

GOVERNANCE

Chandler Good Government Index

Recently, India has been ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI). Finland has topped the list.

Key Points

About:

- The CGGI is released by the Chandler Institute of Governance which is a private nonprofit organization headquartered in Singapore.
- The Index classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes.
- Each country is measured across over 50 open data points. The index focuses on seven pillars:
 1. Leadership and foresight.
 2. Robust laws and policies.
 3. Strong institutions.
 4. Financial stewardship.
 5. Attractive marketplace.
 6. Global influence and reputation.
 7. Helping people rise.

Objective: It supports government leaders and public officers worldwide in nation building and strengthening public institutional capacity through training, research and advisory work. It also shares tools and frameworks for effective policymaking, and empowers nations to provide better public services for citizens.

Performance of South Asian Countries: India ranked 49th, Sri Lanka 74th, Pakistan 90th and Nepal 92nd.

Indian Initiatives for Good Governance:

- **Good Governance Index:** It has been launched by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions to determine the status of governance in the country. It assesses the impact of various interventions taken up by the State Government and UTs.
- **Good Governance Day:** It is celebrated annually on 25th December to mark the birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Its aim is to create awareness of accountability in government among the citizens of India.
- **National e-Governance Plan:** It has the vision to “make all government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man.”
- **Right to Information Act, 2005:** It plays an effective role in ensuring transparency in governance.
- **Other Initiatives:** Setting up of NITI Aayog, Make in India programme, Lokpal, etc.

Governance

- **About:** It is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance.
- **Good Governance:** It is an approach to government that is committed to creating a system founded in justice and peace that protects individual’s human rights and civil liberties.

Eight Characteristics of Good Governance as Identified by the United Nations:



NATIONAL NEWS**1.Crop Diversification**

Recently, a top agriculture economist has suggested that the best chance of Crop Diversification is through animal agriculture/animal husbandry.

Key Points

About: Crop diversification refers to the addition of new crops or cropping systems to agricultural production on a particular farm taking into account the different returns from value-added crops with complementary marketing opportunities.

Cropping System: It refers to the crops, crop sequences and management techniques used on a particular agricultural field over a period of years.

Types: Major cropping systems in India are sequential-cropping, monocropping, intercropping, relay Cropping, mixed-cropping and alley cropping.

Benefits:

- **Increase Income on Small Land Holding:** At present, 70-80% farmers have land below 2 hectare. To overcome this, existing cropping patterns must be diversified with high value crops such as maize, pulses, etc. The Government of Haryana has also supported this by announcing that farmers switching to other alternate crops instead of paddy will be paid Rs. 7000 per acre incentive (Mera Pani - Meri Virasat Scheme).
- **Economic Stability:** Crop diversification can better tolerate the ups and downs in price of various farm products and it may ensure economic stability of farming products.
- **Mitigating Natural Calamities:** Sudden adverse weather conditions like erratic rainfall, drought, hail, incidence of insect and pest disease. Under this situation, crop diversification through mixed cropping may be useful.
- **Balance Food Demand:** Most of the Indian population suffers from malnutrition. Most of the girl children have anemia. Including crops like pulses, oilseed, horticulture, and vegetable crops can improve socio economic status by adding quality to the food basket and also improve soil health with the aim of food safety and nutritional security. The Government of India has now targeted to increase the area under pulses and oilseeds through National Food Security Mission (NFSM).
- **Conservation:** Adoption of crop diversification helps in conservation of natural resources like introduction of legume in rice-wheat cropping system, which has the ability to fix atmospheric Nitrogen to help sustain soil fertility. Soil Health Card (SHC) provides information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

Challenges:

