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1. Record surge in India's imports from China in first half of 2022 (July 14, 2022)

According to China's trade figures released on July 13 India's imports from China reached a record \$57.51 billion in the first half of the year.

India-China Bilateral Trade

- Chinese goods imports are on record growth this year, and are set to surpass last year's \$97.5 billion mark.
- The trade imbalance is also heading towards another record. Imports this year are up 34.5% from the same period in 2021.
- Two-way trade crossed 100 billion dollars for the first time in 2021 to reach 125.6 billion dollars, of which India's imports were 97.5 billion dollars.
- Trade declined in 2020 due to the corona pandemic, but is now well above pre-pandemic levels.
- China is the largest trading partner of India.

Major commodities imported from China into India

- Electronic equipment, machines, engines, pumps, organic chemicals, fertilizers, iron and steel, plastics, iron or steel products, gems etc.

Major commodities exported from India to China

- Cotton, gems, precious metals, coins. copper ores, slag, ash, organic chemicals, salt, sulphur, stone, cement, machines, engines etc.

2. India ranks 135 out of 146 in Global Gender Gap Index (July 14, 2022)

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Annual Gender Gap Report 2022 was released on 13 July in Geneva. India is ranked 135th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, 2022.

India's position

- India is the worst performing country in the world in the "Health and Survival" sub-index, where it ranks 146th.
- India ranks worse than its neighbours and is behind Bangladesh (71), Nepal (96), Sri Lanka (110), Maldives (117) and Bhutan (126).
- In South Asia, only Iran (143), Pakistan (145) and Afghanistan (146) performed worse than India.
- In 2021, India was ranked 140 out of a total of 156 countries in the index.

The top 10 Countries

- Iceland (90.8%) leads the global ranking.
- Other Scandinavian countries such as Finland (86%, second), Norway (84.5%, third) and Sweden (82.2%) figure in the top five.
- Sub-Saharan African countries Rwanda (81.1%, 6th) and Namibia (80.7%, 8th), a Latin American country, Nicaragua (81%, 7th), and a country from East Asia and the Pacific, New Zealand (84.1%, 4th) ranked in the top 10.
- Other European countries such as Ireland (80.4%) and Germany (80.1%) are ranked ninth and tenth.

4 key dimensions

1. Political Empowerment

This includes metrics such as the percentage of women in Parliament.

1. Economic Participation and Opportunity

The metrics involved are, percentage of women who are part of the labor force, pay parity for equal work, earned income, etc.

1. Educational Attainment

It includes metrics such as literacy rate and enrollment rate in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

1. Health and Survival

This includes two metrics: the sex ratio at birth (in %) and healthy life expectancy (in years).

About Global Gender Gap Index

- It is annually published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- It was first introduced in 2006 to benchmark progress towards gender equality.
- It is the 16th edition of the Global Gender Gap Report.
- It tracks the progress of bridging the gender gap over time.

3. 6th National Conference on Mines and Minerals (July 13, 2022)

The 6th National Conference on Mines and Minerals was inaugurated by Union Minister of Mines Prahlaad Joshi in New Delhi.

Important facts

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah attended the program as the chief guest.
- The Union Home Minister presented the 'National Mineral Development Awards' and other awards in various categories in this conclave.
- The Ministry of Mines launched the National Mining Conclave in 2016 with the aim of providing a platform for interaction between various stakeholders such as Central and State Government officials, industry and industry associations.

India's Coal and Mines Sector

- India's coal production was 566 million tonnes in 2013-14, which increased to 777 million tonnes in 2021-22.
- India ranks third in the world in coal production after the US and China.
- Chhattisgarh state ranks first in coal production in India.
- Jharkhand has the largest reserves of coal in India, followed by Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

4. Dwarka Expressway to be the first elevated urban highway in India (July 13, 2022)

The under-construction Dwarka Expressway between Delhi and Gurugram in Haryana is being developed as India's first elevated urban expressway.

