade sanctions: India can serve its national security much better by rapidly expanding its economy

Source: [Times of India](#)

Introduction

Economic size is the biggest tool available to any government to flex its muscle. Due to the sheer size of its economy, China, after decades of peaceful coexistence has turned progressively hostile in its territorial disputes with its neighbours including India.

With GDP at \$14 trillion, it now feels economically secure and militarily powerful enough to pursue its long-standing geopolitical ambitions that include the acquisition of territories with strategic value.

The recent transgressions in eastern Ladakh by China depicts this hostility. As a result, there has been rising demand for trade sanctions on China. But, is India economically strong to put trade sanctions on China without damaging and harming its own economy in the times of COVID-19 pandemic, when its own economy is in downfall?

Why is there a growing demand for trade restrictions on China?

- **Self-reliant India:** COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities of over-dependence on China. India had to import critical medical equipment's such as PPE's, surgical masks, etc. Thus, the 'atmanirbhar' India needs to reduce its dependency on China.
- **To Counter China's assertiveness:** Post Galwan valley incident, trade sanctions by India can inflict far greater injury on China than the other way around.
- **Trade Deficit:** The argument made is that at \$77 billion, China's exports to India far exceed its imports from the latter at \$19 billion in 2018.
- **Diversification of destinations for import and export:** India needs to diversify its export destinations as well as import destinations. India depends heavily on China for essential commodities such as active pharmaceutical ingredients (API's), chemicals and fertilizers, etc.

World Trade Organization (WTO) rules on Trade Sanctions

National Security Exception laid out in Article XXI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) allows WTO members to breach their WTO obligations for purposes of national security.

Article XXI Security Exceptions

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed

(a) to require any contracting party to furnish any information the disclosure of which it considers contrary to its essential security interests; or

(b) to prevent any contracting party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests

(i) relating to fissionable materials or the materials from which they are derived;

(ii) relating to the traffic in arms, ammunition, and implements of war and to such traffic in other goods and materials as is carried on directly or indirectly for the purpose of supplying a military establishment;

(iii) taken in time of war or other emergency in international relations; or

(c) to prevent any contracting party from taking any action in pursuance of its obligations under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Border hostilities potentially give India room to invoke the national security clause in the WTO rules. This would allow it to impose tariffs on imports from China while exempting other trading partners. But, do these sanctions would be beneficial for India?

Negative Implications for India

- **Trade War with China:**USA invoked national security clause to impose tariffs on steel and iron from China. It has led to trade wars between both the countries. India and China can get caught in the same vicious circle of trade tariffs endangering their economies.
- **Loss of huge market base of China:**China with a population of more than 1.4 billion offers huge market for Indian products especially pharmaceutical, automobiles, etc. In 2018, China's exports to India were only 3.1% of its total exports. In contrast, India's exports to China were 5.8% of its total exports.
- **Damage to Indian economy:**Financial and power sectors are already distressed. The GDP growth has plummeted to just 4.2% in 2019-20. Covid-19 has further added to this fragility by disrupting both demand and supply.
- **Territorial aggressions from China:**With India's GDP still less than \$3 trillion, China is more than four times its size. This difference also means that India is militarily a lot weaker, placing it at a disadvantage in a prolonged conflict. Economic integration helps countries to tide off skirmishes and disputes. Example: European Union.
- **Damage to Indian industries:**Imports from China are 15% of India's total imports. India imports 70% of its API's from China. About 27% of the roughly \$17.5 billion worth of component imports into India comes from China, according to rating agency ICRA Ltd. Any interruption of supplies of these raw materials and components will hurt output and employment in those industries.
- **Lack of cooperation at international platforms:**China and India has together tried to save their economies at WTO from unreasonable demands of western countries. Trade sanctions may further create rift in resolving issues at international platforms where India and China are members such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, RIC, etc.
- **Lack of investments:**The slowing economy of India is in dire need of investments from abroad. Chinese investment in India increased from \$1.6 billion in 2014 to \$8 billion in 2018. Recent Cabinet decision to restrict Chinese investments may deter investments in start-ups of India.

Measures to strengthen national security by rapid expansion of economy

- **Atmanirbhar India:** India needs to rapidly rebuild the economy and return it to the 7.5% growth trajectory on which it had been traversing before the disruption in the financial sector derailed it. The atmanirbhar package of Rupees 20 lakh crores is in the right direction.
- **Forging stronger relations with other economies:**India would achieve its immediate security goals better by forging yet closer ties with the United States, Japan and Australia. For the longer-term defence, it must focus attention on building the \$10 trillion economy in the shortest possible time.
- **Fast-tracking Free trade agreements (FTA's):** India must aggressively pursue free trade agreements (FTAs) with friendly developed countries such as the United Kingdom, European Union and Canada and woo multinationals to its shores. The FTAs would make India doubly attractive to multinationals.
- **Diversification of agricultural export destinations:** Agricultural export policy, 2018 aims to double agricultural exports from \$30 billion to \$60 billion by 2022. It further aims to diversify our export basket, destinations and boost high value and value added agricultural exports including focus on perishables.

