News Analysis (01 Jan, 2020)
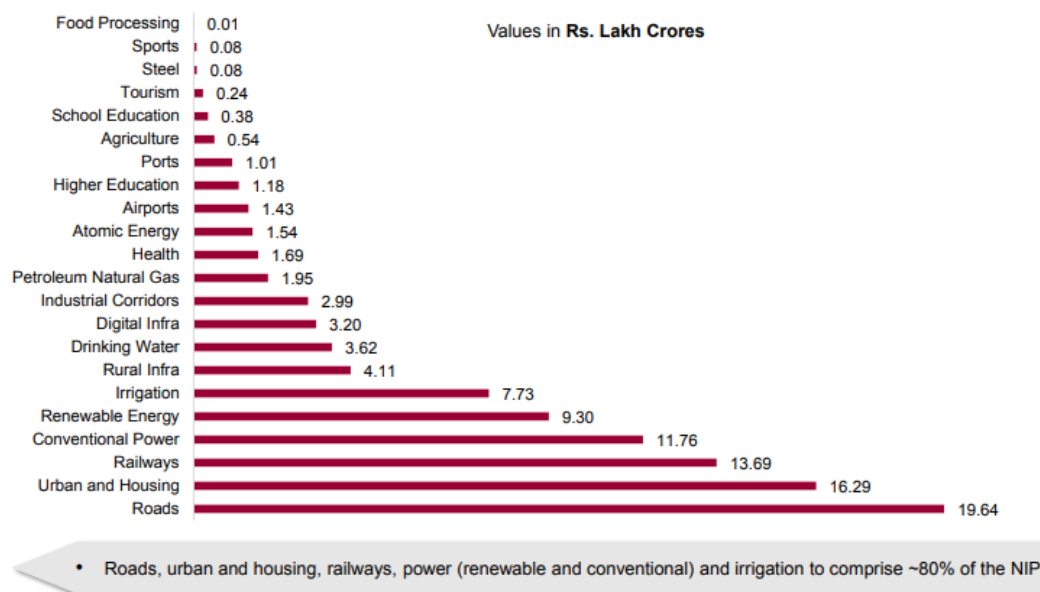
National Infrastructure Pipeline

Why in news

Government has released **Report of the Task** Force on National Infrastructure Pipeline for 2019-2025.

- Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech 2019 had highlighted that ₹100 lakh crore would be invested on infrastructure over the next 5 years.
    - The emphasis would be on ease of living: safe drinking water, access to clean and affordable energy, healthcare for all, modern railway stations, airports, bus terminals and world-class educational institutes.
- **Task Force** was constituted to draw up the **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)** for each of the years from financial years 2019-20 to 2024-25.

National Infrastructure Pipeline

- NIP will enable a forward outlook on infrastructure projects which will create jobs, improve ease of living, and provide equitable access to infrastructure for all, thereby making growth more inclusive.
    - NIP includes economic and social infrastructure projects.
- During the fiscals 2020 to 2025, sectors such as Energy (24%), Roads (19%), Urban (16%), and Railways (13%) amount to around 70% of the projected capital expenditure in infrastructure in India.
    - It has outlined plans to invest more than ₹102 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by 2024-25, with the **Centre, States and the private sector** to share the capital expenditure in a **39:39:22 formula.**

Sector-wise break-up of the NIP

Values in **Rs. Lakh Crores**

Sector	Value
Food Processing	0.01
Sports	0.08
Steel	0.08
Tourism	0.24
School Education	0.38
Agriculture	0.54
Ports	1.01
Higher Education	1.18
Airports	1.43
Atomic Energy	1.54
Health	1.69
Petroleum Natural Gas	1.95
Industrial Corridors	2.99
Digital Infra	3.20
Drinking Water	3.62
Rural Infra	4.11
Irrigation	7.73
Renewable Energy	9.30
Conventional Power	11.76
Railways	13.69
Urban and Housing	16.29
Roads	19.64

- Roads, urban and housing, railways, power (renewable and conventional) and irrigation to comprise ~80% of the NIP

Source: The Hindu

Swachh Survekshan 2020

Why in News

The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** has announced the results of the first (April-June) and second (July- September) quarters of **Swachh Survekshan 2020.**

Swachh Survekshan 2020 is the **5th edition of the annual urban cleanliness survey** conducted by the Ministry.

