

18 Aug 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. [MoU between India and Bangladesh](#)
 2. [MoU between India and the USA](#)
 3. [Kigali Amendment](#)
 4. [India – Australia](#)
 5. [Indian Navy undertook Bilateral Maritime Exercise with Vietnam People's Navy](#)
 6. [Defence India Startup Challenge 5.0](#)
 7. [Mines Ministry](#)
 8. [International Bullion Exchange](#)
 9. [Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa to Study Intersection of COVID-19 and Tuberculosis](#)
- [Pandemics](#)

1. MoU between India and Bangladesh

Context:

Cabinet approved MoU between India and Bangladesh.

Details:

- The MoU signed in March 2021 seeks to foster cooperation between the two countries in the field of disaster management, resilience and mitigation.
- It seeks to put in place a system, whereby both India and Bangladesh will be benefited from the Disaster Management mechanisms of each other and it will help in strengthening the areas of preparedness, response and capacity building in the field of Disaster Management.
- **Salient features of the MoU:**
 - Extending mutual support to one another during large-scale disasters.
 - Exchange of information, remote sensing data, etc. and sharing best practices for disaster response, recovery, etc.
 - Extending cooperation in advanced information technology, early warning systems, navigation services, etc. towards real-time data sharing.
 - Training officials in the field of disaster management.
 - Conducting joint disaster management exercises bilaterally.
 - Sharing standards, technologies and tools for creating disaster management communities.
 - Exchanging publications, guidelines, etc. on disaster management.

Also read: [India – Bangladesh Relations](#)

2. MoU between India and the USA

Context:

Cabinet approved MoU between India and the US on cooperation in geology.

Details:

- The MoU would be signed between the Geological Survey of India (Ministry of Mines, GOI) and the Florida International University (FIU) board of trustees, USA.
- The identified areas of cooperation between the two participants will be as follows:
 - Development of the geological knowledge, research regarding geologic and tectonic environment of post collisions magmatism in India-Asia collisional margin, geologic history and tectonics of the Eastern Himalayan Syntaxis.
 - Developing cooperative projects in the fields of regional geological, geochemical, petrological and multi-isotopic studies related to the evolution of post collisional magmatic belts (Ladakh Plutons).
 - Exchange of information on technology and geoscientific data.
 - Any other area as decided by the parties.

Also read: [India – USA Relations](#)

3. Kigali Amendment

Context:

Cabinet approves Ratification of Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

Details:

- Under the Kigali Amendment, Parties to the [Montreal Protocol](#) will phase down the production and consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).
- Though the present approval of the Cabinet, India will be ratifying the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol for phase down of Hydrofluorocarbons.
- India will complete its phase down of HFCs in 4 steps from 2032 onwards with cumulative reduction of 10% in 2032, 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and 80% in 2047.
- **Implementation strategy and targets:**
 - National strategy for phase down of Hydrofluorocarbons as per the applicable phase down schedule for India will be developed after required consultation with all the industry stakeholders by 2023.
 - Amendments to the existing legislation framework, the Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Rules to allow appropriate control of the production and

consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons to ensure compliance with the Kigali Amendment will be done by mid-2024.

Read more on the [Kigali Amendment](#) in the link.

4. India – Australia

Context:

A 'Joint Guidance for the Australia – India Navy to Navy Relationship' document was signed between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.

Details:

- The document is aligned to the '2020 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' agreed by the Indian and Australian Prime Ministers and aims to ensure a shared approach to regional and global security challenges.
- The Joint Guidance would serve as a guideline document to showcase the intent of both the Navies to work together bi/multilaterally.
- The broad scope of the guidance is focussed on developing mutual understanding, cooperate for regional security, collaborate in mutually beneficial activities and to develop interoperability.

Also read: [India – Australia Relations](#)

5. Indian Navy undertook Bilateral Maritime Exercise with Vietnam People's Navy

Context:

As part of the ongoing deployment of Indian Navy ships in the South China Sea, INS Ranvijay and INS Kora undertook bilateral maritime exercise with Vietnam People's Navy (VPN) frigate VPNS Ly Thai To (HQ-012).

Details:

- The exercise included surface warfare exercises, weapon firing drills and helicopter operations.
- Regular interactions between the two navies over the years have enhanced their interoperability and adaptability.

INS Ranvijay:

- INS Ranvijay is a guided-missile destroyer and the latest of the Rajput class.
- The ship was commissioned in 1987 and is equipped with an array of weapons and sensors which includes [Surface to Surface Missile](#), Anti Air Missiles and guns, Heavy Weight Torpedoes, Anti-Submarine Rockets and capable of carrying Anti-Submarine Helicopter (Kamov 28).

