

INTERNATIONAL RELATION**INDIA-DENMARK GREEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

Recently, India and Denmark agreed to further strengthen the Green Strategic Partnership with a focus on green hydrogen, renewable energy and wastewater management.

Major Highlights of the Meeting**Focus on various sectors**

- A number of agreements covering sectors such as green shipping, animal husbandry and dairying, water management, energy, and cultural exchange were inked after the bilateral talks.

Smart Laboratory on Clean River Water and a Centre of Excellence on Smart Water Resources Management:

- Both countries welcomed the intention of both countries to deepen and expand the existing cooperation in the field of safe and secure water to meet present and future demand through a holistic and sustainable approach.
- They are looking forward to launching new initiatives, including a Smart Laboratory on Clean River Water in Varanasi and a Centre of Excellence on Smart Water Resources Management.

Centre of Excellence on Green Shipping:

- Both countries welcomed the Letter of Intent on the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Green Shipping, which will further strengthen bilateral maritime cooperation.

Centre of Excellence on Dairy:

- They also agreed to expand the cooperation on agriculture by a Joint Declaration of Intent establishing among others a Centre of Excellence on Dairy.

International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions:

- India and Denmark also confirmed their continued collaboration in the field of antimicrobial resistance.
- India conveyed its acceptance of the Danish invitation to join the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) as a Mission Partner.

Global Digital Health Partnership:

- Denmark confirmed its accession to the Global Digital Health Partnership on India's invitation to improve public health and well-being through evidence-based digital technologies.

Climate action

- They welcomed the international agreement at COP26 on the need for accelerated climate action for holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below two degrees above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level.

Green Strategic Partnership

- India and Denmark both have ambitious goals within the climate agenda.
- India is the world's third-largest CO2 emitter and by 2030, the country is expected to have doubled its carbon emissions.
- Denmark has the ambition to reduce CO2 emissions by 70 per cent by 2030 and aims to undertake international leadership on SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy.
- By partnering, India and Denmark will demonstrate to the world that delivering on ambitious climate and sustainable energy goals is possible.
- The Green Strategic partnership builds on and consolidates the existing agreement establishing a Joint Commission for Cooperation between India and Denmark.
- Joint action plan for five years from 2021 to 2026 for the implementation of the "green strategic partnership that was firmed up.

Significance of Green Strategic Partnership**Energy efficiency and renewable energy:**

- To take global leadership in pushing for an ambitious green energy transition and demonstrate the pathways to achieving it, focusing both on energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Fighting air Pollution:

- Denmark's companies with niche technologies and expertise have offered to help India in meeting its air pollution control targets, including in the key area of tackling the problem of burning crop stubble.

Green growth:

- The partnership is a mutually beneficial arrangement to advance political cooperation, expand economic relations and green growth, create jobs and strengthen cooperation on addressing global challenges and opportunities; with focus on an ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Promote a rule-based multilateral system:

- This includes strong multilateral cooperation to face the urgency to step up global efforts to combat the global challenges on energy and climate change and common commitment to the International Energy Agency, the International Renewable Energy Agency and the International Solar Alliance.

Sharing healthy best practices:

- Expanding dialogue and sharing best practices on health policy issues, including on epidemics and vaccines, especially to combat Covid-19 and future pandemics.
- They agreed to work on expanding commercial opportunities for businesses by creating more favourable environments for the life science sector, including research collaborations.

Way Ahead

- Continue to expand the scope of the cooperation, adding new dimensions to it.
- Initiate new partnerships in the field of health.
- By partnering, India and Denmark will demonstrate to the world that delivering on ambitious climate and sustainable energy goals is possible.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM**1. Unique Disability ID (UDID) Scheme**

The Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry asked states to speed up the implementation of the UDID scheme for persons with disabilities (PwD) in the 75 districts across India, which have been selected for their connection with the freedom struggle.

About Unique Disability ID (UDID) scheme

- It was initiated by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.
- It aims at building a holistic end-to-end integrated system for the Issuance of Universal ID & Disability Certificates for persons with Disabilities with their identification and disability details.
- It is being implemented with a view to creating a National Database for PwDs, and to issue a Unique Disability Identity Card to each person with disabilities.

Objective

- To enable the PwDs to obtain the new UDID card / Disability Certificate to avail of schemes and benefits.