Format/ Method of Assessment

- Swachh Survekshan 2020 is evaluated for **each quarter** on the basis of **monthly** updation of **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U)** online Management Information System (MIS) by cities along with citizen's validation on the 12 service level progress indicators.
- Swachh Survekshan 2020 has been conducted in **3 quarters:**
  - April – June
  - July – September
  - October – December 2019
- These quarterly assessments will hold **25% weightage in the annual survey** which is scheduled to commence from **4th January 2020 across India.**

- Ranks for Swachh Survekshan 2020 have been assigned based on the population in two categories of the cities :
    - **1 lakh and above** with sub-categories of
        - **1-10 lakh**
        - **10 lakhs and above.**
    - **Less than 1 lakh** (under this category, the rankings are given zone and population-wise).
            It includes **five** zones namely, North, East, Northeast, South and West.

Key Points

A clean sweep

Urban Local Bodies (ULB) from Gujarat and M.P. dominated the top rankings of the Swachh Survekshan 2020 survey. The rankings were based on collection, transportation, processing and disposal of waste

Top five ULBs in the >10 lakh population category

← Quarter 1 →	← Quarter 2 →
ULB, *State*	**ULB,** *State*
Indore, *M.P.*	**Indore,** *M.P.*
Bhopal, *M.P.*	**Rajkot,** *Gujarat*
Surat, *Gujarat*	**Navi Mumbai,** *Maharashtra*
Nashik, *Maharashtra*	**Vadodara,** *Gujarat*
Rajkot, *Gujarat*	**Bhopal,** *M.P.*

- **Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Jamshedpur (Jharkhand)** have **topped** the cleanliness charts for **two consecutive quarters** among cities with **over 10 lakh population and with 1 lakh to 10 lakh population** respectively.
- **Kolkata** ranked at the **bottom of the ranking of 49 major cities** across both quarters as **West Bengal did not participate** in the nationwide exercise.
- Among **cantonment boards, Tamil Nadu's St.Thomas Mount Cantt** was ranked **1st** in quarter 1 whereas **Delhi Cantt** ranked **first** in the **2nd quarter.**
            Secunderabad Cantonment Board in Hyderabad is the **worst** performer among other cantonment boards.

Source: TH

One-fifth of the Country's Forests Prone to Fire

Why in News

Recently, the **2019 report by Forest Survey of India (FSI)** was released. It states that **about 21.40%** of forest cover in India is **prone to fires,** with forests in the **north-eastern region** and **central India** being the **most vulnerable.**

- FSI **carried out a study** along **forest fire points (FFP)** identified across the country **from 2004 to 2017.**

- There are total 2,77,758 FFP identified during the 13 years.
- FFPs were analysed using a **moderate resolution imaging spectroradiometer (MODIS)** by **overlaying the points coverage over the grid coverage of 5 km x 5 km.**
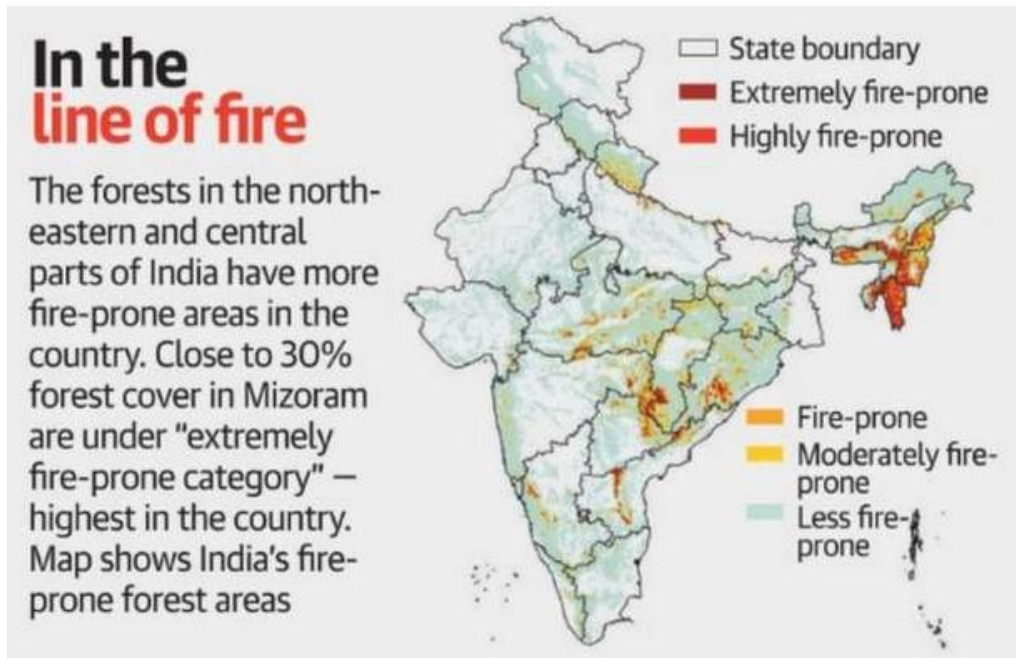
Forest Survey of India

