



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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CLIMATE VULNERABILITY INDEX

GS- 3 CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION

CONTEXT

Recently, a report titled “**Mapping India’s Climate Vulnerability – A District-level Assessment**” has been released by the **Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)** (not-for-profit policy research institution). The report has also launched the first-of-its-kind **Climate Vulnerability Index**. The index has **analysed 640 districts in India** and found that **463 of these are vulnerable to extreme floods, droughts and cyclones**.

ABOUT INDEX

- **Affected States:** 27 Indian states and Union territories are vulnerable to extreme climate events which often disrupt the local economy and displace weaker communities. The states of Assam, Andhra Pradesh,

Maharashtra, Karnataka and Bihar are the most vulnerable to extreme climate events such as floods, droughts and cyclones in India.

- **Magnitude of Impact of Climate Change:** More than **80% of Indians live in districts vulnerable to climate risks**. 17 of 20 people in the country are vulnerable to climate risks, out of which every five Indians live in areas that are extremely vulnerable. More than 45% of these districts have undergone “unsustainable landscape and infrastructure changes”.
- **Low-level of Adaptability:** More than 60% of Indian districts have medium to low adaptive capacity in handling extreme weather events.
- **Role of Anthropogenic Activities:** The anthropogenic activity has already made vulnerable districts become even more vulnerable to impacts of natural disasters. Some of the activities have led to: Loss of wetlands and loss in mangroves which would act as a natural barrier, making it more vulnerable. Landscape disruptions such as the disappearance of forest cover, over-construction, have led to degradation of natural ecosystems.
- **Triggering Financial Crisis:** Combating the rising frequency and scale of extreme climate events is fiscally draining for developing countries such as India. Investments in infrastructure such as housing, transport, and industries will be threatened by these events, especially along the coasts, adding that mounting weather-related insurance losses could trigger the next financial crisis.

MITIGATION

- **Decentralized Planning:** Since most districts in India are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, a district-wise climate action plan is required. The CEEW study also indicated that only 63% of Indian districts have a District Disaster Management Plan (DDMP). Policymakers, industry leaders and citizens must use the district-level analysis to make effective risk-informed decisions.
- **Mobilizing Green Finance:** With loss and damage rising exponentially due to the climate crisis, India must demand climate finance for adaptation-based climate actions at **COP-26** (Climate Conference). At

COP-26, developed countries must regain trust by delivering the USD 100 billion promised since 2009 and commit to stepping up climate finance over the coming decade. Further, India must collaborate with other countries to create a **Global Resilience Reserve Fund**, which could act as insurance against climate shocks.

- **Climate Risk Identification:** Finally, developing a **Climate Risk Atlas for India** would help policymakers to better identify and assess risks arising from extreme climate events. Climate-proofing of physical and ecosystem infrastructures should also now become a national imperative.
- **Institutional Setup:** India must create a **new Climate Risk Commission** to coordinate the environmental de-risking mission. Enhanced climate finance can also support India-led global agencies like the **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** to further mainstream climate actions.

WAY FORWARD

India's climate change mitigation strategy should include post-**Covid-19** recovery plans, according to the report. These include **reducing fossil fuel subsidies, phasing out coal, better coordination** between the central and state governments and **raising self-sufficiency** by domestic manufacturing in the **renewable sector**.

Anshum Verma

Bhupen Khakar : A renowned Artist of India

(GS Paper I : History and culture)

Context :

A London Based multinational Art company Sotheby declared that A art work of the Indian Artist Bhupen Khakhar titled Krishna Hotel was auctioned for 12.7 crores . In fact the objective of this auction was to raise the funds for the Bangladeshi refugees who are residing in Ahmedabad .

An Introduction about the Artwork of the Bhupen Khakkar :

- The art work entitled Krishna Hotel was auctioned in London by 26th Oct and it attracted thousands of art lovers of London .
- In this painting few people are chatting over tea and snacks at what appears to be a neighbourhood restaurant. This work of Bhupen was still unpublished in public . But by Monday (26th Oct 2021) when it was auctioned it was the third highest price for the artist and six times the pre-auction estimate.
- this particular painting has immense importance as it marks the beginning of Bhupen's "Tradesmen Series" of paintings,

Works/ Paintings of the Bhupen

- Salman Rushdie also portrayed the image of Bhupen as an accountant in his novel *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995).
- *Head; Couple* (1983), *Birth of Water* (1983), *HANUMAN* (1960), *Trees, Man with a Monkey* (1995), *The Red Colour & Grills Spilled over his Face* (2000), *TWO PRINTS – THE UNFINISHED DREAM; RED RAIN* (1981), *IN THE COCONUT GROVES* (1993), *His Last Days of Aids – He Remembered his friend* (1998), [TWO ARMCHAIRS](#), *TIGER AND STAG* (1970) and *PREPARATORY STUDY FOR THE CELEBRATION OF GURU JAYANTI* (1980) are one of the few and best art works.