Significance

- It will encourage transparency, efficiency and ease of delivering the government benefits to the person with disabilities and also ensure uniformity.
- It will also help in streamlining the tracking of the physical and financial progress of beneficiaries at all levels of the hierarchy of implementation – from village level, block level, District level, State level and National level.

2. AIP Technology

Recently, the French company Naval Group announced that it is unable to participate in India's P-75I project due to conditions mentioned in the request for proposal (RFP) related to the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system.

About AIP Technology

- Submarines are essential of two types: Conventional and Nuclear.
 - Conventional submarines use a diesel-electric engine and must surface daily for oxygen for fuel combustion.

- If fitted with an Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system, the sub needs to take in oxygen only once a week.
- Many naval powers, including India, have acquired nuclear-powered submarines for deep-sea operations.
- AIP is a mechanism that allows the batteries to be charged even while the boat is submerged.
 - However, even with AIP, the submarine needs to surface every three weeks or so.
- It offers the possibility of increasing underwater endurance by a factor of up to 3 or 4, which reduces the indiscretion ratio significantly.
- It has a force multiplier effect on the lethality of a diesel-electric submarine as it enhances the submerged endurance of the boat severalfold.
 - Fuel cell-based AIP has merits in performance compared to other technologies.
- India has been working to develop AIP technology indigenously as well.
 - There are different types of AIP mechanisms available and India is looking for the P-75I project to be AIP based on fuel cells.
 - These cells convert chemical energy into electrical energy, recharging the batteries of the submarine.

Significance

- It helps to make the diesel generator less dependent on surface air.
- It is known to deliver better performance compared to other technologies.

Downsides

- Installing AIP increases the length and weight of the boats, requires pressurised liquid oxygen (LOX) storage on-board and supply for all three technologies”.
- Also, “MESMA and the Stirling engine have some acoustic noise from moving parts; and the submarine’s unit cost [increases] by around 10%.”

3. Akshaya Tritiya

Recently, Akshaya Tritiya is also known as Akha Teej was celebrated.

About Akshaya Tritiya

- It is a very important Hindu festival celebrated every year, as per the Hindu calendar, on Tritiya Tithi (third day) of Shukla Paksha of Vaishakh month.
 - It is also popularly known as Akha Teej.
- It is a highly auspicious and important day for members of the Hindu and Jain communities.
- The celebration of Akshaya Tritiya is linked to Lord Krishna’s faith and friendship with Sudama.
- It is also stated that Lord Parshuram, Lord Vishnu’s sixth incarnation, celebrates his birthday on Akshaya Tritiya.

Significance

On this day, both shoppers and sellers prepare for good commerce. Hindus and Jains, in particular, spend the day with joy and zeal, buying gold in the hopes of attracting good fortune.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q1. Reducing cost of doing business is one of the most important aspects of ease of doing business. Discuss. (150 words)

Introduction

Reducing the cost of doing business is the key to the success of the economy to continue to grow in an acceptable way in light of the current conditions. Improving the ease of doing business continues to be a major priority. But even more important is the cost of doing business. For this, action is needed to reduce government policy-induced pricing distortions which add to the cost of doing business. In our open economy, these pricing distortions have become a source of competitive disadvantage to domestic value addition and job creation. India’s relative lack of success in manufacturing and employment generation is the outcome.

Body

Background

- Diesel prices in India are 20.8 per cent higher than those in China, 39.3 per cent higher than in the US, 72.5 per cent higher than Bangladesh and 67.8 per cent higher than in Vietnam.
- This is largely because of heavy taxation — total taxes on diesel account for over 130 per cent of the base price in India.
- Including fuels under GST would lower costs for businesses owing to input tax credit even if taxation levels continue to remain high.
- Likewise, in the case of electricity, prices for businesses in India were higher by around 7-12 per cent vis-à-vis those in the US, Bangladesh or China and by as much as 35-50 per cent as compared to those in South Korea.
- High fuel and power costs impart a significant cost disability to energy-intensive sectors such as steel, aluminium and cement, where they account for between 25 and 40 per cent of the cost of production.
- This, in turn, leads to a competitive disadvantage for sectors such as auto, durable goods and construction, which consume these intermediate goods.

