

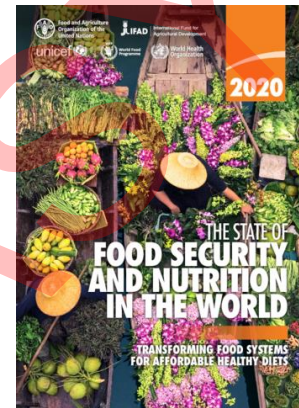
Current Affairs MADE EASY

(15th July to 21st July 2020)

15th July 2020

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report 2020

- The United Nations has released the 'State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World' report, which was jointly prepared by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- **Key Highlights:**
 - It says that around 8.9% of the world population reported hungry in 2019. The report says that it may increase due to COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
 - Africa has the highest number of undernourished. Around 21.3% of children under 5 years of age were stunted, 6.9% were wasted and 5.6% were overweight.
 - At least 340 million children suffered from micro nutrient deficiencies.
 - The report says that the world is not progressing towards Sustainable Development Goals related to eradication of malnutrition and ensuring access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all.



India-European Union Summit

- The 15th India-European Union Summit was held through video conferencing under which India and European Union agreed to boost their ties in the areas of defence, trade and investment.
- **Key Highlights:**
 - The leaders at the summit affirmed their determination to promote multilateralism with United Nations and World Trade Organization (WTO).
 - India and EU discussed the ongoing cooperation under the Clean Energy and Climate Partnership.
 - They also reinforced their cooperation in International Solar Alliance (ISA) and International Platform on Sustainable Finance (IPSF), which will help in environmentally sustainable investments.
 - The leaders at the summit welcomed the signing of India-EURATOM agreement on research and development in nuclear energy.
 - An agreement was also reached to launch a dialogue on maritime security.



COROSURE

- The world's most affordable COVID-19 test kit, named 'COROSURE' which has been developed by IIT Delhi, launched recently. It is a Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) based COVID-19 diagnostic kit. The base price of the kit is Rs. 399.
- The testing cost of the method is greatly reduced as the kit uses a probe-free method to conduct the test.
- Both Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) have approved the test kit. ICMR has approved the kit with highest score and DCGI has approved the kit with highest sensitivity and specificity.
- The kit will also help India achieve its Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan as the kit is developed indigenously.



16th July 2020

PRAGYATA Guidelines

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has launched PRAGYATA Guidelines on digital education. These guidelines will mainly help students who are presently at home due to lockdown.
- The guidelines include eight steps of online learning, which are Plan, Review, Arrange, Guide, Yak (Talk), Assign, Track and Appreciate (PRAGYATA).
- The guidelines provided suggestions to school heads, administrators, parents, and teachers in the planning of digital education as well as physical and mental health wellbeing during digital education.



Demo Days

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog has coordinated and concluded the 'Demo Days' initiative which aimed to identify promising start-ups that have the potential of COVID-19 innovations.
- The initiative was launched in the partnership with Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Start-up India among others.



- Under the initiative, demos were held on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), medical devices and technology solutions. In this, some startups were shortlisted which will receive support in the form of funding, supply chain and logistics and access to manufacturing abilities.

Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)

- The Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying has launched guidelines for Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF). The fund will facilitate incentivization of investments to establish infrastructure for dairy and meat processing.
- The fund will help to increase milk production to 330 million tonnes by 2024.
- **Context:**
 - Under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, Rs 15,000 crores was approved by the Union Cabinet for AHIDF.
 - The Government is to set up credit guarantee fund of Rs 750 crores to achieve the targets in the dairy sector. This is to be managed by NABARD.
- **Note:** Udyami Portal operating under SIDBI has been opened for the beneficiaries of the initiative to register online. It aims to establish dairy and meat processing units.

17th July 2020

Ingenuity

- NASA's Mars Mission which is scheduled to be launched on July 30, 2020, will carry a robotic helicopter named 'Ingenuity'. The helicopter being attached to the mission will check how the conditions on Mars affect aviation. It is the first aircraft to perform controlled flight on another planet.
- NASA's Ingenuity Mars Helicopter will travel with the Perseverance rover through 314 million miles (505 million kilometers) of interplanetary space to get to Mars.
- Perseverance Rover will provide images of Mars. It will collect Martian rocks and dust samples. It will also perform demonstrations of technologies of future Mars mission.



