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International Intellectual Property Index

- International Intellectual Property Index is released by Global Innovation Policy Center or GIPC of the US Chambers of Commerce.
- India has been ranked 40th out of 53 countries on a global intellectual property index 2020.
- India was placed at 36th position among 50 countries in 2019.
- India's score, however, increased from 36.04 per cent (16.22 out of 45) in 2019 to 38.46 per cent (19.23 out of 50) in 2020, a 2.42 per cent jump in absolute score.
- However, India's relative score increased by 6.71 per cent.
- Since the release of the 2016 National IPR Policy, India has improved the speed of processing for patent and trademark applications, increased awareness of IP rights among Indian innovators and creators, and facilitated the registration and enforcement of those rights, it added.
- The Index specifically highlights a number of reforms over the last year that strengthen India's overall IP ecosystem.
- According to GIPC’s report India also continues to score well in the Systemic Efficiency indicator, scoring ahead of 28 other economies in these indicators.
- To continue this upward trajectory, much work remains to be done to introduce transformative changes to India's overall IP framework and take serious steps to consistently implement strong IP standards," the report said.
- GIPC has identified several challenges for India, prominent among them being

1. Patentability requirements,
2. Patent enforcement,
3. Compulsory licensing,
4. Patent opposition,
5. Regulatory data protection,
6. transparency in reporting seizures by customs,
7. Singapore Treaty of Law of TMs
8. Patent Law Treaty.

Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED)

- A research paper accepted by American Meteorological Society has proposed an extraordinary measure to protect 25 million people and important economic regions of 15 Northern European countries from rising seas as a result of climate change.
- It proposes for a mammoth construction of Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) enclosing all of the North Sea.
- The concept of constructing NEED showcases the extent of protection efforts that are required if mitigation efforts fail to limit sea level rise.
- The proposed structure comprises of two dams of a combined length of 637 km, the first between northern Scotland and western Norway, measuring 476 km and with an average depth of 121 m and maximum depth of 321 m.
- The second between France and southwestern England, of length 161 km, and average depth of 85 m and maximum depth of 102 m.
- They have also identified other regions in the world where such mega-enclosures could potentially be considered, including the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea.

Thermal Coal

- Thermal coal, also known as steam coal, is used for power and heat generation.
- In electricity generation, thermal coal is ground to a powder and fired into a boiler to produce heat, which in turn converts water into steam, the steam is used to move turbines to generate electricity.
- They usually have high ash content ranging from as low as 20% to as high as high as 50%.
- In Indian coal industry the Non-Coking coal grades have been categorized into 17 bands according to their Gross Calorific Value.
- As per ranks of the coal the Peat, Lignite and Sub-Bituminous ranges of coal are usually used as Thermal Coal.
- Metallurgical coal/Coking Coal on the other hand is used in metallurgical process such as in smelting of Iron to make steel.
- They are usually used both as fuel and reducing agent in the form of coke.
- Coke is a porous, hard black rock of concentrated carbon that is created by heating bituminous coal without air to extremely high temperatures.
- The coal is baked in a coke oven which forces out impurities to produce coke, which is almost pure carbon.

- These kinds of coal are usually low in ash, Sulfur and Phosphorous Content.
- Although ash content can be regulated by washing process, low contents of sulfur and phosphorous are necessary as they tend to migrate to metals.
- Union Coal and Mines Ministry announced it will stop importing thermal coal from Financial Year 2023-24.
- The move is taken after government's plan to achieve 1 billion tons (BT) coal production target by Coal India Limited (CIL) by Financial Year 2023-24.
- The Ministry of Coal will coordinate with Indian Railways and Shipping Ministry and enable CIL, Captive and Commercial Miners evacuate more coal by 2030.

Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)

- The 3rd Annual Review meeting on Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) was held today at Baidyanath Dham Deoghar, Jharkhand.
- The SIP is coordinated by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Thirty Swachh Iconic Places have been selected across the country in three phases, and are implementing their action plans for improving the sanitation facilities and overall cleanliness, focusing on enhancing visitor's experience and convenience.
- Under SIP some of the key activities undertaken to improve swachhata in the temple are as follows

1. Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM),
2. Beautification and Landscaping of premises and approach areas,
3. Construction of sanitation,
4. Safe drinking water facilities,
5. Rooftop solar panels,
6. Battery operated sweeping machines,
7. Rejuvenation of water bodies,
8. Ban on plastic use,
9. Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs),
10. Multi-level parking,
11. Illuminated boards,
12. Awareness campaigns