- Majority cropped area in the country is completely dependent on rainfall.
- Sub-optimal and over-use of resources like land and water resources, causing a negative impact on the environment and sustainability of agriculture. Animal agriculture is the second largest contributor to human-made Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions after fossil fuels and is a leading cause of deforestation, water and air pollution and biodiversity loss.
- Inadequate supply of seeds and plants of improved cultivars.
- Fragmentation of land holding less favouring modernization and mechanization of agriculture.
- Poor basic infrastructure like rural roads, power, transport, communications etc.
- Inadequate post-harvest technologies and inadequate infrastructure for post-harvest handling of perishable horticultural produce.
- Very weak agro-based industry. Weak research - extension - farmer linkages.
- Inadequately trained human resources together with persistent and large scale illiteracy amongst farmers.
- Host of diseases and pests affecting most crop plants. Poor database for horticultural crops.
- Decreased investments in the agricultural sector over the years.

Other Related Initiatives: Refrigeration System Pusa-FSF, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Mega Food Parks, Seed-Hub Centres,

2.PowerGrid Infrastructure Investment Trust:

The Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL) launched its Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) - PowerGrid Infrastructure Investment Trust (PGInvIT).

Key Points
About PGInvIT:

- This is the first time a state-owned entity (PGCIL) is monetizing its infrastructure assets through the InvIT route.
- This will be only the third InvIT to be listed in the Indian markets, after IRB InvIT and India Grid Trust, both of which went public in 2017.
- The InvIT route was proposed by the Centre as an alternative fundraising route for state-run companies to manage funding requirements without having to depend on government support.

Power Grid: It is a public limited company under the administrative control of the Ministry of Power. It is the largest power transmission company in India. It started its commercial operation in the year 1992-93 and is today, a Maharatna company.

About Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT):

- It is a collective investment scheme similar to a mutual fund, which enables direct investment of money from individual and institutional investors in infrastructure projects to earn a small portion of the income as return.
- InvITs can be treated as the modified version of REITs (real estate investment trusts) designed to suit the specific circumstances of the infrastructure sector.
- It is created to hold income-generating and operational infrastructure assets such as roads, power transmission lines, gas pipelines, etc. These assets have long-term contracts with strong counterparties that provide a steady cash flow over the long term – typically 15-20 years.
- The InvITs are regulated by the SEBI (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014.
- An InvIT consists of four elements:
 1. Trustee has the responsibility of inspecting the performance of an InvIT.
 2. Sponsor(s) are promoters of the company that set up the InvIT.
 3. Investment Manager is entrusted with the task of supervising the assets and investments of the InvIT.
 4. Project Manager is responsible for the execution of the project..

Advantages of Setting up InvITs:

For sponsors (infrastructure developers), InvITs provide a convenient route to monetize revenue-generating assets, unlock equity gains, and deleverage their balance sheets (i.e. to reduce debts). InvITs also present a more tax-friendly structure. Being a trust, all income received by the InvIT from underlying assets receives a pass-through treatment and is not taxable at the InvIT level. For investors such as banks, financial institutions, pension funds, insurance companies, and even retail investors, InvITs provide a good low-risk investment opportunity.

Disadvantages of InvITs:

InvITs are sensitive to changes in regulatory and tax law.
 Infrastructure assets are not inflation-linked in India.

A high rate of inflation has a significant impact on the performance of InvITs.

INTERNATIONAL RELATION
The Armenian Genocide

Recently, the US President officially recognised the mass killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915-16 as an act of genocide. The Armenian diaspora marks 24th April as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

Key Points

Genocide (Meaning): According to Article II of the United Nations (UN) Convention on Genocide of December 1948, genocide has been described as carrying out acts intended “to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group”. Raphael Lemkin, the Polish lawyer, coined the term “genocide” in 1943.

Armenian Genocide:

- The Armenian Genocide is called the first genocide of the 20th century.
- It refers to the systematic annihilation of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1917.
- After the First World War broke out in November 1914, the Ottoman Turks participated in the war, siding with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian empire.
- The Ottoman Turks believed the Armenians would side with Russia in the war. This resulted in the Ottoman Turks engaging in a mass-removal campaign of Armenians from the border areas along the Eastern Front.

