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Contraction in GDP of India in 2020-21: World Bank

Why in News

Recently, the **World Bank** released its **South Asia Economic Focus report** which estimated that India's **Gross Domestic Product** (GDP) can contract **by 9.6% in 2020-21**.

This estimate is way below the earlier forecast of 3.2% contraction, made in June.

Key Points

- **Contraction of Indian Economy in 2020-21**

- The contraction is due to the impact of the **national lockdown** against the outbreak of the **Covid-19 pandemic** and the income shock experienced by households and small urban service firms.

- The **manufacturing and exporting industries** are likely to be depressed, and the **construction** sector is also likely to experience a protracted slowdown.

This is due to a **limited pipeline of public sector infrastructure projects** and reliance of these industries on **migrant workers** who have not yet returned to cities where they worked.

- Significant disruptions to jobs are likely to boost the **poverty rate**, with 2020 rates back to levels in 2016.

The **biennial Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report** was recently released by the World Bank which stated that Covid-19 can add around 27-40 million **new poor** in **Sub-Saharan Africa** and around 49-57 million in **South Asia** region, causing over 1.4% of the world's population to fall into **extreme poverty**.

- The demand slowdown could lead to **rising loan non-repayment** and **risk aversion** impacting the financial markets.

- Other concerns include **health care system capacity constraints, rising food prices, sharp drops in earnings of informal workers, impact on the MSMEs** etc.

- **South Asian Scenario:**

- The **entire South Asia region** may face its **worst-ever recession**.

- The regional GDP is estimated to contract by 7.7% in 2020, which stayed above 6% annually in the past five years.

- This recession will be **different from previous ones** as earlier downturns were mainly due to **falling investment and exports** but this pandemic-induced recession is due to a **decline in private consumption**.

- **Private consumption**, which has been traditionally the backbone of demand in South Asia and a core indicator of economic welfare, will **decline by more than 10%**. This will **spike poverty rates**.

- A **decline in remittances** is also expected to accelerate the loss of livelihoods for the poorest in some countries.

- **Other South Asian Countries:** Countries like the Maldives, Sri Lanka are going to see a contraction in their economies while Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan will witness slow growth in 2020-21.

- The collapse of South Asian economies during Covid-19 has been the worst of all for **small businesses and informal workers** who suffer sudden job losses and vanishing wages.

- **Rebound of Economy in 2021-22**

- India's growth is estimated to **rebound to 5.4%** in 2021-22.
 - However, this will be reflecting base effects and are based on the assumption that Covid-related restrictions will be completely lifted by 2022.
 - **Base Effect:** It is the distortion in a monthly inflation figure that results from abnormally high or low levels of inflation in the year-ago month.
- South Asia's growth is projected to rebound to 4.5% in 2021. However, due to population growth, per-capita income in the region will remain 6% below 2019 estimates.
- The expected **rebound will not offset the lasting economic damage** caused by the pandemic.
- However, the pandemic could spur innovations that improve South Asia's future participation in global value chains.

The **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative** is a step in this direction which would reduce the dependence on imports from a handful of countries.
- The comparative advantage that South Asia and **India have in tech services** and niche tourism will likely be in higher demand as the global economy becomes more digital.

- **Other Related News**

- India's **eight core industrial sectors contracted by 8.5%** in August 2020 compared to **August 2019**, marking the sixth month in a row of shrinking output.
- According to the recent **National Statistical Office (NSO)** data, India's **GDP growth contracted by 23.9%** in the first (April-June) quarter of 2020 compared to the same period (April-June) in 2019.

Way Forward

- The World Bank urged governments to design universal social protection as well as policies that support greater productivity, skills development, and human capital.
- Amid a sudden and steep economic impact from the pandemic, South Asian governments proactively stabilized the economy through monetary easing, fiscal stimulus, and supportive financial regulation, but the situation is fragile. The governments need to address the deep-seated vulnerabilities of their informal sectors through smart policies and allocate their scarce resources wisely.