INS Kora:

- It is the lead ship of Kora class missile corvette.
 - The ship is fitted with Surface-to-Surface missiles and Anti Air Guns.
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6. Defence India Startup Challenge 5.0

Context:

Defence India Startup Challenge 5.0 to be launched.

About the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) 5.0:

- DISC 5.0 will be launched by the [Innovations for Defence Excellence \(iDEX\)](#) three years after it launched the DISC 1.0.
 - In the challenge, participants will try to solve problem statements that will be given by the Services and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).
 - The Problem Statements are designed to ensure military advantage in the foreseeable future.
 - The winners receive grants up to Rs 1.5 crore from iDEX, along with support from Partner Incubators and guidance from the Nodal Officers who are the ultimate users.
 - The launch of DISC 5.0 will be a massive leap towards leveraging the start-up ecosystem to develop India's defence technologies, equipment design and manufacturing capabilities.
 - These challenges will also encourage start-ups to become more attuned to innovative concepts and inculcate the approach of creative thinking in India's budding entrepreneurs.
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7. Mines Ministry

Context:

Mines Ministry adopts Scheme for Accreditation of Private Exploration Agencies for Undertaking Prospecting Operations of Minerals.

Details:

- Under this, the National Accreditation Board for Education and Training of the Quality Council of India (QCI-NABET) will grant accreditation to private exploration agencies for undertaking prospecting operations of minerals in accordance with the standards and procedures of the scheme.
- The Ministry has formulated guidelines for considering the exploration agencies for notification containing detailed procedure, terms and conditions for the same.

Background:

- The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, (MMDR Act) was recently amended through the [MMDR Amendment Act, 2021](#).

- The amendment empowers the Central Government to notify entities, including private entities, that may undertake prospecting operations.
 - With the view to increase the pace of exploration in the country and to bring advance technology in exploration of minerals, it has been decided to notify private exploration agencies to undertake prospecting operations under the provisions of the MMDR Act.
 - At present, only government agencies are involved in exploration and the pace of exploration is limited by their capacity.
 - The regulatory reform undertaken is expected to increase the pace of exploration, generate employment and bring more explored blocks for auction.
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8. International Bullion Exchange

Context:

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) launched the pilot run/soft launch of the International Bullion Exchange.

Details:

- The International Bullion Exchange is scheduled to go live on October 1, 2021 – the Foundation Day of IFSCA.
 - The International Bullion Exchange shall be the “Gateway for Bullion Imports into India”, wherein all the bullion imports for domestic consumption shall be channelized through the exchange.
 - The exchange ecosystem is expected to bring all the market participants at a common transparent platform for bullion trading and provide an efficient price discovery, assurance in the quality of gold, enable greater integration with other segments of financial markets and help establish India’s position as a dominant trading hub in the world.
 - CDSL-IFSC, a foreign depository, has been designated as the Bullion Depository for the Bullion Exchange responsible for managing the Vault Manager.
 - CDSL-IFSC will now facilitate holding and transfer of gold initially which will be extended to silver and any other commodities that are eligible to be traded by IFSCA at IFSC, GIFT City.
 - It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Central Depository Services (India) Ltd or CDSL, India’s only listed depository.
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9. Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa to Study Intersection of COVID-19 and Tuberculosis Pandemics

Context:

A consortium of doctors and researchers from India, Brazil, Russia, and South Africa have partnered to conduct a study on the epidemiological impact and intersection of the COVID-19 and Tuberculosis pandemics in these countries.

Details:

- Under this joint research, the teams from these countries will explore the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the epidemiological characteristics of TB infection and search for mechanisms responsible for the interaction of these two processes.
- They will also search for strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of the pandemic and develop individual recommendations for each participating country, which can help overcome the impact of epidemics of respiratory viral diseases on the epidemic of tuberculosis.
- Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa currently rank 2nd to 5th in the number of cases of COVID-19 and belong to 24 countries recognized by WHO with the highest burden of tuberculosis in the world. Moreover, BRICS countries have the largest number of cases of drug-resistant tuberculosis.
- Under this backdrop, this joint research assumes significance.
- **What the team will assess:**
 - The impact of COVID-19 on trends in the structure of the *tuberculosis* population.
 - They will evaluate the impact of tuberculosis on the clinical course and treatment outcomes for COVID-19 at the individual level.
 - The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictive measures on morbidity and tuberculosis-related mortality will be assessed using mathematical modelling.

Also read: [Tuberculosis \(TB\) & National Strategic Plan for TB Elimination](#)