



## News Analysis (02 Nov, 2021)

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### India to Reach Carbon Neutrality by 2070

#### Why in News

Recently, India announced that it will **reach carbon neutrality by 2070** as part of a **five-point action plan** that included reducing emissions to 50% by 2030.

- India made this pledge at the **Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 climate summit in Glasgow**, where it also urged developed countries to deliver on their promise of **climate financing**.
- However, India hasn't submitted an updated **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs)** with these commitments to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** yet.

#### PM MAKES FIVE PLEDGES

- 1 India will increase its non-fossil energy capacity to 500GW by 2030
- 2 India will meet 50% of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030
- 3 India will reduce the total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now to 2030
- 4 By 2030, India will reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 45% (from a previous target of 35%)
- 5 By 2070, India will achieve the target of net zero

#### WHAT IS NET ZERO?

Net zero refers to a balance where emissions of greenhouse gases are offset by the absorption of an equivalent amount from the atmosphere. Experts see net zero targets as a critical measure to successfully tackle climate change and its devastating consequences

#### PLEDGES BY TOP THREE EMITTERS

-  **CHINA:** Beijing announced no new pledges on Monday. It previously pledged net zero by 2060.
-  **UNITED STATES:** The US touted domestic legislation to spend \$555bn to boost renewable power and electric vehicles. It has pledged net zero by 2050.
-  **INDIA:** The country's economy will become carbon neutral by the year 2070

#### Key Points

- **About:**

- Net Zero is a **state in which a country's total emissions are offset by absorptions of carbon dioxide** from the atmosphere, like that done by trees and forests, and physical removal of carbon dioxide through futuristic technologies.
- More than **70 countries have promised to become Net Zero by the middle of the century**, and this is being considered vital for meeting the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global temperatures within 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times.
- India's Net Zero target of 2070 silences its critics but it is along expected lines.
  - The big thing here is not the target itself but the fact that **India finally relented and decided to take up a target**, something it had been holding back on for quite some time.
  - In its climate action plan submitted under the **Paris Agreement**, India had promised to reduce its emissions intensity, or emissions per unit of **Gross Domestic Product**, by 33 to 35% by the year 2030 compared to 2005 levels.

- **Reducing India's Emissions:**

- India **has the lowest per capita emissions** of the world's major economies -- emitting **5% of the total**, despite accounting for **17% of the world's population**.
- According to the **World Resources Institute**, India's total **greenhouse gas** emissions were about 3.3 billion tonnes in 2018.
  - It's **projected to rise above 4 billion tonnes per year by 2030**.
- That would mean between now and 2030, **India could be emitting anywhere between 35 to 40 billion tonnes** at the current rates of growth.
- Cutting 1 billion tonnes would, therefore, represent a reduction of **2.5 to 3% in its absolute emissions** in the business-as-usual scenario in the next nine years.

- **India's New Renewables Target:**

- In 2019 India announced that it would take up its installed capacity of **renewable energy to 450 GW by 2030**.
  - At that time, India's publicly stated target was **175 GW by the year 2022**.
- The installed renewable capacity has been growing rapidly in the last few years, and the **enhancement as per its pledge from 450 GW to 500 GW is not likely to be very challenging**.
- The **increase in the proportion of non-fossil fuel energy** in the energy mix, to 50% is a natural corollary of this.
- Most of the new capacity additions in the energy sector are being done in the renewable and non-fossil fuel space.
  - In fact, India has already said **it does not plan to start any new coal power plants after 2022**.
  - As of now, India was already targeting 40% electricity production through non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

- **Climate Finance:**
  - India's efforts though will have to be supported by the **availability of climate finance from developed countries**. Without foreign capital, on concessional terms, this transition will prove to be difficult.
  - India **demands USD 1 trillion of climate finance as soon as possible** and will monitor not just climate action, but deliver climate finance.
  - Most importantly, India has called, once again, for a **change in lifestyles**.
- **Steps Needed to Achieve Net Zero:**
  - According to the Council on Energy, Environment and Waters implications of a Net-zero Target for India's Sectoral Energy Transitions and Climate Policy' study, **India's total installed solar power capacity would need to increase to over 5,600 gigawatts to achieve net-zero by 2070**.
  - The **usage of coal, especially for power generation, would need to drop by 99% by 2060**, for India to achieve net-zero by 2070.
  - Consumption of **crude oil, across sectors**, would need to peak by 2050 and **fall substantially by 90% between 2050 and 2070**.
    - Green hydrogen could contribute 19% of the total energy needs of the industrial sector.