Source: IE

Arctic Amplification

Why in News

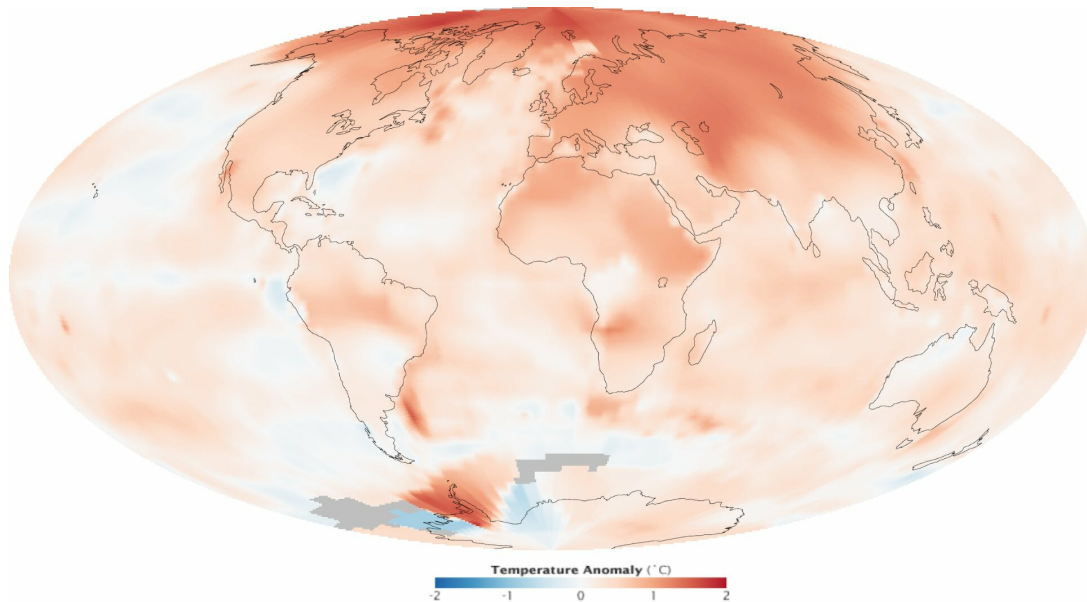
A team of scientists have identified **iodic acid (HIO_3)** as a novel driver of new **aerosol** particle formation in the Arctic which is responsible for **Arctic Amplification or Arctic Warming**. Presence of Iodic acid in the region had not been observed previously.

These aerosol particles influence the formation of clouds. As these **clouds reflect solar radiation (known as Aerosol Radiative Forcing)** but also retain heat on the Earth's surface, they have an influence on the warming of the Arctic.

Key Points

About:

- Over the past 30 years, the Arctic has warmed at roughly twice the rate as the entire globe, a phenomenon known as **Arctic amplification**.
- This means that **global warming** and **climate change** are **impacting the Arctic more than the rest of the world**.
- Global temperatures from 2000–2009 were on average about 0.6°C higher than they were from 1951–1980. The Arctic, however, was **about 2°C warmer**.
- Scientists first started to see evidence of changes in Arctic climate in the 1980s. Since then, the changes have become **much more pronounced**.



- **Reasons:**
 - **Change in Albedo:**
 - Albedo is a measure of how much light that hits a surface is reflected without being absorbed.
 - When bright and reflective ice (with more albedo) melts, it gives way to a darker ocean (lowering albedo); this amplifies the warming trend because the ocean surface absorbs more heat from the Sun than the surface of snow and ice.
 - **Changing Ocean currents:**
 - Ocean currents normally bring in warmer water from the Pacific, and colder water exits out of the Arctic into the Atlantic.
 - But those currents may be changing because more melting ice is injecting the Arctic Ocean with freshwater. The missing ice also exposes the surface waters to more wind. This mixes up colder freshwater at the surface and warmer saltwater below, raising surface temperatures and further melting ice.
 - **Changing Weather**
 - Ocean currents drive the powerful polar jet stream, which moves hot and cold air masses around the Northern Hemisphere. This is a product of the temperature differences between the Arctic and the tropics.
 - But as the Arctic warms, the jet stream now undulates wildly north and south. This has been **injecting the Arctic with warm air**.
 - **Thunderstorms** are also much more likely to occur in the tropics than the higher latitudes. The storms transport heat from the surface to higher levels of the atmosphere, where global wind patterns sweep it toward higher latitudes.
 - The abundance of thunderstorms in tropics creates a near-constant flow of heat **away from the tropics towards the Arctic**
- **Impact in the Arctic:**
 - The floating sea ice cover of the Arctic Ocean is shrinking, especially during summer.
 - Snow cover over land in the Arctic has decreased, notably in spring.
 - In addition, frozen ground in the Arctic, known as **permafrost**, is warming and in many areas thawing.
- **Comparison with Antarctica:**
 - There is **no Antarctic amplification**. Antarctic warming has been similar to the global average, although some parts are warming much faster.
 - **Reason:** Antarctica is surrounded by the **vast Southern Ocean**, which is soaking up much of the atmosphere's excess heat.

