

Current Affairs of the Day

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2. Aadhaar not mandatory for birth, death records

Health:

1. eVIN network to handle COVID-19 vaccine supply



India's economy to contract by 10.3% this fiscal, says IMF

Key findings:

- India's economy is expected to contract 10.3% in the current fiscal year as the country and the world reel from the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- Global output is projected to shrink 4.4% in 2020, the IMF said in its World Economic Outlook October 2020 report titled, "A Long and Difficult Ascent".
- The projection for India is a downgrade of 5.8 percentage points from its June forecast. India is expected to rebound in the fiscal year beginning in April 2021 with 8.8% growth — an upgrade of 2.8 percentage points relative to the June update.
- Revisions to the forecast are particularly large for India, where GDP contracted much more severely than expected in the second quarter.
- Consumer prices in India are expected to grow at 4.9% this year and by 3.7% in the next fiscal. The current account balance is projected to grow by 0.3% this year and -0.9% next year.
- For the world as a whole, the 2020 growth projection has been revised upwards by 0.8 percentage points relative to June — the result of a less dire second quarter and signs of a stronger recovery in the third quarter, partly offset by downgrades in certain developing countries and emerging economies (except China). The recovery in 2021 is projected to be at 5.2%, lower than the June 2020 projections.
- After 2021, global growth is expected to ease off at 3.5% in the medium term.



*India's figures are for fiscal years. All figures in %



eVIN network to handle COVID-19 vaccine supply

- The eVIN network, which can track the latest vaccine stock position; temperature at storage facility; geo-tag health centres; and maintain facility-level dashboard, is being repurposed for the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccine, said the Union Health Ministry in a release issued on Tuesday.

Aadhaar not mandatory for birth, death records

- The provision of Aadhaar is not mandatory for the registration of births and deaths, the Registrar General of India (RGI) has clarified in a recent reply to an RTI request.
- If Aadhaar is provided voluntarily, it must not be printed on any document or stored in any database of births and deaths in full form, according to an RGI circular cited in the RTI response.

'U.S. aiming to build an Indo-Pacific NATO'

- China's Foreign Minister on Tuesday said the United States was aiming to build an "Indo-Pacific NATO" that would be founded on the four-nation India, U.S., Japan and Australia grouping, in Beijing's most high-profile criticism so far on the "Quad".
- Wang Yi's remarks, during a visit to Malaysia, underline how Chinese officials who once sought to downplay the Quad as an over-hyped idea are now highlighting it prominently, describing it as part of a broader American effort in the region to "contain" China, as ties continue to worsen between Beijing and Washington.
- Mr. Wang had, in 2018, dismissed the then recently-revived Quad and the Indo-Pacific concept as a "headline-grabbing idea" that would "dissipate like sea foam".
- On Tuesday, he hit out at the U.S. approach to the region during his visit to Malaysia, the second stop on his five-nation tour to Southeast Asia. He arrived there following a visit to Cambodia, and will later travel to Laos and Thailand, and stop in Singapore.
- "In essence, [the Indo-Pacific strategy] aims to build a so-called Indo-Pacific NATO underpinned by the quadrilateral mechanism involving the U.S., Japan, India and Australia," he said, reported the South China Morning Post.



Value Added Information

What is Quad grouping?

- The quadrilateral security dialogue includes Japan, India, United States and Australia.
- All four nations find a common ground of being the democratic nations and common interests of unhindered maritime trade and security.
- The idea was first mooted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it.

Significance of the grouping:

- Quad is an opportunity for like-minded countries to share notes and collaborate on projects of mutual interest.
- Members share a vision of an open and free Indo-Pacific. Each is involved in development and economic projects as well as in promoting maritime domain awareness and maritime security.
- It is one of the many avenues for interaction among India, Australia, Japan and the US and should not be seen in an exclusive context.

What are China's views on the Quad?

- There is a general understanding that the Quad would not take on a military dimension against any country. The strategic community in China, nevertheless, had branded it an emerging "Asian NATO".
- Notably, Japanese PM Shinzo Abe's "Confluence of Two Seas" address to the Indian Parliament gave a fresh impetus to the Quad concept. This recognised the economic rise of India.

Asia-Pacific Group (Apg) On Money Laundering retains Pakistan on its 'Enhanced Follow-Up' list

- Due to Pakistan's minimal progress in combating money laundering and terror financing, the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering has retained the country on its 'Enhanced Follow-Up' list.



Key takeaways:

- According to APG, Pakistan will remain in the enhanced follow-up list.
- It will also have to continue to report back to the APG on progress to strengthen its implementation of comprehensive measures.
- Pakistan is desperate to move out of 'grey list' because its inclusion in the list has severely impacted its economy and image.
- Pakistan was placed in the grey list in June 2018.

Value Added Information

Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering:

- APG is a regional affiliate of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- Secretariat: Sydney, Australia.
- Founded in: 1997 in Bangkok, Thailand
- It currently consists of 41 member jurisdictions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Nation- wide campaign to celebrate Kamdhenu Deepawali Abhiyan started

- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA) recently started a nation- wide campaign to celebrate Kamdhenu Deepawali Abhiyan on the occasion of Deepawali festival.
- Through this campaign, the RKA is promoting extensive use of cow-dung/ Panchgavya products during this Diwali Festival.

Value Added Information:

Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA)

- It was constituted by Indian Prime Minister for the conservation, protection and development of cows and their progeny and for giving direction to the cattle development programmes.
- It is a high powered permanent body to formulate policy and to provide direction to the implementation of schemes related to cattle so as to give more emphasis on livelihood generation.