

24 August 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

Stakeholders' Consultations by Department of Commerce on RCEP

Context

- In the last 6 years of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations, more than 100 stakeholders' consultations have been held by the Department of Commerce and other lead Ministries and Departments of the Government of India
- Consultations are held seeking industry inputs for formulating India's interests, covering a wide spectrum of the economy including agriculture, chemicals, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, plastics, textiles, ferrous and nonferrous metals, automobiles and machinery.

About RCEP

- The RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its six FTA partners (China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand).
- In 2017, prospective RCEP member states accounted for a population of 3.4 billion people with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP, PPP) of 49.5 trillion USD, approximately 39 percent of the world's GDP, with the combined GDPs of India and China making up more than half that amount.
- RCEP is the world's largest economic bloc, covering nearly half of the global economy and is estimated that by 2050 the GDP of RCEP member states is likely to amount to nearly 250 trillion USD with the combined GDPs of India and China making up more than 75 percent of the amount.

WorldSkills Kazan 2019

Context

The world's biggest international vocational skills competition, WorldSkills Kazan 2019 got underway with a grand ceremony at Kazan, Russia.

About the ceremony

- Mahendra Nath Pandey, Hon'ble Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship inaugurated the India Pavilion at the competition.

- Team India was familiarised with Russian culture during the One School-One Country program; also aims at encouraging children to join skill programs.
- 'Future Skills' category introduced at the Competition to focus on digital economy.

About One School One Country

- Before the opening ceremony, the competing teams came together to present their national cultures under the One School-One Country initiative.
- The initiative aims to promote cultural exchange between the participating countries and to raise the profile of skills and different career pathways.
- Participants visited a Russian School, where they interacted with Russian school students and also participated in cultural programs.

New Initiatives

- An international conference, WorldSkills Conference 2019, will also be held alongside the skills competitions, for government representatives, experts and thought-leaders to interact on an array of topics on future of skills to maximize economic and social impact.
- Two new initiatives — WorldSkills Juniors and 'Future Skills' — are also being introduced in this edition. WorldSkills Junior aims at inspiring schoolchildren aged 14-16 years to join vocational and skill training and participate alongside the national teams.
- The focus of 'Future Skills' is to lay emphasis on relevant fields of activity in the era of high-tech production and digital economy.

