

2019



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POLITY AND NATION

23rd December- 28th December



The Indian **EXPRESS**

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mint

BusinessLine



1. Good Governance Day

Why in News?

The Good Governance Day is observed on 25th December to mark the birth anniversary of former **Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.

- On this occasion, a number of initiatives have been taken by the government viz. the launch of Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL), naming of tunnel under Rohtang Pass as Atal Tunnel and the launch of Good Governance Index.

Atal Tunnel

- The 8.8-km-long Atal tunnel under Rohtang Pass is the world's longest tunnel above an altitude of 3,000 m. It has a fireproof emergency tunnel built into the main tunnel itself.
 - Rohtang Pass (elevation 3,978 m) is located in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
 - It is present on the **Pir Panjal Range** of Himalayas.
 - It connects the **Kullu Valley with Lahaul and Spiti Valleys** of Himachal Pradesh.
 - The **Ravi river** rises west of the Rohtang pass in the Kullu hills of Himachal Pradesh.
- It will provide all-weather connectivity to remote border areas of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh which otherwise remained cut off from the rest of the country for about six months during winters.
- The tunnel will help to promote tourism in the region.

Good Governance Index (GGI)

- The Good Governance Index (GGI) has been launched by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions.
- The Good Governance Index is a uniform tool across States to assess the status of governance and impact of various interventions taken up by the State Governments and UTs.
- **Objectives:**
 - To provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance in all states and UTs.
 - To enable states and UTs to formulate and implement suitable strategies for improving governance.
 - To shift towards result oriented approaches and administration.
- The GGI takes into consideration **ten sectors:**
 - Agriculture and Allied Sectors
 - Commerce & Industries
 - Human Resource Development
 - Public Health

- Public Infrastructure & Utilities
- Economic Governance
- Social Welfare & Development
- Judicial & Public Security
- Environment
- Citizen-Centric Governance.

Key Findings of GGI

- The states and union territories have been divided into three groups: big states, north-east and hill states, and union territories.
- **Big States Category:**
 - **Tamil Nadu** has bagged the top position followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka.
 - Odisha, Bihar, Goa, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand are poor performers.
- **North-East and Hill States Category:**
 - **Himachal Pradesh** has topped the ranking followed by Uttarakhand and Tripura.
 - The bottom 3 states are Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Union territories:**
 - **Pondicherry** leads among the UTs followed by Chandigarh and Delhi.
 - Lakshadweep is at the bottom among the UTs.

2. Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban

Why in News?

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) has achieved its target of creating Open Defecation Free (ODF) - Urban India.

- Urban areas of 35 states/UTs have become ODF and have been certified through third party verification.
- In order to achieve the target, the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has launched various initiatives including ODF+, ODF++ and Water+ under Swachh Bharat Mission.

Government Initiatives

- **ODF, ODF+ and ODF++ Protocols:**
 - ODF primarily means the eradication of open defecation in the entire community. Every household, as well as public/community institutions, should be using safe technology option for disposal of faeces.

- **ODF+ Protocol** focuses on sustaining community/public toilet usage by ensuring their functionality, cleanliness and maintenance.
- **ODF++ Protocol** focuses on achieving sanitation sustainability by addressing complete sanitation value chain, including safe containment, processing and disposal of faecal sludge and septage.
- **Water+ Protocol:** It is designed to ensure that no untreated wastewater is discharged into the open environment or water bodies.
- **Star Rating Protocol for Garbage Free Cities:**
 - It is based on 12 parameters following a **SMART framework**:
 - Single metric
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Rigorous verification mechanism
 - Targeted towards outcomes.
 - As on date, **4 cities have been certified as 5-star cities**, namely:
 - Indore (Madhya Pradesh)
 - Ambikapur (Chhattisgarh)
 - Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra)
 - Mysuru (Karnataka)
- **Plastic Waste Management:**
 - MoHUA has partnered with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to use plastic waste for road construction.
 - Cities have been asked to set up adequate **Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs)** to handle the segregation, processing and recycling of plastic waste.
- **Swachh Survekshan 2020 (SS 2020) league:**
 - It is a quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns in India.
 - It will be integrated with Swachh Survekshan 2020 (SS 2020).
 - Under **SS 2020**, the concept of '**continuous Survekshan**' is introduced to ensure that the Mission outcomes are sustained through a system of continuous monitoring and verification.

3. Nagpur Resolution

Why in News?

The 'Nagpur Resolution- A holistic approach for empowering citizens' was adopted during the Valedictory session of the two-day Regional Conference on 'Improving Public Service Delivery– Role of Governments', in Nagpur.

- This is the third such resolution adopted for good governance after Shillong Declaration and Jammu resolution for empowering citizens.
- The conference was organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India, in

collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and the Maharashtra State Commission for Right to Public Services.

