

22 Sep 2020: PIB Summary & Analysis

1. IN-SPACe

Context:

IN-SPACe to promote private investment and innovation in the space sector.

About IN-SPACe:

- IN-SPACe or Indian Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre is the institutional and regulatory mechanism established by the Government of India to facilitate greater private participation in the space domain.
- It has been created to enable private players to use Indian space infrastructure.
- It is expected to boost private investment and innovation in the space sector.
- It will support and facilitate the private sector in the following ways:
 - Provide technical support
 - Share cash-intensive facilities
 - Allow establishing temporary facilities in Dept. of Space premises
 - Allow bidding for requirements coming from NSIL (New Space India Ltd)
 - Partner in science and space exploration missions
- Under this, financial provisions are not covered. Private players can participate in:
 - Building satellites
 - Building launch vehicles
 - Carrying out launches
 - Developing applications & providing space-based services
 - Developing subsystems and systems for space sector activities

2. Fast Breeder Reactor

Context:

Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) likely to be commissioned in 2022.

Details:

- The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor is being constructed by Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI).
- On completion of commissioning, PFBR will be adding 500 MW of electrical power to the national grid.

About Fast Breeder Reactors:

- A Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) is a nuclear reactor that uses fast neutrons to generate more nuclear fuels than they consume while generating power, dramatically enhancing the efficiency of the use of resources.
- Hence, a breeder reactor is a [nuclear reactor](#) that generates more fissile material than it consumes.

- It achieves this because its neutron economy is high enough to create more fissile fuel than it uses, by irradiation of a fertile material, such as uranium-238 or thorium-232 that is loaded into the reactor along with fissile fuel.

Also read: [List of nuclear power plants in India](#)

3. G-20 Meeting of the Trade and Investment Ministers

Context:

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry takes part in the G-20 meeting of the Trade and Investment Ministers.

Details:

- In the virtual meeting, the Minister announced that India is not in a position to accept the concept of Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT).
- He said that India is of the view that the concept of DFFT is neither well understood nor is comprehensive enough in the legislation of many countries.
- He stressed that in view of the huge digital divide among countries, there is a need for policy space for developing countries who still have to finalize laws around digital trade and data.
- He also said that data is a potent tool for development and equitable access to data is a critical aspect for India.
- India, like many other developing countries, is still in the phase of preparing a framework for its data protection and e-commerce laws.
- Moreover, the existing regulations on which DFFT is sought to be premised, such as uninhibited cross border flow of data, are grossly inadequate to address many concerns on data access. This, the Minister said could aggravate the digital divide.

Background:

- In the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Osaka, Japan in 2019, the '**Osaka Track**' was signed by many countries including the EU, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, UK, USA, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- India boycotted this Track along with South Africa, Egypt and Indonesia and many other developing nations.
- India boycotted it because it reportedly undermines multilateral negotiating processes based on consensus-based decision-making in global trade negotiations, and denies policy space regarding digital economy to developing countries.
- Developing countries have consistently demanded that negotiations on digital economy/e-commerce must be carried out on the basis of the **1998 WTO Work programme**.
 - The 1998 Work Program on e-commerce was initiated at the Second Ministerial Conference of the WTO in 1998.
 - Ministers adopted the Declaration on Global Electronic Commerce, recognizing that global electronic commerce was growing and creating new trade opportunities.
 - The Work Program on e-Commerce was adopted as a result of this in September 1998.
- India asserted that data is a form of trade and talks should remain under the [WTO](#).
- India is among the many countries that have stressed on data localisation, with the Reserve Bank of India issuing a directive that mandated foreign firms to store their payments data within the country for "unfettered access...for supervisory purposes".

- American firms like Google, Mastercard, Visa and Amazon have lobbied against data localisation rules around the world, including India.
 - **What is the Osaka Track?**
 - It is an initiative that seeks to standardise rules in the global movement of data with better protection for personal information and intellectual property.
 - It is a framework to promote cross-border data flow with enhanced protections.
 - The regime the advocates of this track sought to achieve has been termed 'Data Free Flow with Trust' or DFFT.
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4. PASSEX

Context:

Passage Exercise (PASSEX) between the Royal Australian Navy and the Indian Navy in East Indian Ocean Region.

