UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 14-07-2020

Chabahar-Zahedan Railway Line

- In 2016 India and Iran signed an agreement to construct a 628 km rail line from *Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border (Zaranj) with Afghanistan.*
- The railway project was being discussed between the Iranian Railways and the state-owned Indian Railways Construction Ltd (IRCON).
- It is a part trilateral agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan to build an alternate trade route to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- Recently, Iran has decided to proceed with the construction on its own, citing delays from the Indian side in funding and starting the project.
- The entire project would be completed by March 2022, and that *Iranian Railways will proceed without India's assistance.*
- Iran will be using approximately $400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund.
- The development comes as China finalizes a massive 25-year, $400 billion strategic partnership deal with Iran.

Aids to Navigation Bill

- A navigational aid is any kind of marker which aids the traveler in navigation, usually nautical or aviation travel.
- Common types of such *aids include lighthouses, buoys, fog signals, and day beacons.*
- Recently, the Ministry of Shipping has issued the draft of the Aids to Navigation Bill, 2020.
- It is proposed to replace the nine decades old colonial *Lighthouse Act, 1927.*
- It aims to regulate state-of-the-art technologies of marine navigation.
- It also provides for identification and *development of heritage lighthouses.*
- The draft also proposes cess for *every ship arriving at or departing from any port in India, at rates notified by the Central government.*

Light House Act, 1927

- The Lighthouse Act is an act relating to the provision, maintenance and control of lighthouses.
- It was enacted under the British rule in 1927.
- Currently, the Central government, as per the provisions of the Lighthouse Act, *levies light dues on all the foreign going ships arriving at or departing from any port in India.*
- Light dues are the charges levied on ships for the maintenance of lighthouses and other aids to navigation.

Voluntary National Review

- NITI Aayog presented India's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, 2020.
- NITI Aayog prepared and presented *India's first VNR in 2017.*
- The Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, presented the VNR.
- The India VNR 2020 report titled - Decade of Action: Taking SDGs from Global to Local.
- The VNRs presented by Member States at the HLPF on Sustainable Development are a critical component of the review of progress and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- The reviews are voluntary and state-led and are aimed at facilitating the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned.
- India's VNR this year has undertaken a paradigm shift in terms of *embodying a whole-of-society approach in letter and spirit.*
- As part of this process, NITI Aayog partnered with the UN in India and engaged in consultation 14 population groups including women, children, and elderly, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), People Living with HIV (PLHIV), among others.

High-level Political Forum

- The Forum replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development, which had met annually since 1993.
- The establishment of the HLPF was mandated in 2012 by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "The Future We Want".
- It is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development.
- It has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.

- The Forum *meets annually* under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council.
- It *meets every four years* at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly.
- It is the foremost international platform for follow-up and *review of progress on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*
- The process of preparation of a country's VNR provides a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of various relevant stakeholders.

National Fish Farmers Day

- National Fish Farmers Day is celebrated on 1oth July every year.
- It is celebrated in the *memory of scientists Dr K. H. Alikunhi and Dr H. L. Chaudhury.*
- Both of them successfully demonstrated *Hypophysation (technology of induced breeding) in Indian Major Carps* (common name for several species of fish) on 10th July 1957.
- The day aims to recognize the accomplishments and contribution of fish farmers, aquapreneurs (entrepreneurs in the water sector) and fisher folks in the growth of the fisheries sector in the country.

Fish Cryobanks

- Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying in association with the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) has announced establishment of fish Cryobanks.
- The Cryomilt technology may be helpful in the establishment of fish cryobanks, *which will provide good quality of fish sperm in hatcheries at any time.*
- The proposed Fish Cryobanks will be established across the country at different phases.
- This would be the first time in the world when Fish Cryobanks will be established, *enhancing fish production and increasing prosperity among the fish farmers.*

National Fisheries Development Board

- It was established in 2006 as an autonomous organization under the administrative control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- Now, it works under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

- It aims to enhance fish production and productivity in the country and to coordinate fishery development in an integrated and holistic manner.

DRDO Jets for Indian Navy

- Indian Navy expects to have the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-I) Vikrant operational by 2022.
- It currently operates *Russian-origin carrier INS Vikramaditya*
- With a second carrier to come in, the Navy is already evaluating a global tender for 57 carrier-based twin-engine fighter aircraft.
- Based on new demand, DRDO has offered to develop a twin-engine deck-based fighter for the Navy, which will be ready by 2026.
- It will replace the MiG-29Ks in service which are scheduled to start going out by 2034.

Source: PIB, the Hindu, AIR

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