Prelim Bits 21-12-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Social Progress Index

Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released the Social Progress Index (SPI) for states and districts of India.

- The Social Progress Index (SPI) is a comprehensive tool intended to be a holistic measure of the Social Progress made by the country at the national and sub-national levels.
- **Mandated and released by** - Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India (EAC-PM).
- **Prepared by** - Institute for Competitiveness and the Social Progress Imperative and submitted to EAC-PM.
- **Significance** - The report will act as a critical enabler and tool for policymakers in the coming years for achieving sustained socio-economic growth.
- A special section of the report highlights progress made by the 112 aspirational districts in the country leading to a broader understanding of the social progress at the grassroots level.
- **Dimensions** - The index assesses states and districts based on 12 components across 3 critical dimensions of social progress -
    1. Basic Human Needs - Assesses the performance in terms of Nutrition and Basic Medical Care, Water and Sanitation, Personal Safety and Shelter.
    2. Foundations of Wellbeing - Evaluates the progress across the components of Access to Basic Knowledge, Access to Information and Communication, Health and Wellness, and Environmental Quality.
    3. Opportunity - Focuses on aspects of Personal Rights, Personal Freedom and Choice, Inclusiveness, and Access to Advanced Education.

Top 3 Best-performing States		Top 3 Best-performing Districts
Puducherry	(SPI - 65.99)	Aizawl (Mizoram)
Lakshadweep	(SPI - 65.89)	Solan (Himachal Pradesh)
Goa	(SPI - 65.53)	Shimla (Himachal Pradesh)

References

1. PIB - Social Progress Index (SPI) for States and Districts

Vadnagar Town

Three more sites from India have been added to the tentative list of UNCESO World Heritage Sites.

- The tentative list of UNCESO World Heritage Sites is added with 3 historically

important sites from India,
    - Vadnagar town and the iconic Sun Temple at Modhera from Gujarat
    - The rock cut sculptures of Unakoti from Tripura

The UNESCO tentative list is an inventory of those properties which each State Party intends to consider for nomination.

- Vadnagar is a municipality under Mehsana district of Gujarat.
- A multi-layered historic town, the history of Vadnagar stretches back to nearly 8th century BCE.
- Vadnagar had continuous habitation for more than 2,700 years.
- The ancient town of Vadnagar is an L-shaped town with Sharmishtha Lake located on its northeastern edge.
- Vadnagar town is divided into several blocks, also called Mohallas or Madhs.
- The town still retains a large number of historic buildings that are primarily religious and residential in nature.
- The town was a significant junction on trade routes and mercantile town.

Vadnagar is also known as the home town of PM Narendra Modi.

- The built heritage resource of the Vadnagar includes historical structures, temples, fortification remains, water bodies, kothis, residential structures and excavated sites. Few are
    - Hatkeshwar Temple
    - Six gates to the town
    - 2 magnificent Kirti Torans
    - Gauri Kund, Paschim MehtaniVav, Zunzunia Well, Sharmishtha Lake
    - Buddhist monastery
- The ASI excavations highlighted the excellent water management system, a building construction system and bead and bangle-making units.
- The finds of foreign objects during excavations indicates trade connection with ancient ports.

References

1. The Hindu - Vadnagar town added to tentative list of WHS
2. Indian Express - Vadnagar make it to UNESCO-WHS tentative list

Mission Amrit Sarovar

50,000 Amrit Sarovar ponds will be constructed additional to the planned a target of 50,000 Amrit Sarovar ponds by 15th August 2023.

- The Mission Amrit Sarovar is a water conservation mission

- **Aim** - Developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country as a part of celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- **Participators** - The Mission was launched in 2022 with a 'whole of government' approach involving 6 Ministries/Departments.
    1. Ministry of Rural Development
    2. Ministry of Jal Shakti
    3. Ministry of Culture
    4. Ministry of Panchayati Raj
    5. Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
    6. Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) – Technology Partner
- The Mission Amrit Sarovar works through the States and Districts with convergence from various ongoing schemes such as MGNREGS, 15th Finance Commission Grants, PM-KSY, besides States' own scheme.
- **Amrit Sarovar** - A total of 34 States/ Union Territories are covered under the mission.
- Every Amrit Sarovar will have a pondage area of 1 acre with a water holding capacity of about 10,000 cubic metre.
- **Fund** - No separate financial allocation for Mission Amrit Sarovar.
- Works on convergence of schemes.
- Public contribution like crowd funding and Corporate Social Responsibility is allowed for the work.

