

**SOCIAL ISSUE****World Food Day 2021**

India is ranked at 71st position in the Global Food Security (GFS) Index 2021 of 113 countries. Earlier, India was ranked 101st position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021.

**Key Points****About the Index:**

- **Developed by:**
  1. The GFS Index was designed and constructed by London-based Economist Impact and is sponsored by Corteva Agriscience.
  2. The 2021 GFSI is the tenth edition of the index. It is published every year.
- **Calculation:**
  1. It measures the underlying drivers of food security based on the following factors:
    - ✓ Affordability
    - ✓ Availability
    - ✓ Quality and Safety
    - ✓ Natural Resources and Resilience
  - It considers 58 unique food security indicators including income and economic inequality - calling attention to systemic gaps and actions needed to accelerate progress toward United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030.

**Findings of the Report (India and World):**

- **Top Rankers:** Ireland, Australia, the UK, Finland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Canada, Japan, France and the US shared the top rank with the overall GFS score in the range of 77.8 and 80 points on the index.
- **India's Rank:**
  1. **Overall Position:** India held 71st position with an overall score of 57.2 points on the GFS Index 2021 of 113 countries
  2. **In Comparison to Neighbouring Countries:** It fared better than Pakistan (75th position), Sri Lanka (77th position), Nepal (79th position) and Bangladesh (84th position). But the country was way behind China (34th position).
    - ✓ However, over the past 10 years, India's incremental gains in overall food security score were lagging behind that of Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. India's score improved only by 2.7 points to 57.2 in 2021 from 54.5 in 2012 when compared with Pakistan by 9 points (to 54.7 in 2021 from 45.7 in 2012).
  - Pakistan scored better than India in the food affordability category and Sri Lanka was even better. On the remaining 3 factors, India scored better than Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

**Concerns:**

- Global food security has decreased for the second year in a row after seven years of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal of achieving zero hunger by 2030.
- While countries have made significant strides toward addressing food insecurity in the past ten years, food systems remain vulnerable to economic, climatic, and geopolitical shocks.

**Suggestions:**

- Action is imperative at all levels—local, national, and global—to end hunger and malnourishment and ensure food security for all.
- To meet these present and emerging future challenges requires that investments in food security are sustained – from innovation in climate-resilient crop yields to investing in programs to assist the most vulnerable.

**Related Government Initiatives:**

1. Eat Right India Movement
2. POSHAN Abhiyan
3. Food Fortification
4. National Food Security Act, 2013
5. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme
6. National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)

**INTERNATIONAL RELATION****Review of IMF Role**

Recently, in the backdrop of the 2021 annual meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leading experts have suggested the need to review the role of the IMF. With a continuing trend of emerging markets increasing their share in global output or GDP, there is a need for review of the quota system.

- Apart from this, there is a need for maintaining data integrity amid the World Bank discontinuing its Ease of Doing Business reports.
- The IMF was set up along with the World Bank after the Second World War to assist in the reconstruction of war-ravaged countries. The two organisations were agreed to be set up at a conference in Bretton Woods in the US. Hence, they are known as the Bretton Woods twins.

### **Key Points**

#### **Need for IMF Reforms:**

- **Quota Reforms:**
  1. The IMF's quota system was created to raise funds for loans.
  2. Each IMF member country is assigned a quota, or contribution, that reflects the country's relative size in the global economy. Each member's quota also determines its relative voting power as well as its borrowing capacity.
- ✓ This makes wealthy countries have more say in the making and revision of rules.
- ✓ This leads to the problem where countries that grow economically have tended to become under-represented as their voting power lags behind. For eg: BRICS countries.
- Quotas are denominated in Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), the IMF's unit of account. SDR is a potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members. SDRs can be exchanged for these currencies.
- The IMF's Board of Governors conducts general reviews of quotas at regular intervals (no more than five years apart).
- Restructuring of the Article IV Consultations: Under Article IV consultations, the IMF holds bilateral discussions with its members usually every year and its staff prepares a report. Article IV consultation is the most powerful instrument and it needs to be restructured and sharpened to make it more useful by using the new technologies and access to public data.

#### **Proposed Reforms**

- **Reforming Quota System:** The quota reform would reflect the changed economic realities, especially with regard to the increasing capabilities of the developing nations.
  1. For example, the quota of BRICS countries should increase and that of European Union Countries should decrease.
  2. Also, it is important that the new quota formula give more weight to PPP GDP to better reflect the true economic strength of emerging markets and developing economies.
- **Helping Lower Income Countries:** The IMF should focus on lower income countries and support other developing countries' market funds raising activities, as its Article IV consultation reports are utilised by credit rating agencies, impacting the fund raising capacity of countries like India. Most of the Asian countries including India can now raise funds on their own on the basis of strength of their forex reserves, and do not have to necessarily go to the IMF like in the past to tide of crisis.
- **Management Reforms:** The management system in the IMF should be modified.
  1. In the IMF and World Bank group, there is an informal arrangement, that the head of the IMF should be a European and the head of the World Bank should be an American.
  2. The time has come to reconsider this, and the IMF probably should really rethink it.