Source: IE

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## **G20 Summit & Climate Change**

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### **Why in News**

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In the recently concluded G20 summit, the leaders made a commitment to reach carbon neutrality by or around mid-century.

- They have adopted the **Rome Declaration** (the **current presidency** of G20 countries is **being held by Italy**).
- Earlier, the G20 Climate Risk Atlas was released which provides climate scenarios, information, data and future changes in climate across the G20 countries.

### **Key Points**

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- **Highlights of the Declaration:**

- **Roadmap for COP 26:** It urged leaders of the world's biggest economies to put their action plans to tackle the global climate change crisis.

This is a significant step in the context of the upcoming UN climate conference (COP 26) in Glasgow, Scotland.

- **Restricting Aid to Coal Based Plants:** It included a pledge to **halt financing of overseas coal-fired power generation** by the end of this year (2021).
- **PPP Model of Finance Mobilisation:** Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are the only way to achieve the trillions of dollars in annual investment needed to transition to **clean, sustainable energy sources** that will mitigate the warming of global temperatures.

- **Declaration by India:**

- **Addressing Vaccine Inequality:** Underlining the need to address vaccine inequity across the world, India is ready to produce over **5 billion vaccine doses by the end of next year (2022)**.

India also emphasised on vaccine research, manufacturing and innovation.

- **One Earth One Health:** The vision of "One Earth One Health", or the need for a collaborative approach in the international domain in the fight against the pandemic.
- **Resilient Global Supply Chains:** India highlighted the need for resilient global supply chains and invited G-20 countries to make India their partner in economic recovery and supply chain diversification.
- **Support for Global Minimum Tax:** India also lauded the G-20's decision to come up with a 15-percent minimum corporate tax to make the global financial architecture "more just and fair".
- **Welcoming Indo-Pacific Strategy:** India welcomed the European Union's Indo-Pacific strategy and French leadership in it.

- **Associated Concerns:**

- **Half-Hearted Steps:** The statement contained few concrete actions and made **no reference to a specific 2050 date to achieve net-zero carbon emission**. Moreover, the statement removed references in a previous draft to the target to “reduce emissions significantly”.
- **No target for Phasing Out Coal:** It set no target for phasing out coal domestically, a clear nod to top carbon polluters China and India.
  - For example, China has not set an end date for building domestic coal plants at home.
  - Coal is still China’s main source of power generation, and both China and India have resisted attempts for a G-20 declaration on phasing out domestic coal consumption.
- **No resolution on Vaccine Patent Waiver:** It did not touch upon the dispute over **vaccine patent waivers**.
- **Pressing India’s developmental Imperative:** Climate negotiators from the US, EU and UK had made a number of visits to India over the past few months, pressing for India to update its **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** to include its target of 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030.

## G20

- **About:**

- It is **an informal group of 19 countries and the European Union (EU)**, with representatives of the **International Monetary Fund** and the **World Bank**.  
It **does not have a permanent secretariat or Headquarters**.
- The membership comprises a mix of the world’s largest advanced and emerging economies, representing about two-thirds of the world’s population, 85% of global **gross domestic product**, 80% of global investment and over 75% of global trade.

- **Members:**

Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU.

**Source: IE**

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## 18th India-ASEAN Summit

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### Why in News

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Recently, India participated in the **18<sup>th</sup> India-ASEAN Summit** at the invitation of **Brunei, the current Chair of ASEAN**.

- The **Year 2022** has been highlighted as **India-ASEAN Friendship** by the leaders.
- India-ASEAN Summit is **held every year** and provides an opportunity for India and Asean to **engage at the highest level**.

