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Third India Energy Forum

Recently, the **India Ministerial Dialogue** was held at **3rd India Energy Forum** by **CERAWEEK** in New Delhi.

The Indian, as well as regional energy companies, institutions, and governments, participated at the forum held under the patronage **of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**.

Key Points

- As India is experiencing the **fastest growth in energy consumption** among all large economies, the country will be the **key driver of global energy demand** in the coming decades.
 - To meet the huge demand for energy, India would be implementing a **healthy mix of all commercially viable energy sources**.
- India plans its course of the **energy transition in a responsible manner** which would greatly influence **global energy transition**.
 - The **shares of renewables in electricity capacity** has significantly **gone up** now to 22% from around 10% in 2014-15.
 - The **ethanol blending percentage has risen** from 0.67% in 2012-13 to now close to 6%.
 - Also, **more than 95%** of households now have **access to LPG**, making their kitchens smoke-free.
- Three critical transitions to be addressed in the Indian energy sector are:
 - Mobility
 - Urbanization
 - Power generation
- **India's per capita consumption of coal is about 1/10th** of that of the **United States** but still, India aims to use cleaner technology for **low- carbon energy future**.

- In addition to the above initiatives, India is planning to transform itself into **Gas Economy**.
Natural Gas offers an option of a balancing fuel, as it has proven capability to complement renewables.
- The contribution of modern technologies, efficiency in production has been recognized for transforming the landscape towards **climate justice, and a sustainable future**.

CERAWeek

- CERAWeek by IHS Markit has become the world's premier energy event.
- In 1983, Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA) was founded in Cambridge.
- Each year, CERA clients gathered for a few days in Houston, Texas to attend the executive conference where they gained insight into the energy future while connecting with their peers. Over time, the program was expanded to five days of informative sessions and networking opportunities—and named CERAWeek.

Source: PIB

National Security Guard (NSG)

Recently, the Union Minister for Home Affairs celebrated the 35th raising day ceremony of National Security Guard (NSG) at **NSG headquarters** located in **Manesar**, Gurugram.

National Security Guard (NSG)

- The NSG is a counter-terrorism unit that formally came into existence in 1986 by an act of Parliament- '**National Security Guard Act, 1986**'.
The idea behind raising such force came in the aftermath of **Operation Blue Star** (an Indian military action carried out to remove militant religious leader from the Golden Temple, Amritsar) in 1984, Akshardham Temple attack and the assassination of former PM Indira Gandhi, for '**combating terrorist activities** with a view to protect states against internal disturbances.'
- It operates under the **Ministry of Home Affairs** and is a **task-oriented force** that has two complementary elements in the form of:
 - **Special Action Group** (SAG) comprising of the Army personnel- is the main offensive or the strike wing of the NSG, and
 - **Special Ranger Groups** (SRG) comprising of personnel drawn from the **Central Armed Police Forces**/State Police Forces. They generally handle VIP securities.
 - The **head of NSG**- designated as Director General (DG), is selected and appointed by the Minister of Home Affairs.

- The motto of '**Sarvatra, Sarvottam, Suraksha**' has always been upheld by it with a focus on its basic philosophy of **swift and speedy strike** and immediate withdrawal from the theatre of action.
- National Security Guard has been given the specific role to handle all facets of **terrorism** in any part of the country as a **Federal Contingency Force**.
The NSG is trained to conduct counter-terrorist task including counter hijacking tasks on land, sea, and air; Bomb disposal (search, detection, and neutralization of IEDs), Post Blast Investigation (PBI), and Hostage Rescue missions.
- The NSG personnel are often referred to in the media as **Black Cat Commandos** because of the black outfit and black cat insignia worn on their uniform.
- **Operations undertaken:**
 - **Operation Black Thunder** (Golden Temple, Amritsar, 1986 & 1988)
 - **Operation Ashwamedh** (Indian Airlines Flight-IC427 hijacking, India, 1993)
 - **Operation Thunderbolt or Vajra Shakti** (Akshardham Temple attack, Gujarat, 2002)
 - **Operation Black Tornado** (Mumbai Blasts, 2008)

Source: PIB

Merger of Manipur and Tripura with India

The outlawed insurgent groups, Alliance for Socialist Unity, Kangleipak (ASUK) and National Liberation Front of Twipra (NLFT) in Tripura and Manipur, have called for a total shutdown in the two north-eastern states on 15th October, 2019 arguing that **the two states were merged with the Indian Union "under duress"**.

NLFT was banned in 1997 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and then under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA).