- **Effects Worldwide:**

- Higher temperature will cause a **Sea-Level Rise** globally that in turn has impacts like the destruction of ecosystems, displacement, loss of life and property etc.
- Arctic permafrost thaw is also releasing the potent **greenhouse** gas methane causing profound **global warming effects**.
- Arctic wildfire, called **Zombie Fire** intensity is also increasing each year as thawing ground dries out.



- **Other Related Information:**

- The **Arctic Council** is the leading **intergovernmental forum** promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.
- Recently, the Indian Prime Minister at **Eastern Economic Forum (EEF)**, mentioned **India's willingness to play a significant role in the Arctic Council**.

Way Forward

The only way to deal with Arctic amplification is by halting global warming as a whole. The **Paris Agreement** provides a clear vision of limiting global warming. Cutting fossil fuel emissions, conservation of forests and afforestation and carbon sequestration are some of the ways to bring down the global temperature levels.

Fluoride & Iron Removal technology of CMERI

Why in News

The **Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI)** has transferred its High Flow Rate Fluoride & Iron Removal technology to Capricans Aqua Private Limited, West Bengal.

Key Points

- **Technology:**

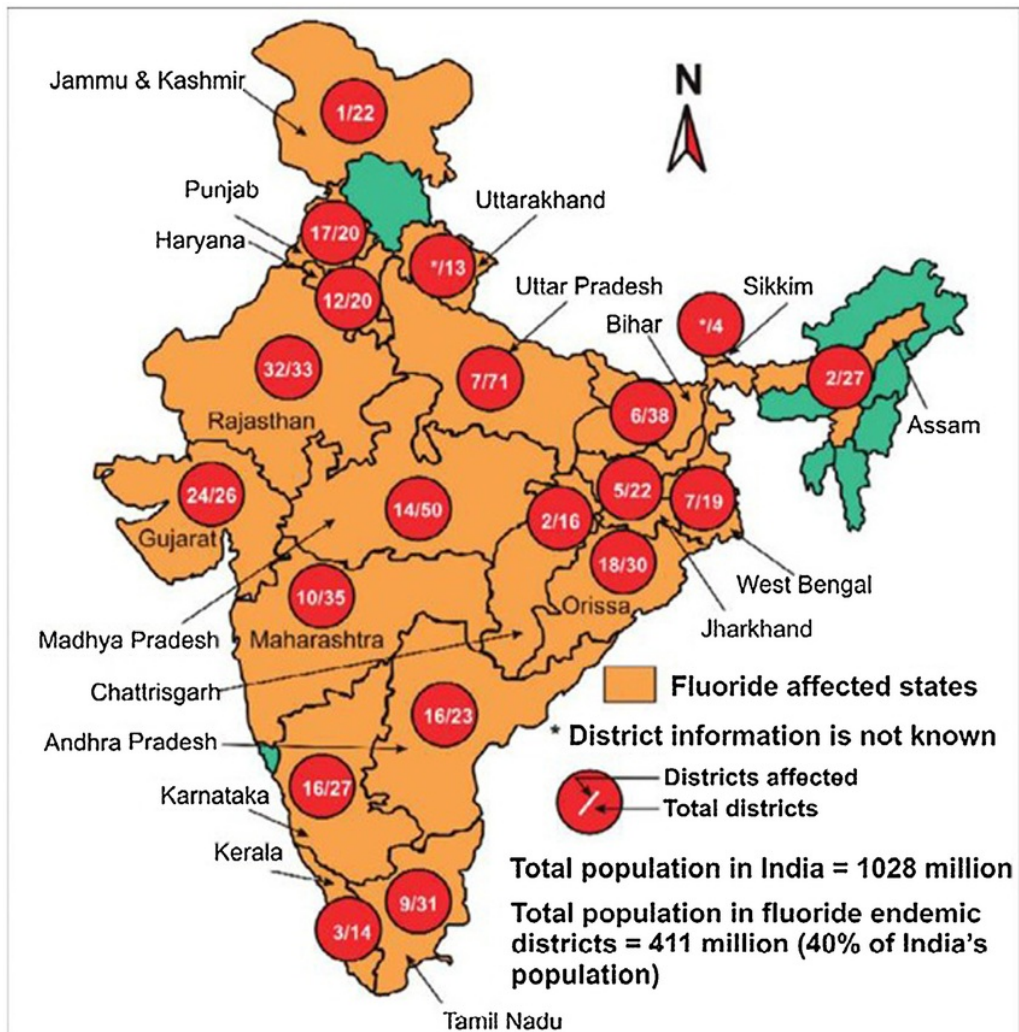
- It is a **Community Level Water Purification System** which has a Flow-Rate capacity of 10,000 Ltr/hr.
- It uses commonly available raw materials such as **sand, gravel and adsorbent materials.**
- It comprises a **three-stage purification process** that purifies water within permissible limits (1.5 parts per million (ppm) & 0.3 parts per million for Fluoride and Iron respectively).
- The technology uses a combination of **Oxidation, gravity settling** (settling down of heavier impurities under gravity) and **Chemisorption** process in an Affordable Package.