## Key Points

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- **ASEAN in Act East Policy:**

- The centrality of ASEAN in **India's Act East Policy** and in India's Vision for the wider **Indo-Pacific** Vision has been underlined.
- Welcomed the adoption of the **India-ASEAN Joint Statement** on cooperation for peace, stability and prosperity in the region, building upon the synergies between the **ASEAN Outlook for the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)** and **India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)**.

Recently, India also addressed the **16<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit**, where it **reaffirmed India's focus on a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific** and the principle of Asean Centrality in the region.

- **India-ASEAN Connectivity:**

- Exchanged views on enhancing **India-ASEAN connectivity** in broadest terms including physical, digital and people to people.
- India announced its support for establishing the **ASEAN Cultural Heritage List** to further strengthen **India-ASEAN cultural connectivity**.

- **Trade and Investment:**

The importance of diversification and **resilience of supply chains** for post-Covid economic recovery and in this regard, the need to revamp the **India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** has been underlined.

- **Rule-Based Order:**

- Regional and international issues of common interest and concern, including **South China Sea** and **terrorism**.
- The importance of promoting a **rules-based order** in the region including through upholding adherence to international law, especially the **UNCLOS**.

- **Covid-19:**

Highlighted **India's efforts** in the fight against the **pandemic** in the region and also reiterated support for ASEAN's initiatives in this regard.

India has contributed medical supplies worth USD 200,000 to **ASEAN's humanitarian initiative** for Myanmar and USD 1 million for **ASEAN's Covid-19 Response Fund**.

## India-ASEAN and China

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- Traditionally the basis of **India-ASEAN ties** has been trade and people-to-people ties due to shared historical and cultural roots, a more recent and urgent area of convergence has been balancing China's rise.
  - Both India and ASEAN aim to **establish a rules-based security architecture for peaceful development in the region**, in contrast to China's aggressive policies.
- Like India, **several ASEAN members** such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei have territorial disputes with China, the China factor does form an important component of the relationship.
  - India in 2014 reinvigorated the **Look East policy into Act East**, with a more strategic outlook than its previous incarnation, **focusing on engagement not just with Southeast Asian countries but also those in the Pacific**.

### **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

- **About:**
  - It is a **regional grouping** that promotes economic, political, and security cooperation.
  - It was established in **August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand** with the signing of the **ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration)** by the founding fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
  - Its **chairmanship rotates annually**, based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States.
  - ASEAN countries have a total population of 650 million people and a combined **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** of USD 2.8 trillion. It is **India's 4<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner** with about USD 86.9 billion in trade.
- **Members:**

ASEAN brings together ten Southeast Asian states – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – into one organisation.



### ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific

- It offers an outlook to **guide cooperation in the region and enhance ASEAN's Community building process** and further strengthen the existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the East Asia Summit.
- Its main objectives are helping to **promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperity** in the region in **addressing common challenges**, upholding the rules-based regional architecture, and promoting closer economic cooperation, and thus strengthening confidence and trust.
- And implementing existing and **exploring other ASEAN priority areas of cooperation**, including maritime cooperation, connectivity, the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, and economic and other possible areas of cooperation.

### India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)

- It is an **open, non-treaty based initiative for countries to work together for cooperative and collaborative solutions to common challenges** in the region. IPOI draws on existing regional architecture and mechanisms to focus on seven pillars: Maritime Security. Maritime Ecology.
- It draws on existing regional architecture and mechanisms to focus on **seven pillars**:
  - Maritime Security
  - Maritime Ecology
  - Maritime Resources
  - Capacity Building and Resource Sharing
  - Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
  - Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation
  - Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport



## Italy-India Strategic Partnership in Energy Transition

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### Why in News

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Recently, at a bilateral meet, India and Italy released the Joint Statement on **Italy-India Strategic Partnership in Energy Transition**.

The two nations acknowledged significant progress in bilateral relations since the **adoption of the Action Plan for an enhanced Partnership** between India and Italy (2020 –2024) in **November 2020**.



