

12 December 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

Satellites Launched by India

Context:

ISRO has launched satellites from 26 countries during the last five years.

Details:

- Contracts with 10 countries namely the USA, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Singapore, the Netherlands, Japan, Malaysia, Algeria and France were signed in the last five years under commercial arrangements by [ISRO](#).
- From 2014 to 2019, it generated revenue of Rs. 1245.17 crores.

North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS)

Context:

Infrastructure projects in North Eastern States.

About the NESIDS:

- The **broad objective** of the North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) is to ensure focused development of the North East Region by providing financial assistance for projects of:
 - Physical infrastructure relating to water supply, power and connectivity to enhance tourism.
 - Social sector for the creation of infrastructure in the areas of primary and secondary sectors of education and health.
- It is a central sector scheme and was approved in 2017.
- Under the scheme, 100% central funding is provided.
- The NESIDS will accord focus on exploitation of the huge tourism potential of the area by way of strengthening related infrastructure and will also give emphasis on the creation of infrastructure of social sectors like health and education.
- The NESIDS will be implemented in 3 years from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

Also read: [Gist of Yojana April 2018 Issue: North East](#).

India Design Council (IDC)

Context:

The India Design Council launches two initiatives to promote Design Education and Standards.

Details:

- The IDC launched the Chartered Designs of India (CDI) and the Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM).
- These two initiatives of the IDC and the National Institute of design, Ahmedabad will help to address

the 5 challenges of scale, quality of design, quality of education for design, raising the priority for design in industry and design for public purpose.

- As Design Education gains momentum in India, it is necessary that commissioners of design projects and designers are able to distinguish qualified professional designers as against hobbyists and non-professionals.
- India has a growing design ecosystem that has resulted in growth - both in the employment of creative skills and impact in the service sector.
- Creative manufacturing and design innovation will be the key drivers in the [Make in India](#) initiative of 2020 and beyond and further strengthening the brand “designed in India”.
- In 2007, India became one of the few countries to adopt a **National Design Policy (NDP)**.
- **About Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM):**
 - The DEQM will benchmark design education programmes on predetermined standards and will accord Design Education Quality Mark to institutions that meet the provisions of the published standard.
 - The DEQ Mark will be granted to institutions that undergo the review process and meet or exceed the expectations for quality and standards as prescribed in the Quality Code.
 - The Quality Mark will communicate to everyone that an institution has a guaranteed minimum level of quality and standards and has undergone a third party, neutral review process.
 - The Quality Mark includes a trademark-protected logo, which could be used by the recipient institutions in all forms of internal and external communication.
- **About the Chartered Designs of India (CDI):**
 - The CDI is envisaged as an institution that will establish and uphold the professional standards of design practice in India.
 - The focus of CDI is the “Professional Designer” identified by a design qualification and or experience.
 - CDI is a cohesive platform that adheres to the design practice to standards in professional design competence, ethics and service.

About the India Design Council (IDC):

- The IDC’s establishment was announced by the government in 2009 in order to enable the policy implementation of the National Design Policy.
- IDC is mandated to implement the NDP and is committed to work towards raising the standards of design education in India and ensure that it meets global benchmarks.
- IDC is working with other government agencies, the design community, industry and educational institutions to promote design in business, society and public service.
- The IDC is an autonomous body of the Government of India established under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It is a national strategic body for multi-disciplinary design and is involved in the promotion of design to make India a design-enabled country.

National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

Context:

The National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) has issued Audit Quality Review (AQR) report of the statutory audit for the year 2017-18 of IL&FS Financial Services Limited (IFIN).

About the NFRA:

- The NFRA was constituted by the Government of India in 2018 under the [Indian Companies Act, 2013](#).
- The need for establishing the NFRA was felt in the wake of accounting scams and to establish an independent regulator for enforcement of auditing standards and ensuring the quality of audits.
- While many recommendations of the Companies Act came into force in 2014, the setting up of the NFRA was delayed due to discontent from the then regulator, the **Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)**.
 - The ICAI is a statutory body set up in 1949.
 - It regulates the profession of Chartered Accountancy in the country.
 - It is a self-regulatory body and has had a monopoly on training and qualifying chartered accountants, giving them license to practice and regulating them including scrutinising audit quality.
- Across the globe, over 50 countries have moved away from self-regulatory professional accountant bodies (like ICAI) and created independent audit regulators (like NFRA).
- In India, the move to set up a new oversight body for the accounting and audit professions was approved by a parliamentary panel.
- After the Satyam scandal (2009), the Standing Committee on Finance proposed the concept of the NFRA for the first time.
- **Functions of the NFRA:**
 - Recommend accounting and auditing policies and standards to be adopted by companies for approval by the Central Government.
 - Monitor and enforce compliance with accounting standards and auditing standards.
 - Oversee the quality of service of the professions associated with ensuring compliance with such standards and suggest measures for improvement in the quality of service.
 - Perform such other functions and duties as may be necessary or incidental to the aforesaid functions and duties.
- **NFRA's jurisdiction:**
 - The NFRA will oversee the quality of service and undertake investigation of the auditors of listed entities; unlisted entities with paid-up capital of not less than ₹500 crore or annual turnover of over ₹1,000 crore or those having aggregate loans, debentures or deposits of not less than ₹500 crore as of March 31 of the preceding financial year.
 - The ICAI retains the jurisdiction of small listed companies.
 - The NFRA will also have oversight over auditors of banks, insurers, electricity firms and also those body corporates referred to it by the Centre.
 - It will investigate matters, either suo moto or on a reference made to it by the Central Government, of professional misconduct by chartered accountants (CA) or CA firms, impose a penalty and debar the CA or CA firm for up to 10 years.