Conclusion

India must transform and re-purpose its policies in accordance to the WTO plus disciplines in areas such as labour, environment and intellectual property, which is integral to increase our export destinations to western economies.

Trade sanctions may look beneficial in short term but in long term it will bring no good to India. So, India must develop the in-house capabilities to meet the needs of critical essential items that we import today in heavy quantities.

India stands firmly for rule-based international order and the principles of multilateralism. Thus, India should ensure its national security by building its economic heft on one hand and keeping bilateral relations amicable on the other.

Question:

Q.1) Till what extent do you consider it justified for India to impose trade sanctions on China in retaliation to recent transgressions? (10 Marks)

ForumIAS

India Needs a New Rural-Centric Development model.Source: Hindustantimes.com**Introduction**

COVID-19 Pandemic has brought out in open the pain, sorrow and misery of migrant labourers. The lack of authentic data on their numbers, their living and working conditions and perpetual uncertainty in their livelihood prospects have been brought in to sharp focus with the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite the best effort of both the central and state governments, the mass movement of nearly 10 million migrant workers in poor conditions, has brought into focus the urgent need to shift to a new paradigm of economic development and urbanisation in which migration under economic distress or due to the lack of amenities is brought down.

COVID-19 must be taken as an opportunity to transform and re-purpose the development process of India. Fortunately for us, an alternative model that minimises migration is available in the works of Mahatma Gandhi, the late president APJ Abdul Kalam and social activist Nanaji Deshmukh.

Why India needs a rural-centric development model?

- **To reduce poverty:** Tendulkar Committee puts people below poverty line at 22%. To achieve sustainable development goals (SDG's), reducing poverty by raising per capita income in rural areas should be the focal point.
- **Increase employment opportunities:** In a survey of urban migrant workers, 84% of them reported that their primary source of livelihood in their villages was casual work. Only 11% stated that agriculture was their primary source of income. This indicates that there is a need to create jobs in rural areas far beyond just augmentation of agriculture.
- **To make agricultural sustainable:** Creation and promotion of food processing industries, cottage-based industries and forest-based industries will reduce disguised unemployment in agriculture. The surplus can be invested to augment agricultural inputs to increase agricultural intensity and productivity.
- **To reduce distress migration:** India has the second-largest migrant worker population in the world, second only to China. Current estimates of the total number of migrant workers range from 72 million to 110 million. Self-reliant villages will reduce push factors such as famines, floods, draughts, water-crisis, starvation and hunger that leads to distress migration.
- **Reduce rural-urban divide:** Approximately 70% of the Indian population lives in villages but still majority of the investments and focus is on urban areas.
- **Welfare of vulnerable sections:** Majority of the vulnerable sections such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes reside in villages. Self-reliant villages will help them improve their socio-economic indicators such as maternal mortality rate, literacy rate, etc.
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation:** Climate change has the potential to create havoc in rural areas by declining agricultural productivity, water crisis, desertification, inundation of coastal lands, frequent floods and recurrent droughts, etc. Self-reliant villages would make the farmers capable to adapt to climate change.

Models of Self-Reliant Villages

- **Gandhiji's Village Swaraj Model**
 - Model of self-reliant villages is the basis of a free democracy.

- The idea of village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity.
- His was not a model of a closed economy and a village economy perpetuating itself at the lower levels of income.
- The model envisaged that the local populations could be employed locally but with rising incomes and higher productivity
- **A.P.J Abdul Kalam's Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) Model**
 - His vision was to develop rural India through a cluster development system where 50-100 villages with common competencies and/or mutual markets could be horizontally or vertically integrated as PURA complexes.
 - These villages would be linked through “four connectivity’s” — physical, electronic, knowledge and economic.
 - The goal was to provide income and quality of life opportunities to all within PURA complex.
 - While some rural-rural migration would be acceptable, rural to urban migration would be minimised.
 - He envisioned 7,000 PURA complexes at the cost of Rupees 130 crore per unit built through public-private partnerships.
- **Nanaji Deshmukh's Social Well-Being Model**
 - His model of self-reliant villages was based on a model of integral humanism where harmony was also a pivotal force.
 - The collective social consciousness that promoted collective well-being was considered to be a cornerstone to next-generation rural development.
 - He worked extensively in around 500 villages especially in the Chitrakoot area.
 - His successful implementation of model in Chitrakoot called not just for zero unemployment and no one below the poverty line, but also zero internal legal disputes and no widow being denied remarriage.
- **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)**
 - SPMRM is a scheme launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in 2016 to deliver integrated project based infrastructure in the rural areas, which will also include development of economic activities and skill development.
 - The model follows a cluster development design to create social, health, education and economic infrastructure across villages.
 - For the purposes of SPMRM, Rurban areas refer to a cluster of 15-20 villages having about 30 to 40 lakh population.
 - The clusters will be geographically contiguous Gram Panchayats with a population of about 25000 to 50000 in plain and coastal areas and a population of 5000 to 15000 in desert, hilly or tribal areas.