- On 24th April, 1915, Ottoman Turkish government officials arrested and executed thousands of Armenian intellectuals. It was the start of the Armenian Genocide.
- Armenian families, including small children, were forced to walk for days without food, water and shelter in the deserts of Syria and Arabia.
- According to estimates, approximately 1.5 million Armenians died during the genocide, either in massacres and in killings, or from ill treatment, abuse and starvation.

Significance of this Recognition:

- The acknowledgement by the US government will have little legal impact on Turkey, other than becoming a cause for embarrassment for the country and giving other countries the impetus to also acknowledge the genocide.
- According to the Armenian National Institute, 30 countries officially recognise the Armenian Genocide.

Turkey's Response:

- Such moves would only set back the already strained relationship between US and Turkey, both of whom are North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies.
- Ties between the US and Turkey have been strained over a range of issues that include Turkey's purchase of Russian S-400 defence systems, foreign policy differences with regard to Syria, human rights and other intersecting legal issues.
- Turkey has acknowledged that atrocities were committed against Armenians, but denies it was a genocide (which comes with legal implications) and challenges the estimates that 1.5 million were killed.

India's Stand:

- India, that has not formally recognised the Armenian Genocide has primarily adopted this stance in the interests of its wider foreign policy decisions and geo-political interests in the region.
- India does not have any domestic law on genocide, even though it has ratified the United Nations Convention on Genocide.
- This was even observed by the Delhi High Court in State v. Sajjan Kumar (2018). The case concerned the mass killing of Sikhs during the anti-Sikh riots in 1984 in Delhi — and throughout the country.

Other Related News to Armenia:

- **Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict:** Recently, Russia has brokered a new peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Both countries have been in a military conflict over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh in the South Caucasus. Nagorno-Karabakh, the centre of the conflict, is located within Azerbaijan but is populated, mostly, by those of Armenian ethnicity (and mostly Christian compared to the Shia Muslim majority Azerbaijan).

2. Project Dantak

Recently, Project DANTAK which is one of the oldest Projects of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) commemorated its Diamond Jubilee in Bhutan. Over 1,200 DANTAK personnel laid down their lives while constructing important infrastructure in Bhutan.

Key Points**About:**

- Project DANTAK was established on 24th April 1961.
- It was a result of the visionary leadership of the third King of Bhutan and then Prime Minister of India Jawahar Lal Nehru.
- DANTAK was tasked to construct the pioneering motorable roads.

Achievements:

- **Road Connectivity:** Over the years, the Project has completed approximately 1600 km of blacktopped roads and 120 km of tracks in Bhutan with 5000 meters of bridges over them.
- **Other Projects Executed:** Include the construction of Paro Airport, Yonphula Airfield, Thimphu – Trashigang Highway, Telecommunication & Hydro Power Infrastructure, Sherubtse College, Kanglung and India House Estate.
- **Medical and Education Facilities:** The medical and education facilities established by DANTAK in far flung areas were often the first in those locations.
- **Food Outlets:** The food outlets along the road introduced the Bhutanese to Indian delicacies and developed a sweet tooth in them.

Indo-Bhutan Relationship:

- **Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1949:** The Treaty provides for, among other things, perpetual peace and friendship, free trade and commerce and equal justice to each other's citizens. In 2007, the treaty was re-negotiated, and provisions were included to encourage Bhutan's sovereignty, abolishing the need to take India's guidance on foreign policy.
- **Multilateral Partnership:** Both of them share multilateral forums such as South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) etc.
- **Economic Partnership:** Mutually beneficial hydro-power cooperation with Bhutan forms the core of bilateral economic cooperation. The 720 MW Mangdechhu was commissioned in August 2019. HEPs namely, 1200 MW Punatsangchhu-I, 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II and Kholongchhu HEP (600 MWs) are under various stages of implementation.
- **India is Bhutan's largest trading partner.**

Border Roads Organisation:

- BRO was conceived and raised in 1960 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for coordinating the speedy development of a network of roads in the North and the North Eastern border regions of the country.
- It works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence.
- It has diversified into a large spectrum of construction and development works comprising airfields, building projects, defence works and tunneling and has endeared itself to the people.