Universal Health Coverage Day 2019

Context:

The 6th Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day observed.

The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare conferred the UHC Awards to best performing Primary Healthcare teams of States and UTs.

About the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day:

- The Universal Health Coverage Day on 12 December is the annual rallying point for the growing movement for health for all.

- It marks the anniversary of the United Nations' historic and unanimous endorsement of universal health coverage in 2012.
- In 2014, the Universal Health Coverage Coalition started to celebrate 12 December as UHC Day, to commemorate the date on which the UN General Assembly officially recognised the importance of UHC.
- UHC Day aims to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage.
- The theme of UHC Day 2019 is '**Keep the Promise**'.

Vocationalisation of School Education

Context:

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is implementing the Scheme of Vocationalisation of School Education under the umbrella of '[Samagra Shiksha](#) – an integrated scheme for school education'.

Details:

- Under the scheme, a vocational subject is offered for Classes IX to XII along with the general education to provide necessary employability and vocational skills for a variety of occupations.
- The scheme provides for diversification of educational opportunities so as to enhance individual employability, reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled manpower and provides an alternative for those pursuing higher education.
- The scheme was initiated in 1988 and was revised in 1992-93.
- The Scheme provides for financial assistance to the States to set up administrative structure, area vocational surveys, preparation of curriculum, textbook, workbook curriculum guides, training manual, teacher training programme, strengthening technical support system for research and development, training and evaluation, etc.
- It also provides financial assistance to NGOs and voluntary organizations towards the implementation of specific innovative projects for conducting short-term courses.

Initiatives to develop world class research facilities

Context:

The Government has taken many initiatives to promote research in the field of science & engineering and to develop world-class research facilities in India.

Details:

The following are some of the schemes in this regard:

Prime Minister's Research Fellowship

- The Prime Minister's Research Fellowship (PMRF) scheme is aimed at attracting the talent pool of the country to doctoral (Ph.D.) programmes of Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISERs), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Central Universities (which are among the top 100 National Institutional Ranking Framework, NIRF ranked universities) for carrying out research in cutting edge science and technology domains, with focus on

national priorities.

- Under this scheme, meritorious students of IITs, IIITs, NITs and IISERs, after completing their B.Tech programme can straightaway get admission in PhD programme at IITs and IISc.

Junior Research Fellow (JRF)/Senior Research Fellow (SRF)

- Under the scheme of Junior Research Fellow, for research personnel engaged in Research and Development programmes are given emoluments of Rs.31,000/- per month. For Senior Research Fellow (SRF) these emoluments are Rs. 35,000/- per month.

Research Associate

- Depending upon their experience and qualifications, the research associates are given emoluments in three pay levels ranging from Rs. 47000 to Rs. 54000.

National Initiative for Technology Transfer (Establishment of Research Parks)

- The government has accorded approval for the establishment of research parks in the various IITs.

Institutions of Eminence (IoE)

- In order to empower the Higher Educational Institutions and to help them in becoming world-class teaching and research institutions, the government has recently declared 20 institutions (10 public and 10 Private institutions) as Institutions of Eminence.
- These institutes will emphasise on multi-disciplinary initiatives, high quality research, global best practices and international collaboration. Financial assistance up to an amount of Rs 1000 crore is to be provided to government institutions in the next 5 years.

Impacting Research, Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT)

- IMPRINT is a flagship national initiative of the Government, which aims at providing solutions to the most relevant engineering challenges and translating knowledge into viable technology in 10 selected technology domains, viz. health care, energy, sustainable habitat, nanotechnology hardware, water resources and river systems, advanced materials, information and communication technology, manufacturing, security and defence, and environmental science and climate change.
- It is a pan IITs and IISc Joint Initiative seeking to develop a roadmap for research.
- However, IMPRINT is not meant only for IITs and IISc; it is a national movement providing an opportunity for the higher echelon institutes in India to integrate with all grass-root level institutes, industry and organizations, mutually complement and deliver what the country demands and aspires.

Atal Bhujal Yojana

Context:

The World Bank has approved the Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY), a Rs.6,000 Crore Central Sector Scheme, for the sustainable management of ground water resources with community participation. The funding pattern is 50:50 between the Government of India and the World Bank.

For more on the Atal Bhujal Yojana, click [here](https://byjus.com).

Ken-Betwa River Inter-Linking Project

Context:

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Ken-Betwa link project (KBLP) (Phase-I, Phase-II and Comprehensive) has been completed.

For more on the Ken-Betwa River Inter-Linking Project, click [here](#).

Mullaperiyar Dam

Context:

As per directions of the [Supreme Court](#) in a 2014 judgement, the Ministry of Jal Shakti has constituted a three member Supervisory Committee with a representative from the Central Water Commission (Chairman of the committee) and one representative each from Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

For more on the Mullaperiyar Dam and issues surrounding it, check [CNA dated Dec 19, 2018](#).