### Key Points

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- **Joint Working Group:**
  - Tasked the Joint Working Group to explore cooperation in areas such as:
    - **Smart Cities**, mobility; smart-grids, electricity distribution and storage solutions.
    - Gas transportation and promoting natural gas as a bridge fuel.
    - **Integrated waste management** ("waste-to-wealth").
    - Green energies (**green hydrogen**, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) & Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), bio-methane, bio-refinery, second-generation **bio-ethanol**, castor oil, bio-oil –waste to fuel).
  - The **Joint Working Group was established** by the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Energy, signed in Delhi in **October 2017**.

- **Green Corridor Project:**

Consider working together to support a large size green corridor project in India to capitalize on India's target to produce and integrate **450 GW of renewable energy by 2030.**

The Green Energy Corridor Projects aim at **synchronizing electricity produced from renewable sources**, such as solar and wind, with conventional power stations in the grid.

- **Investments:**

Encourage joint investments of Indian and Italian companies in energy transition-related fields.

- **Sharing Information:**

- Share useful information and experiences especially **in the field of policy and regulatory framework.**
- Including possible **means to facilitate the transition to cleaner and commercially viable fuels/technologies**, long-term grid planning, incentivizing schemes for renewables and efficiency measures, as well as with regard to financial instruments for accelerating clean energy transition.

## **Significance of Italy for India**

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- 2021 is the year of the **73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations** between India and Italy.
- India has recently been identified by Italy as **one of the top five priority countries** for internationalization of business.
- **Italy acknowledges both geopolitical and economic importance of India** and is actively trying to step up its relations to a new high, based on good diplomatic relations and economic exchanges.
- The economic importance of relations can be understood from the fact that **Italy is the eighth largest economy in the world and the third largest in the Eurozone.**
  - It is also the **world's sixth largest manufacturing nation**, dominated by small and medium enterprises clustered in many industrial districts.
  - **India**, on the other hand, is the **sixth-largest economy** and a large market for over 600 Italian companies operating in India.
- Italy has **supported India's membership** to export control regimes like the **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)**, Wassenaar Arrangement and the **Australia Group.**
- Italy **hosts the third largest Indian community** in the **European Union**, with an estimated 1,80,000 people, after the UK and the Netherlands. Indian labor is particularly active in the agriculture and dairy industry.
- Italy, being a part of the European Union, can **prove to be an important partner for India in the post-Brexit Europe** and can prove to be a favorable base for India companies to operate in Europe.

- The **Indo-Pacific**, at one end, is becoming the leading route for international maritime trade, and the **Mediterranean Sea**, on the other, is the natural point of arrival for ship cargo arriving from Asia.

Acting jointly in both areas would mean promoting values such as democracy, free trade, security, and rule of law, that denote India and Italy's international behaviour, with consequences in terms of planning and policymaking.

- **2021 and 2023 will see Italy and India respectively preside over the G20** during what is expected to be a critical phase in the recovery of global economy and inter-state relations after the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

Recently, **Italy has joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.

**Source: PIB**

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## **Supreme Court on SC/ST Act**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, in a judgement, the **Supreme Court** has observed that the **apex court and high courts have the power to quash criminal cases filed under various 'special statutes' including the SC/ST Act.**

The **Supreme Court** has inherent powers **under Article 142 of the Constitution** or that of the **High Court under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure** to quash proceedings under the **Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities Act), 1989** (SC/ST Act).

### **Key Points**

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- **Situations on Quashing Cases under 'Special Statutes':**
  - When the court is **satisfied that the offence in question**, although covered under the SC/ST Act, is **primarily private or civil in nature** or when this offence has not been committed on account of the victim's caste or where the continuation of legal proceedings would constitute an abuse of process of law.
  - When **considering a prayer for quashing** on the basis of a compromise/settlement between the two parties, the court is satisfied that **the underlying objective of the SC/ST Act would not be contravened** if the crime goes unpunished.

