



Current Affairs of the Day

PAPER 2:

➤ Polity & Governance:

1. India's population may peak by 2047

➤ International Relations:

1. India and European Union push trade talks
2. Ashok Lavasa appointed V-P of ADB
3. About Asian Development Bank (ADB)
4. State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 report
5. 'Pacific a pivot for ties with Moscow'

PAPER 3:

➤ Economy:

1. Modi exhorts youth to skill, reskill and upskill



India and European Union push trade talks

Key Points:

- India and the European Union (European Union) committed to a framework for strategic cooperation until 2025, and vowed to cooperate on their response to the coronavirus pandemic and at the United Nations Security Council.
- The assurances came as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen via videoconference on Wednesday.
- In a new initiative to revive talks on a free trade agreement that have been suspended since 2013, the two sides announced a “high-level dialogue” between Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and EU Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan to try and take the Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) forward.

Importance of India – EU relationship:

- “India and the EU are natural partners,” said Mr. Modi in his opening remarks.
- “Our partnership is important for global peace and stability, and this reality is clearer given the situation around the world,” he added.
- He also referred to shared “universal values” of democracy, pluralism, respect for international institutions and multilateralism between India and the EU.

Issues discussed:

- The leaders discussed India’s tensions with China at the Line of Actual Control, the situation with Iran and concerns over cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.
- The EU leadership also raised concerns over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir as well as the Citizenship Amendment Act.
- The two sides issued a joint political statement, a five-year roadmap for the India-EU strategic partnership, a civil nuclear research and development cooperation agreement between EURATOM and the Department of Atomic Energy, a declaration on “resource efficiency and circular economy” to



exchange best practices in range of areas and the renewal of their science and technology agreement for another five years.

- Both sides stressed the importance of bilateral trade, as EU is India's largest trading partner, while India is the EU's ninth biggest trading partner.
- Ahead of the summit, EU officials had expressed concerns about a "protectionist" tone to Mr. Modi's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" slogan, but in the talks on Wednesday, the Prime Minister conveyed that the programme was aimed at "integrating domestic production in India to global supply chains," said MEA Secretary (West) Vikas Swarup, while briefing the media.
- According to diplomats, the high level dialogue on trade and investment now launched is a key takeaway of the EU-India summit, which was last held in 2017.

Modi exhorts youth to skill, reskill and upskill

In news:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the youth should skill, reskill and upskill themselves to remain relevant in the rapidly changing business environment and market conditions, which were impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- Speaking on the occasion of the World Youth Skills Day and the fifth anniversary of "Skill India Mission", Mr. Modi said the mission — launched exactly five years ago — had led to the creation of vast infrastructure for skilling, reskilling and upskilling and enhancing opportunities for access to employment, both locally and globally.

Kaushal Kendras:

- Under the programme, hundreds of PM Kaushal Kendras had been set up and capacity of the ITI ecosystem increased. More than five crore youth were skilled.
- Referring to a portal launched recently for mapping the skilled employees and employers, the Prime Minister said it would help the skilled workers, including the migrant workers who had returned to their homes, to access jobs easily and



the employers to contact skilled employees at the click of a mouse. Skills of migrant workers would also help in changing the local economy.

- Mr. Modi highlighted the potential to capitalise on skilling opportunities, giving example of the healthcare sector where Indian skilled manpower could supplement the global demand. There was a need to map such opportunities and align Indian standards with those of other countries.

Ashok Lavasa appointed V-P of ADB

In news:

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** on Wednesday announced that it had appointed Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, who was next in line to become the Chief Election Commissioner in 2021, as its vice-president (V-P) for private sector operations and public-private partnerships.

Value added Information

About Asian Development Bank (ADB):

- It is a regional development bank
- established on 19 December 1966.
- headquartered — Manila, Philippines.
- official United Nations Observer.
- **The bank admits the members of** the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, formerly the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East or ECAFE) and non-regional developed countries.

Voting rights:

- It is **modeled closely on the World Bank**, and has a **similar weighted voting system** where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions.



Roles and functions:

- ADB defines itself as a social development organization that is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.
- **This is carried out through investments – in the form of loans, grants and information sharing** – in infrastructure, health care services, financial and public administration systems, helping nations prepare for the impact of climate change or better manage their natural resources, as well as other areas.

