

## Current Affairs of the Day

### PAPER 2:

#### ➤ Polity & Governance:

1. Nod for Ministries' schemes integration

#### ➤ International Relations:

1. India announces \$500 mn package for the Maldives
2. Australia shares experience on 5G

### PAPER 3:

#### ➤ Economy:

1. PM announces taxpayers' charter

#### ➤ Defence & Security:

1. Navy should design and develop armaments: Rajnath  
Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)



## PM announces taxpayers' charter

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched a “**Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest**” platform that provides faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers' charter.

### Details:

- He appealed to those not paying taxes, despite having the ability, to come forward and commit themselves to the cause of making the country self-reliant.
- While the faceless assessment and taxpayers' charter came into force on Thursday itself, the faceless appeal system will be available from September 25, the birth anniversary of DeendayalUpadhyaya.
- The assessment system seeks to eliminate corrupt practices by doing away with the territorial jurisdiction of income-tax offices.
- With the help of technology, the cases of scrutiny will now be allocated randomly to any official in any part of the country. The document identification numbers will be issued from the Central database. Review of orders will also be done by another team at some other place, chosen randomly using data analytics and artificial intelligence.
- From now on, officials in the Directorate General of Income Tax (Investigation) and the Principal Commissioner of I-T/Chief Commissioner of I-T (TDS) will be the only competent authorities for approving survey actions to gather information for scrutiny and assessment. The Prime Minister said that in the new system, the department would escape unnecessary litigation and the officials would get reprieve from the energy otherwise spent on transfers and postings.

### Significance:

- The platform would instil a sense of fairness and fearlessness in the taxpayers.
- The new facilities were in consonance with, and further strengthened, the government's motto of 'minimum government, maximum governance', he noted. The effort was to make the tax system seamless, painless and faceless.



- On the taxpayers' charter, Mr. Modi said it was also a vital step in the country's development, in terms of bringing about a balance between the responsibilities and the taxpayers' duties and also fixing the government's responsibilities.

## India announces \$500 mn package for the Maldives

- India announced a slew of new connectivity measures for the Maldives, including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications in an effort to help the Indian Ocean Islands deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Among the initiatives announced at a meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Maldives Foreign Minister Abdullah Shahid via videoconference on Thursday are an air connectivity "bubble" for travel, a direct ferry service, a submarine cable for telecom connectivity; and assistance for the **Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP)** to connect Male to three neighbouring islands, the biggest such project thus far.
- Responding to a request from the Government of Maldives, the External Affairs Minister announced India's decision to support the implementation of the GMCP in Maldives, through a financial package consisting of a grant of USD 100 million and a new Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 400 million.
- The GMCP would be the "largest civilian infrastructure project in Maldives".

### Connecting islands

- The project, which will consist of a number of bridges and causeways to connect Male to Villingili, **Thilafushi and Gulhifahu islands** that span 6.7 km, will take much of the pressure off the main capital island of Male for commercial and residential purposes.
- The \$400 million Line of Credit comes in addition to a previous LoC of \$800 million that was announced by New Delhi in December 2018.



## Significance:

- “A landmark moment in Maldives-India cooperation today as we receive Indian assistance of USD250 million as budget support and USD500 million for the Greater Malé Connectivity Project,” said Mr. Solih in a tweet thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi and India.
- When completed, the project would render the Chinese-built Sinemale Friendship bridge connecting Male to two other islands, thus far the most visible infrastructure project in the islands, “insignificant in comparison”.

## Australia shares experience on 5G

- India and Australia are sharing experiences on protecting critical infrastructure, including 5G networks, said a senior Australian High Commission official on Thursday while talking of the huge increase in cybersecurity cooperation between the two countries. However, Australia has no intention of banning Chinese apps like India has done, said Minister-Counsellor, Home Affairs, Tara Cavanagh.
- At the Prime Minister’s virtual summit in June both countries had signed a **cyber and cyber-enabled critical technology framework agreement** along with the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP)**.
- Another area which the two countries were exploring was of regulatory **space**, including Australia’s encryption legislation, and how that could be used to prevent cyber-enabled crime.
- In August 2018, Australia had banned Chinese companies from offering 5G services, citing national security. In January, India allowed Chinese firms to participate in 5G trials but with the current border standoff in Ladakh, there are reports India may take a tougher stand.
- On June 29, India banned 59 Chinese apps citing national security and later banned 47 more Chinese apps.



## Significance:

- Deputy High Commissioner Rod Hilton sad there was a lot of focus on the CSP but in his view the cyber framework was the second most important agreement signed that day (June 4). “The [cyber] agreement sets out practical actions to enhance digital trade, harness critical technology opportunities and address cybersecurity challenges,” he said. As part of this, the two countries had been increasing information sharing and stepping up cooperation, he added.
- The two diplomats said the categories of threats that the two countries were looking at were criminal groups, financial gain, sophisticated state-based actors and so on.

## Nod for Ministries' schemes integration

- The Governing Board of the **National Health Authority (NHA)**, chaired by Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan, met on Thursday to review the implementation of the **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)**.
- The Governing Board has approved the proposal to integrate existing health schemes of Central Ministries with AB PM-JAY to employees (including government and contractual employees).

## Navy should design and develop armaments: Rajnath

- The Navy, which has made significant progress in indigenous design of warships, should now focus on design and development of armaments, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday after virtually launching the Indian Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO).

### Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO):

- The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence in keeping with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.



- The NIIO is a three-tiered organisation. The Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC) will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation and provide apex level directives.
- A working group under the N-TAC will implement the projects. A Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC) has also been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.
- The Navy has an in-house design bureau, which, over the years, has made significant progress in designing the 'float' component, and made some progress in the 'move' component, which is propulsion. However, there is heavy reliance on imports for armaments, called the 'fight' component.