- **Article 142:**

- **About:** It provides **discretionary power to the Supreme Court** as it states that the Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is **necessary for doing complete justice** in any cause or matter pending before it.
- **Constructive Application:** In the early years of the evolution of Article 142, the general public and the lawyers both lauded the Supreme Court for its efforts to bring complete justice to various deprived sections of society or to protect the environment.
  - In the ***Union Carbide case***, relating to the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy, the Supreme Court placed itself above the laws made by the Parliament or the legislatures of the States by saying that, to do complete justice, it could even override the laws made by Parliament.
  - However, in the ***Supreme Court Bar Association v. Union of India***, the Supreme Court stated that **Article 142 could not be used to supplant the existing law, but only to supplement the law.**
- **Cases of Judicial Overreach:** In recent years, there have been several judgments of the Supreme Court wherein it has been **foraying into areas which had long been forbidden to the judiciary by reason of the doctrine of 'separation of powers'**, which is part of the basic structure of the Constitution. One such example is:

The **ban on the sale of alcohol along national and state highways:**

While the notification by the central government prohibited liquor stores along National Highways only, the Supreme Court put in place **a ban on a distance of 500 metres by invoking Article 142.**

- **Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure:**

The section **allows the High Court to pass any order so as to ensure justice.** It also gives the court power to quash the proceedings of lower court or to quash FIRs.

- **SC/ST Act:**

- SC ST Act 1989 is an Act of Parliament enacted **to prohibit discrimination against SC & ST communities members** and prevent atrocities against them.
- The Act is also a **recognition of the depressing reality** that despite undertaking several measures, the **Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes** continue to be subjected to various atrocities at the hands of upper-castes.
- The Act has been enacted keeping in view the express constitutional safeguards enumerated in **Articles 15 (Prohibition of Discrimination), 17 (Abolition of Untouchability) and 21 (Protection of Life and Personal Liberty) of the Constitution**, with a twin-fold objective of **protecting the members of these vulnerable communities** as well as to **provide relief and rehabilitation** to the victims of caste-based atrocities.
- In the **amended SC/ST Act (2018)**, preliminary inquiry is not a must and no prior approval is also required for appointing authorities for senior police officers to file FIRs in cases of atrocities on SC and ST.

**Source: IE**

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## **Ganga Utsav 2021-The River Festival**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of **Ganga Utsav-The River Festival 2021** has begun which celebrates the glory of the **National river Ganga**.

- Ganga was declared as the **National River of India on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008**.
- The event will also comprise, **launch of the Ganga Tarang Portal, curtain raiser on Ganga Knowledge Portal and many more**.

### **Key Points**

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- **About:**

- The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** celebrates the festival every year to strengthen the Public – River Connection.
  - NMCG is the implementation wing of **National Ganga Council**, set up in 2016, which replaced the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NRGBA).
  - The **NMCG has been registered in the Guinness Book of World Records on the first day of Ganga Utsav 2021** for the highest number of photos of handwritten notes that were uploaded on Facebook in an hour.
- The Utsav **celebrates the mystical and cultural river Ganga through** storytelling, folklore, dialogues with eminent personalities, quizzes, displaying traditional artforms, dance and music performances by renowned artists, photo galleries and exhibitions and much more.
- It highlights the **significance of Jan Bhagidari** (People's Participation) in the revival of Ganga, with a **focus on encouraging stakeholder engagement and public participation** towards the rejuvenation of river Ganga.

- **Programmes Held During the Festival:**

- **Continuous Learning and Activity Portal:**
  - Continuous Learning and Activity Portal (CLAP) is a learning portal that will be **buzzing with activities, quizzes, crosswords, discussion forums** to keep children engaged throughout the year.
  - The objective of all the activities will be to sensitize and motivate the children and youth for **action to protect and restore our rivers**.
- **Ganga Mashal:**

It is an expedition led by the **Ganga Task Force (GTF)** that will travel the route including 23 stations along the river Ganga which will help sensitization of the local people and bodies like **Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan**) and Voluntary groups such as Ganga Mitras, Ganga Praharis, Ganga Doots.

