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**General studies-2**

**Fourth NITI Aayog- DRC Dialogue Held**

The Fourth Dialogue of the NITI Aayog - Development Research Centre (DRC) of the State Council, Peoples' Republic of China was held in Mumbai today.

This is the second ministerial dialogue between China and India since the meeting of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Johannesburg during the BRICS summit in July 2018.

**About NITI-DRC Dialogue:**

NITI-DRC Dialogue is a strong platform for continuous intellectual engagement between the two countries, wherein inputs from sectoral experts help identify and collaborate on key areas of India-China economic cooperation.

**Details of Dialogue:**

- After detailed presentations and in-depth discussions, both sides affirmed their commitment for a more inclusive and truly global world order, with multilateralism as the preferred way forward.
- Emphasis was also laid on innovation and digital economy and it was observed that India and China are poised to become global leaders in digital innovation with rising number of tech startups operating in various sectors.
- On electric mobility, with India envisioning to move towards EVs and ZEVs by 2030, as also showcased by the Global Mobility Summit recently organized by NITI Aayog, avenues for collaboration via joint research and development, public and private investment were discussed.
- It was also agreed that NITI Aayog and DRC will undertake joint research in the areas of WTO reforms, urbanization and frontier technologies, which would be presented in the next Dialogue.

The Fifth edition of the NITI - DRC Dialogue will be held in Wuhan, China in November, 2019.



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## **Shanghai Cooperation Organization Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search & Rescue -2019**

### **Why in News?**

The two-day long preparatory meeting of the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search & Rescue- 2019 began here today.

This marks the first phase of the main exercise scheduled for 21-24 February, 2019 in Delhi by India.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has been entrusted with the responsibility of organizing the exercise by Government of India.

### **Raionale for exercise:**

- Increasing trends of disasters especially hydro-metrological disasters in the region.
- As all the countries are interconnected with each other, hence action in one part of world affects the other part.
- Challenges in disaster management are common in the world. If we are able to prevent and reduce the impact of disasters, it will be a huge global benefit.

### **About SCO:**



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## Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional intergovernmental security alliance involving Russia, China and four Central Asian states



### Milestones

- 1996  
Foundation of the Shanghai Five, the SCO predecessor
- 1999  
Foundation of the Bishkek Group to counter border criminality
- 2001  
Uzbekistan joins SCO
- June 15, 2001  
Shanghai Cooperation Organization Founding Declaration signed
- 2008  
Iran submits official application for full-right SCO membership

### Basic documents

- 2001  
Shanghai Convention on the Struggle against Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism
- 2002  
SCO Charter
- 2002  
Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) Founding Agreement

### Goals and Objectives

- Strengthening of mutual trust and good-neighborly policies between member states
- Promotion of effective cooperation in politics, trade, economics, science, technology, and culture, as well as education, energy, transport, tourism and environmental protection
- Jointly ensuring peace, security and stability in the region
- Advancement to a new democratic, fair and rational global political and economic order

### SCO Structure

- Council of Heads of State
  - Council of Heads of Government
  - Council of Foreign Ministers
  - Meetings of Heads of Ministries and Departments
  - Council of National Coordinators
  - Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure
- Russian Foreign Ministry  
Ambassador-at-Large Vitaly Vorobyov is the Presidential Envoy for SCO Affairs

## **INDO - Japan joint military exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN 2018**

### **Why in News?**

Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN - 2018, a joint military exercise between Indian & Japanese Armies, commenced at Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School, Vairengete, Mizoram, India on 01 November 2018.



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**About the Exercise:**

- The Japanese contingent is being represented by 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, while the Indian side is being represented by 6/1 Gorkha Rifles.
- Approximately one platoon strength each of both the battalions is participating in this exercise.
- The opening ceremony was given a patriotic start by contingents of both the countries singing their respective national anthems.
- Being first of its kind, the 14 days long joint exercise is being conducted from 01 Nov 2018 to 14 Nov 2018.
- The exercise will consist of a balance of indoor classes and outdoor training activities.

**Objective of this exercise :**

- To build and promote army to army relations in addition to exchanging skills and experiences between both the armies.
- Due emphasis will be laid on enhancing tactical skills to fight against global terrorism and on increasing interoperability between forces of both countries which is crucial for the success of any joint operation.
- The exercise will contribute immensely in developing mutual understanding and respect for each other's military.

**General studies-3**

**MSME Support and Outreach Programme**

**Why in news?**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi will launch the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Support and Outreach Programme.

