



Daily Current Affairs Dated On 12-July-2019

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Iran Nuclear deal:

Why in News?

[Iran](#) on Monday began enriching its stockpile of uranium to 4.5% purity, breaching the terms of the 2015 nuclear deal that Washington abandoned last year. This comes days after Iran exceeded the 300-kg limit to its low-enriched uranium stockpile, breaching another cap set by the nuclear deal.

Reasons:

- These moves come as part of a series of aggressive actions by the U.S. and Iran.
- It began last year when the U.S. unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions that have hit the Iranian economy.
- Iranian oil exports have fallen drastically and it has put its economy in a precarious situation.
- Oil exports dropped from 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd) to about 300,000 bpd in the first three weeks of June after the U.S. withdrew the waivers it had granted to a few countries, including India, to import oil from Iran.
- Iran has urged the remaining signatories of the deal to come up with an effective solution to help it circumvent U.S. sanctions.
- It had earlier threatened to exceed 20% in enrichment of uranium if Europe had not made any progress by July 7.
- Once 20% enrichment is reached, enriching it to weapon-grade levels of 90% is only a short step.

Why did the deal fall apart?

- Officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) it was signed by Iran, the five countries of the UNSC (the U.S., the U.K., France, China and Russia), Germany and the EU.
- The Islamic Republic was suspected of developing nuclear weapons surreptitiously; a charge that it denied.
- Under the deal, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear capabilities and, in return, international sanctions would be lifted.



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- As per the deal, Iran reduced the number of its centrifuges used for enriching uranium by two-thirds, restricted its uranium enrichment to 3.67%, and removed the core of its heavywater facility in Arak.
- In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the deal stating it did not make an effort to curb Iran's "sponsoring of terrorism" abroad and its ballistic missiles programme.

Did Europe try to save the deal?

- Europe launched a new trade mechanism called Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) to continue trade with Iran in a non-dollar basis.
- But INSTEX covers only humanitarian goods such as medicine, water, and food supplies, which are not affected by the sanctions anyway.
- INSTEX does not help in trading oil, which is the lifeline of the Iranian economy.
- Iran and other signatories met in Vienna on June 28 to work out a solution, but saw no breakthrough.
- The European leaders declared INSTEX operational after the conference, but Iran opines that although it is a positive development, Europe can 'do more'.
- Circumventing U.S. sanctions via an alternative trade mechanism is not very simple as it is the European companies and not the government that have to trade with Iran, in the face of U.S. antagonism.

Poverty status in India:

Context:

India lifted 271 million people out of poverty between 2006 and 2016, recording the fastest reductions in the multidimensional poverty index values during the period with strong improvements in areas such as "assets, cooking fuel, sanitation and nutrition," a report by the [United Nations](#).



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Salient observation of report:

- The 2019 global Multidimensional [Poverty](#) Index (MPI) from the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) was released on Thursday.
- The report said that in the 101 countries studied — 31 low income, 68 middle income and 2 high income - 1.3 billion people are “multidimensionally poor”, which means that poverty is defined not simply by income, but by a number of indicators, including poor health, poor quality of work and the threat of violence.
- The report identifies 10 countries, with a combined population of around 2 billion people, to illustrate the level of poverty reduction, and all of them have shown statistically significant progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1, namely ending poverty “in all its forms, everywhere”.
- The 10 countries are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru and Vietnam.
- The report said that within these 10 countries, data shows that 270 million people moved out of multidimensional poverty from one survey to the next.

Global Scenario:

- This progress was largely driven by South Asia. In India, there were 271 million fewer people in poverty in 2016 than in 2006, while in Bangladesh the number dropped by 19 million between 2004 and 2014,” it said.
- The report noted that of the 10 selected countries for which changes over time were analysed, India and Cambodia reduced their MPI values the fastest — and they did not leave the poorest groups behind.
- India’s MPI value reduced from 0.283 in 2005-06 to 0.123 in 2015-16.
- Noting the examples of pro-poor reduction, where the poorest regions improved the fastest, the report said that Jharkhand in India reduced the incidence of multidimensional poverty from 74.9% in 2005-06 to 46.5% in 2015-16.
- Ethiopia, India and Peru significantly reduced deprivations in all 10 indicators, namely nutrition, sanitation, child mortality, drinking water, years of schooling, electricity, school attendance, housing, cooking fuel and assets.

Status in India:



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- In 2005-2006, the population in India living in multidimensional poverty stood at about 640 million people (55.1%) and this reduced to 369 million people (27.9%) living in poverty in 2015-16.
- India saw significant reductions in number of people who are multidimensionally poor and deprived in each of the 10 indicators over this time period.
- India reduced deprivation in nutrition from 44.3% in 2005-06 to 21.2% in 2015-16, child mortality dropped from 4.5% to 2.2%, people deprived of cooking fuel reduced from 52.9% to 26.2%, deprivation in sanitation from 50.4% to 24.6%, those deprived of drinking water reduced from 16.6% to 6.2 %.
- Further more people gained access to electricity as deprivation was reduced from 29.1% to 8.6%, housing from 44.9% to 23.6% and assets deprivation from 37.6% to 9.5%.

