Prelim Bits 18-12-2019

Global Gender Gap Index

- The Global Gender Gap Index for the year 2020 was released by World Economic Forum.
- Iceland, Norway, and Finland occupy the top three spots in the Report. Yemen ranked at the last place (153rd).
- India has ranked 112th among 153 countries, slipped four places from the previous year ranking.
- Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and China are ranked at 50, 101 , 102 and 106 respectively. Pakistan is ranked at 151.
- It measures progress towards parity between men and women in –

    1. Economy
    2. Education
    3. Health &
    4. Political representation.

- The index lies between 0 and 1, with 1 denoting complete parity and 0, complete inequality.
- **Key Findings -** The largest gender disparity is in political empowerment.
- Only 25% of the total seats in parliaments around the world are occupied by women, and only 21% of the ministers are women.
- By following the current trends, the overall global gender gap will close in 99.5 years.
- It can potentially be closed 71.5 years in South Asia.
- Globally, the average distance completed to gender parity is at 68.6%, which is an improvement since last edition.
- **India** – Ranked 18th in political empowerment and 4th in the number of years a female or a male ruled a state.
- Ranked in the bottom-five in terms of women's health and survival and economic participation.
- On health and survival, four large countries such as Pakistan, India, Vietnam and China fare badly with millions of women not getting the same access to health as men.

- It has closed two-thirds of its overall gender gap (score of 66.8%)

Other Gender Related Reports

- The Gender Parity Index is released by UNESCO.
- The Gender Inequality Index is released by UNDP.



Global Refugee Meet

- The first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) was held in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It is a two-day gathering of United Nations member states
- It is jointly hosted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, and the Government of Switzerland.
- It aims to debate and discuss the response of the world's countries to the global refugee situation.
- It is guided by the Global Compact on Refugees.
- It has been organised around 6 areas of focus –

1. Burden and responsibility-sharing,
2. Education,
3. Jobs and livelihoods,
4. Energy and infrastructure,
5. Solutions, and
6. Protection capacity

- The Issues discussed at the forum include

1. Displacement of Afghans and Central Americans
2. Providing education for refugee children, and
3. Emergency situations and financial support through Islamic finance.

- Pakistan PM sought to use the platform to attack India over Kashmir.
- The GRF will be held every four years at the Ministerial level.
- Presently, the number of refugees has risen to over 25 million people worldwide.

GEM Samvaad

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is the national public procurement portal launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in 2016.
- It offers end to end solutions for all procurement needs of Central and State Government Departments, PSUs, autonomous institutions and local bodies.
- It has more than 3 lakh registered sellers and service providers and more than 40,000 Government buyer organizations.

- Sellers from the State are benefitting through the access to national Public Procurement market using the portal.
- It makes procurement contactless, paperless and cashless.
- The government has recently launched **GeM Samvaad,** which is a national outreach programme.
- It will take place with stakeholders across the country and with local sellers in order to facilitate on-boarding of local sellers on the marketplace while catering to specific requirements and procurement needs of buyers.
- The outreach programme will cover all the States and UTs of the country.
- Through GeM Samvaad the marketplace is looking forward to receiving feedback from users which shall be used for making improvements and advancements in the system.

National Broadband Mission

- Ministry of communications have recently launched a new "National Broadband Mission".
- The mission aimed at providing broadband access in all villages in the country by 2022.
- Under the mission, the government plans to lay incremental 30 lakh route km of Optical Fiber Cable.
- The Centre will work with States and UTs for having consistent policies pertaining to expansion of digital infrastructure including for Right of Way (RoW) approvals required for laying of optical fibre cable.
- It aims to increase tower density from 0.42 to 1 tower per thousand of population by 2024.
- It entails investments of around ₹7 lakh crore from various stakeholders.
- Additionally, a Broadband Readiness Index will be developed to measure the availability of digital communications infrastructure within a State/UT.
- **Other Objectives -** Creation of a digital fiber map of the Digital Communications network and infrastructure, including Optical Fiber Cables and Towers, across the country.
- Investment from stakeholders of USD 100 billion (Rs 7 Lakh Crore) including Rs 70,000 crore from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

Recycling of Ships Act

- Recycling of Ships Act, recently comes into force, provide for the regulation of recycling of ships by setting certain international standards.
- It lays down the statutory mechanism for enforcement of such standards.
- It restricts and prohibits the use or installation of hazardous materials, which applies irrespective of whether a ship is meant for recycling or not.
- For new ships, such restriction or prohibition on use of hazardous materials

will be immediate, that is, from the date the legislation comes into force, while existing ships shall have a period of five years for compliance.

- Restriction or prohibition on use of hazardous materials would not be applied to warships and non-commercial ships operated by Government.
- Ships shall be surveyed and certified on the inventory of hazardous materials used in ships.
- Under this Act, ship recycling facilities are required to be authorized and ships shall be recycled only in such authorized ship recycling facilities.
- It also provides that ships shall be recycled in accordance with a ship-specific recycling plan.
- Ships to be recycled in India shall be required to obtain a Ready for Recycling Certificate in accordance with the Hong Kong Convention for Ship Recycling.
- The Act imposes a statutory duty on ship recyclers to ensure safe and environmentally sound removal and management of hazardous wastes from ships.
- Appropriate penal provisions have been introduced in the Act to deter any violation of statutory provisions.

Click here to know about Hong Kong Convention for Ship Recycling

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express

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