

11 Feb 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. Unani Day 2021

Context:

World Unani Day is observed on February 11 annually.

About Unani Day:

- It is celebrated on the birth anniversary of great Unani scholar and social reformer Hakim Ajmal Khan (1868 – 1927). He was a Unani medical educationist and founder of scientific research in the Unani system of medicine.
- The day is marked to spread awareness about health care delivery through the Unani system of medicine.
- Unani is a preventive and curative philosophy that has been used in India for many years. Today, India is one of the leading countries as far as the practice of Unani medicine is concerned.
- The first Unani Day was celebrated in 2017 at the Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM), Hyderabad.

About Unani:

- The Unani system of medicine was originated in Greece, however, its present form was saved by the Arabs.
- Unani medicine is also known as Unani Tibb, Arabian medicine, or Islamic medicine.
- It is a healing philosophy that takes from ancient Greek medicine. In Arab, Unani means 'Greek.'
- It assumes the four main elements – Fire, Water, Air and Earth which corresponds to four humours – Phlegm, Black bile, Blood, and Yellow bile respectively.
- Unani was introduced in India by the Arabs and Persians.

2. National Coal Index

Context:

The Ministry of Coal has started the commercial auction of coal mines on revenue share basis. The National Coal Index (NCI) was conceptualised in order to arrive at the revenue share based on market prices of coal.

What is the NCI?

- The NCI is a price index which reflects the change of price level of coal on a particular month relative to the fixed base year.
 - The base year for the NCI is FY 2017-18.
 - Prices of coal from all the sales channels of coal, including import, as existing today are taken into account for compiling the NCI.
 - The amount of revenue share per tonne of coal produced from auctioned blocks would be arrived at using the NCI by means of defined formula.
 - NCI was rolled out in June 2020 and the same is placed on the website of the Ministry of Coal.
 - NCI is composed of a set of five sub-indices: three for Non Coking Coal and two for Coking Coal.
 - The three sub-indices for Non Coking Coal are combined to arrive at the Index for Non Coking Coal and the two sub-indices for Coking Coal are combined to arrive at the Index for Coking Coal.
 - Thus, indices are separate for Non-coking and Coking Coal.
 - As per the grade of coal pertaining to a mine, the appropriate sub-index is used to arrive at the revenue share.
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3. Agri Export Policy

Context:

The government introduced a comprehensive Agri Export Policy in 2018.

About the Agri Export Policy 2018:

- The Agriculture Export Policy is framed with a focus on agriculture export oriented production, export promotion, better farmer realization and synchronization within policies and programmes of Government of India.
- The vision of the policy is to harness the export potential of Indian agriculture through suitable policy instruments, to make India a global power in agriculture and raise farmers' income.
- **Objectives of the policy:**
 - To diversify our export basket, destinations and boost high value and value added agricultural exports, including focus on perishables.

- To promote novel, indigenous, organic, ethnic, traditional and non-traditional Agri products exports.
 - To provide an institutional mechanism for pursuing market access, tackling barriers and dealing with sanitary and phytosanitary issues.
 - To strive to double India's share in world agri exports by integrating with global value chains.
 - Enable farmers to get benefit of export opportunities in overseas market.
 - Some of the policy recommendations include focus on clusters, attract private investments, making and promoting 'Brand India', establishing a strong quality regimen, promotion of value-added organic exports, etc.
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4. The India Toy Fair, 2021

Context:

The India Toy Fair, 2021 is going to be held virtually from 27 February to 2 March.

About The India Toy Fair, 2021:

- This initiative is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of making India a global hub for the Toy Industry.
 - The Fair aims to provide an impetus to the underlying themes of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" and "vocal for local" campaigns, launched by the Government to promote indigenous industries.
 - It also aims to leverage the potential of toys in making learning joyful across all ages in education.
 - The India Toy Fair 2021 intends to bring policy makers, toy manufacturers & distributors, investors, industry experts, MSMEs, artisans, start-ups, children, parents and teachers together on a common platform, in a bid to propel the growth of the Indian Toy Industry, giving it a global competitive edge.
 - The main attractions of the Fair include a Virtual Exhibition with over 1000 virtual stalls, webinars by State Governments, knowledge sessions with engaging panel discussions/webinars on diverse topics by experts on areas including toy-based learning, craft demonstrations, competitions, quizzes, virtual tours, product launches, etc.
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5. Urban Local Bodies Reforms

Context:

Goa becomes the 6th State to complete Urban Local Bodies (ULB) reforms.

Details:

- Goa has become the 6th State in the country to successfully undertake Urban Local Bodies (ULB) reforms stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

- Thus, the State has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs. 223 crore through Open Market Borrowings.
- Goa has joined five other States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan and Telangana, who have completed ULB reforms.

Objectives/Need for reforms:

- Reforms in the Urban Local Bodies and the urban utilities reforms are aimed at financial strengthening of ULBs in the states and to enable them to provide better public health and sanitation services. Economically rejuvenated ULBs will also be able to create good civic infrastructure.