About Bhupen Khakar

- Bhupen Khakar was a well-known Indian painter whose paintings are attracting the attention of art lovers in these days in London.
- Bhupen was born in Mumbai, Maharashtra in 1934.
- He was not only an expert in making paintings on paper and cloth but also painted on glass, ceramics, etc.
- By profession he was a chartered accountant. Painting was his hobby, but he became famous internationally because of his artwork.
- He was influenced by the great artist Ghulam Mohammad Sekh, a renowned painter, poet, and critic of Gujarat.
- He worked as a faculty in the department of fine art in Vadodra University.
- Gradually Khakar became the core figure in the Baroda School.
- Khakar invented his own technique and style of painting and he used vibrant oil, gouache, or watercolour, containing imaginative and deeply personal references.
- Khakar has often been linked to the [Pop Art](#) movement, and parallels have been drawn with the work of David Hockney.
- In his painting, we see the features of Indian miniatures and Henry Rousseau.
- He graduated from the University of Bombay where he did his graduation in Economics; therefore, he worked as an accountant also.

- The artist's homosexuality was prominent feature in much of his work, and was often tinged with the melancholy of living in a country in which that lifestyle was condemned.
- Today, his works are held in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, among others

Nowadays Khakhar is one the most popular Indian artist / painters whose paintings are being sold in crores of rupees . Definitely his artworks should also be appreciated in India also

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

NEED TO ACCELERATE CURRENT INDO-RUSSIA BILATERAL EXCHANGE

[GS II, International Relations]

CONTEXT :

- India and Russia discussed about the expansion in cooperation of energy sector as New Delhi looks at newer sources of oil and natural gas to diversify its import basket.
- In September, at the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok [Russia], Indian PM Narendra Modi in a virtual address said, “India-Russia energy partnership can help bring stability to the global energy market.”
- Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri held a video interaction with Russian Energy Minister Nikolay Shulginov on forwarding the energy cooperation between the two nations,as tweeted by the minister.

INFORMATION:-

- India has been at the forefront of the global energy transformation and aiming to diversify its trade relations.
- India has plethora of energy sources and aspirations to diversify the trade. Russia fits in India’s such ambitions well.
- To strengthen the bilateral ties, an attempt from both government and corporate leaders is needed.
- Indian and Russian Energy Ministers announced that the companies of both the countries are pushing for greater cooperation in the oil and gas sector.

POST CORONA RECOVERY- INDIA

- In the economic recovery post corona, India (Asia’s third-largest economy) has expanded by more than 20% in the June quarter and is expected to grow by around 9% by the end of 2021. (Higher than China’s 8.5%)
- Since the recovery started, India has a bend toward green transition.
- The examples of cooperation between the two countries are:-

For example-

1. Russia's Gazprom and India's ONGC Videsh Ltd. and the Indian Oil Corporation have signed separate MOUs at Vladivostok.
2. A few years ago, Rosneft invested approx U.S.\$12.9 billion in India's second-largest private oil refiner, Essar Oil, renamed Nayara Energy, marking it one of the most significant foreign investments in many years.
3. In Energy transformation, there is a joint venture between India's Reliance Industries Ltd. and Russia's Sibur.

This joint venture (set up in Jamnagar, Gujarat), is leading as the first butyl and halogenated butyl rubber production facility in South Asia.

- This facility (operational in 2019), will meet the growing demand from domestic tyre manufacturers.
- Sibur has come up with unique technology to India, which is not commercially available in the market and is the most advanced in terms of ecological footprint.
- The project will support the growth of India's auto industry by making the critical raw material supply available.
- The venture is also promoting halogenated butyl rubber. The project is a clear example of the "Make in India" and "Atma-Nirbhar Bharat" initiatives, representing a practical example of **technology transfer** from Russia to India.

Some important factors-

- India is currently one of the fastest-growing **butyl rubber** and **halogenated butyl rubber** markets due to its rapidly expanding car manufacturing industry pushing for electric vehicles.
- Additionally, **India** is emerging as a **critical refining hub** in Asia to boost its petrochemical capacity.