Uneven poverty reduction:

- The trends in these 10 countries also shine a light on where poverty reduction has been uneven, despite the good progress overall.
- "In all 10 countries rural areas are poorer than urban areas.
- In Cambodia, Haiti, India and Peru poverty reduction in rural areas outpaced that in urban areas — demonstrating pro-poor development — and in Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of the Congo poverty fell at the same speed in rural and urban areas, it added.
- The report also showed that children suffer poverty more intensely than adults and are more likely to be deprived in all 10 of the MPI indicators, lacking essentials such as clean water, sanitation, adequate nutrition or primary education.
- Child poverty fell markedly faster than adult poverty in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Haiti, India and Peru.

Globally, of the 1.3 billion people who are multidimensionally poor, more than two-thirds of them—886 million— now live in middle-income countries. A further 440 million live in low-income countries.

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Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS):



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What is it?

The AFRS, being implemented by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), is a component of Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), a national database of crimes and criminals.

The data will only be accessible to law enforcement agencies.

Concerns about Privacy:

- The Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS) would not violate privacy of citizens and is only being developed to help the law enforcement agencies to identify criminals, missing children and unidentified bodies in a scientific and speedy manner.

Details:

- The NCRB had last week invited bids for AFRS that would even “capture face images from CCTV feed and generate alerts if a blacklist match is found,” triggering privacy concern.
- At present, there are 7.71 lakh cases of missing persons in the CCTNS database that includes 98,000 children.
- “This software will be used only in respect of such persons who figure on the CCTNS data base -- accused persons, prisoners, missing persons and unidentified found persons including children, and unidentified dead persons -- and is not going to be used on any other data base
- Just as fingerprint matching is used in investigation by the police by matching fingerprint found in crime scene with the fingerprint database, the AFRS will add another information layer to investigation by allowing matching photograph of suspect or missing person with the photo database of CCTNS.

Helping against crime:

- In case a person is suspected or arrested for crime during investigation, his photo can also be matched over the CCTNS data base for previous criminal records.
- This will ensure that criminals and terrorists will no longer be able to hide behind fake identities.



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- Presently, police undertake manual search for matching photographs on CCTNS data base.

Artificial Intelligence:

Why in News?

The Union Health Ministry is working towards using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a safe and effective way in public health.

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said in Lok Sabha on July 12 that to address gaps in India's AI ecosystem and realise its economic impact, the central government has prioritised building AI technology capabilities.

Potential in health sector:

- The potential of AI in public health is being explored in our country. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is working towards using AI in a safe and effective way in public health in India/
- A few of the initiatives undertaken by the central government to use AI in public health are Imaging Biobank for cancer, for which the NITI Aayog with Department of Bio-Technology (DBT) aims to build a database of cancer-related radiology and pathology images of more than 20,000 profiles of cancer patients with focus on major cancers prevalent in India.
- NITI Aayog is working on using AI for early detection of diabetic retinopathy.
- NITI Aayog is currently in the process of developing institutional mechanism, funding framework and other such steps to realise India's AI aspirations.
- NITI Aayog, after consultation with various ministries and leading academicians, institutions, practitioners and industry players, released India's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in June 2018.

Ease of doing business:

Why in News?



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Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, said the government will increase its focus on agriculture infrastructure.

“Ease of doing business and ease of living should apply to farmers,” she said.

In this regard, Ms. Sitharaman suggested that farmers take up zero-budget farming. ”

What is zero-budget farming?

- Zero-budget farming is a form of natural farming which is neither chemical-loaded nor organic with its reliance on manure.
- It is a form of gardening as a self-sustainable practice with minimum external intervention.
- This concept was first propagated 25 years ago by Subhash Palekar as a movement for farmers who were in debt due to the Green Revolution and is now being used by a large number of farmers across the country.

Hayabusa:

Why in News?

Japan’s Hayabusa2 probe made a “perfect” touchdown on Thursday on a distant asteroid, collecting samples from beneath the surface in an unprecedented mission that could shed light on the origins of the solar system.

“We have never gathered sub-surface material from a celestial body further away than the moon,” he added.

Details of Mission:

- The brief landing on Thursday is the second time Hayabusa2 has touched down on the desolate asteroid Ryugu, some 300 million kilometres from Earth.
- Ryugu, which means “Dragon Palace” in Japanese, refers to a castle at the bottom of the ocean in an ancient Japanese tale.
- The complex multi-year Hayabusa2 mission has also involved sending rovers and robots down to the surface.



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- Thursday's touchdown was intended to collect pristine materials from beneath the surface of the asteroid that could provide insights into what the solar system was like at its birth, some 4.6 billion years ago.
- To get at those crucial materials, in April an "impactor" was fired from Hayabusa2 towards Ryugu in a risky process that created a crater on the asteroid's surface and stirred up material that had not previously been exposed to the atmosphere.
- Hayabusa2's first touchdown was in February, when it landed briefly on Ryugu and fired a bullet into the surface to puff up dust for collection, before blasting back to its holding position.
- The touchdown is the last major part of Hayabusa2's mission, and when the probe returns to Earth next year to drop off its samples, scientists hope to learn more about the history of the solar system and even the origin of life on Earth.

Background:

- Hayabusa2 is the successor to JAXA's first asteroid explorer, Hayabusa — Japanese for falcon — that returned with dust samples from a smaller, potato-shaped asteroid in 2010.
- It was hailed as a scientific triumph despite various setbacks during its epic seven-year odyssey.
- The Hayabusa2 mission was launched in December 2014, and has a price tag of around \$270 million.