The reforms stipulated by the Department of Expenditure to achieve these objectives are:

- The State will notify –
 - Floor rates of property tax in ULBs which are in consonance with the prevailing circle rates (i.e. guideline rates for property transactions)
 - Floor rates of user charges in respect of the provision of water-supply, drainage and sewerage which reflect current costs/past inflation.
- The state will put in place a system of periodic increase in floor rates of property tax/user charges in line with price increases.

Background:

- To meet the challenges posed by the pandemic, GOI had enhanced the borrowing limit of the states by 2 percent of their GSDP.
- Half of this special dispensation was linked to undertaking citizen centric reforms by the states.
- The four citizen centric areas for reforms identified were:
 - Implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System (done by 13 states)
 - Ease of doing business reform (done by 12 states)
 - Urban Local body/utility reforms (done by 6 states)
 - Power sector reforms (done by 2 state)

6. International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Context:

Women & Child Development Ministry in association with MyGov launches online campaign to celebrate women in science.

Details:

- The campaign honours our young girls from across the country who have performed well in the subjects of Maths and Science & encourage these STEM STARS to make us proud in days to come.

International Day of Women and Girls in Science:

- This is a UN-declared celebration started in 2015.
 - It is observed on the 11th day of February.
 - The day recognizes the critical role women and girls play in science and technology.
 - Theme for 2021: “Women Scientists at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19”.
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7. TIFAC unveils two new initiatives of technology

What are the two schemes launched?

1. SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch)
2. Seaweed Mission

Who has launched the schemes?

- TIFAC has launched the two schemes.
- **About TIFAC:**
 - TIFAC or Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council is a technology think tank and autonomous body under the GOI's Department of Science & Technology (S&T).
 - It was formed in 1988 and is headquartered in New Delhi.
 - TIFAC assesses the technology trajectories and supports innovation by networked actions in select areas of national importance.
 - It strives for technology development in the country by leveraging technology innovation through sustained and concerted programmes in close association with industry and academia.

1. SAKSHAM:

- It is a dynamic portal for jobs/mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs and other industries all across the country.
- The portal with the demand and supply data uses algorithm and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, for geo-spatial information on demand and availability of Shramiks, and also provide analysis on skill training programmes of Shramiks.
- The pilot portal originally initiated with two districts is now being launched as an all India portal.
- **Key features of SAKSHAM:**
 - A dynamic job portal – opportunity for Shramiks and MSMEs.
 - Facilitate creation of 10 lakh blue collar jobs
 - Direct connect between Shramiks and MSMEs, no middleman in between
 - Minimise migration of Shramiks – job opportunity in proximate MSMEs

2. Seaweed Mission:

- It is a mission for the commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing for value addition.
 - Despite several advantages, commercial seaweeds cultivation has not been taking place in the country at an appropriate scale, as being practiced in South-East Asian countries.
 - By an estimate, if cultivation is done in ≈ 10 million hectares or 5% of the EEZ area of India, it can provide employment to approximately 50 million people; set up new seaweed industry; contribute to national GDP; ocean productivity; abate algal blooms, sequester millions of tons CO₂; contribute to a healthier ocean; provide bio-ethanol of 6.6 billion litres.
 - Thus, with this objective, TIFAC will showcase a model, in collaboration with other in-line ministries, of the commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing. Seaweed Cultivation would help in boosting the economy.
 - **Seaweed cultivation:**
 - Seaweed Cultivation is also called kelp farming.
 - It is the practice of cultivating and harvesting seaweeds.
 - Seaweed, or macroalgae, refers to thousands of species of macroscopic, multicellular, marine algae.
 - Seaweed species such as kelps provide essential nursery habitat for fisheries and other marine species and thus protect food sources; other species, such as planktonic algae, play a vital role in capturing carbon, producing up to 90% of Earth's oxygen.
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8. India-Australia Circular Economy (I-ACE) Hackathon, 2021

Context:

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission & Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation kick-start the India-Australia Circular Economy (I-ACE) Hackathon, 2021.

About the I-ACE Hackathon:

- Goal of the hackathon: to enable talented innovative students and start-ups from Australia and India to address common national issues through innovative technology solutions.
 - Conducted by: [Atal Innovation Mission \(AIM\)](#) and Australia's national science agency (CSIRO).
 - The priority themes for the hackathon are Innovation in packaging – reducing packaging waste, Innovation in food supply chains avoiding waste, Creating opportunities for plastics waste reduction, and Recycling critical energy metals and e-waste.
 - I-ACE is supported by the Australian Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER), AIM Atal Incubation Centre network, and various domain experts.
 - 80 teams have been shortlisted from over 1000 applications.
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9. Swadhar Greh Scheme

What is the scheme?

- The Scheme envisages providing shelter, food, clothing and health as well as economic and social security for women in distress.
- Under this scheme, Swadhar Greh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women.
- The scheme also envisages offering legal aid and guidance to these women for their readjustment in family/society.
- It also offers vocational training and economic rehabilitation so that they can start their life afresh with dignity.
- Beneficiaries could include women above the age of 18 years who:
 - are deserted and are without any social and economic support;
 - are survivors of natural disasters and have been rendered homeless and are without any social and economic support;
 - are prisoners released from jail and are without family, social and economic support;
 - are victims of domestic violence or family/marital discord and were made to leave homes;
 - trafficked women, etc.