Chemisorption is a kind of adsorption which involves a chemical reaction between the surface and the adsorbate. New chemical bonds are generated at the adsorbent surface.

- The integrated **backwashing** technology will help in improving the shelf-life of the filtration media in a resource rationalized manner.

Backwashing refers to pumping water backwards through the filter media, for the preventive maintenance so that the filter media can be reused.

- **Significance:**
 - The number of Fluoride affected individuals are continuously increasing in a contaminated habitat in the last 50 years.
 - This has been happening in consonance with the disproportional **depletion of the Water Table**, which has led to the multiplication of the level of concentration of Fluoride in the particular region.
 - The deployment of this Community Level system at affected places can help to turn the tide against the menace of Iron and Fluorosis across the Nation.
 - **Cost-Effective solution** for serving the most vulnerable sections of the Nation.
 - Besides, the technology is also a major thrust towards the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** campaign.
 - The proliferation of this technology will also help in catalyzing **Employment Generation opportunities**.
- **Iron in water:** Iron is the most common contaminant of drinking water, followed by salinity, arsenic, fluoride, and heavy metal.
 - **Rajasthan** had the highest number of rural habitations affected by contamination overall, at 16,833 in 2019.
 - **Combined arsenic and iron pollution** affect West Bengal and Assam the worst.
 - **Reason:** Corrosion of pipes is a common reason why iron is found in drinking water.
 - **Impacts:** As little as 0.3 mg/L concentration of iron can make the water appear brown.
 - The overload of iron may cause severe health problems such as liver cancer, diabetes, cirrhosis of liver, diseases related to heart and central nervous system, infertility etc.
- **Fluoride in water:**



Fluoride-affected states and years of discovery

Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab	1937 - 1950
Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chattrishgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Karnataka	1950 - 1986
Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir	1986 - 1992
West Bengal	1997
Assam	1999
Uttarakhand, Sikkim	1999 to present

- High levels of Fluoride were reported in 230 districts of 20 States of India (2016-17).
- **Reasons:** Naturally occurring fluoride in water along with the result of industrial processes.
- Owing to inaccessibility to Affordable Fluoride Removal Solutions the Fluorosis affected statistics has also witnessed an upward trajectory.

- **Impact:** There are two main types of fluorosis, namely dental and skeletal fluorosis.
 - **Dental fluorosis** is caused by continuous exposure to high concentrations of fluoride during tooth development.
 - **Skeletal fluorosis** is developed by the disturbance of calcium metabolism in the formation of bones of the body.
 - It results in the softening and weakening of bones resulting in deformities leading to crippling.
- **The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Fluorosis:**
- NPPCF is a health initiative **launched in the 11th Five Year Plan**, initiated in 2008-09.
- **Objectives:**
 - To collect, assess and use the baseline survey data of fluorosis of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
 - Comprehensive management of fluorosis in the selected areas.
 - Capacity building for prevention, diagnosis and management of fluorosis cases.

Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute

- CMERI is a public engineering research and development institution in Durgapur, West Bengal.
- It is a constituent laboratory of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research**.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

- CSIR is the **largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India**. CSIR has a pan-India presence and has a dynamic network of 38 national laboratories, 39 outreach centres, 3 Innovation Complexes and 5 units.
- **Established:** September 1942
- **Located:** New Delhi
- CSIR is **funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology** and it operates as an **autonomous body** through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- CSIR covers a wide spectrum of streams and provides significant technological intervention in many areas with regard to societal efforts which include the environment, health, drinking water, food, housing, energy, farm and non-farm sectors.