Measures to Create Self-Reliant Villages

- **Strengthening Gram Panchayats:** The Legislatures must devolve funds, functions and functionaries to Gram Panchayats to make them self-reliant. The bottom-up development process will bring inclusivity and diversity in the development process of India.
- **Use of technology:** Internet and artificial intelligence could be leveraged to facilitate sustainable agriculture. Large-scale and real-time data collected from farming practices and collated with global price and production numbers can be used to offer more profitable choices to our farmers.
- **Promotion to industries:** Food-processing industry, cottage-based industries, textile industry, etc. should be promoted to create employment opportunities.

- **Public-private participation:** Rural knowledge platform could be created through active collaboration between the public and private sector. Private sector will bring investments and technology in rural areas.
- **Human Capacity development:** Skill mapping of returning migrant labourers will help in developing their capacity further as per the global standards in their respective fields.
- **Issuance of Atmanirbhar village bonds:** To finance this ambitious re-engineering of our development model, Atmanirbhar Village bonds could be issued to raise resources. Part of the mandated priority sector lending by scheduled commercial banks could be used to finance these bonds.

Conclusion

The challenges to achieve self-reliant villages are numerous such as lack of funds, ineffective multi-level planning, lack of trust in private sector, distressed financial sector, poor capacity development of panchayats, etc. But, these challenges should not stop India to achieve this dream.

Thus, the rural-urban divide should be seen as a continuum rather than as a dichotomy. The continuum approach will bring urban facilities in rural areas and thus mitigate distress migration.

For India, to become truly 'atmanirbhar', the key lies in making our villages self-reliant. Therefore, the State governments should incorporate these models as per the local needs to increase standard of living in rural areas and develop social capital.

Question:

Q.1) Discuss various models of rural-centric development process? Elaborate the need for self-reliant villages in Indian development process and also provide solutions to achieve them? (15 marks)

In post- Covid world, growth of business must not be at expense of societal well-being.

Source: Indianexpress.com

Introduction

COVID-19 has caused a healthcare crisis in India. Despite such a crisis, ethical concerns have arisen regarding the prices charged by hospitals for treatments and by pharmaceutical companies for medicines.

The fundamental question seems to be, how much qualifies as sufficient private gain while providing a public service? This question would always gain importance whenever investors want their investees to run their enterprise as a “business” rather than as a public service.

Issues related to healthcare industry during Covid-19

- **Exorbitant bills by private hospitals:** Doctors prescribed tests and medicines that patients do not really need to increase the revenues of hospitals and sales of pharmaceutical companies.
- **Case Study: Price of admission at Delhi’s private hospitals**
With the rates of medical procedures not capped in Delhi, numerous examples of patients being slapped with ‘exorbitant’ bills by private hospitals have come to light. A kidney patient, infected by coronavirus was asked for an advance deposit of Rupees 5 lakhs by Sri Ganga Ram Hospital.
- **Over-pricing of pharmaceutical drugs:** Prices of raw materials, also called active pharmaceutical ingredients (API), and basic chemicals used to manufacture Covid drugs have skyrocketed during Covid pandemic. This has led to manipulation of prices by intermediaries and pharmaceutical firms to ramp up their revenues.
- **Shortage of medical equipment:** Covid-19 protective gears and medical equipment were in short numbers to meet the rising demand. Earlier, there was no domestic manufacturing of PPE in the country and almost all of them were imported.
- **Improper dumping of covid-19 infected bodies:** Due to lack of infrastructure coupled with fear of infection and stigmatization, the corpses of Covid patients have not been cremated as per the guidelines. Bio-medical waste Management Rules, 2016 has seen blatant violations.

Reasons for brewing crisis in medical profession.