PASSEX:

- PASSEXs are regularly conducted by the Indian Navy with units of friendly foreign navies, whilst visiting each other's ports or during a rendezvous at sea.
 - A passage exercise or PASSEX is normally conducted when there is an opportunity in contrast to pre-planned maritime drills.
 - The current exercise being conducted in the East Indian Ocean Region, reflects the growing strength of Indo-Australian bilateral relations as comprehensive strategic partners, particularly in defence cooperation in the maritime domain.
 - The exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability, improving understanding and imbibing best practices from each other.
 - it would involve advanced surface and anti-air exercises including weapon firings, seamanship exercises, naval manoeuvres and Cross Deck Flying Operations.
 - Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Karmuk are taking part in the current PASSEX.
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5. ABHYAS

Context:

Successful Flight Test of ABHYAS.

About ABHYAS:

- Abhyas is a High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of the [DRDO](https://drdo.gov.in/).
- It offers a realistic threat scenario for the practice of weapon systems. The vehicle can be used as a target for the evaluation of various missile systems.
- Abhyas is designed for autonomous flying with the help of an autopilot.
- Abhyas has RCS, Visual and IR augmentation systems required for weapon practice.

- The air vehicle is launched using twin underslung booster. It is powered by a small gas turbine engine and has MEMS based Inertial Navigation System (INS) for navigation along with the Flight Control Computer (FCC) for guidance and control.
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6. World Rhino Day

Context:

22 September is celebrated as World Rhino Day.

About World Rhino Day:

- The World Rhino Day is celebrated every year on 22nd September to emphasize the importance of the conservation of the Rhinoceros species and its habitats.
- The World Rhinoceros Day was announced by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 2010.
- Meant for Asian and African species of rhinoceros, the day celebrates the animal and encourages people to take steps for its conservation.
- One of the five rhinoceros species living in Africa and Asia have been declared 'critically endangered'.
 - These species are - Javan Rhinos, Sumatran Rhinos and Black Rhinos.
 - The White Rhinos have been declared 'near threatened' while one-horned rhinos are said to be vulnerable.

Indian Rhinoceros:

- The Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), also called the Indian rhino, greater one-horned rhinoceros or great Indian rhinoceros is a rhinoceros species native to the Indian subcontinent.
 - IUCN Red List – Vulnerable
 - Indian rhinos once ranged throughout the entire stretch of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, but excessive hunting and agricultural development reduced its range drastically to 11 sites in northern India and southern Nepal.
 - **Efforts to save the rhino**
 - Efforts are currently ongoing in the country to protect the existing rhino population and also to increase the distribution of the species through the **Indian Rhino Vision (IRV) 2020 programme**.
 - Success was achieved in restocking the rhino population in the World Heritage Site Manas National Park recently through wild to wild translocations.
 - The one-horned Rhinoceros is also one of the 21 species identified for the Recovery programme for critically endangered species by the Ministry.
 - The Ministry has also launched the “National Conservation Strategy for the Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros” with the goal to repopulate the Rhinoceros population in those areas also which used to hold the Rhinoceros earlier by augmenting the existing conservation efforts and strengthening them through scientific and administrative measures.
 - Today, approximately 75% of the entire population of Greater One-horned Rhinoceros now occurs in India in the three States viz, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
 - The Census of Rhinoceros is undertaken at the State-level by the respective State Governments periodically.
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7. TEX-Fund

Context:

Development of Powerloom Sector in the Country.

Details:

- The Government of India is implementing the Venture Capital Fund for Powerloom and Allied Products and Services (TEX-Fund), as a component under PowerTex India scheme with effect from 2017.
- The TEX Fund has a minimum corpus of Rs.35 crores with the Government of India's contribution of Rs.24.50 crores and the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has a minimum contribution of Rs.10.50 crores. SIDBI Venture Capital Limited (SVCL) is the Investment Manager of the TEX-Fund.
- The TEX-Fund is aimed at providing equity investment to micro and small enterprises in the power loom sector to boost innovation in the industry by creating of brands and generation of intellectual property and enable the development of the Powerloom Sector and allied activities.