Source: PIB

Concerns Related to ART Bill, 2020

Why in News

Recently, the **Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020** has been introduced in the Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- **Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART):**
 - ART is **used to treat infertility**. It includes **fertility treatments that handle both a woman's egg and a man's sperm**. It works by removing eggs from a woman's body and mixing them with sperm to make embryos. The embryos are then put back in the woman's body.
 - **In Vitro fertilization** (IVF) is the most common and effective type of ART.
 - ART procedures **sometimes use donor eggs, donor sperm, or previously frozen embryos**. It may also involve a **surrogate carrier**.
- **Aim of the Bill:** To regulate ART banks and clinics, allow the safe and ethical practice of ARTs and protect women and children from exploitation.
- **Supplementary Status:**
 - It was introduced to supplement the **Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, (SRB) 2019**, which **aims to prohibit commercial surrogacy** in India.
 - The Bill designates **surrogacy boards under the SRB to function as advisory bodies** for ART.

Concerns

- **Discrimination in Accessibility:**

- The Bill **allows** for a **married heterosexual couple** and a **woman above the age of marriage** to use ARTs and **excludes single men, cohabiting heterosexual couples and LGBTQ+ individuals and couples** from accessing ARTs.

LGBTQ+ stands for **lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer** (or sometimes questioning), and others. The "**plus**" represents **other sexual identities** including pansexual, intersex, and asexual.

- The Bill seems to **violate Article 14** of the Constitution and the **Right to Privacy jurisprudence of Puttaswamy, 2017**, where the **Supreme Court** held that "the sanctity of marriage, the liberty of procreation, the choice of a family life and the dignity of being" concerned all **individuals irrespective of their social status** and were **aspects of privacy**.

In **Navtej Singh Johar vs Union Of India (2018)**, States were advised to take positive steps for equal protection for same-sex couples.

- Unlike the SRB, there is **no prohibition on foreign citizens accessing the ARTs** but not all of the Indian citizens which is an illogical result which **fails to reflect the true spirit** of the Constitution.
- The Bill **restricts egg donation to a married woman with a child** (at least three years old). Even here, egg donation as an altruistic act is **possible only once a woman has fulfilled her duties** to the patriarchal institution of marriage.

- **Less or No Protection for Donors:**

- The Bill does **little to protect the egg donor. Harvesting of eggs is an invasive process** which, if performed incorrectly, **can result in death**.
- The Bill requires an egg donor's written consent but **does not provide for her counselling or the ability to withdraw** her consent before or during the procedure.
- A woman receives **no compensation or reimbursement of expenses for loss of salary, time and effort. Failing to pay for bodily services** constitutes **unfree labour, which is prohibited by Article 23** of the Constitution.
- The **commissioning parties only need to obtain an insurance** policy in her name for medical complications or death with **no amount or duration specified**.

- **Ambiguity in Disorders:**
 - The Bill requires **pre-implantation genetic testing** and where the **embryo suffers** from “pre-existing, heritable, life-threatening or genetic diseases”, it **can be donated for research** with the commissioning parties’ permission.
 - These **disorders are not specified** and the Bill **risks promoting an impermissible programme of eugenics.**
 - **Eugenics** is the practise or advocacy of improving the human species by selectively mating people with specific desirable hereditary traits.
- **Hides Information:**
 - Children born from ART **do not have the right to know their parentage**, which is crucial to their best interests and was protected under previous drafts.
- **Imbalance Between ART and SRB:**
 - Although the Bill and the SRB regulate ARTs and surrogacy, respectively, there is **considerable overlap** between both sectors and they **do not work in tandem.**
 - **Core ART processes are left undefined** and few of them are defined in the SRB but not in the Bill.
 - **Same offending behaviours** under both Bills are **punished differently** and sometimes with greater punishments under the SRB.
 - **Offences under the Bill are bailable but not under the SRB.**
 - Finally, **records** have to be maintained for **10 years under the Bill** but for **25 years under the SRB.**
- **Duplicacy:**
 - **Both Bills set up multiple bodies for registration** which will result in **duplication or worse, lack of regulation.** For example, a surrogacy clinic is not required to report surrogacy to the **National Registry.**
 - The National Registry will be established under the Bill and will act as a **central database with details of all ART clinics and banks** in the country.
- **Possible Gamete Shortage:**
 - **Gamete shortage** is likely to happen as there is no clarity on if **gametes** could be gifted between known friends and relatives now, which was not allowed earlier.
 - **Gametes** are an **organism's reproductive cells.** They are also referred to as **sex cells.** **Female gametes** are called **ova or egg cells**, and **male** gametes are called sperm.
- **Poorly Drafted:**
 - Further, Bill’s **prohibition on the sale, transfer, or use of gametes and embryos is poorly worded** and will **confuse** foreign and domestic parents relying on donated gametes.

