

Current Affairs of the Day

How India's Gati Shakti Plan can have an impact beyond its borders

1. The Gati Shakti National Master Plan is another important step for India to upgrade national infrastructure and multimodal connectivity.
2. According to the Economic Survey 2019-20, India will have to invest approximately \$1.5 trillion on infrastructure to become a \$5-trillion economy by 2024-25.
3. However, while the Rs 100 lakh crore plan will have an important economic multiplier effect at home, it must also be leveraged to have an external impact by aligning it with India's regional and global connectivity efforts.



The Gati Shakti plan

It has three main components, all focused on domestic coordination.

1. First, it seeks to increase information sharing with a new technology platform between various ministries at the Union and state levels.
2. Second, it focuses on giving impetus to multi-modal transportation to reduce logistics' costs and strengthen last-mile connectivity in India's hinterland or border regions.
3. The third component includes an analytical decision-making tool to disseminate project-related information and prioritise key infrastructure projects. This aims to ensure transparency and time-bound commitments to investors.

Spillover in the neighbourhood:

1. One way to look at the Gati Shakti plan from a foreign policy angle is that it will automatically generate positive effects to deepen India's economic



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ties with Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, as well as with Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean region.

2. This has been the experience in recent years with India's investment in roads, ports, inland waterways or new customs procedures generating positive externalities for these neighbours, who are keen to access the growing Indian consumer market.

3. Nepal, for example, in 2020 reached record export levels due to a series of Indian connectivity initiatives, including electronic cargo tracking systems, new rail and road routes, modernisation of border control systems, and the region's first-ever bilateral petroleum pipeline.

4. Any reduction in India's domestic logistics costs brings immediate benefits to the northern neighbour, given that 98 per cent of Nepal's total trade transits through India and about 65 per cent of Nepal's trade is with India.

5. In 2019, trade between Bhutan and Bangladesh was eased through a new multimodal road and waterway link via Assam. The new cargo ferry service with the Maldives, launched last year, has lowered the costs of trade for the island state.

6. And under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Programme, India's investments in multimodal connectivity on the eastern coast is reconnecting India with the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia through integrated rail, port and shipping systems.



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Olive Ridley breeding season: Locals clean up Gahirmatha beach

1. Locals, environmentalists and forest officials flocked to the 1.5 kilometres-long beach in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary to clean the beach ahead of the mass-nesting (arribada) of the Olive Ridley sea turtles.
2. Most of the rubbish consisted of plastic items, discarded fishing nets, glass bottles, shoes and slippers.
3. Trash floating in seawater can also obstruct the path of nesting and hatching sea turtles by disorienting them.
4. Sea turtles are protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that came into force in 1975 and the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. India is a signatory to CITES, which prohibits the trading of turtles, turtle parts and eggs.

Olive ridley sea turtle



An olive ridley sea turtle at Gahirmatha beach, Odisha, India

Conservation status

Extinct	Threatened				Least Concern	
EX	EW	CR	EN	VU	NT	LC
Vulnerable (IUCN 3.1) ^[1]						

Gahirmatha marine sanctuary:

In 1997, the government declared the Gahirmatha beach a marine sanctuary, covering 1,435 square kilometers in the sea and 20km from the coast from Hukitola to Dhamara. This was done with the objective of protecting the marine turtles that arrive in thousands to lay eggs. Gahirmatha beach is the largest rookery of sea turtles in the world.





RETURN TO NATURAL HABITAT

<p>▶ Olive Ridley turtles lay eggs from December onwards</p>	<p>▶ The eggs hatch in 40-45 days</p>	
<p>▶ The forest department sets up artificial hatching points with protective cover</p>		
<p>▶ Baby turtles are released into sea between March and May</p>	<p>▶ Breeding success rate is around 80-90%</p>	

UNESCO picks Srinagar as a creative city

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has picked Srinagar among 49 cities as part of the creative city network under the Crafts and Folk Arts category.
2. The process of nomination of Srinagar under the UNESCO 'Creative City Network' (UCCN) was undertaken and funded under the World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project. This is the recognition of the historical crafts and arts of the city.
3. The inclusion is likely to pave way for the city to represent its handicrafts on the global stage through UNESCO. It's a major recognition for Jammu and Kashmir.
4. The network involves folk art, media, film, literature, design, gastronomy and media arts. Only Jaipur (Crafts and Folk Arts) in 2015, Varanasi and Chennai (Creative city of Music) in 2015 and 2017 respectively have so far been recognised as members of the UCCN for creative cities.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Creative Cities
Network



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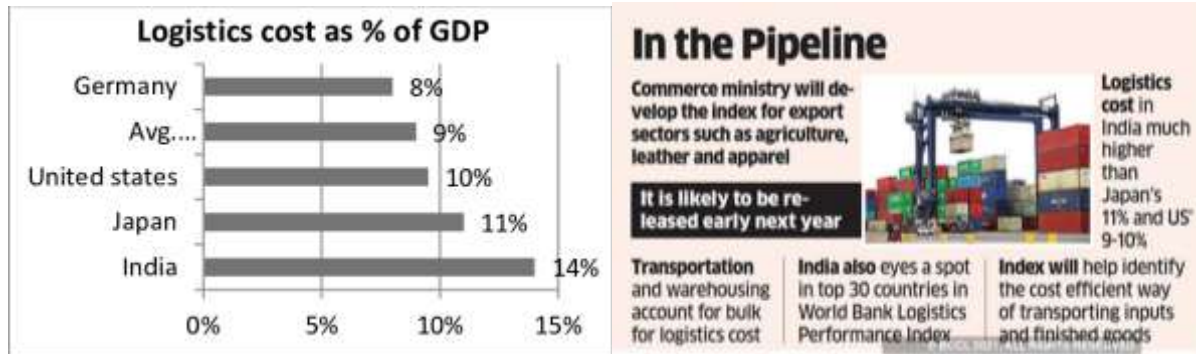
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6. Ministry of Commerce and Industry releases report on Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2021.



Understanding Padma Awards

1. In the year 1954, the Government of India had introduced two major civilian awards named "Bharat Ratna" and "Padma Vibhushan".



Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award and Padma Vibhushan is the second-highest civilian award of our country.

2. Padma Vibhushan was then divided into three classes; Pahela Varg, Dusra Varg, and Teesra Varg. Later all these classes were renamed Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shree respectively.
3. There is no distinction of race, occupation, position, or sex. The standards for the award include "service in any field including service rendered by Government servants" including doctors and scientists, but excludes those working with the public-sector undertakings.



MCQs

Q1. Consider the following statements

1. The logistics cost is 14% of GDP in India
2. It is one of the lowest in the world

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

MAINS
DAWP

Q1. "Delhi's Indo-Pacific strategy has acquired political and institutional traction, thanks to intensive Indian diplomacy in recent years. It must now devote similar energy to the development of a "Eurasian" policy". Critically Discuss.