Three eminent social psychologists saw the crises in professions brewing in the 1990s with the accelerating advance of businesses into the domain of public goods.

In their book, Good Work—When Excellence and Ethics Meet, Howard Gardner, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and William Damon have written that they recognise the positive role that markets play in promoting competition among them. But, not all spheres are to be operated in the same way as commercial enterprises do, in the way suggested by the Adam Smith-Friedrich von Hayek-Milton Friedman view of the marketplace.

Medicine requires financial prudence, but the purpose of the profession should not be to achieve the greatest profit for shareholders of a health maintenance organisation. In the words of the French prime minister, Lionel Jospin, “We are not against market-based economy, but market-based society”.

International examples that handled Covid-19 effectively

- **Resilient Public Health System:** Countries with stronger public health systems, such as Vietnam, for example, seemed to have managed far better than those with large, and very well-equipped, private health systems, such as the USA.
- **Universal Social Security:** Countries with universal social safety nets, like the Scandinavian countries, Japan, South Korea and Germany, seem to be managing

the effects of the economic breakdown on the poorer sections of their populations much better than the countries without universal social security, like India.

- **South Korea's 3T:** South Korea's 3T or "test, trace and treat" policy consists of robust testing to identify confirmed cases, tracing their contacts to prevent further spread, and treating those infected at the earliest possible stage.

How Covid-19 has revealed the deep fissures in the field of economics?

The 'free market' school of economics that has dominated public policy across the globe since the 1980's failed to provide solutions during the Covid-19 Pandemic. During the pandemic, the needs of businesses in economic policy trumped the needs of needy human beings such as migrant labourers in India.

Thus, the profession of economics must be reoriented. Societal (and environmental) well-being must be the goal of economic policies, not the size of the GDP. Citizens' "ease of living" must become more important than "ease of doing business". The growth of businesses and the economy must not be allowed to harm societal and environmental well-being.

Measures to ensure that economies do not trump medical ethics.

- **Medical Professionals:** Professionals are expected to maintain high ethical standards in their work and in their conduct.
- **Public and Private hospitals:** Hospitals violating the rules must be penalised. Accessibility and affordability of hospitals during Covid-19 pandemic should be seen as a right of an individual.
- **Pharmaceutical companies:** The pharmaceutical companies must not run on the principle that "the business of business must be only business", which has become the dominant view since the 1990s.
- **Government:** The government must cap the prices charged by private hospitals for treatment. They must ramp up production of critical protective gears crucial for fighting Covid-19.

Conclusion

The lockdowns following COVID-19 have caused many people to introspect about the purposes of their lives, and the purposes of the enterprises they serve. It has also provided an opportunity to reset the course of economies.

Business associations should utilise this opportunity to re-orient, transform and re-purpose their mission, vision and standards. The regulatory regime of government must be strengthened in order to keep greedy medical business associations under check. Only then, India can truly rise both in the ease of doing business index and ease of living index.

Question:

Q.1) Critically analyse the role played by healthcare ecosystem as a whole comprising medical professionals, public and private hospitals, pharmaceutical firms and government in handling Covid-19 pandemic? (10 Marks)

Draft EIA Notification is an attempt to weaken regulation, silence affected communities

Introduction

The government has put up for public consideration and comment the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020, which if put into force will replace the EIA Notification of 2006 for all future projects.

The government's actions on environmental regulation show that it considers it as an impediment to the ease of doing business. During the nationwide coronavirus lockdown, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has been working swiftly to clear projects, even carrying out public hearings over video conference.

What is Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is one of the tools available with the planners to achieve the goal of harmonizing development activities with the environmental concerns.

EIA has been made mandatory under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

The EIA process scrutinises the potential environmental impact and negative externalities of a proposed project before ground is broken and determines whether it can be carried out in the form proposed, or whether it is to be abandoned or modified.

The assessment is carried out by an Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), which consists of scientists and project management experts. The EAC frames the scope of the EIA study and a preliminary report is prepared.

General steps involved in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure

1. **Screening:** it is done to see whether a project requires environmental clearances as per the statutory notifications.
2. **Scoping:** It considers the areas of impacts that needs to be studied. Example: Impact on tribal, forest, rivers, soil, biodiversity, etc.
3. **Baseline Data:** it describes the existing environmental status of the identified study area.
4. **Impact Prediction:** Analysing the possible effects on the physical, biological, social and economic conditions and suggesting alternatives.
5. **Public Hearing:** That report is published, and a public consultation process takes place, where objections can be heard including from project-affected people.
6. **Environment Management Plan:** It includes delineation of mitigation measures, including prevention and control for each environmental component and rehabilitation and resettlement plan.
7. **Decision Making:** The EAC can then make a final appraisal of the project and forward that to the regulatory authority, which is the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The regulatory authority is ordinarily obliged to accept the decision of the EAC.
8. **Monitoring:** To monitor the compliance with the report throughout the project. To ensure corrective actions, wherever the impact exceeds the predicted levels.

