



Current Affairs of the Day

PAPER 2:

➤ Governance:

1. TULIP (The Urban Learning Internship Programme) portal

➤ International Relations:

1. India-China dialogue to focus on three areas
2. India-Australia meet strengthens ties
3. India vows \$15 mn to vaccine alliance

PAPER 3:

➤ Economy:

1. Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 3018 – 29

➤ Disaster Management:

1. State of India's Environment in Figures 2020 report



India-China dialogue to focus on three areas

- The first-ever talks between Indian and Chinese Lieutenant-Generals over the weekend to ease the tension on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) will focus on eastern Ladakh with the aim of moving back to the earlier positions.
- The focus of the talks will be on the Galwan area, Pangong Tso and Gogra.
- The agenda will focus on the recent use of force, getting back to the positions before May 5 and subsequent de-induction of troops by China.

Pangong Tso:

- Pangong Tso is an important focus area as Chinese troops have taken positions in large numbers at the Finger 4 area.
- India holds one-third of the 135 km boomerang-shaped lake. India has always held areas in Finger 4, while it claims areas so far as Finger 8.
- Major scuffles have broken out in this area in the past and on May 5, which were acknowledged by the Army. There was at least one more major scuffle later in this area, the sources said.

Galwan area:

- Galwan has never been an area of contention, and sources said this would be strongly conveyed to the Chinese delegation. India and China have identified 23 “disputed and sensitive” areas along the LAC and both Galwan in Ladakh and Naku La in Sikkim do not figure on the list.
- In the month-long stand-off at several areas along the LAC in Ladakh and Sikkim, Chinese troops have moved in large numbers into Indian territory at points in Pangong Tso, Galwan and Gogra in Ladakh and Naku La in Sikkim, besides the massive build-up on its side.

Small drop in joblessness in 2018-19: PLFS

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 3018 - 29:

- It's released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Key Findings:

- India's unemployment rate improved from the 45-year high of 6.1% in 2017-18 to 5.8% in 2018-19.
- The labour force participation rate also improved marginally, from 36.9% in 2017-18 to 37.5% in 2018-19. The labour force is defined as people who are working, or seeking work or available for work.
- The report shows the dip came across all categories, though women and rural workers showed the most improvement.



- Women's unemployment fell from 5.7% to 5.2%, while male unemployment only fell from 6.2% to 6%.
- Urban unemployment was still at a high of 7.7% in 2018-19, a marginal drop from 7.8% in 2017-18, while rural unemployment fell from 5.3% to 5%.

India-Australia meet strengthens ties

Key takeaways:

- India and Australia raised their relationship to a “**Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**” after a ‘virtual’ summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who concluded nine agreements including a **Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA)** and issued a joint declaration on a “**Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.**”
- The two countries also agreed to increase the frequency of meetings between the two Prime Ministers, and took the “2+2” format of bilateral meetings to the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers, who will meet to “discuss strategic issues” at least every two years.
- The two leaders, who are expected to meet in person at the extended G-7 summit to be held in the United States later this year, spoke for more than an hour over a video link, a first for a bilateral summit for India.
- Both India and Australia share a vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region to support the freedom of navigation, overflight and peaceful and cooperative use of the seas by adherence of all nations to international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and peaceful resolution of disputes rather than through unilateral or coercive actions.

No talks on China:

- The summit came amidst tensions between India and China over the stand-off at the Line of Actual Control, and Australia-China tensions over trade issues and differences over handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- However, Ministry of External Affairs officials said there had been “no discussion” on China, and the two leaders had not discussed including Australia for “Malabar” or quadrilateral maritime exercises that would include India, Australia, U.S. and Japan, something that China has opposed in the past.



Disasters displace lakhs: study

State of India's Environment in Figures 2020 report:

Key Findings:

- India had one in five of all internal displacements caused by disasters across the world in 2019, mostly caused by floods, cyclones and drought, according to the State of India's Environment in Figures 2020 report released on Thursday.



Also, 19 major extreme weather events claimed 1,357 lives last year.

- There were more than 50 lakh internal displacements in India last year, the highest in the world. This refers to the number of movements, not people, as individuals can be displaced several times, said research and advocacy organisation Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), which published the report.
- Flooding caused by the southwest monsoon led to 26 lakh displacements, while Cyclone Fani alone led to 18 lakh displacements, followed by cyclones Vayu and Bulbul. On the other hand, drought conditions in 19 States led to another 63,000 displacements.
- Apart from such forced migrations, many move for work. With migrant workers in the news due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the report also broke down 2011 census data on migrant populations.
- There were over 45 crore migrants in the country at the time, with the vast majority migrating within their own State. In 2011, over 1.7 crore new migrants had moved for employment purposes, mostly from rural to urban areas.

Shrinking forests:

- The compilation also offers a snapshot of data on forests, water, waste, air, land, wildlife and other natural resources. It notes that there were 747 more tigers in 2018 than in 2014.
- However, the net area meant for tiger conservation shrunk by 179 sq.km.
- Forest cover has shrunk in 38% of districts, while five out of 21 river basins are now in a state of absolute water scarcity.



Centre launches internship scheme for 25,000 graduates

TULIP (The Urban Learning Internship Programme) portal:

- Minister for Housing and Urban Development (MoHUA) has launched TULIP (The Urban Learning Internship Programme) portal on Thursday.
- The scheme is a five-year joint venture between MoHUA and the All India Council for Technical Education, and the fulfilment of a promise made in the 2020 Budget speech.
- City administrations can register available opportunities on the portal, ranging from positions in urban planning or water supply and waste management to slum improvement and digital governance.
- Applicants must be Indian citizens who have completed their final year of college within the last 18 months. Internship durations can range from eight weeks to one year.
- TULIP is founded on a value-driven pull strategy. For students, it's about experiential learning that makes them ready for the job market or may help them contribute to start-ups developing solutions for ground zero India.
- For city administrations, it is a valuable way to inject fresh energy and ideas into our urban governance.
- The programme does not have any budget of its own, but the 100 smart cities and 4,400 urban local bodies can use the administrative expenses allocated by the Centre to pay stipends or perks, if they wish to. They are also free to develop their own selection procedures.

India vows \$15 mn to vaccine alliance

Global Vaccine Summit:

- As India pledged \$15 million to Gavi, the international vaccine alliance.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the country stood with the world in these challenging times. He was addressing the virtual Global Vaccine Summit hosted by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.
- Addressing heads of state, Ministers, business leaders, U.N. agencies and civil society of over 50 countries, Mr. Modi said: "India's civilisation teaches to see the world as one family and that during this pandemic it had tried to live up to this teaching."

Symbol of solidarity

- He said Gavi was not just a global alliance but also a symbol of international solidarity. He said India understood the importance of immunisation since it has a huge population and limited health facilities.
- The country had added six vaccines to its National Immunisation Programme to expand protection, he said. The vaccine supply chain had been digitised and an electronic intelligence network had been developed to monitor the integrity of the cold chain, he said.