



## Current Affairs of the Day

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- Rengma Nagas demand autonomous council
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### GS Paper III

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## New norms for digital content

The Education Ministry has laid down new guidelines for producing digital education resources for children with disabilities, after a year in which the COVID-driven shift to online education has spotlighted the lacunae in such resources.

### Guidelines released

1. The guidelines are based on four guiding principles, stipulating that all resources must be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust for disabled students.
2. They recommend that all textbooks be made digitally accessible in a phased manner so that they are available in multiple formats such as text, audio, video and sign language with turn-on and turn-off features.
3. The closure of regular schools and learning centres due to COVID-19 has led to special difficulties for many disabled children.
4. For instance, a recent study by the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy showed that more than half of the NCERT textbooks available on the government's virtual education platform DIKSHA were not accessible for visually impaired students.

### Supplementary content

The guidelines provide strategies to produce supplementary content for varying disabilities, including students who face visual and hearing challenges, those on the autism spectrum, those with intellectual or special learning disabilities, and those with multiple disabilities.

They note that learning activities must include audio, visual and tactile experiences, while evaluation must be multimodal.

## Rengma Nagas demand autonomous council

1. The Rengma Nagas in Assam has written to Union Home Minister demanding an autonomous district council amid a decision by the Central and the State governments to upgrade the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) into a territorial council.



2. The Rengma Naga Peoples' Council (RNPC), a registered body, said in the memorandum that the Rengmas were the first tribal people in Assam to have encountered the British in 1839, but the existing Rengma Hills was eliminated from the political map of the State and replaced with that of Mikir Hills (now Karbi Anglong) in 1951.
3. Narrating its history, the council said that during the Burmese invasions of Assam in 1816 and 1819, it was the Rengmas who gave shelter to the Ahom refugees.
4. The petition said that the Rengma Hills was partitioned in 1963 between Assam and Nagaland at the time of the creation of Nagaland State and the Karbis, who were known as Mikirs till 1976, were the indigenous tribal people of Mikir Hills.
5. Thus, the Rengma Hills and Mikir Hills were two separate entities till 1951. Karbis have no history in the Rengma Hills. People who are presently living in Rengma Hills are from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya. They speak different dialects and do not know the Karbi language of Karbi Anglong, the memorandum said.

## Take action against illegal adoption: SC

NCPCR statistics show that 3,621 children were orphaned, 26,176 children lost either parent and 274 abandoned between April 1, 2021, to June 5, 2021. The court is hearing a suo motu case on the plight of children impacted by the pandemic.

### Highlights:

1. The Supreme Court directed the governments to step in and prevent private entities from revealing the identities of affected children, usually on social media and inviting people to adopt them.
2. No adoption of affected children should be permitted contrary to the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, the court ordered.

### CARA involvement

1. It was illegal to invite strangers to adopt children, already traumatised by their personal losses, without the involvement of the Central Adoption Resource



Authority (CARA), a statutory body under the Women and Child Development Ministry, it said.

2. Stringent action shall be taken by the State Governments/Union Territories against agencies/individuals who are responsible for indulging in this illegal activity.

### Child trafficking

1. Advocate Gaurav Agrawal, amicus curiae, said cases of child trafficking have been going up.
2. The government should intervene to care for and protect children orphaned, abandoned or whose families have lost their earning members.
3. The court said a lack of knowledge about the rights of children under the Juvenile Justice Act had led to many falling victims to efforts at illegal adoption.
4. It directed the Centre, States and the Union Territories to give wide publicity to the provisions of the 2015 Act at regular intervals so as to make the general public, children and their parents or guardians aware of such provisions.
5. It ordered the States and the Union Territories to continue with their efforts to identify children in need of care and protection after March 2020 and upload their details on the NCPCR database in order to provide them welfare schemes.

### BRICS opposes exceptionalism: China

China sought to frame a joint statement from the Foreign Ministers of the BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa] countries, who met virtually last week, as standing in opposition to what Beijing has increasingly hit out at “bloc politics” from the United States and the West.

### Bloc politics:

1. The BRICS Foreign Ministers, at a virtual meet last week, put out a joint statement on multilateralism.
2. Ironically, among the targets of Beijing’s recent attacks on what it calls “selective multilateralism” is the India-Australia-Japan-U.S. Quad grouping, which Chinese officials have repeatedly criticised.



3. India finds itself in a curious position of being described by Beijing as both a partner and a target in its recent emphasis on the importance of “multilateralism” and its criticism of calls for a “rules-based order”, voiced not only by the U.S. but also by the Quad.

### Multilateral system

The BRICS Joint Statement on Strengthening and Reforming the Multilateral System laid out the following principles.

1. First, it should make global governance more inclusive, representative and participatory to facilitate greater and more meaningful participation of developing and least developed countries.
2. Second, it should be based on inclusive consultation and collaboration for the benefit of all.
3. Third, it should make multilateral organisations more responsive, action-oriented and solution-oriented based on the norms and principles of international law and the spirit of mutual respect, justice, equality, mutually beneficial cooperation.
4. Fourth, it should use innovative and inclusive solutions, including digital and technological tools.
5. Fifth, it should strengthen the capacities of individual states and international organizations.
6. Sixth, it should promote people-centred international cooperation at the core.

China added that the BRICS countries were indeed different from a few developed countries in their attitude towards multilateralism and multilateral cooperation. The BRICS countries stress the need to observe the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and oppose exceptionalism and double standard. We are committed to extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and oppose hegemonic bullying and zero-sum games. We pursue openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, and reject bloc politics and ideological confrontation.





## World Bank sees India growing by 8.3%

1. India's economy is expected to grow by 8.3% in the fiscal year that began in April 2021, the World Bank forecast in its June 2021 Global Economic Prospects.
2. The forecast, however, masked the significant expected economic damage caused by the "enormous" second wave of COVID-19, the Bank said.
3. Raising its projection for global growth, the bank said the world economy would expand at 5.6% in 2021, the fastest post-recession growth rate in 80 years, underpinned by U.S. stimulus spending and faster growth in China.
4. Observing that global output would still end up 2% below pre-pandemic projections by the year-end, the development lender said "highly unequal" access to COVID-19 vaccines was a factor in the uneven recovery.
5. In India, an enormous second COVID-19 wave is undermining the sharper-than-expected rebound in activity seen during the second half of FY2020/21, especially in services.

### 'Collapse and recovery'

1. Economic activity in India would likely follow a similar but less pronounced 'collapse and recovery' trend seen during the first wave, the bank said in its outlook.
2. The pandemic will undermine consumption and investment as confidence remains depressed and balance sheets damaged. Growth in FY2022/23 is expected to slow to 7.5% reflecting lingering impacts of COVID-19 on household, corporate and bank balance sheets; possibly low levels of consumer confidence; and heightened uncertainty on the job and income prospects, the global lender added.
3. For the world as a whole, losses to per capita income would not be reversed by 2022 for some two-thirds of emerging market and developing economies, the bank said.
4. Low-income countries that had lagged in vaccinations had witnessed a reversal in poverty reduction, with the pandemic exacerbating insecurity and other long-standing challenges.
5. While there are welcome signs of global recovery, the pandemic continues to inflict poverty and inequality on people in developing countries, World Bank said.