Salient Features of 2006 Amendment in the EIA

- EIA Notification, 2006 has decentralised the environmental clearance projects by categorizing the developmental projects in two categories i.e. Category A and category B.
- Category A projects are appraised at the national level by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) and category B projects are appraised at State Level.
- After 2006 Amendment, EIA cycle comprises of four stages:
 - Screening

- Scoping
- Public Hearing
- Appraisal
- Category A projects require mandatory environmental clearance and thus screening process is not undertaken.
- Category B projects undergoes screening process and they are classified in two categories:
 - Category B1 Projects: Mandatory requires EIA
 - Category B2 Projects: Do not require EIA.

What is Precautionary Principle?

Precautionary principle is the basis for global environmental law for the EIA. The precautionary principle enables decision-makers to adopt precautionary measures when scientific evidence about an environmental or human health hazard is uncertain and the stakes are high.

Since environmental regulation must balance damage to the environment with sustainable development and possible benefits of the project, an unbiased assessment must be made on a precautionary basis, before investment, jobs and infrastructure are put on the line.

The government is also legally bound to the precautionary principle under international treaties and obligations, as well as by Supreme Court judgments.

Issues with the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020

- **Ex-post-facto clearance route:** This route enables a project proponent to enter an assessment procedure for those projects, whose EIA clearance was never sought or granted, and the construction took place regardless. The penalty includes some minor fines for the violations.
 - It should be noted that previously Courts have declared such ex-post facto clearances illegal. The legality of sidestepping the courts is questionable and will have to be tested.
 - It will become a business decision as to whether follow the law or to break it and manage it later.
- **Curtailing response period:** The draft notification shortens the time period for the public to give their suggestions on the project.
 - In most cases project-affected people have been the traditional forest dwellers and absence of information and communication technology in these areas will further create obstacles in public participation.
- **Dilution of Monitoring Stage:** The frequency period of reporting about the compliance in the monitoring stage has been increased to one year from six months.
 - Climate change and increased deforestation in ecological sensitive areas demands that rules and regulations must be strictly followed. Allowing lax in compliance will not make the project sustainable.
- **Relaxation of norms for critical sectors:** The draft notification extends the validity period for approvals in critical sectors such as mining.
- **Downgrading the assessment of industries:** Industries that previously fell under the categories that required a full assessment have been downgraded. The construction industry will be one such beneficiary, where only the largest projects will be scrutinised fully.
- **Dilution of public consultation:** Projects related to defence and national security were already under exemption list but the new notification creates a new category of projects “involving other strategic considerations”.

- These category of projects would be free from public consultation requirements. The newly created category is vague and can be manipulated. Would a power plant fall into that category?

Case Studies related to violations of EIA

- Oil India Limited's oil wells in the Tinsukia district, Assam, only a few kilometres away from protected forests, went up in flames this month. Recent processes for expansion and modification apparently took place without fresh environmental clearance.
- A deadly gas leak at LG Polymers' Visakhapatnam plant in May killed 12 people and harmed hundreds. What came to light after the disaster was that the plant had been operating without a valid environmental clearance for decades.

Measures to strengthen Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- **Independent agency:** The entire EIA process from screening to monitoring should be done by independent agencies and creation of a National EIA Accreditation Body for agencies carrying out EIA.
- **Strict adherence to Precautionary Principle:** The list of the concerns raised by the public should be studied in detail to arrive at any conclusion.
- **Strategic Environment Assessment:** It should be included in EIA as it helps in choosing a project, and not just evaluate it. It offers alternatives and guides project financing. The directives of the SEA re reflected in the National Environment Policy, 2006.
- **Robust and inclusive public hearing:** The Panchayats and urban local bodies should be a part of EIA as to incorporate the traditional knowledge of locals. The report must also be published in local vernacular languages.

Conclusion

EIA process aims to create a bridge between the development and the people that are being affected by the development process. Thus, weakening EIA process goes against the principles of democracy.

Land alienation is the biggest cause of distress amongst the traditional forest dwellers. Their representation and engagement in the public consultation stage acts like a referendum on existential threats.

Therefore, government in order to achieve sustainable development and a balance between economy and environment should undergo progressive refinements by steadily removing the constraints.

Question:

Q.1) What do you understand by Precautionary principle? Critically analyse the recent modifications made in the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020?

(15 Marks)