



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

GS-1

STARTALK

Why in News?

A programme funded by NASA in the U.S. has produced a series of videos about popular archaeological sites and institutions in India.

Significance:

- The videos come with lesson plans in [Hindi](#), to aid in teaching the language internationally using themes of science and technology .
- The videos focus on scientific innovations at various sites like Amer Fort palace and Hawa Mahal in Jaipur, the rust-resistant [Iron Pillar in Delhi](#), UNESCO Heritage site [Qutub Minar](#), the [Chand Bawri stepwell](#) and the [Jaipur Foot](#), a prosthetic given to impoverished amputees in 80 countries for free.
- Each video, designed for learners from middle school through college, employs a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) perspective "to provide interesting and incredibly rich context to create learning experiences that can push learners to the advanced level of Hindi.
-

About the Programme:

- The NASA-funded programme STARTALK made a USD 90,000 grant to Ved Chaudhary, director of the project.
- The programme is supplemented by funding from Chaudhary's New Jersey-based foundation Educators' Society for Heritage of India.
- The programme is administered by the National Foreign Language Centre at the University of Maryland.

About Hawa Mahal & Iron Pillar:

- A Hindu architect designed the honeycomb-patterned Hawa Mahal or 'Palace of Wind,' way back in 1799 when air conditioning units didn't exist. The architect used the 'Venturi effect,' Kumar said, adding that since air enters narrow passages of the building, it increases the wind speed and produces natural cooling.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

- The nearly 24-foot-tall Iron Pillar of Delhi, built in 402 CE, is a testament to the skill of blacksmiths who processed the phosphorus-rich iron to create a protective layer that has withstood centuries of monsoon and summer, the university said.

UN Population Report:

Context:

India is set to overtake China as the most populous country by 2027 and will have almost 1.64 billion inhabitants by 2050, says a [United Nations](#) report, adding that South Asia's opportunity to reap the "demographic dividend" will peak by 2047.

Globally, people aged above 65 are the fastest growing age group, putting pressure on social protection systems as the proportion of the working-age population shrinks.

Important Findings:

- According to the World Population Prospects 2019 report released on Tuesday, India is expected to add 273 million people by 2050, which will be the largest national increase in the world. China, on the other hand, is expected to become smaller, dropping from its current 1.43 billion people to approximately 1.4 billion by 2050.
- However, while India may have the highest absolute increase in numbers, its rate of growth is slowing.
- The Central and the Southern Asia region, of which India is a part, is expected to see a 25% increase in population between now and 2050.
- The rate of population growth is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, where the fertility rate stand at 4.6 births per woman over a lifetime. The region is expected to double its population by mid-century.
- Nigeria is expected to add 200 million people over the next three decades and overtake the U.S. to become the third most populous nation.

Demographic Characteristics:

- Moving from geographical areas to age cohorts, India is still among the countries where the working-age population (25-64 years) is growing faster than other groups, creating an opportunity for accelerated economic growth.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

- However, the “demographic dividend” will peak by 2047 in the region, meaning that countries such as India must rush to invest in education and health, especially for young people, the report says.
- Globally, it’s the post-working-age group that is growing the fastest.
- By 2050, one in six people will be above 65, compared with one in 11 people in 2019. In 2018, for the first time in history, people above 65 outnumbered children under five years of age.
- By 2050, the number of people over 80 is expected to triple to 426 million.
- This trend has also led to falling proportions of working-age people to support an ageing population. By 2050, almost 50 countries are expected to have less than two working-age people to support every person above 65.

Ageing impact:

- “These low values underscore the potential impact of population ageing on the labour market and economic performance as well as the fiscal pressures that many countries will face in the coming decades as they seek to build and maintain public systems of health care, pensions and social protection for older persons,” says the report.

GS-2

12th ReCAAP ISC capacity building workshop

Why in News?

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) will be co-hosting 12th Capacity Building workshop with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) here on June 19-20, 2019.

What is RECAAP?

- The ReCAAP is the first regional Government-to-Government agreement to deal with piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia.
- Presently 20 countries are members of ReCAAP. India played an active role in the setting up and functioning of ReCAAPISC along with Japan and Singapore.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

- Union Government has designated ICG as the focal point within India for ReCAAP. India has hosted this workshop earlier in November 2011 at Goa and December 2017 at New Delhi.

Areas of Cooperation:

- Information sharing, capacity building and mutual legal assistance are the three pillars of co-operation under the ReCAAP agreement.
- An ISC has been established at Singapore to collate and disseminate the information among the contracting parties and the maritime community.
- Capacity building workshop is organised annually by the ISC and is co-hosted by one of the contracting parties.