‘Nagpur Resolution: A Holistic approach for empowering citizens’

The Conference resolved that Government of India and the participating states including the state of Maharashtra shall collaborate:

- To empower the citizens by policy interventions for better service delivery through timely updation of citizens charters, implementation of enactments and benchmarking standards for continuous improvement.
- To empower citizens by adopting a **bottom-up approach** to bring massive improvements in quality of grievance redressal and reduction in timelines of grievance redressal.
- To adopt a holistic approach of systemic public grievance reforms through improved mapping, formulation of monitoring matrix, data collection and evaluation in quality of grievance redressal.
- To focus on dynamic policy making and strategic decisions, monitoring of implementation, appointment of key personnel, coordination and evaluation.
- To ensure timely publication of Good Governance Index to identify the quality of governance in 10 sectors especially those pertaining to welfare and infrastructure at the Union, State and District levels.
- To achieve a sense of common identity by exchange of technical expertise in the areas of improved service delivery between the paired states under- Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat Programme.

4. National Consumer Day

- Every year, the 24th of December is observed as **National Consumer Day** in India.
- The theme for 2019 was **Alternate consumer grievance/dispute redressal**.
- On this day the **Consumer Protection Act, 1986** came into effect after receiving the assent of the President.
- It highlights the **importance of the consumer movement** and the need to **make every consumer more aware** of their rights and responsibilities.
- The **World Consumer Rights Day** is observed on 15th March.
- The **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** was passed by the Parliament in August 2019 to replace the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
 - Six consumer rights have been enumerated.
 - i. The right to be protected against the marketing of hazardous products and services.

- ii. The right to be informed about goods, products or services to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices.
- iii. The right to access to a variety of goods, products or services at competitive prices.
- iv. The right to be heard and to be assured that consumer's interests will receive due consideration at appropriate fora.
- v. The right to seek redressal against unfair, restrictive trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers.
- vi. The right to consumer awareness.

5. Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) Scheme

Why in News?

Distribution Companies' (Discom) losses have rebounded in the financial year 2019, after it had progressively reduced in the first couple of years since the rollout of UDAY scheme in November 2015.

- Discoms have also missed the year 2019 UDAY target to bring down their **Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses** to 15%.
 - **Technical Loss:** It is due to the flow of power in transmission and distribution system.
 - **Commercial Loss:** It is due to theft of electricity, deficiencies in metering, etc.
- The primary reason for losses is the failure of discoms to collect the full cost that they pay for power.

About UDAY Scheme

- UDAY Scheme was launched by **Union Power Ministry** for financial turnaround and revival package for state discoms.
- It aimed at making discoms financially and operationally healthy so they can supply adequate power at affordable rates.
- The scheme is optional for the states to join.
- **Components of the scheme:**
 - Takeover of 75% of the discoms' debt by their respective state governments by issuing sovereign bonds to pay back the lenders.
 - Remaining 25% of debt will be issued by discoms in the form of bonds.
 - Increase operational efficiencies of discoms by providing capital and infrastructure like coal linkages.
 - Reduction in AT&C and transmission losses.
- Timely tariff revisions and elimination of the gap between the Average Cost of Supply (ACS) and Average Revenue Realised (ARR) by the financial year 2019.

- It also envisages development of renewable energy sector and availability of 24*7 Power for all at an affordable price.
- There are several other operational efficiency targets under UDAY, such as feeder metering, smart metering and feeder segregation etc.
- The Scheme will wind up in March 2020.

6. UGC issues Norms for Ethics in Higher Education

Why in News?

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has recently adopted **Higher Education Quality Improvement Programme Mandate**.

- The quality mandate aims at evolving higher education system to equip the country's next generation with vital skills, knowledge and ethics for leading a rewarding life.

5 verticals of Quality Mandate

- The Quality Mandate was developed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) which contains 5 documents covering the 5 verticals.
- **Evaluation Reforms:** In order to make student assessment more meaningful, effective and linked to 'Learning Outcomes', the report 'Evaluation Reforms in Higher Educational Institutions in India' has been published.
- **Eco-friendly and Sustainable University Campuses:** SATAT- Framework for Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Campus development in Higher Educational Institutions; it encourages universities to:
 - adopt reflective policies and practices to enhance the environmental quality of the campus and
 - adopt sustainable green and sustainable methods in its future.
- **Human values & professional ethics:**
 - UGC has developed a policy framework- "**MulyaPravah**" – Guidelines for Inculcation of Human Values and Professional Ethics in Higher Educational Institutions.
 - This has been done to discuss and streamline the process that helps to infuse the culture of human values and ethics in educational institutions.
- **Faculty Induction:** Guidelines for **Guru-Dakshta-** A guide to Faculty Induction Programme (FIP)- will fulfill its main objective to sensitise and motivate the faculty to adopt:
 - Learner centred approaches
 - ICT integrated learning

- New pedagogic approaches to teaching-learning assessment tools in higher education
- **Academic Research Integrity:**
 - UGC has set up a **Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (UGC-CARE)** to continuously monitor and identify quality journals across disciplines.
 - It will be useful to create more awareness and help the cause of promoting academic integrity and ethical publishing.



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