Air Bubble

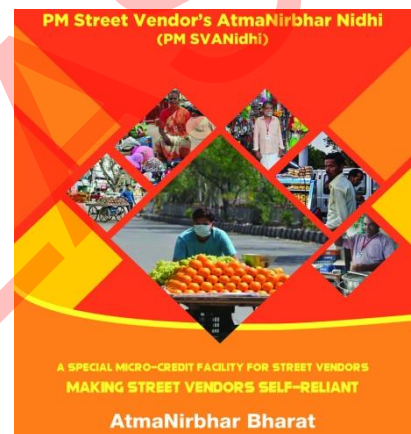
- Air Bubble is a term which refers to transport and people connectivity between specific regions in the world during COVID-19 pandemic, especially between those regions where COVID-19 spread has been contained to similar levels.

- **Context:**
 - The Ministry of Civil Aviation has announced that India is to resume operation of international commercial flights with France and US. It is also expected to sign agreements with UAE and Germany for this.
 - According to the agreement signed, India is to allow only overseas citizens, Indian nationals and a certain category of people with business and diplomatic visas. People with valid tourist visa will not be allowed to enter India by the flights being scheduled.

18th July 2020

SVANidhi Scheme

- Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi) is a credit facility scheme that will help more than 50 lakh urban and rural street vendors. Under the scheme, Rs 10,000 of credit is to be provided to street vendors. They shall return the amount as monthly instalments within a year.
- This will benefit the street vendors largely as they were affected by COVID-19 badly.
- The scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman during her announcement of the package of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- **Context:**
 - PM SVANidhi app has been launched to provide user-friendly digital interface for lending institutions and their functionaries to source and process loan applications of street vendors.
 - The application will help in enabling business correspondents of micro lending institutions, banks, Non-Banking Financial Corporation to get maximum coverage. The application will also provide paper-less lending facilities.
 - The main features of the application include e-KYC (Know Your Customer) of application, real-time monitoring, vendor search in the survey and processing of applicants.



Renewable Energy Export Policy, 2020

- The Andhra Pradesh Government has announced the Renewable Energy Export Policy, 2020, which permits sale of power to other states of India.
- The policy will facilitate establishment of wind, solar and solar-wind hybrid projects in the State.
- It will help in increasing the energy capacity of the State to 120 GW.

- The incentives provided under the policy will seek to establish equipment manufacturing and ancillary facilities related to renewable energy. The developers are to get an exemption from the payment of electricity duty for 10 years.

Madhu Babu Pension Yojana

- Madhu Babu Pension Yojana is a social security scheme launched in Odisha in 2008. It has objective of providing financial assistance to the destitute elderly and differently abled persons in the state.
- It is a merger of two pension schemes namely Disability Pension Rules, 1985 and Revised Old Age Pension Rules, 1989.
- **Context:** Odisha Government has announced that transgenders are to be included under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana. In order to avail the benefits of the scheme, the transgenders should have a certificate issued under Section 6 of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Also, the income of the beneficiary should not be exceed Rs 40,000 per year.
- Under the scheme, around 5,000 transgenders are to receive Rs 500, Rs 700 and Rs 900 per month as pension. The women currently fighting in divorce cases are also to be brought under the scheme.

ASPIRE Portal

- The ASPIRE portal is being developed by International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT). It aims to help in developing a strong and self-reliant automotive industry in India which is in tune with the vision of Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- The portal is to be completely functional to host grand challenges and provide elaborate resource databases.
- ASPIRE is an acronym for Automotive Solutions Portal for Industry, Research and Education.
- **Context:**
 - Union Government has announced that five portals are being developed by different organizations to promote innovation in India. This will help boost Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
 - The portals being developed for BHEL in power sector, CMFTI in manufacturing sector, HMT for machine tools, and ICAT and ARAI in automotive sector.
 - These portals will be launched to bring the problem solvers and solution seekers together. The portal will focus on academia, industry, research institute, startups and experts.

19th July 2020

KURMA App

- The KURMA app was launched in May 2020 on World Turtle Day. The application provides database to identify and help to locate the nearest rescue centre for turtles across the country.
- The application was developed by Indian Turtle Conservation Action Network (ITCAN).
- **Context:** KURMA application has been successfully able to track and report Indian turtles.
- **Turtle Survival Alliance:** The alliance was formed in 2001 in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for sustainable management of tortoises and turtles.



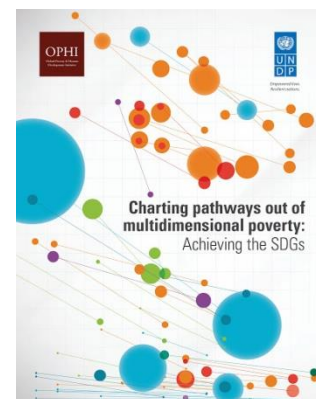
Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC)

- The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) was launched in June, 2020 by 8 democracies, namely United States, UK, Japan, Germany, Canada, Australia, Norway and Sweden. The alliance was formed to counter China's growing global ambitions.
- The countries call China as a big threat to global trade, security and human rights.
- **Context:** The UK military is to station HMS Queen Elizabeth carrier in the Pacific as a part of international alliance to counter China.
- **Background:** Recently, China introduced the Hong Kong Security law, under which China now has control over defence and external affairs matters of Hong Kong. It earned worldwide criticism as it is against the treaty signed between China and Hong Kong (the former colony of UK).



Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2020

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has released the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, 2020.
- It was jointly prepared by UNDP and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).
- The multi-dimensional poverty encloses deprivations experienced by poor people such as health, education, poor quality of work, violence, hazardous living environments and threat of violence.



- **Key Highlights:**

- The report says that around 1.3 billion people in 107 developing countries live in multi-dimensional poverty. Of this more than 10 countries accounted for more than 60% of unvaccinated children.
- Around 273 million people have moved out of multidimensional poverty over 10 years.
- According to the index, India recorded the largest reduction in number of people living in poverty between the period of 2015-19.

COVID-19 Protection System (COPS)

- Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI) of CSIR has unveiled COVID-19 Protection System (COPS) for workplaces. It includes contactless solar based intelligent mask automated dispensing unit cum thermal scanner (IntelliMAST), 360-degree car flusher and touchless faucet.
- **IntelliMAST:** The solar based IntelliMAST is an intelligent surveillance kiosk. It identifies body temperature and also checks if a person is wearing face mask or not. After identifying, it also informs the administrator.
- **360 Degree car flusher:** The system has several specialized nozzle designs to ensure the sanitizer diffused water is evenly spread under and over the car body. It uses sodium hypochlorite solution.
- **Touchless Faucet:** It dispenses liquid soap and water from the same faucet in a time gap of 30 seconds. It works under 10 watts of power supply.

20th July 2020

Hope Satellite

- The United Arab Emirates has launched the first ever mission to the Mars. The spacecraft is to land at Mars in February 2021. It is first mission to Mars from any Arab country.
- The satellite named “Hope” is to be placed in orbit between 20,000 and 43,000 kilometres above the surface of Mars. The satellite will complete its orbit once in 55 hours inclined at an angle of 25 degrees.
- The Hope Satellite has three instruments on board to carry out scientific goals. The satellite will study oxygen and hydrogen levels in the Martian atmosphere.



Consumer Protection Act, 2019

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 passed by Parliament came into force on July 20, 2020. The Act will empower consumers and help them to protect their rights through its provisions such as Consumer Protection Council and Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission.
- The Act replaces Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
- **Key Highlights**
 - Under the Act, the Central Consumer Protection Authority has been empowered to conduct investigations on violation of consumer rights, order recall of unsafe goods, misleading advertisements, impose penalties on endorsers, publishers or manufacturers, etc.
 - As per the Act, the celebrities can be fined up to Rs 10 lakhs for promoting misleading products. Besides, strict actions shall be taken against advertisers for generating misleading content. However, no action can be taken against the media through which the advertisement is being published.
 - The Act makes it mandatory for the E-Commerce entities to acknowledge the receipt of consumer complaints within 48 hours. Also, they have to redress the complaint within one month from the date of receipt.
 - The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 defined six major consumer rights as follows:
 1. Right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices.
 2. Right to sue the celebrity for misleading endorsements.
 3. Right to be protected against marketing goods and services those are hazardous to life and property.
 4. Right to be informed about the quantity, quality, standard, purity and price of goods and services.
 5. Right to be assured to access variety of goods at competitive prices.
 6. Right to claim product liability action under the Act on account of harm caused to consumers due to defective products.

21st July 2020

Manodarpan

- Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to launch the 'Manodarpan' initiative which will provide psychosocial support to the students for their mental well-being. It to be launched under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan,
- It is essential to provide focus on mental health of the students along with academic importance. The initiative will increase overall productivity of working-age population in the country.



Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Yojana

- The Delhi Government has launched Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Yojana which aims to help the eligible beneficiaries get ration delivered at home.
- Under the scheme, the Delhi government will deliver wheat, rice, flour and sugar in hygienically packed bags which are to be delivered at door step of the people.
- The scheme is to run for 6-7 months.

RAISE

- The Union Ministry of Power has launched RAISE initiative which is an acronym for 'Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency'. It is a joint initiative of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and US Agency for International Development (USAID).
- It is developed under MAITREE (Market Integration and Transformation Programme for Energy Efficiency) which is operated under US-India bilateral partnership between USAID and Ministry of Power.
- The RAISE initiative will alleviate issues of bad air quality in workspaces all over the country. The initiative focuses to improve indoor air quality, energy efficiency and thermal comfort in the office air conditioning.