PowerTex India Scheme

- The scheme is a comprehensive scheme for the development of the power loom sector re-launched in 2017.
- The scheme integrated many sub-schemes for the sector into one comprehensive scheme. The component schemes are:
 - Solar Energy Scheme for Powerlooms
 - Pradhan Mantri Credit Scheme for Powerloom Weavers
 - Group Workshed Scheme
 - Common Facility Centre
 - Yarn Bank
 - In-situ Upgradation of Plain Powerlooms
 - Other components include the TEX-Fund, IT awareness, market development and publicity, grant-in-aid and modernisation & upgradation of Powerloom Service Centres.
- The scheme is under the Textile Ministry.
- Schemes for Powerloom Sector Development (SPSD) is a continuing Central Sector Plan Scheme from the 11th Plan for the development of the power loom sector. It was in operation since the year 2007-08.

8. Social Security for AWWs during Pandemic

The following insurance schemes are being implemented for the benefit of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs)/Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs).

1. **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY):** AWWs and AWHs in the age group of 18 to 50 years are covered under PMJJBY for life cover of Rs.2.00 lakh (covers life risk, death due to any reason).
2. **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY):** AWWs and AWHs in the age group of 18-59 years are covered under PMSBY for accident cover of Rs. 2.00 Lakh (for accidental death and permanent full disability) /Rs.1.00 Lakh (for partial but permanent disability).

3. **Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojana (AKBY) (modified):** AWWs/AWHs in the age group of 51 to 59 years are covered under the AKBY (modified) as long as they are engaged for life cover of Rs.30,000/- (covers life risk, death due to any reason).

AWWs/AWHs in the age group of 18-59 years are also provided Female Critical Illness benefits of Rs.20,000/- on diagnosis of identified illness and scholarships to their children studying in 9th to 12th Standard (including ITI courses). Scholarship of Rs.300/- per quarter per child is available for two children per family.

9. National Service Scheme

Context:

President will confer the National Service Scheme (NSS) awards for 2018 – 19.

To know more about the National Service Scheme, check [PIB dated Sep 24, 2019](#).

10. Medical Devices Park in Kerala

Context:

Government to set up Medical Devices Park in Kerala.

Details:

- The proposed medical devices park in Kerala will be the country's first and will focus on the high-risk medical device sector to provide a full range of services for the medical devices industry like R&D support, testing, and evaluation.
- Named MedSpark, the park is a joint initiative of:
 - Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India located in Thiruvananthapuram
 - Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC), the industrial and investment promotion agency of the Government of Kerala
- The park is going to be established in the Life Science Park, Thonnakkal, Thiruvananthapuram.
- The park will place emphasis on the high-risk medical device sector involving medical implants and extracorporeal devices. This is an area in which the SCTIMST has expertise in.
- The Medical Devices Park will create an enabling support system for R&D, testing and evaluation of medical devices, manufacturing support, technology innovation, and knowledge dissemination, all of which are the full range of services that the medical devices industry seeks.
- These services can be utilized by the medical device industries located within MedSpark as well from other parts of India.
- This will benefit small and medium-sized medical devices industries, which dominate the medical devices sector.
- Currently, Kerala has a number of medical device companies with an annual turnover in excess of Rs. 750 crores, most of them operating with technologies transferred from SCTIMST.

- The business model for the MedSpark is self-sustaining in which its operational expenses will be generated from its revenue streams. Funding from the state and central governments through various schemes will meet the capital expenditure and deficit in income against expenses during the initial stages.
- The project is expected to provide direct employment to 1200 people.
- **When completed, MedSpark will have:**
 - A Medical Device Testing & Evaluation Centre accredited to international agencies.
 - An R&D Resource Centre for facilitating R&D in the medical device domain, the services of which would be shared by the entities within the Park.
 - A centralised Knowledge Centre for skill up-gradation with facilities for conducting training and providing support on regulatory issues, clinical trials, etc.
 - A Technology Business Incubation Centre for promoting start-ups and early-stage companies.
 - A set of Modular Manufacturing Units for lease by the industries coming to the park or land modules for setting up manufacturing units.