



CURRENT AFFAIRS

≡ 17 DECEMBER, 2021 ≡

1. All India Mayors' Conference

Why in news?

Prime Minister will inaugurate and address the All India Mayors' Conference in Varanasi at 10:30 AM today via video conferencing.

About :

Mayors from various states across the country will participate in the conference, being organized by the Department of Urban Development, Uttar Pradesh.

The theme of the Conference is “New Urban India”.

Significance :

- The government has launched multiple schemes and initiatives to address the issues of dilapidated urban infrastructure and lack of amenities.
- A special focus of these efforts has been the state of Uttar Pradesh, which has witnessed tremendous progress and transformation of the urban landscape, especially in the last five years.

- A 3-day exhibition is also being organized from today to showcase the key achievements of the Centre and Uttar Pradesh government in the sphere of urban development.

2. Highest ever annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

About :

- India has registered the highest ever annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow of 81.97 billion dollar in 2020-21.
- FDI inflows in the last seven financial years is over 440 billion dollar, which is nearly 58 percent of the total FDI inflow in last 21 financial years.
- The Ministry said, top five countries from where FDI Equity Inflows were received during 2014 to 2021 are Singapore, Mauritius, USA, Netherlands and Japan.
- Computer Software and Hardware sector attracted the largest share of FDI inflows, followed by Service, Trading and Telecommunications.

3. Management Information System (MIS) portal

Why in news ?

Rural Development Minister launched Management Information System (MIS) portal for rankings of States and Union Territories in Land Acquisition Projects.

About :

- As per the ranking and performance, the top three States and top three districts will be awarded.
- The MIS portal will not only show the data and figures but it will also show the speed of the development in the country.
- This portal is a result of the vision to give impetus to the government's Gati Shakti Mission.
- Delay in completion of projects increases the project cost and hampers the speed of development.

4. Country Reports on Terrorism 2020

Why in news ?

- This report has been released by US in which it has praised India for effectively countering terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and northeast and Maoists in the central parts of the country in 2020.
- While US appreciated Indian states

for creating anti-terrorism units to deal with the menace, it has accused Pakistan of not taking action against terrorists such as JeM founder and UN-designated terrorist Masood Azhar and Key accused of 2008 Mumbai attack Sajid Mir.

- Several UN and US-designated terrorist groups that focus on attacks outside the country continued to operate from Pakistani soil in 2020, including the Haqqani Network, LeT, and JeM.
- The US accused the Imran Khan government and Pakistani military of acting inconsistently with respect to terrorist safe havens throughout the country.

5. Auction of coal mines

Why in news?

Coal Minister launched the fourth tranche of auction of 99 coal mines including 24 new mines.

Launching the latest tranche, the Minister called upon the investors who have already completed successful bidding of coal mines to start production at the earliest for greater self-reliance in this sector.

About :

Of these 99 mines on offer, 59 are fully explored mines and 40 are partially explored.

These mines are spread across eight coal-bearing states. These are Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The list of mines has been finalized post detailed deliberations, and mines falling under protected areas, wildlife sanctuaries, critical habitats, having forest cover greater than 40 per cent, heavily built-up area etc. have been excluded.

Key features of the auction process include :

- Introduction of National Coal Index
- Ease in participation with no restriction for prior coal mining experience
- Full flexibility in coal utilization
- Optimised payment structures
- Efficiency in promotion through incentives for early production and use of clean coal technology.

Significance :

Incentives are being contemplated by the ministry with focus on sustainability.

The auction shall be held online through a transparent two-stage process, on the basis of Percentage Revenue Share.

This will be the 14th round of auction under CMSPA Act and fourth tranche of auction under MMDR Act.

6. India and France Defence Dialogue

About :

- The 3rd Annual Defence Dialogue between India and France will be held.
- Rajnath Singh to meet French counterpart today for 3rd annual Defence Dialogue
- The in-depth discussions will cover all elements of Indo-French defence collaboration, including operational defence cooperation, particularly maritime security in the Indo-Pacific, industrial and technology cooperation in line with Make in India, and counter-terrorism cooperation.
- Recent events in Afghanistan, as well as the situation in the Indo-Pacific region, are expected to be discussed.
- India and France inked an intergovernmental agreement in 2016 to buy 36 of the planes for Rs 59,000 crore.

Significance :

- The relationship between India and France has improved significantly in recent years, with cooperation

expanding considerably in important areas.

- Furthermore, India and France are expanding their cooperation in new sectors such as the Indian Ocean region, climate change, and long-term growth and development.
- On a variety of regional and global problems, including how to combat terrorism and extremism, the two countries have a high degree of agreement.

7. Citizens Tele law Mobile App

Why in news ?

Ministry of Law and Justice announced the expansion of Tele-Law in 75,000 Gram Panchayats covering all States/UTs as a part of the 75 years of India's Independence celebrations.

About :

- This Mobile Application enables the beneficiary to access pre-litigation advice and consultation directly from the empanelled lawyers free of cost.
- The app is available in six languages like Hindi, English, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Marathi.
- It intends to widen the access to increased legal information and empower the masses to identify their problems

- It allows them to choose from the appropriate forum of dispute redressal to claim their entitlements and rights by connecting the beneficiary directly to the Panel Lawyer or with the assistance of Para Legal Volunteers, Village Level entrepreneurs, in case of a beneficiary who are unable to read or write.

8. India Central Asia Dialogue

Why in news?

- External Affairs Minister will be hosting the third meeting of the India Central Asia Dialogue in New Delhi from 18th to 20th December.
- Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan will participate in the meeting.
- The second meeting was organized by India in October last year via video conferencing.
- The ministers are expected to discuss further strengthening of relations between India and Central Asian countries with a particular focus on trade, connectivity, and development cooperation.
- They will also exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Significance :

There has been an ongoing engagement between India and the five Central Asian countries over the last few years.

India considers Central Asia as part of its extended neighborhood.

9. National Judicial Infrastructure Authority of India (NJIAI)

Why in news?

The Centre said a proposal has been received from the Chief Justice of India (CJI) for setting up a National Judicial Infrastructure Authority of India (NJIAI) for arrangement of adequate infrastructure for courts.

NJIAI will act as a Central body in laying down the road map for planning, creation, development, maintenance, and management of functional infrastructure for the Indian Court System besides identical structures under all the High Courts.

There will be a Governing body with CJI as patron-in-chief in the Authority.

Significance :

Judicial infrastructure is important

for improving access to justice and to meet the growing demands of the public that is more aware of its rights and is developing economically, socially and culturally.

Thus, it becomes important to have strong judicial infrastructure.

10. Digital partnership between India and Vietnam

About :

- India and Vietnam signed a Letter of Intent to establish partnership in Digital Media.
- The Letter of Intent envisages sharing of information and experience in establishing policies and regulatory frameworks on digital media and social networks.
- It also envisages conducting capacity building and training programs for media professionals and officials in the two countries.
- It would shape the bilateral cooperation in the field of new technologies and challenges such as the “infodemic” which all countries are grappling with during the COVID-19 pandemic.