Some Recent Achievements:

1. **Atal Tunnel:** It is located in Himachal Pradesh's Rohtang pass. It connects Solang Valley near Manali to Sissu in Lahaul and Spiti district.
2. **Nechiphu Tunnel:** Foundation stone was laid on the Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.
3. **Daporijo Bridge:** It is over Subansiri river in Arunachal Pradesh.
4. **Kasowal Bridge:** It is over Ravi river. It connects Kasowal enclave in Punjab along the India - Pakistan border to the rest of the country.
5. **Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie Road:** It connects Leh via the villages of Darbuk and Shyok at southern Shyok River Valley, with the Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) post near the northern border.
6. **Barsi Bridge (longest bridge on Manali-Leh highway):** It is built on Bagga river, which joins with Chandra river at Tandi in Lahaul to flow down into Jammu & Kashmir as the Chenab.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS**World Military Spending during Covid-19**

According to the latest data published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the military spending across the world rose to USD 1,981 billion in 2020, during Covid-19 pandemic. The 2.6% increase in world military spending came in a year when the global GDP shrank by 4.4% largely due to the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key Points**Global Scenario:**

- Military spending as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), reached a global average of 2.4% in 2020, up from 2.2% in 2019.
- The five biggest spenders in 2020, which together accounted for 62% of global military expenditure were: the United States>China>India>Russia>the United Kingdom.
- US: 2020 was the third consecutive year of growth in US military spending, following seven years of continuous reductions.
- This reflects growing concerns over perceived threats from strategic competitors such as China and Russia, as well as the Trump administration's drive to bolster what it saw as a depleted US military.
- **China:** China's spending has risen for 26 consecutive years, the longest series of uninterrupted increases by any country in the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database.
- Nearly all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) saw their military burden rise in 2020.

- The countries with the biggest increases in military burden among the top 15 spenders in 2020 were Saudi Arabia, Russia, Israel and US.

Regional Scenario:

- **Europe:** Military spending across Europe rose by 4.0% in 2020. Germany and France were the 7th and 8th largest spender globally.
- **Asia and Oceania:** In addition to China, India (USD 72.9 billion), Japan (USD 49.1 billion), South Korea (USD 45.7 billion) and Australia (USD 27.5 billion) were the largest military spenders in the Asia and Oceania region. All four countries increased their military spending between 2019 and 2020 and over the decade 2011-20.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Military expenditure in sub-Saharan Africa increased by 3.4% in 2020 to reach USD 18.5 billion. The biggest increases in spending were made by Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Nigeria, all in the Sahel region, as well as Uganda.
- **South America:** Military expenditure in South America fell by 2.1%. The decrease was largely due to a 3.1% drop in spending by Brazil, the sub region's largest military spender.
- **Middle Eastern Countries:** The combined military spending of the 11 Middle Eastern countries for which SIPRI has spending figures decreased by 6.5% in 2020. Eight of the nine members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for which SIPRI has figures cut their military spending in 2020. Angola's spending fell by 12%, Saudi Arabia's by 10%, and Kuwait's by 5.9%. Non-OPEC oil exporter Bahrain also cut its spending by 9.8%.

India's Scenario:

- India was the third largest military spender in the world in 2020, behind only the US and China.
- India's military expenditure was USD 72.9 billion and it accounted for 3.7% of the global military expenditure share.
- India's spending since 2019 grew by 2.1%. The increase can be largely attributed to India's ongoing conflict with Pakistan and renewed border tension with China.
- India has to maintain an over 15-lakh strong armed forces because of the two active and unresolved borders with China and Pakistan.
- With a weak domestic defence-industrial base, India of course continues to languish in the strategically-vulnerable position of being the world's second-largest arms importer just behind Saudi Arabia.
- India accounted for 9.5% of the total global arms imports during 2016-2020.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