- **Enhanced Punishments:**
 - The SRB and the Bill impose **high sentences** (8-12 years) and **hefty fines**.
 - The poor enforcement of the **Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994** demonstrates that enhanced punishments do not secure compliance.

Way Forward

- Clinics must have ethics committees and mandated counselling services should be independent of them.
- Prior versions of the Bill regulated research using embryos, which must be brought back and definitions of commissioning “couple”, “infertility”, “ART clinics” and “banks” need to be synchronised between the Bill and the SRB.
- All ART bodies should be bound by the directions of central and state governments in the national interest, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency and morality.
- All the constitutional, medico-legal, ethical and regulatory concerns raised by the Bill must be thoroughly reviewed before affecting millions.

Source: IE

Graded Response Action Plan

Why in News

The **Environment Pollution (Prevention & Control) Authority (EPCA)** has directed Delhi and neighbouring States to implement air pollution control measures under **very poor** and **severe** category air quality of the **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)** from 15th October 2020.

Key Points

Graded Response Action Plan:

- The action plan which was **formulated in 2016 and notified in 2017** for Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).
- The plan was formulated after several meetings were held by **Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA)** with state government representatives and experts.
- These are **institutionalized measures to be taken when air quality deteriorates**, hence **works only as an emergency measure**.
- GRAP includes the measures which will be taken by different government agencies to prevent worsening of Air Quality of Delhi-NCR and prevent **PM10** and **PM2.5** levels to go beyond the 'moderate' national **Air Quality Index (AQI)** category.
- If air quality reaches the **severe+ stage**, GRAP talks about **shutting down schools and implementing the odd-even road-space rationing scheme**.
- The plan requires action and coordination among **13 different agencies in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan (NCR areas)**.

Category	Ambient Particulate Matter (PM) Concentration	Measures
Moderate to Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM 2.5 between 61-120 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ▪ PM10 between 101-350 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enforce pollution control in thermal power plants ▪ Mechanized sweeping on roads ▪ Ban on firecrackers ▪ Stop garbage burning
Very Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM2.5 between 121-250 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ▪ PM10 between 351-430 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stop use of diesel generator sets ▪ Increase bus and metro services and increasing frequency of metro service ▪ Stop use of coal/firewood in hotels and open eateries
Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM2.5 more than 250 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ▪ PM10 more than 430 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase frequency of mechanized sweeping of road and sprinkling of water on roads ▪ Close brick kilns, Hot Mix plants, Stone Crushers ▪ Shut down Badarpur power plant ▪ Introduce concessional rates to encourage off-peak travel in public transport.
Severe+ or Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PM2.5 of or more than 300 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ▪ PM10 of or 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ <p>(persist for 48 hours or more)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stop entry of diesel trucks into Delhi (except essential commodities) ▪ Stop construction activities ▪ Introduce odd and even scheme ▪ Shutting of schools

Reasons of Winter Pollution in Delhi: Apart from the other pollution which are due to overpopulation, vehicular emissions and industries, following are the factors that make winter pollution severe:

- **Stubble Burning:** It is a traditional practice in Punjab and Haryana to clean off the rice chaff to prepare the fields for winter sowing.
- **Shifting of Jet Stream:** The southward shift of subtropical jet stream happens causing a westward wind pattern in the northern part of India and thus spread of pollutants.
- **Stagnant Lower Level Winds:** As the winter season sets in, dust particles and pollutants in the air become unable to move. Due to **stagnant lower level winds**, pollutants get locked in the air and affect weather conditions, resulting in **smog**.

Environment Pollution Control Authority

- It was notified in 1998 under the **Environment Protection Act, 1986**.
- EPCA is a **Supreme Court mandated body** tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region.

Way Forward

- The economy is already under stress post-lockdown so the combined effort is to ensure that there is no further disruption.
- Pollution will make Covid-19 “more dangerous” and therefore, there must be zero-tolerance for air pollution during this period, as it will come at “huge human health cost”.