Aspects of cost of doing business

- **Energy and fuel:** Energy is the basic requirement of the modern industrial economy and the key to competitiveness. Its pricing distortions are onerous. But the real adverse impact is on the cost of road transport of goods which makes the cost of logistics about twice that of our competitors.
- **Logistics:** For instance, the port turnaround time in India is 64 hours, compared to 10 hours in Taiwan, 12 hours in Korea, 19 hours in Singapore, 20 hours in China, and 22 hours in Malaysia.
 - There are many other roadblocks that exist in India, reducing the competitiveness of industries. Land, labour, capital, power and logistics are major factors to increase the cost of doing business in India.
- **Electricity pricing:** As the Railways have been unable to raise passenger fares to cover their costs, they need to cross subsidise passenger traffic from goods freight. They, therefore, charge about twice the actual cost for carrying coal to thermal power plants. This distortion adds to the cost of coal for thermal power plants and further increases the price of electricity for the distribution companies.
 - They, in turn, cross subsidise most domestic household consumption by having higher tariffs for industrial users.
 - This increases the cost of industrial production vis-a-vis competitors in other countries.
 - The consequential loss of competitiveness results in lower manufacturing growth and the creation of fewer jobs.
- **Cost of land:** Not only is it difficult to get land for business enterprises, but prices are also higher than they need to be.
 - India has had a real estate asset price bubble with return on land assets by way of rents or returns on farming being around 2%, far lower than the cost of capital.

Conclusion

Private investments can create jobs for our young generation. Government jobs are a mirage. The sooner we realise this and start grappling with feasible pathways for reducing the cost of doing business and getting a surge in private investment which creates jobs, the better. Our demographic dividend is fast becoming a nightmare while we struggle to leverage this to our advantage.

Meanwhile, reducing the cost of business along with increasing the ease can make India a much more favourable destination in establishing new businesses, that too, at a time when many companies are looking forward to shifting their bases from China. Neighbours believe in its nuclear doctrine through effective confidence building measures.

DAILY QUIZ

1. Which of the following treaty designated Antarctica as a “ Natural reserve, devoted to peace and science
 - a) Antarctica Treaty 1959
 - b) Convention for the conservation of Antarctica Seals 1972
 - c) Convention on the conservation of Antarctica Marine living Resource 1980

d) Protocol on Environment Protection to Antarctic Treaty

2. Consider the following statements
1. One percent of India's commercial fishing comes from Antarctica region belongs to India's quota
 2. The recent domestic bill on Antarctica set a target of five percent share to India's commercial fishing in next five years and make it more sustainable.
- Choose the correct statement/s using the code given below
- a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both **d) Neither 1 nor 2**
3. "Amery ice self" is recently seen in news is belongs to which of the following
- a) Antarctica** b) Russia c) Arctic d) Himalaya
4. Recently Ministry of jal shakti lunched SUJALAM 2.0 campaign for Gray water Management on World water day , with reference to this consider the following statements
1. Gray water does not contain Faecal contamination and does not include black water from toilet
 2. The theme for the year 2022 is 'Ground Water : Making the invisible visible.
- Choose the correct statement/s using the codes
- a) 1 only b) 2 only **c) Both** d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following is/are part of NORDIC country
1. Faroe island
 2. Green land
 3. Aland
 4. Finland
- Choose the correct answer using the codes
- a) 1 and 4 only b) 2 and 3 only c) All except 3 **d) All of the above**
6. Consider the following statements
1. All the Nordic countries are part of Scandinavian countries.
 2. Among the common countries between Nordic and Scandinavian , only Norway share border with Russia.
 3. Among the Nordic countries Finland is the only country share border with Russia .
- Choose the correct statement/s using the code given below
- a) 1 and 2 only b) 1 only **c) 2 only** d) 3 only
7. Examine the following statements
1. All the countries which border Baltic sea are called Baltic countries
 2. Denmark and Sweden are the only Nordic countries are also part of Baltic countries
- Choose the incorrect statement using the code given below
- a) 1 only b) 2 only **c) Both** d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. In recent context which of the following item is topped in India's Agricultural Import
- a) Vegetable oil** b) Fresh fruit c) Pulses d) Cashew
9. 'Right to be silent' is protected under which of the following Article of Indian constitution?
- a) Article 20** b) Article 21 c) Article 22 d) Article 13
10. Which of the following portals are related to MSMEs.
1. Udyam portal
 2. E-shram
 3. NCS portal
 4. Aseen portal
 5. DESH-stack e portal
- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only (b) 1, 2 and 4 only (c) All **(d) 1, 2, 3, 4 only**