

1. Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)

Why in News?

- Recently, Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) was jointly released by Germanwatch, New Climate Institute and Climate Action Network at the COP25.

About CCPI:

- It is for the first time India ranks among the top 10 in CCPI. India is ranked 9th in the high category showing that emissions are still comparatively low.
- In it the first three places of the ranking remain unoccupied. Sweden ranked 4th and Denmark ranked 5th achieved overall high or very high ratings.
- It ranked China in 30th place, the largest global emitter slightly improves its ranking.
- Only two G20 countries, the UK ranked 7th and India ranked 9th, are in the high category.
- And other eight G20 countries are remaining in the worst category of the index. Australia is ranked 56th out of 61, Saudi Arabia and above all the US perform particularly poor.
- The ranking results are defined by a country's aggregated performance on 14 indicators within the four categories "GHG Emissions", "Renewable Energy" and "Energy Use", as well as on "Climate Policy."

2. World's first e-plane

Why in News?

- Recently, the world's first fully-electric commercial aircraft took its test flight in Vancouver, Canada.

About e-plane:

- It is a 62-year-old, six-passenger DHC-2 de Havilland Beaver seaplane was retrofitted with an electric motor.
- It is Invented by Harbour Air.
- It can fly about 160 km on lithium battery power.
- It emits 285 grammes of CO₂ per Km of travel.
- It will be significant cost savings for airlines, not to mention zero emissions.
- It is to be tested further to confirm it is reliable and safe.
- Its electric motor must be approved and certified by regulators.

3. Green Good Deeds

Why in News?

- Recently, Environment Ministry has launched Green Good Deeds campaign.

About Green Good Deed:

- It aims to sensitise the people and students, in particular, about climate change and global warming.
- Its objective is to restore and return the clean and green environment to the next generation.
- It also aims to broad its base with involvement of teachers, students and other voluntary organisations. The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change had drawn up a list of over 500 Green Good Deeds and asked people to alter their behavior to Green Good Behavior to fulfil their Green Social Responsibility.
- These small positive actions to be performed by individuals or organisations to strengthen the cause of environmental protection, were put on a mobile application named “Dr Harsh Vardhan App”.

4. International Financial Service Centre (IFSC) Authority Bill, 2019

Why in News?

- Recently, Lok Sabha has passed International Financial Services Centres (IFSC) Authority Bill, 2019.

About IFSC Authority Bill, 2019:

- It provides jurisdiction for carrying out international financial services domestically.
- Its first centre in Indai is set up at Gujarat International Finance Tec-city (GIFT) in gandhinagar.
- It includes banking , capital markets and insurance sectors .
- It is regulated by multiple regulators, such as the RBI, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- It seeks to ammend 14 acts, including the SEBI Act, the IRDA Act and the PFRDA Act.

5. Land Boundary Agreement (LBA)

Why in News?

- Recently, a report has been released by civil rights organisations the historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA).

About Report:

- It says that the condition of the people is far from what they had imagined.
- It calls for a comprehensive survey should be undertaken to identify and assimilate the people whose names have been left out of the headcount previously, and all the benefits of being a citizen in India should be extended to them
- They are yet to get land records and nothing has been done for providing them employment
- More than four years after, it enclaves states that protest and resistance have become an essential part of their survival in India.

About LBA:

- It is between, the Bangladeshi enclaves in India and Indian enclaves in Bangladesh were transferred on July 31, 2015.
- It involved handing over 17,000 acres of land to Bangladesh in return for 7,000 acres in 162 enclaves in West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya.
- It also required an amendment to the Constitution (the 119th amendment).
- It settles land boundary dispute which dates back to colonial times as India transfers 111 border enclaves to Bangladesh in exchange for 51 enclaves.
- It also settles the question of citizenship for over 50,000 people in these enclaves.
- It remained a major concern of opposition from the north-eastern affected states and west Bengal. Also, most of the area concerned is occupied by the tribes of the NE states and hence the swapping takes away their land rights leaving them more vulnerable.

Significance:

- It will secure the long-stranded boundary and enable to curb the illegal migration, smuggling and criminal acts cross the border.
- It would help those stateless citizens by granting the citizenship from their respective countries.

- It would help settle the boundary dispute at several points in Meghalaya, Tripura, Assam, and west Bengal. It would improve the access to the underdeveloped north-eastern state and would further enhance the developmental works in the region.
- It would help to increase the connectivity with the south-east Asia as part of India's North-eastern policy.

6. Infrastructure Investment Trust

Why in News?

- Cabinet authorises NHAI to set up Infrastructure Investment Trust and monetize National Highway projects.