**Focus of programme:**

Access to credit, access to market, hand holding and facilitation support measures etc. for MSME Sector are likely to be announced on this occasion.

**About the Programme:**



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- MSME Outreach Programme will run for 100 days covering 100 Districts throughout the country.
- Various Central Ministers are likely to visit these districts in order to apprise the entrepreneurs about various facilities being extended to MSME Sector by the Government and financial institutions and to come forward and make best use of these facilities including access to credit and market, etc.
- In short, it is expected that this Outreach Programme will help in further boosting the MSME sector since this sector is one of the major generator of employment opportunities and making a significant contribution to the overall growth of the economy.

### **Importance of MSME Sector:**

- MSME- an abbreviation of Micro, Small & Medium enterprises- is the pillar of economic growth in many developed, and developing countries in the world.
- Often rightly termed as “the engine of growth” for India, MSME has played a prominent role in the development of the country in terms of creating employment opportunities-MSME has employed more than **50 million people**, scaling manufacturing capabilities, curtailing regional disparities, balancing the distribution of wealth, and contributing to the **GDP-MSME sector forms 8% of GDP**.
- Though India is still facing infrastructural problems, lack of proper market linkages, and challenges in terms of flow of institutional credit, it has seen a tremendous growth in this sector.

### **Share of MSME in Manufacturing, Exports and Employment sectors in India:**

	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Percentage(%) share</b>
1	Manufacturing	45
2	Exports	40
3	Employment	69

- The contribution of MSME to other sectors has been immensely instrumental.



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- It is the biggest employer after agriculture sector, despite the fact that agriculture sector's contribution to GDP is less than MSME.
- While it contributes about 45% to manufacturing sector, and perhaps 40% to Exports, it forms the highest share of Employment sector in India, contributing around 69% to it.

### **Advantage of MSME sector :**

- Requires less investment, thus creating employment on a large scale, and reducing the employment and underemployment problems.
- Moreover, this sector has survived almost all threats emerging out of still completion from both domestic and international market.

### **Ease of doing Business Report:**

As per the World Bank report 2019 on Ease of Doing Business, India has taken a huge leap of 23 ranks from 100 in 2017-18 to 77 in 2018-19 indicating it is continuing its steady shift towards global standards.

### **Detailed Observation:**

- One of the key indices which has contributed immensely toward this growth is 'Trading across borders' which shows an impressive improvement from 146 rank last year to 80<sup>th</sup> rank this year.
- The Ministry of Shipping has been taking initiatives to improve the parameter of 'Trading across border' as 92% of India's Export- Import trade by volume is handled at ports.
- The report mentions that this is mainly due to India's continued reform agenda, which has made it the top-ranked economy in the region.
- Upgradation of port infrastructure, Improvement of processes, and digitization of document submission has substantially reduced Export/Import cargo handling time at ports which has significantly



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contributed towards improving the trading across border parameter and India's impressive growth in the World Bank's report.

- The World Bank has recognized India as one of the top improvers for the year.

### **Black Hole:**

Scientists using data from India's first dedicated [astronomy](#) satellite, AstroSat, and NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory have found that a black hole in the binary star system 4U 1630-47 spins close to the maximum possible rate.

### **What are Black Holes?**

- Relatively smaller black holes are exotic end states of massive stellar cores, said astronomers led by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Mumbai.
- The gravity of such a collapsing core is so strong that its entire mass is crushed into a point, according to the research accepted for publication in *The Astrophysical Journal*.
- This point, however, cannot be directly seen, because nothing, not even light, can escape from a region around it, thus justifying the name of the object.
- Surprisingly, astronomical black holes are the simplest known objects in the universe, because they can be fully characterised by only two properties, mass and spin rate.
- Therefore, measurements of these two properties are uniquely important to probe some extreme aspects of the universe, and the fundamental physics related to them.

### **About AstroSat:**

- AstroSat was launched in 2015 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- It is the first dedicated astronomy satellite of India, and the SXT aboard AstroSat is the first Indian X-ray telescope.

### **Mission**



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Astrosat is a proposal-driven general purpose observatory, with main scientific focus on:

- Simultaneous multi-wavelength monitoring of intensity variations in a broad range of cosmic sources
- Monitoring the X-ray sky for new transients
- Sky surveys in the hard X-ray and UV bands
- Broadband spectroscopic studies of X-ray binaries, [AGN](#), [SNRs](#), clusters of galaxies, and stellar coronae
- Studies of periodic and non-periodic variability of X-ray sources