India's population may peak by 2047

Key Points:

- When this century ends, India may no longer be a country of a billion, says a projection that appears in the online edition of the Lancet on Wednesday.
- At the current rate of growth, India's population is likely to peak by 2047 at about 1.61 billion and then decline to 1.03 billion by 2100. However, were it to meet UN Sustainable Goal Development targets, the peak would be earlier and see a population decline to 929 million.
- Conventional wisdom is that though a decline in population is expected, it is expected to begin only around 2046 and that fall, according to the latest 2019 assessment by the United Nations Development Programme calculation, is expected to see India's population settle at a little over 1.4 billion, though this too ranges from 2.1-0.9 billion

Access to contraception:

- The sharper fall, say the group of scientists who are affiliated to the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, is due to the assumption that all women globally will have have much higher access to contraception and education.



- This scenario will lead to a sharper reduction in the Total Fertility Rate, a metric that shows on average how many children a woman must have to keep replenishing population. A TFR lower than 2.1, it is said, leads to a decline in a country's population.
- The UNPD forecasts assume that all countries mirror the trend in selected low-fertility countries in Europe, east and southeast Asia, and North America, where the TFRs converge towards a level of approximately 1.75.
- "In our model, in a population where all females have 16 years of education and 95% of females have access to contraception, the global TFR was projected to converge to 1.41 (1.35–1.47). The difference between a convergent TFR of 1.75 or 1.41 is profound," the study said.
- Seen this way, they argue, world population is expected to peak by 2061 at 9.73 billion and by 2100 dip to 8.79 billion. However, the UNDP forecasts about 10.8 billion by then.

Nigeria to grow:

- India will, however, remain the most populous country. The five largest countries in 2100 (are projected) to be India, Nigeria, China, the U.S. and Pakistan.

However, these forecasts showed different future trajectories between countries.

'Pacific a pivot for ties with Moscow'

In news:

- India wants Russia to be more involved in the Indo-Pacific and Moscow should look to its own interests in the region and that will create a mutual basis for cooperation and dialogue.

Common interests:

- In this direction, he referred to investments by both India and Russia in the oil and gas sector of Vietnam. If there was a challenge to well established principles of international law, norms and contracts, Indian interests were as much affected as much as Russian interests.



- A stable Indo-Pacific assumes particular importance for Russia too with the proposed energy bridge from Arctic to Vladivostok to Chennai.
- There have been standoffs between China and Vietnam in the South China Sea due to overlapping claims close to the Indian oil blocks in Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- India and Russia saw ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) centrality as critical to the Indo-Pacific concept. There was a perception that India and Russia dealt with Indo-Pacific as different concepts but "the differences are quite exaggerated."
- The commonalities far outweighed the differences.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit India later this year coinciding with the 20th year of India-Russia strategic partnership.

Fight against hunger disrupted by slowdown

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 report:

- The SOFI report was released on Monday in New York on the sidelines of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which tracks the progress of nations towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 2030. It is produced jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Its first edition was brought out in 2017
- The heads of the five agencies warn that five years after the world committed to end hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, we are still off track to achieve this objective by 2030.

Key findings:

- Between 8.3 crore and 13 crore people globally are likely to go hungry this year due to the economic recession triggered by COVID-19, warns the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 report.



- Estimates drawn from data available till March 2020 show that almost 69 crore people went hungry in 2019 — up by 1 crore in 2018.
- The report underlines that in line with findings in the previous editions, hunger continues to be on the rise since 2014 and the global prevalence of undernourishment, or overall percentage of hungry people, is 8.9%.
- Asia remains home to the greatest number of undernourished (38 crore). Africa is second (25 crore), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (4.8 crore).
- According to current estimates, in 2019, 21.3% (14.4 crore) of children under 5 years were stunted, 6.9% (4.7 crore) wasted and 5.6% (3.8 million) overweight.
- The report highlights that a healthy diet costs more than ₹143 (or \$1.90/ day), which is the international poverty threshold. The number of people globally who can't afford a healthy diet is at 300 crore people, or more than the combined population of China and India.