Highlights:

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the proposal of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways authorizing the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to set up an Infrastructure Investment Trust(s) (InvIT) as per InvIT Guidelines issued by SEBI. This will enable the NHAI to monetize completed national highways that have a toll collection track record of at least one year and the NHAI reserves the right to levy toll on the identified highway. InvIT as an instrument provides greater flexibility to investors and is expected to create the following opportunities:
- Generation of specialized O&M Concessionaires (Operation & Maintenance).
- Attract patient capital (for say 20-30 years) to the Indian highway market, as these investors are averse to construction risk and are interested in investment in assets which provide long-term stable returns.
- Retail domestic savings and corpus of special institutions (such as mutual funds, PFRDA, etc.) to be invested in infrastructure sector through InvIT.

NHAI:

- The National Highways Authority of India was set up by an act of Parliament, the NHAI Act, 1988. It develops, maintains and manages the national highways of India.
- National Highways are the arterial roads of the country for inter-state movement of passengers and goods.
- They traverse the length and width of the country connecting the National and State capitals, major ports and rail junctions and link up with border roads and foreign highways.

- The total length of NH (including expressways) in the country at present is 1,32,499 km.
- While Highways/Expressways constitute only about 1.7% of the length of all roads, they carry about 40% of the road traffic.
- NHAI is mandated to implement the National Highways Development Project (NHDP) which is India's largest ever Highways Project in a phased manner.
- The NHAI also collects fees on national highways, regulates and controls the plying of vehicles on the highways for its proper management.
- It functions under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India.

7. BASIC Ministerial Joint Statement at UNFCCC COP25

Why in News?

- The Ministers of the Brazil, South Africa, India and China group (BASIC) met during the 25th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) in Madrid, Spain.

Highlights:

- The BASIC meeting was chaired by the Chinese Vice Minister of Ecology and Environment.
- The Ministers pledged their full support to the Chilean COP Presidency and expressed their gratitude to the Kingdom of Spain for hosting the meeting.
- They noted that the central mandate of COP25 is to prepare the way for the full implementation of the Paris Agreement in the post-2020 period building upon the climate action efforts under the Convention and its Protocol.
- The Ministers underlined that COP25 should achieve the following outcomes:
 - ✓ To conclude the negotiations related to article 6 of the Paris Agreement;
 - ✓ To mandate a 2-year Work Programme under SBI to assess the pre-2020 progress and gaps, with a view to making the necessary arrangements to fill those gaps;
 - ✓ To urge developed country parties to fulfil their commitments on providing finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support to developing countries;
 - ✓ To interpret and implement the provisions of the Paris Agreement in a holistic and Faithful Manner.
- The Ministers highlighted that BASIC countries are implementing ambitious climate actions based on their national circumstances and have achieved great progress,

contributing significantly to global efforts in combating climate change. This is notwithstanding the insufficient and uneven progress of their domestic development and the multiple challenges all BASIC countries face, including in poverty eradication and achieving socio-economic development and environment protection.

- In 2018, China reduced carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP by 45.8% from 2005 levels, as well as increased the share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption to 14.3%. South Africa has recently implemented a carbon tax and announced a massive renewable energy program in its latest electricity plan.
- India has already achieved a 21% reduction in emission intensity of GDP in 2014 compared to 2005 levels, thereby achieving its pre-2020 voluntary target.
- In 2015, Brazil had already achieved a 58% emission reduction relative to the business as usual scenario set for its NAMAs, thereby overachieving its target of 36%-39% reductions set for 2020.

8. Hill Area Development Programme (HADP)

Why in News?

- The HADP was launched for a period of two years (2018-19 and 2019-20).

HADP:

- Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) is a pilot project launched for the hill district of Tamenglong (later on divided into two districts of Tamenglong and Noney) in Manipur with an outlay of Rs.90 crore for a period of two years (2018-19 and 2019-20).
- As per NER District Infrastructure Index, prepared by the Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER) in 2009, districts of Tamenglong, Chandel & Churachandpur in Manipur are ranked among the lowest in NER (North-Eastern Region).
- The pilot programme is aimed at bringing them on par with the rest of the districts in the region.

District Infrastructure Index (DII):

- The Ministry of DoNER has prepared the DII in order to reduce intra-regional disparity and have better targeting of schemes and projects in the North Eastern States.
- The DII is based on seven broad indicators — transport facilities in terms of road density and road quality, energy, water supply, education, health facilities, communication infrastructure and banking facilities.

- The Ministry has used the composite NER DII to give ranking from 1 to 80 to all the 80 districts. (In all there are 86 districts in eight NE States. However, six new districts, four in Assam and two in Arunachal Pradesh have been clubbed with the old districts from which those were carved out, for the purpose of DII).
- It has also prepared a State-wise composite infrastructure index and district ranking on 14 indicators covering the seven broad indicators.
- Imphal West district in Manipur ranks first while Kiphire in Nagaland ranks the lowest rank 80.