- This think tank is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- It was established in 1966 at Stockholm (Sweden).
- It provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM
Cyber Crime Volunteer

The Union Home Ministry has said it does not maintain a centralised list of volunteers enrolled under the cybercrime volunteer programme since the police is a "State subject" under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Key Points:

- The Ministry, through its cybercrime grievance portal, aims to raise a group of "cybercrime volunteers" to flag "unlawful content" on the Internet.
- A digital rights group, the Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF), has said the programme enables a culture of surveillance and could create potential social distrust by encouraging civilians to report the online activities of other citizens
- The programme was expected to include 500 volunteers, 200 "cyber awareness promoters" and 50 "cyber experts".
- Cybercrime Volunteers Programme is a constituent of The National Cybercrime Ecosystem Management Unit.
- The unit is part of the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) scheme launched by Union Home Minister in January 2020.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q. How does the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020 differ from the existing EIA Notification, 2006. (250 words)

Ans:

Introduction

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has proposed a draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification 2020, that seeks to replace the current EIA notification which goes back to 2006.

Body**Major Differences Between Draft And Current Notification**

- Post-Facto Approval: From a stark departure from the current notification, the new draft allows for post-facto approval for projects.
- It means that the clearances for projects can be awarded even if they have started construction or have been running phase without securing environmental clearances.
- Post facto approval is the derogation of the fundamental principles of environmental jurisprudence and violation of the “precautionary principle,” which is a principle of environmental sustainability.
- Public Consultation Process: The draft notification provides for a reduction of the time period from 30 days to 20 days for the public to submit their responses during a public hearing for any application seeking environmental clearance.
- If adequate time is not given for the preparation of views, comments, and suggestions to those who would be affected by the project, then such public hearings would not be meaningful.
- Compliance Report Issue: The 2006 notification required that the project proponent submit a report every six months, showing that they are carrying out their activities as per the terms on which permission has been given.
- However, the new draft requires the promoter to submit a report only once every year.
- Diluting EIA Process: Unlike the existing notification, with the draft notification, the central government gets the power to categorize projects as “strategic.”
- Once a project is considered as strategic, the draft notification states that no information related to such projects shall be placed in the public domain.
- Further, the draft notification states that the new construction projects up to 1,50,000 square meters (instead of the existing 20,000 square metres) do not need “detailed scrutiny” by the Expert Committee, nor do they need EIA studies and public consultation.

Conclusion: The draft EIA rule 2020, envisages consolidating the existing EIA rules and has the potential of alleviating some ambiguity in the present law. However, it must not compromise the existing principles of environmental sustainability.

DAILY QUIZ

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW):

1. It is an independent autonomous international organisation.
 2. It is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).
 3. It was awarded the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize “for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons”. Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- a) 2
 - b) 1,2
 - c) 1,2,3
 - d) 3 only

Q.2 With reference to SVAMITVA scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme.
2. The scheme is piloted by the Ministry of Rural Development.
3. Under the scheme, residential land in villages will be measured using drones to create a non-disputable record.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1,3
- b) 2,3
- c) 3,1

d) 1,2,3

Q.3 Consider the following statements regarding Ways and Means Advances (WMA).

1. It is a facility for which both Centre and States can borrow money from the RBI.
2. These borrowings are meant purely to tide over temporary mismatches in cash flows of receipts and expenditures.
3. The interest rate on WMA is lower than RBI's repo rate.

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 2 only
- b) **1,2**
- c) 1,2,3,4
- d) 1,3

Q.4 The Commercial Crew Program (CCP) sometimes mentioned news recently is related to

- a) Deep-sea exploration
- b) **Space exploration**
- c) Intercontinental Transport Services
- d) Himalayan Impact Expedition

5. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) functions under the control of the

- a) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- b) **Ministry of Defence**
- c) Ministry of Home Affairs
- d) Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises



VANIK-IAS
Exclusive Coaching for UPSC/OPSC