  - Ganga Mitras, Ganga Praharis, Ganga Doots are dedicated voluntary groups formed at the grassroot level, whose resources are channelized **for engagement of the community and public at large**.
  - **GTF** is a unit of battalion of ex-servicemen deployed in the services of the Ganga with the approval of the Ministry of Defence for the period of four years till December 2020.
- **Ganga Quest:**

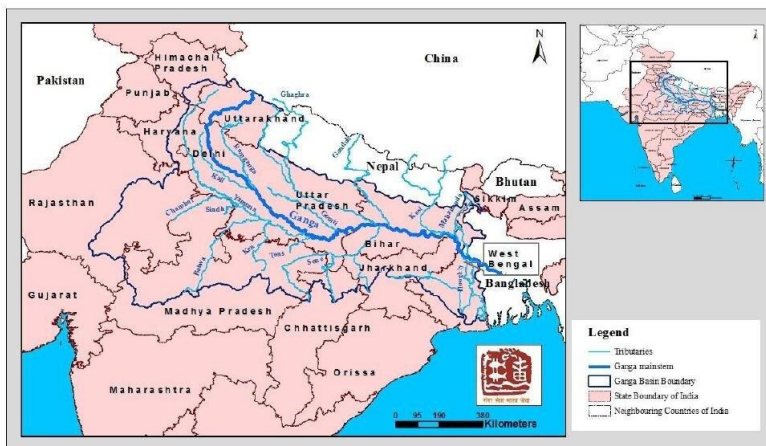
It is a **national online quiz on Ganga**, rivers, and environment that was first conceptualized in 2019 as an educational program to sensitize children and youth towards River Ganga to strengthen the **Namami Gange program**.

- **Government Initiatives on River Ganga:**

- **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the **first river action plan** to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion and treatment of domestic sewage.  
The **National River Conservation Plan** is an extension to this plan, which aims at cleaning the Ganga river under **Ganga Action Plan phase-2**.
- **National River Ganga Basin Authority:** It was formed in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the **Environment Protection Act 1986**.
- **Clean Ganga Fund:** In 2014, it was formed for cleaning up of the Ganga, setting up of waste treatment plants and conservation of biotic diversity of the river.
- **Bhuvan-Ganga Web App:** It ensures the involvement of the public in the monitoring of pollution entering into the river Ganga.
- **Ban on Waste Disposal:** In 2017, the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** banned the disposal of any waste in the Ganga.

## River Ganga

- It is the **longest river of India** flowing over 2,510 km of mountains, valleys and plains and is **revered by Hindus** as the most sacred river on earth.



- It originates in the snowfields of the **Gangotri Glacier** in the **Himalayas** as the Bhagirathi River and is joined by other rivers such as the Alaknanda, Yamuna, Son, Gumti, Kosi and Ghagra.
- The Ganga river basin is **one of the most fertile and densely populated areas of the world** and covers an area of **1,000,000 sq. km**.
- The **Ganges River Dolphin** is an endangered animal that specifically habitats this river.
- The Ganga widens out into the Ganges Delta in the **Sundarbans** swamp of Bangladesh, before it ends its journey by **emptying into the Bay of Bengal**.

**Source: PIB**

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**Bhasha Sangam Initiative: Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**

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## Why in News

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Recently, the **Ministry of Education** launched various initiatives under **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)** to commemorate **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas**.

- The **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** was announced by the Prime Minister in 2015 on the occasion of the 140<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of **Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.

## Key Points

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- **About the Initiatives:**

- **Bhasha Sangam:**

- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Education** under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, **to teach basic sentences of everyday usage in 22 Indian languages (Eighth Schedule languages)**.
    - It is **developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**.
    - The idea is that people should **acquire basic conversational skills in an Indian language other than their mother tongue**.

It is available on **DIKSHA**, **ePathshala** and through 22 booklets.

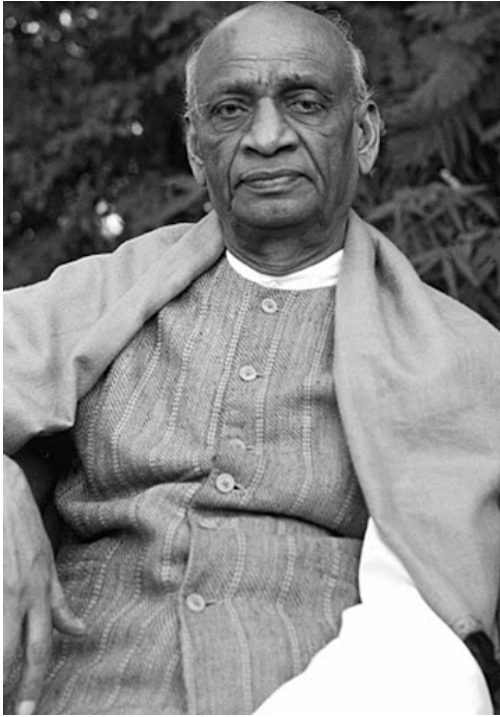
- Other initiatives launched include **Bhasha Sangam Mobile App** and the **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Quiz App**.