### **INDIAN HERITAGE**

#### **Kushinagar International Airport**

The Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh is the latest entrant in India's list of international Airports. The airport is expected to provide seamless connectivity to people from South east and East Asian countries for Buddhist Pilgrimage Tourism. Kushinagar is the centre of the Buddhist circuit, which consists of pilgrimage sites at Lumbini, Sarnath, Gaya and others.

### **Key Points**

#### **Kushinagar Airport and Cultural Diplomacy:**

- The inauguration of Kushinagar International airport is set to be a landmark in the India-Sri Lanka relations.

- On the occasion of Aiprort's inauguration, Sri Lanka will present to India photographs of two mural paintings:
  - One Mural Painting shows Arahata Bhikkhu' Mahinda, son of Emperor Ashoka delivering the message of the Buddha to King Devanampiyatissa of Sri Lanka.
  - The other shows the arrival of 'Theri Bhikkhuni' Sanghamitta, the daughter of the Emperor, in Sri Lanka, bearing a sapling of the 'sacred Bodhi tree' under which Siddhārtha Gautama is believed to have attained enlightenment.
- The Buddhist circuit reflects the use of soft power in India's foreign policy.
- The emphasis on Buddhist diplomacy, will help counter increasing Chinese influence in Sri Lanka and improve people to people relations (especially in the context of the aftermath of Sri-lankan Civil War).
- Further, the Buddhist faith, due to its emphasis on peaceful co-existence and its wide pan-Asian presence, lends itself well to soft-power diplomacy.

#### **Spread of Buddhism in Sri Lanka**

- Buddhism was first brought to Sri Lanka by a mission sent out from eastern India during the reign of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka (c. 273–232 BCE).
- The leader of the mission to Sri Lanka, Mahendra (Mahinda), is described as Ashoka's son.

#### **About Buddhist Circuit:**

- In 2014-15, the Ministry of Tourism launched the Swadesh Darshan scheme with a vision to develop theme-based tourist circuits on the principles of high tourist value. The Ministry has identified Buddhist Circuit as one of the fifteen thematic circuits for development under the scheme.
- The Buddhist circuit is a route that follows in the footsteps of the Buddha from Lumbini in Nepal to Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh in India, where he died. Buddhist pilgrims consider Kushinagar a sacred site where, they believe, Gautama Buddha delivered his last sermon and attained 'Mahaparinirvana' or salvation.
- Investing in the Buddhist Circuit is the result of first-time collaboration between the Government of India's Ministry of Tourism, the State Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the private sector, Buddhist monasteries and sects, and the World Bank Group.

#### **Buddhist Circuit**



#### **Other Initiatives Taken to Promote Buddhist Sites:**

- PRASHAD Scheme:** 30 projects for development of infrastructure have been undertaken under the PRASHAD Scheme.
- Iconic Tourist Sites:** Buddhist Sites at Bodhgaya, Ajanta & Ellora have been identified to be developed as Iconic Tourist Sites.
- Buddhist Conclave:** It is organised every alternate year with the objective of promoting India as a Buddhist Destination and major markets around the globe.
- Diversity of Languages:** Signages have been installed in Chinese language at buddhist monuments in Uttar Pradesh and in Sinhala language (official language of Sri Lanka) at Sanchi monuments in Madhya Pradesh.

**IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM**

**Allium Negianum: A New Species of Onion**

Recently, a newly discovered plant *Allium negianum*, in Uttarakhand has been confirmed to belong to the genus that includes many staple foods such as onion and garlic. A staple food makes up the dominant part of a population's diet. They are eaten regularly—even daily—and supply a major proportion of a person's energy and nutritional needs.

**Key Points**

**About:**

- Allium is one of the largest genera in Amaryllidaceae. Amaryllidaceae is a family of herbaceous (connected with plants that have soft stems), mainly perennial and bulbous flowering plants.
- The genus Allium contains about 1,100 species worldwide, including many staple foods like onion, garlic, scallion, shallot and chives.
- The genus naturally occurs in dry seasons in the northern hemisphere and South Africa but the newly-identified species is restricted to the region of the western Himalaya.
- The scientific name *Allium negianum* honours the late Dr. Kuldeep Singh Negi, an eminent explorer and Allium collector from India. They are useful for various medicinal purposes.

**Distribution in India:**

- The Indian Allium is distributed in different eco-geographical areas of the temperate and alpine regions of Himalayas.
- The Indian Himalayan region has two distinct centers of Allium diversity, the Western Himalaya (over 85% of total diversity) and the Eastern Himalaya (6%), covering the alpine-sub temperate region.

**Condition of Growth:**

- It grows at 3,000 to 4,800 m above sea level and can be found along open grassy meadows, sandy soils along rivers, and streams forming in snow pasture lands along alpine meadows.

**Threat:**

- Indiscriminate harvesting of its leaves and bulbs for seasoning may pose a threat to its wild populations.

