

19 Feb 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

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1. India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)

Context:

PM addresses India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE).

About I-ACE:

- The hackathon aims to enable students and start-ups/MSMEs of both the nations in fostering innovative solutions for the development of a circular economy across the food system value chain with the aim of increasing the long-term health and resilience of our planet, through innovative technology solutions.
- **Who is organising the hackathon?**
 - India Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE) is jointly being organized by [Atal Innovation Mission](#), NITI Aayog, GOI and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia.
- I-ACE aims to accelerate the development of young and promising students and start-ups/MSMEs working towards the creation of a sustainable future.
- Launched in October 2020, the initial round received more than 1000 registrations from both countries.
- After the finals held in February 2021, the selected teams attended five masterclass sessions, three dedicated mentoring sessions and three presentation/jury evaluation sessions.
- The winners will be supported by the innovation and incubation ecosystems of both Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog and CSIRO Australia to enable them develop their solutions into products.
- The four themes addressed by the hackathon were:
 - Innovation in packaging – reducing packaging waste
 - Innovation in food supply chains – avoiding waste
 - Creating opportunities for plastics waste reduction
 - Recycling critical energy metals and e-waste

2. 'Go Electric' Campaign

Context:

Transport Minister launches 'Go Electric' Campaign.

About the Campaign:

- The aim of the campaign is to spread awareness on the benefits of e-mobility and EV Charging Infrastructure as well as electric cooking in India.
 - The idea behind this initiative is to encourage the use of electric vehicles rather than those running on petrol and diesel.
 - The campaign is aimed at creating awareness at PAN-India level and is expected to boost the confidence of Electric Vehicle manufacturers.
 - The "Go Electric" campaign is an important initiative as it would be an important step towards a cleaner and greener future and help in reducing the import dependence of our country in the coming years.
 - Electric fuel is a major alternative to fossil fuels which have an import bill of Rs 8 lakh crores.
 - When compared to conventional fuels the electric fuel has low cost, reduced emissions and it is also indigenous.
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3. Power sector reforms

Context:

Five more states undertake partial Power Sector Reforms, get additional borrowing of Rs. 2,094 crore.

Details:

- Bihar, Goa, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand have successfully met the target set by the Ministry of Power for reduction in Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses or achieved the targeted reduction in Average Cost of Supply and Average Revenue Realisation (ACS-ARR) gap.

Background:

- Reduction in AT&C losses and ACS-ARR gap are two of the three reforms in the Power Sector stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- A part of additional borrowing ceiling to the states is linked to undertaking reforms in the Power Sector.
- States get permission to borrow an amount equivalent to 0.05 percent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) for meeting the target set for the state for reduction in AT&C losses and additional 0.05 percent of GSDP for crossing the ACS-ARR gap target.

- 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 16 states)
 - Ease of doing business reform (done by 18 states)
 - Urban Local body/utility reforms (done by 6 states)
 - Power sector reforms (done by 7 state)

Significance of the reforms:

- Power Sector reforms stipulated by the Ministry of Finance aim at creating a transparent and hassle free provision of power subsidy to farmers and prevent leakages.
- They also aim at improving the health of power distribution companies by alleviating their liquidity stress in a sustainable manner.

4. India-EU Macroeconomic Dialogue

Context:

Eleventh India-EU Macroeconomic Dialogue held.

About the Dialogue:

- The dialogue, inter-alia, covered sharing of their experiences to enable both sides on various aspects including collaboration in the G20 on finance track matters, including through G20 Framework Working Group deliverables, G20 Action plan, debt related issues and international taxation of digital economy.
- Fiscal policy response and medium-term fiscal strategy including financial/structural reforms priorities were also discussed.
- India shared its policy response to the Covid crisis and steps taken to revive the economy from its impact including well calibrated stimulus packages announced by Government of India as also the vaccination related efforts.

5. Anti-Tank Guided Missile Systems

Context:

Successful user trials of DRDO-developed Anti-Tank Guided Missile Systems 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra'.

About Helina and Dhruvastra:

- The 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra', that are third-generation anti-tank guided missiles, were successfully test-fired by India.
 - Both were indigenously developed by DRDO.
 - The successful trials paved the way for Helina's induction into the Indian Army and Dhruvastra's induction into the Air Force.
 - The missiles were test-fired at Pokhran deserts in Rajasthan.
 - These missiles are one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world according to the Defence Ministry.
 - The system has all-weather day-and-night capability and can defeat battle tanks with conventional armour as well as with explosive reactive armour.
 - These [anti-tank missiles](#) can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.
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6. NAVDEX 21

Context:

Indian Navy Ship Pralaya Arrives in Abu Dhabi, UAE to participate in NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21.

NAVDEX 21 & IDEX 21:

- NAVDEX 21 (Naval Defence Exhibition) and IDEX 21 (International Defence Exhibition) are scheduled to be held in February 2021 for five days.
- NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 are the leading international naval and defence exhibition of the region

INS Pralaya:

- INS Pralaya, the second ship of the indigenously built Prabal Class Missile Vessels, was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 2002.
- The 56 m long ship, displacing about 560 T is capable of speeds in excess of 35 knots and is fitted with an impressive array of weapons and sensors.
- These include a 76.2 mm medium range gun, 30 mm close range guns, chaff launchers and long range surface to surface missiles.
- The ship was indigenously built at the Goa Shipyard Ltd.

Background:

- Defence relations between India and UAE have been steadily growing since the upgradation of bilateral relations to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' during the visit of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi to India in 2017 as Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations.
- Towards enhancing interactions between the two navies, inaugural edition of Indian Navy – UAE Navy bilateral exercise GULF STAR – 1 was conducted in March 2018.
- In addition, Indian Navy ships have been making regular port calls at UAE for promoting maritime cooperation.

- Deployment of Indian Navy ships to Abu Dhabi, UAE underscores deep rooted friendly ties and multi-faceted cooperation between India and UAE, and will further strengthen defence cooperation between the two countries.