Merger of Manipur with India

- Before 15th August 1947, peaceful negotiations had brought almost all states whose territories were contiguous to the new boundaries of India, into the Indian Union.
- The rulers of most of the states signed a document called the '**Instrument of Accession**' which meant that their state agreed to become a part of the Union of India.
- A few days before Independence, **the Maharaja of Manipur, Bodhachandra Singh**, signed the **Instrument of Accession** with the Indian government on the assurance that the **internal autonomy of Manipur would be maintained**.

- Under the pressure of public opinion, the Maharaja held elections in Manipur in June 1948 and the state became a constitutional monarchy. Thus **Manipur was the first part of India to hold an election based on universal adult franchise.**
- In the Legislative Assembly of Manipur there were sharp differences over the question of merger of Manipur with India. The Government of India succeeded in pressuring the Maharaja into signing a **Merger Agreement in September 1949**, without consulting the popularly elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur.

Merger of Tripura with India

- Tripura was princely state till the merger with Indian union on 15th November, 1949.
- The **last king Bir Bikram** who was on the throne, immediately before India's independence, died on 17th May, 1947.
- After his demise, his minor son Kirri Bikram Mannikya took the throne of Tripura kingdom, but he could not rule as he was minor.
- So his widow **queen Kanchan Prabha** took the charge of regency of Tripura and took over the administrative charges.
- She was **instrumental for Merger of Tripura kingdom in Indian Union.**

Arguments of the Outlawed Groups

- Merger agreements were signed under duress by two incompetent authorities of the two kingdoms.
 - Manipur king was reduced to a 'mere figurehead' of the kingdom after installation of an elected legislature and government.
 - Tripura's queen regent had 'questionable legitimacy' after the unilateral dissolution of the council of regency.
- These two states' merger was done out of '**pure miscalculation**' and '**unrealistic comprehension**' that the then Dominion of India would become a loose confederation of states and provinces like it existed under British colonial India.

Source: TH

Maritime States Development Council

The 17th meeting of the **Maritime States Development Council (MSDC)** was held on 15th October, 2019 in New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- **National Port Grid:**

- The Ministry of Shipping is working on a plan to develop a national port grid based on the **synergy between major and minor ports** in the country.
- There are 204 Minor ports in the country, of which only 44 are currently functional.

Extensive study will be done for the revival of each port, identifying the specific cargo linked to it and the downstream industry.

- **Expansion of Port Capacity:**

- The Ministry is planning expansion of port capacity through the implementation of **well-conceived infrastructure development projects**.
- **Digitization** of processes to reduce and finally eliminate human interface.
- Making **water transport pollution free** to reduce logistics cost.

- **Other Issues:**

- Developing common and comprehensive guidelines for **inland waterways barges** so that barges of different states can move seamlessly in coastal waters.
- **Port security:** International levels of security would be ensured at every port in the country.
- Emphasis was laid on the advent of **cruise tourism** in India and the importance of **Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** being developed in Smart Industrial Port Cities at Kandla(Gujarat) and Paradip (Odisha).
- Establishment of **research based institutes** like the Centre for Inland and Coastal Maritime Technology (CICMT) at IIT, Kharagpur and the National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC), IIT, Madras will help the maritime industry to get indigenous research and skilled manpower.

Maritime States Development Council

- MSDC is an **apex advisory body for the development of the maritime sector** and aims to ensure integrated development of Major and non-Major Ports.
- It was constituted in **May, 1997** to assess in consultation with State Governments, the future development of existing and new Minor Ports by the respective Maritime States either directly or through captive users and private participation.

Source: PIB

World Food Day

World Food Day is observed **annually** on **October 16** to address the problem of global hunger.

- The theme for 2019 is '**Our Actions are our Future; Healthy Diets for a #ZeroHunger World**'.
Achieving Zero Hunger is not only about addressing hunger, but also nourishing people while nurturing the planet.
- It emphasizes the **Second Sustainable Goal (SDG 2) i.e. Zero hunger**.
- The initiative aims **to eradicate hunger** as well as **to address all types of malnutrition including obesity**.
 - According to the **Global Burden of Disease Study (2017)** by the University of Washington, **malnutrition is among the leading causes of death and disability in India**.
 - **The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** estimates that about **14.5% of the total population of India** are undernourished.
 - **The Global Hunger Index 2018** ranks India **103 out of 119 countries** on the basis of three leading indicators:
 - The prevalence of wasting and stunting in children under five years of age.
 - Child mortality rate under five years of age
 - The proportion of undernourished in the population.
- World Food Day, 2019 calls for action across sectors **to make healthy and sustainable diets affordable and accessible to everyone**.
At the same time, it aims to make everyone **aware of nutritious dietary habits**.

Source: TH