- The International Energy Agency wrote in the **India Energy Outlook 2021 report** in February that over the past years, India's refineries have been expanding towards petrochemicals to capture additional value.
- The agency evaluates the country's **ethylene production** to grow by 2/3 rd over the period to 2030.

Towards Renewable and nuclear energy-

- In efforts to transition to green energy, India has achieved the countrywide installation of 100 gigawatts of total installed renewable energy capacity.
- India's next target → to hit 175 GW of renewable energy target by December 2022.
- Furthermore, A/c the government survey, additional investments in renewables up to the year 2022 would be about \$80 billion.

Russian companies have been involved in the construction of six nuclear reactors in the Kudankulam nuclear power project at Tamil Nadu.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had showed Russia's willingness to build a dozen reactors in India over the next 20 years.

By 2031 → India's nuclear power generation capacity of 6,780 MW may increase to 22,480 MW.

In September, almost all of Russia's major energy companies were interested in projects in India.

However, the current bilateral exchange rate needs to be accelerated for India to grasp its potential from energy transformation.

Coal dependency to be reduced and investments in renewable energy to be enhanced :-

- coal remains India's most important source of electricity production, and it's not a good news for the environment.
- To meet its growing energy demand and succeed in green transformation, India needs approximately U.S.\$500 billion of investments in wind and solar infrastructure, grid expansion, and storage to reach the 450 GW capacity target by 2030.

Rajeev Yadav

Strong Recovery can boost the Tax Revenue

News/ Context: Indian government is expecting the tax revenue for current financial year 2021-22 to be 10% above the budget, Beating forecast for the first time in 4 years as the economic powers back towards free pandemic labels.

The 2021-22 Budget (presented On 1st February 2021) **estimated** that for the financial year 2021-22 (starting from 1st April 2021 to 31st march 2022) the tax

revenue collection will be 15.45 lakh crore. It is going to be 10% more than what was estimated as per tax officials.

Tax revenues have been below projections ever since 2017-18 as the economy lost momentum even before COVID-19 and then slipped into a deep recession.

But now retail sales have picked up and exports are surging at a record rate, suggesting it is rebounding faster than anticipated after a devastating second wave.

India's economy grew 20.1% between April and June, versus a 24.4% contraction during the same period last year. Activity levels have improved a lot. All indicators are showing a faster-than-anticipated recovery.

Explained the percentage game: Here one thing to understand is that when we say the GDP for a quarter has increased to 20% which is like record growth, is true in terms of percentage but that the absolute value of production is still the same as it was earlier before covid. We can take an example to understand this. Supposedly the GDP in the first Quarter (April,May, June of 2019) of the financial year 2019-20 is 100. This GDP went down say to the level of 80 in the first quarter (April,May,June of 2020) of the financial year 2020-21, because of Covid. Then it will be said that GDP for the first quarter of 2020-2021 is reduced to 20%, or we got a negative GDP growth of 20% in the first quarter of 2020-21. And now obviously things would be coming better with the ease in restriction/lockdown and our economy will be proceeding towards normal. Say now that the GDP in the first quarter of 2021-2022 (April,May,June of 2021) is 100 again as it was earlier in in the first Quarter of 2019-2020. This time it will be said as we have achieved 25% growth in the first quarter of 2021-2022, but see the level of GDP in the absolute value terms is still 100 as it was earlier. This 25% growth has come

because of a low base. It is called base effect. **So the whole story can be summarised in two lines as GDP moved from 100 to 80, showing 20% negative growth and then again moved from 80 to 100, showing positive growth of 25%. Absolute value is still 100 as it was earlier.**

You can understand this when Ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MosPI) data shows **“GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q1 of 2021-22 is estimated at ₹ 32.38 lakh crore, as against ₹ 26.95 lakh crore in Q1 of 2020-21, showing a growth of 20.1 percent as compared to a contraction of 24.4 percent in Q1 2020-21.**

Government to get a good total from sale of Air India, other disinvestment and through the listing of LIC: India aims to raise ₹1.75 lakh crore in the current fiscal year through sales of stakes in state-run companies and is hoping the sale of Air India to the Tata Group will provide an impetus. The listing of state-owned Life Insurance Corp. could fetch up to a further ₹1 lakh crore, according to another official. “We are working very hard to complete the listing of LIC and we should be able to do it by March,” the third official said.

Rating agency Moody’s Investors Service this month upgraded its outlook on India to stable from negative, saying downside risks in the country and its financial institutions had eased.

MD. Layeeque Azam

Plutus IAS