References

1. PIB - Mission Amrit Sarovar
2. Mission Amrit Sarovar

Urban-20 Event

Urban-20 2023 Event is organised by Ahmedabad under India's presidency of G20.

- Urban-20 (U20) one of the Engagement Groups of G20.
- It provides a platform for cities from G20 countries to facilitate discussions on various important issues of urban development including climate change and social inclusion.
- **Host** - Under the G20 presidency of India, Ahmedabad will host the U20 2023 cycle and organised by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Participants** - Besides G20 countries, the Mayors and representatives of C40 (Climate 40), UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) member cities, and Observer Cities.
- **Objective** - The effort of this cycle will be to move from 'intention to action'.
- It drafts a roadmap for closing the gaps between policy and practice to address critical urban issues.
- Priority areas for Urban 20 event are as follows:
    1. Encouraging environmentally responsive behaviour
    2. Ensuring water security
    3. Accelerating Climate Finance
    4. Leveraging 'local' potential and identity
    5. Reinventing urban governance and planning frameworks
    6. Catalysing digital urban futures

References

1. PIB - Urban-20 event organised under G20 presidency of India
2. Urban 20

Rule 267 of RS Rule Book

Rule 267 of the Rajya Sabha rulebook has become the bone of contention in Rajya Sabha.

- Rule 267 of the Rajya Sabha rulebook has become a bone of contention in the Upper House as not a single notice under the rule moved by the Opposition has been accepted in the Winter Session.
- **Rule 267** - The Rule 267 of the Rajya Sabha rulebook gives special power to a Rajya Sabha member to suspend the pre-decided agenda of the House, with the approval of the Chairman.
- **Significance** - No other form of discussion entails suspension of other business.
- If an issue is admitted under Rule 267, it signifies it's the most important national issue of the day.
- Also, the government will have to respond to the matter by replying during the discussions under Rule 267.
- **Reason for rejection as said** - Moving motions under 'Rule 267' has become a known mechanism of causing disruption.

> The Rajya Sabha rule book defines 'Rule 267' under 'suspension of rules' as an instance where "any Member, may, with the consent of the Chairman, move that any rule may be suspended in its application to a motion related to the business listed before the council of that day and if the motion is carried, the rule in question shall be suspended for the time- being."

- **Exception** - The rule will not apply where specific provisions already exist for suspension of a rule under a particular chapter of the Rules.
- **In History** - Parliamentary records said that there were 11 instances between 1990 up till 2016 that this rule was invoked for various discussions.
- The last instance was in 2016 when then Chairman Hamid Ansari allowed for a debate on the "demonetisation of currency".

Vice-President (Chairman of Rajya Sabha)	Number of times invoked	To Debate
Shankar Dayal Sharma (1987 -1992)	4 times (between 1990 to 1992)	1. The Jammu and Kashmir situation 2. The 66th Constitution Amendment Bill, (Land Reforms- Ninth Schedule) 3. The Gulf War situation 4. The demolition of the Ayodhya temple
Bharon Singh Shekhawat (2002-2007)	3 times (In 2004)	1. Issues of corruption 2. Consideration and return of the Appropriation (Railways) No. 3 Bill 3. Consideration and return of the Appropriation (No.3)

Hamid Ansari (2007-2012 & 2012-2017)	4 times	1. Role of CBI in Coalgate scam 2. Attack on the secular fabric of the country 3. Agrarian crisis 4. Demonetisation of currency

References

1. The Hindu - Rule 267 becomes the bone of contention in RS
2. Hindustan Times - Rule 267 of the Rajya Sabha is in focus