List of Swachh Iconic Places

- **Phase I Iconic sites**

1. Ajmer Sharif Dargah
2. CST Mumbai,
3. Golden Temple, Amritsar,
4. Kamakhya Temple, Assam,
5. Maikarnika Ghat, Varanasi,
6. Meenakshi Temple, Madurai,
7. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Katra, J&K,
8. Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri,
9. The Taj Mahal, Agra,
10. Tirupati Temple, Tirumala

- **Phase II Iconic sites**

1. Gangotri;
2. Yamunotri;
3. Mahakaleshwar Temple, Ujjain;
4. Char Minar, Hyderabad;
5. Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assissi, Goa;
6. Adi Shankaracharya's abode Kaladi in Ernakulam;
7. Gomateshwar in Shravanbelgola;
8. Baijnath Dham, Devghar;
9. Gaya Tirth in Bihar;
10. Somnath Temple in Gujarat.

- **Phase III Iconic sites**

1. Sree Dharma Sastha Temple;
2. Mana Village, Uttarakhand;
3. Vidur Kuti Temple, Uttar Pradesh;
4. Shri Sarveshwar Mahadev Temple;
5. Shri Nag Vasuki Temple;
6. Kanvashram, Uttar Pradesh;
7. Ema Keithel, Manipur;
8. Hazarduari Palace, West Bengal;
9. Pangong Tso;
10. Sri Raghvendra Swamy Mutt Mantralayam

Kala Kumbh

- It is a Handicrafts Exhibitions for promotion of Geographical Indication (GI) Crafts and heritage of India organized by Ministry of Textiles.
- It is a thematic Exhibition in various parts of the country through the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).
- The exhibitions are planned in various major cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.
- The exhibitions sponsored by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).
- The GI tag is used on handicrafts which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country).
- As on August 2019, 178 GI handicraft products were registered from all over India.
- Few of the exhibits are as follows

1. Mysore rosewood inlay,
2. Channapatna lacquerware,
3. Dharwad kasuti embroidery,
4. Kolhapur chappal,
5. Bidriware,
6. Molakalmur handblock printing,
7. Ananthapur leather puppet,
8. Thrissur screwpine,
9. Vishakapatna lacquerware,
10. Sandur lambani embroidery,
11. Jodhpur terracota,
12. Jaipur handprinted textile,
13. Medinipur mat weaving,
14. Birbhum artistic leather,
15. Khurdah palm leaf engraving are being displayed.
16. Chittoor kalamkari painting,
17. Pokharan terracotta crafts,
18. Kutch embroidery & crochet crafts,
19. Pingla patachitra,
20. Birbhum kantha embroidery,
21. Jajpur photachitra painting,
22. Madhubani Mithila painting,
23. Kolhapur chappal,
24. Palghar Worli painting,
25. Kondagaon wrought iron craft,
26. Agate stone crafts,

27. Krishna hand block printing.

Matribhasha Diwas

- The Matribhasha Diwas falls on 21st February will be celebrated by Ministry of Human Resource Development across the country.
- The theme of the programme is 'Celebrating our Multilingual Heritage' reflecting the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat.
- MHRD along with educational institutions and language institutions is celebrating the Matribhasha Diwas since 2017.
- Under the even educational institutions will organize activities like Elocution, Debating, Singing, Essay writing competitions, painting Competitions, Music and dramatic performances, Exhibitions, Online resources and activities as well as events exploring the cognitive, economic, social and cultural activities of multilingual society,
- Exhibitions depicting linguistic and diverse wealth of India in at least two languages and also more.
- Matribhasha Diwas coincides with International Mother Language Day, which will be celebrated to promote the use of mother tongues and to achieve the following objectives:-
    1. Highlight the linguistic diversity of our country;
    2. Encourage usage, not only of the respective mother tongue but other Indian languages as well.
    3. To understand and draw attention to the diversity of cultures in India and the consequent forums of literature, craft, performing arts, scripts and other forms of creative expression.
    4. To encourage the learning of languages other than one's own mother tongue.

International Mother Language Day (IMLD)

- It is a worldwide annual observance forming a part of UNESCO's calendar of events, held on 21st February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.
- It was first announced by UNESCO on 17th November, 1999.
- It was formally recognized by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2008.
- The latter called upon its member states "to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by people of the world".

Source: PIB, Indian Express, the Hindu