Source: TH

Television Rating Points

Why in news

Recently, the Mumbai Police has claimed about a scam about the manipulation of **TRPs (Target Rating Points)** by some TV channels by rigging the devices used by the **Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) India**.

Key Points

- **About:** The TRP is the metric used by the marketing and advertising agencies to evaluate viewership.
 - **Viewer:** Anyone who watches television for **more than a minute** is considered a viewer.
 - It represents how many people, from which **socio-economic categories**, watched which channels for how much time during a particular period. This period is **one minute** as per the international standards.
- **Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC)**
 - It is a company created in 2010 and jointly owned by advertisers, ad agencies, and broadcasting companies, represented by the Indian Society of Advertisers, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation and the Advertising Agencies Association of India.
 - The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting notified the **Policy Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies** in India on January 10, 2014, and registered BARC in July 2015 under these guidelines, to carry out television ratings in India.
- **Methodology of Calculation:**
 - **Bar-o-meters:** BARC has installed **Bar-O-meters** in over **45,000 empanelled households**. These record viewing details as well as audio watermarks of content.
 - Audio watermarks are embedded in video content prior to broadcast. These watermarks are not audible to the human ear, but can easily be detected and decoded using dedicated hardware and software.
 - **Selection of Households:** The households are chosen by an **annual Establishment Survey** which is a large-scale face-to-face survey of a sample of approximately 3 lakh households from the target population.
 - The panel chosen to capture TRPs must be representative of the country's population, and the methodology must be economically viable for the industry.
 - **Classification of Households:** These households are classified into 12 categories under the New Consumer Classification System (NCCS) adopted by BARC in 2015, based on the **education level of the main wage earner** and the **ownership of consumer durables** from a list of 11 items ranging from a power connection to a car.
 - **Data Collection:** While watching a show, members of the household register their presence by pressing their **separate viewer ID** button.
 - This captures the duration for which the channel was watched and by whom and provides data on viewership habits across age and socio-economic groups.

- **Precautions to Prevent Rigging:**
 - The viewing behaviour of panel homes is reported to BARC India **directly and daily**.
 - **Coincidental checks** either physically or telephonically are done regularly. Certain **suspicious outliers** are also checked directly by BARC India.
 - These households **rotate randomly** every year and they are kept confidential.
- **Significance of TRP:**
 - These **influence programmes produced** for the viewers. Better ratings would promote a programme while poor ratings will discourage a programme.
 - TRPs are the main **currency for advertisers** to decide which channel to advertise on by calculating the **cost-per-rating-point (CPRP)**.
- **Limitations of TRP:**
 - The panel can be **infiltrated or tampered** by bribing viewers or cable operators or tampering with the selection of panel.
 - If the **sample size is very small**, e.g. for English News channels, the manipulation becomes easier as even manipulating a few homes will change the TRP.
 - There is an **absence of any specific law** through which the agents/suspects involved in panel tampering/infiltration could be penalised.
 - About 70% of the revenue for television channels comes from advertising and only 30% from the subscription. **Dependence on advertisements** for revenue is leading to broadcasting content which suits the advertisers.

Way forward

- **Increasing the sample size so that the results are more accurate, developing a legal framework for the regulation of TRP and chip-based activity logs through all set-top boxes** are some of the things that can be done by the government in conjunction with the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** to make the calculation of TRP fair and precise.
- The subscription rates, which are controlled by the TRAI, should be raised so that TV channels are not forced to serve the lowest common denominator.

Source: TH

Earthshot Prize

Why in News

Britain's Prince William has launched a new **50-million pound Earthshot Prize**, aimed at funding the most innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing **environmental challenges**.

Key Points

- **About the Prize:**

- **Theme:** The Earthshot Prize is **centred around five “Earthshots”**, simple but ambitious goals for the planet, which **if achieved by 2030** will improve life for all, for generations to come.

It is said to be the **most prestigious global prize for the environment** in history.

- **Five Earthshots:**

- Protect and restore nature
- Clean our air
- Revive our oceans
- Build a waste-free world
- Fix our climate.

- **Awards Ceremony:** It will take place in different cities across the world **each year between 2021 and 2030**, at which the **five winners for each of the Earthshots** will be selected from 15 finalists.

The **first awards ceremony** will take place in **London** in autumn 2021.