Aim of Workshop:

- The main objective of this workshop is to share updated situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia and best practices of Asian countries.
- The workshop also aims to deepen the knowledge of participants on various issues related with piracy and armed robbery such as international laws, prosecution process, forensics and emerging threats.

UN Report on open defecation

Why in News?

India has made great gains in providing basic sanitation facilities since the start of the millennium, accounting for almost two thirds of the 650 million people globally who stopped practising open defecation between 2000 and 2017.

However, a monitoring report by UN organisations released on Tuesday also shows that there has been absolutely no growth in the population with access to piped water facilities over that period, while large inequalities remain between rural and urban areas.

Salient observations of Report:

- As for drinking water, the Joint Monitoring Programme report by UNICEF and WHO shows that India has increased the percentage of its population



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

with access to a protected drinking water source less than 30 minutes away, from 79% in 2000 to 93% in 2017.

- However, the percentage of households getting piped water has remained stagnant at 44% over the 17-year period.
- With regard to sanitation, India's record has been better. The country is responsible for almost single-handedly dragging the world towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal of ending open defecation.
- The South Asian region, including India, accounted for almost three-fourths of the population who stopped defecating in the open between 2000 and 2017, according to the report.
- Of the 2.1 billion people who gained access to basic sanitation services over this time period globally, 486 million live in India.

Importance of Sanitation:

- The human right to sanitation implies that people not only have a right to a hygienic toilet but also have a right not to be negatively affected by unmanaged faecal waste.
- This is most relevant to poor and marginalized groups who tend to be disproportionately affected by other people's unmanaged faecal sludge and sewage," says the report, highlighting inequalities beyond toilet access.

-

GS-3

Plastic pollution;

Why in News?

Group of 20 environment ministers agreed on Sunday to adopt a new implementation framework for actions to tackle the issue of marine plastic waste on a global scale, the Japanese government said after hosting the two-day ministerial meeting.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

Environment and energy ministers of the Group of 20 major economies met this weekend in Karuizawa, northwest of Tokyo, ahead of the G20 summit in Osaka, western Japan, on June 28-29.

Issues to be discussed:

- One of the top issues was ocean plastic waste as images of plastic debris-strewn beaches and dead animals with stomachs full of plastic have sparked outrage, with many countries banning plastic bags outright.

Framework to address the Issue:

- The new framework is aimed at facilitating further concrete action on marine waste, though on a voluntary basis, after the G20 Hamburg Summit in Germany adopted the "G20 action plan on marine litter" in 2017.
- Under the new framework, G20 members will promote a comprehensive life-cycle approach to prevent and reduce plastic litter discharge to the oceans through various measures and international cooperation.
- They will also share best practices, promote innovation and boost scientific monitoring and analytical methodologies.

Japan plans to host the first meeting under the new framework this autumn when officials of environment ministers in the G20 countries are due to meet for the G20 Resource Efficiency Dialogue.

Black tiger shrimps

Why in News?

Ending a decade's slide in the production of black tiger shrimps, [Kerala](#) is experiencing a comeback of the top healthy seafood, thanks to a much-needed initiative of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) launched earlier this year.

What has been done?

- The MPEDA's efforts to revive the production of black tiger shrimps on a mass sale of its seeds have been receiving encouraging feedback, according to authorities with the statutory body that functions under the Union Governments Ministry of Commerce & Industry.



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 19-June-2019

- The mass sale of seeds since the past 100 days shows a rapidly growing interest among the farmers to raise the disease-free variety.
- The Kochi-headquartered MPEDA had on February 18 begun supplying black tiger shrimp seeds from its new multi-species [aquaculture](#) complex (MAC) at Vallarpadam.
- Today, the black tiger prawn supplied from the nine-acre MAC has been showing 'excellent' performance in various parts of the State.

Background:

- It was from 2010 that the black tiger shrimp, an endemic species to south-east Asia, began to face a slump in its traditional reputation as a major variety of cultivated shrimp item in India.
- That was after aquaculture farmers in the country began to focus on growing the exotic *vannamei* species of shrimps in a big way.

About MPEDA;

- The **Marine Products Export Development Authority** (MPEDA) is a [Government of India](#) company headquartered at [Kochi](#). It was constituted on 20 April 1972, under the *Marine Products Export Development Authority Act 1972 (No.13 of 1972)*.
- The role envisaged for the MPEDA under the statute is comprehensive - covering fisheries of all kinds, increasing exports, specifying standards, processing, marketing, extension and training in various aspects of the industry.
- MPEDA functions under the [Department of Commerce, Government of India](#) and acts as a coordinating agency with different Central and State Government establishments engaged in fishery production and allied activities