It is a premier **national organization** under the **Union Ministry of Environment and Forests** responsible for assessment and monitoring of the forest resources of the country regularly.

Key Points

- **Extremely fire-prone areas** account for **3.89%** of total forest cover, **very highly fire-prone areas** account for **6.01%** and **highly fire-prone areas** for **11.50%.** Together, the three categories come to 21.40 % of forest cover.
- From **November 2018 to June 2019,** there were **total 29,547 alerts** based on MODIS. **Mizoram** recorded the **highest number** of fire alerts (2,795).
    - The north-eastern region accounted for about one-third of alerts in the country.
    - The **Central Indian States** also recorded a high number of forest fire alerts.
    - **Alerts: Madhya Pradesh > Maharashtra > Odisha > Chhattisgarh**
- The **overall green cover has increased** in the country but the **forest cover in the north-east,** particularly in **Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland,** has **decreased.**
- The **uncontrolled forest fires** can lead to significant loss of forest cover. Climate change influences the frequency and intensity of forest fires and results in forests becoming increasingly inflammable.
- **Reasons for Forest Fires**
    - **Thunderstorms** are the most likely **natural cause** for forest fires.
    - In **central India,** the reasons are **mainly manmade,** particularly in cases where people visit forests and leave burning bidis, cigarette stubs or other inflammable materials.
    - A major reason for forest fires in the **north-east** is **slash-and-burn cultivation,** commonly called **jhoom or jhum** cultivation.
        - The north-east has tropical evergreen forests which are not likely to catch fire easily on their own like the dry deciduous forests of central India.

In the line of fire

The forests in the north-eastern and central parts of India have more fire-prone areas in the country. Close to 30% forest cover in Mizoram are under "extremely fire-prone category" — highest in the country. Map shows India's fire-prone forest areas

- State boundary
- Extremely fire-prone
- Highly fire-prone
- Fire-prone
- Moderately fire-prone
- Less fire-prone

Source: TH

202nd Anniversary of the Bhima-Koregaon Battle

Why in News

The **victory pillar** (also known as **Ransthamb**) in **Bhima-Koregaon village** (**Pune** district of **Maharashtra**) is to celebrate the **202nd anniversary** of the **Bhima-Koregaon battle of 1818** on January 1, 2020.

> In 2018, incidents of violence were registered during the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Bhima-Koregaon battle.

Historical Background

- A battle was fought in Bhima Koregaon between the **Peshwa forces and the British** on January 1, 1818.
- The **British army,** which comprised **mainly** of **Dalit soldiers,** fought the upper caste-dominated Peshwa army. The British troops **defeated** the Peshwa army.
  - Peshwa Bajirao II had insulted the Mahar community and terminated them from the service of his army. This caused them to side with the English against the Peshwa's numerically superior army.
  - The defeat of Peshwa army was considered to be a **victory against caste-based discrimination** and **oppression.**

- It was **one of the last battles of the Third Anglo-Maratha War,** which ended the Peshwa domination.
- **Babasaheb Ambedkar's** visit to the site on **January 1, 1927,** revitalised the memory of the battle for the Dalit community, making it a **rallying point and an assertion of pride.**

Source: TH