- **Benefits to Winners:** After the awards, **each winner will receive a global platform and prestigious profile**, with their stories being showcased over the decade with the ambition that their solutions lead to mass adoption, replication and scaling.

The **1 million pound in prize money** will support environmental and conservation projects that are agreed with a winner.

- **Eligibility:** Prizes **could be awarded to** a wide range of **individuals, teams or collaborations** – scientists, activists, economists, community projects, leaders, governments, banks, businesses, cities, and countries – **anyone** whose workable solutions make a substantial contribution to achieving the Earthshots.

- **Prize Management:** In addition to the **Prize Council**, the Earthshot Prize will be **supported by its Global Alliance**, a network of organisations worldwide which share the ambition of the Prize to repair the planet.

- **Background:**

- The launch, **backed by** popular British broadcaster and conservationist **David Attenborough**, comes after **two years** of work by **Prince William** and the **Royal Foundation of the Duke** to develop a project which will support the global effort to protect and restore the environment.

Recently **Sir David Attenborough** has also been conferred with **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019**.

- The Prize has been launched taking inspiration from **former USA President John F. Kennedy's Moonshot**, which united millions of people around an organising goal to put man on the moon and catalysed the development of new technology in the 1960s.

Source: IE

World Space Week

Why in News

Recently, during the celebrations of **World Space Week**, the **India Meteorological Department** (IMD) has announced that it would soon launch a dynamic, impact-based **cyclone** warning system.

The warning system **aims at minimising economic losses and damage to property due to the cyclones** that hit Indian coasts every year.

Key Points

- World Space Week is an **international celebration of science and technology** and their contribution to the betterment of the human condition.
 - It is **coordinated by the United Nations** with the support of the **World Space Week Association** (WSWA), a non-profit organisation.
- The **United Nations General Assembly** (UNGA) declared in **1999** that World Space Week would be held each **year from 4th-10th October**. These **dates commemorate two events:**
 - **4th October 1957:** Launch of the first human-made Earth satellite, **Sputnik 1**, thus opening the way for space exploration.
 - **10th October 1967:** The signing of the **Outer Space Treaty** (Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space including the Moon and other celestial bodies).

- **Objectives:**

- Provide unique leverage in space outreach and education.
- Educate people around the world about the benefits that they receive from space.
- Encourage greater use of space for sustainable economic development.
- Demonstrate public support for space programs.
- Excite young people about science, technology, engineering, and math.
- Foster international cooperation in the space sector.

- **2020 Theme:** “Satellites Improve Life.”

It shows the **importance of satellites in daily life** and how human lives are affected by satellites such as in **communications, environmental monitoring, transportation, weather forecasting, telemedicine, science**, and in many other ways.

Indian examples: EMISAT, RISAT-2B, Cartosat-3, Microsat-R and Kalamsat-V2, etc.

Source: PIB

Nobel Prize in Literature 2020

Why in News

The **Nobel Prize in Literature 2020** has been awarded to the **USA poet Louise Glück** "for her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal."

- **Established by Alfred Nobel in 1895**, the Nobel Prize in Literature is **one of six awards** that also span physics, chemistry, medicine or physiology, peace and economic sciences.

For 2020, Nobel Prizes for **Chemistry**, **Physics** and **Medicine** have already been announced.

- The **Nobel Prize** comes with a **medal** and a **prize sum of 10 million Swedish kronor**.

Key Points

- Glück, born 1943 in New York, lives in Massachusetts and is also professor of English at Yale University.
- Her poetry **focuses** on the painful reality of being human, dealing with themes such as **death, childhood, and family life**.

- She is the **fourth woman** to win the prize for literature **since 2010**, and only the **16th since the Nobel prizes were first awarded in 1901**.

The **last American** to win was **Bob Dylan** in **2016**.

- Glück won the **Pulitzer Prize** in 1993 for her collection **The Wild Iris** and the **National Book Award** in 2014.
- **Criticism of Last year's Winner:**
 - Choice of Austrian novelist **Peter Handke** led to wide criticism.
 - Handke was a known supporter of the Serbs during the **1990s Yugoslav war** and spoke at the funeral of former Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic, who was accused of genocide and other war crimes.
 - Last year also saw **Polish author Olga Tokarczuk** belatedly announced as the **winner of the 2018 literature prize** which had been suspended for a year after a sexual assault scandal and financial misconduct allegations rocked the **Swedish Academy**, which awards the annual Nobel Prize for Literature.

Source: IE