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns. The space industry in the country has the ability to foster a thriving ecosystem of entrepreneurs and private businesses. Comment in the light of launch of Indian Space Association (ISpA). (250 words)**

**Ans:**

**Introduction**

Indian Space Association or ISpA is a premier industry association of space and satellite companies. In line with the recent measures taken to expand the role of private players in the space sector, the Indian Space Association aims to serve as a body that brings public and private entities together so that they can work in tandem for the expansion of the Indian space programme.

India is lagging in harnessing the power of private innovation in the space domain. This not only limits the exploitation of space for economic development, but has serious national security implications.

**Body**

**Potential of private sector in the space sector**

- Today, the space industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, moving from Space 3.0 to Space 4.0, driven by changes in motivations, actors, roles, and technologies.
- While Space 3.0 has been characterized by large government investments and public-public collaborations, Space 4.0 is a more democratized and accessible field with more public-private and private-private collaborations.
- It entails the emergence of a plethora of small to medium-sized private companies.
- As military uses of space and prestige projects like Moon-landing emerged, major private sector entities already in the aviation industry like Boeing and Lockheed won space contracts in the US.
- Significant expansion of satellite-based telecommunication, navigation, broadcasting and mapping, and lent a significant commercial dimension to the space sector.
- As the digital revolution in the 21st century transformed the world economy, the commercial space sector has begun to grow in leaps and bounds.



- The global space business is now estimated to be around \$ 400 billion and is expected easily rise to at least trillion dollars by 2040.
- One example of the rise of private sector companies in the space sector is SpaceX run by the US entrepreneur Elon Musk. Hired for a resupply mission for the space station, it now launches more rockets every year than NASA.
- The entry of private sector has begun to drive down the cost-per-launch through innovations such as reusable rockets.
- India, however, is quite some distance away from adapting to the unfolding changes in the global space business.
- In its early years, India's space programme that was constrained by lack of resources found innovative ways of getting ahead in space.
- Although the ISRO encourages private sector participation in the national space programme, its model is still very 20th century — in terms of governmental domination.

#### **Challenges for private space entities in India:**

- **Monopoly:** In India 'Space' means Indian Space Research Organisation. Globally the technology is highly protected because of its dual use capability. Even if it was not, it would be prohibitively expensive.
- **Funding:** A major challenge in setting up a space business in India is funding. Space industry is capital intensive and upstream activities come with a long gestation period.
- **Investor's Dilemma:** The lack of clarity among the investors and lack of the ecosystem required for significant contribution is a challenge for the investors.
- **Lack of Regulation:** India is a party to the Outer Space Treaty, where one of the fundamental requirements laid upon states is the supervision of space activities within its borders, the country did not have any formally legislated laws. This is a potential roadblock for commercialization.
- **Growth Challenges:** Scaling up, international marketing and funding are challenges.
- **Lack of Support:** The Indian ecosystem has neither incubation support nor pointers to seek support of leaders such as ISRO for space start-ups.
- Political and bureaucratic hurdles limit private space operations in India.
- Low in-house capacity of ISRO restricts them to very few launches in a year. Privatization can offload 30-40% of the work and help them work more efficiently.

#### **Way forward:**

- India should have national space activities legislation which takes on board all stakeholders.
- A public-private partnership (PPP) model can be looked into to realise ISRO's workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), with a joint venture between ISRO and the private sector.
- In the UK, space ventures are treated as a complement to big organizations and not a competitor. This should be encouraged in India too.
- A supportive international partner and likeminded local partners helps to set up a space business.
- The idea should be to let the private industry build their own facilities after gaining enough expertise.
- ISRO has built a space technology park spread over 25 acres in Bengaluru where the entire range of facilities have been set up for use by the industry.

#### **Conclusion**

The private sector already supplies majority of the sub-systems in satellite manufacturing. This can be further scaled up into other activities with proper regulation and partnership of the ISRO and private sector. The country must deregulate the space sector to encourage private enterprise if we are to compete in the new space economy.

#### **DAILY QUIZ**

Q1. With reference to the Parliament of India, consider the following statements:

1. A private member's bill is a bill presented by a Member of Parliament who is not elected but only nominated by the President of India.
2. Recently, a private member's bill has been passed in the Parliament of India for the first time in its history.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2**

Q2. From the ecological point of view, which one of the following assumes importance in being a good link between the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats?

- a. Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve**
- b. Nallamala Forest
- c. Nagarhole National Park
- d. Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve

Q3. Consider the following statements in respect of Trade Related Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce (TRAFFIC):

- 1. TRAFFIC is a bureau under United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- 2. The mission of TRAFFIC is to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only**
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q4. Consider the following statements:

With reference to the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles of State Policy constitute limitations upon

- 1. legislative function.
- 2. executive function.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2**

Q5. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The Factories Act, 1881 was passed with a view to fix the wages of industrial workers and to allow the workers to form trade unions.
- 2. M. Lokhande was a pioneer in organizing the labour movement in British India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only**
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2