- **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat:**

- It was **launched in 2015 to promote engagement amongst the people of different States/UTs** so as to enhance mutual understanding and bonding between people of diverse cultures, thereby securing stronger unity and integrity of India.
  - It is **an initiative of the Ministry of Education**.
  - **Every State and UT in the country would be paired with another State/UT** for a time period, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.

## Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel





- He was born on **31<sup>st</sup> October 1875** in Nadiad, Gujarat.  
The **National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas)** is celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> October to commemorate the **birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.
- He was the **first Home Minister** and **Deputy Prime Minister of India**.
- **Headed various Committees of the Constituent Assembly of India**, namely:
  - Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights.
  - Committee on Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas.
  - Provincial Constitution Committee
- Integrated the **farmer's cause in Kheda Satyagraha (1918) and Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)** with the national freedom movement.  
**Women of Bardoli bestowed the title 'Sardar' on Vallabhbhai Patel**, which means 'a Chief or a Leader'.
- **Known as the "Iron Man of India"** for playing an important role in unification and **integration of Indian princely states** into the Indian federation and for convincing princely states to align with the Indian Union.
- Requested the people of India to live together by uniting (Ek Bharat) in order to create a foremost India (Shresth Bharat).  
This ideology still reflects in the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiative which seeks to make India self-reliant.
- Remembered as the '**Patron Saint of India's Civil Servants**' as he established the modern all-India services system.
- In 2018, the Government unveiled the **Statue of Unity** in Gujarat in Patel's honour.

**Source: PIB**

# World Bank Loan for Strengthening Health System: Meghalaya

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## Why in News

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Recently, India and the **World Bank** signed a USD 40 million for **Meghalaya Health Systems Strengthening Project**.

## Key Points

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- **About:**

- **Infection Prevention:** The project will invest in infection prevention and control for a more resilient response to future outbreaks, **pandemics**, and **health emergencies**.
- **Bio-medical Waste Management:** The project will invest in improving the overall ecosystem for bio-medical waste management (both solid and liquid waste). It will include **segregation, disinfection, and collection while safeguarding the environment** and improving the quality of health service and patient safety.
- **Performance-based Financing System:** The project will move towards a performance-based financing system where **Internal Performance Agreements (IPAs)** between the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** and its subsidiaries would foster more accountability at all levels. **Performance Agreements** define accountability for specific personal and organizational goals. It establishes and agrees **results-oriented goals that are aligned with the overall objective**, and it concludes with the **formal, signed commitment to the agreement**.
- **Promoting Synergy:** It will also focus on **promoting synergy between various schemes** and augment the capacity of the state insurance agency.

- **Significance:**

- **Enhances Governance Capabilities:** It will enhance the **management and governance capabilities of the state and its health facilities**; expand the design and coverage of the state's **health insurance** program; improve the quality of health services through certification and better human resource systems; and enable efficient access to medicines and diagnostics.
- **Strengthen Health Insurance Programme:** It will help strengthen the **effectiveness of Meghalaya's health insurance program** known as the **Megha Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS)** – which currently covers 56% of the households.
- **Women Empowerment:** It will enable women **to better utilize healthcare services** at the community level.

## World Bank

- **About:**

- It was created in 1944, as the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IBRD later became the World Bank.
- The **World Bank Group is a unique global partnership of five institutions** working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.

- **Members:**

- It has 189 member countries.
- India is also a member country.

- **Its Five development institutions:**

- **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**
- **International Development Association (IDA)**
- **International Finance Corporation (IFC).**
- **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**
- **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)**

India is not a member of this.

**Source: PIB**

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