Important facts

- With the construction of the 29 km long Dwarka Expressway, being built at a cost of about 9.5 thousand crore rupees, the traffic pressure on Delhi-Gurugram Expressway will be reduced.
- The expressway will be operational in 2023.
- The Delhi-Gurugram Expressway is a part of the 'Delhi-Jaipur-Ahmedabad-Mumbai' branch of the Golden Quadrilateral.
- It is also known as Northern Peripheral Road
- This expressway is of 16 lanes with provision of minimum three lane service road on both the sides.
- The foundation stone of Dwarka Expressway was laid almost three years back in March 2019.
- A total of 2 lakh metric tons of steel and 20 lakh cubic metric concrete are being used in the construction of this expressway.

What is elevated road?

- Elevated roads are constructed in those places where there is more traffic.

- An elevated road is technically a bridge.
- Elevated road construction is preferred in areas where land acquisition becomes difficult due to dense population.

Additional information

- The longest expressway in India is the Agra - Lucknow Expressway with a length of 302.02 km.
- India's first expressway was started in January 2001 between Delhi-Noida.
- The state with the most (13) expressways in the country is Uttar Pradesh. Out of the total 13 expressways of 3200 km, seven are under construction while six expressways are in operation.

5. CBI joins Interpol's ICSE initiative on child sexual abuse (July 13, 2022)

Central Bureau of Investigation, an investigating agency of India has joined the Interpol's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) initiative.

Important facts

- Now the CBI is allowed to work with investigators in other countries to trace child sexual abuse online and trace abusers from audio-visual clips using specialized software, identify victims and crime scenes.
- India has become the 68th country to have access to this database and software.

What is the ICSE database?

- The ICSE database uses image and video image comparison to analyse Child Sex Exploitation Material (CSEM).
- It makes interconnections between victims, abusers and places.
- As of July 2022, more than 30,000 victims of child abuse and over 13,000 perpetrators have been identified by Interpol using this database and software.

What is Interpol?

- The International Criminal Police Organization, or Interpol, is an intergovernmental organization with 194 members.
- It was formed in 1923 as the International Criminal Police Commission, and it was named Interpol in 1956.
- India joined Interpol in 1949, and is one of its oldest members.
- It is the world's largest international police organization.

- Its work focuses on public safety and combating terrorism, crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes, environmental crimes, etc.
- Headquartered - Lyon, France

6. PM Modi unveiled the National Emblem Ashoka Pillar on the roof of Central Vista (July 12, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the National Emblem Ashoka Pillar on the roof of the new Parliament House (Central Vista) on July 11, 2022.

• Important facts

- The national emblem is made of bronze and has a total weight of 9500 kg and a height of 6.5 m.
- It is built on top of the central hall of the new Parliament House.
- A supporting structure of steel weighing about 6500 kg has also been constructed to support the emblem.

• Statue of India (National Emblem)

- The Regalia (National Emblem) of India is a replica of the Lion Pillar of Ashoka at Sarnath, which is preserved in the Sarnath Museum.
- The original pillar has four lions at the top, with their backs facing each other.
- The four small animals on the lower part of the emblem are the horse and the bull (visible) and the lion and the elephant (invisible).
- 'Dharmachakra' is placed on top of this lion pillar made by cutting a single stone.
- This symbol was adopted by the Government of India on 26 January 1950.
- The sutra 'Satyameva Jayate' inscribed under the emblem is taken from the Mundakopanishad.

7. Indonesia announced 'Digital Nomad' Visas for travellers (July 12, 2022)

Indonesia has announced "**Digital Nomad Visa**" for travelers to attract foreign tourists.

• Important facts

- Bali is one of the most famous places in the country for beaches and bars, Indonesia is looking to bring back the sluggish economy due to Covid through these visas.

• Who are digital nomads?

- Digital nomads are people who work while travelling to different places and spend their earned income in the country they are travelling to.

- Most workplaces were moved online during the pandemic, while some offices are beginning to open, with most organizations announcing remote work.
- As the world moves towards vaccination and international borders have opened, people can continue to do their routine work remotely from anywhere in the world.
- A study found that 10.9 million American workers described themselves as digital nomads in 2020, a 49 percent increase from 2019.
- **What is the “Digital Nomad Visa” of Indonesia?**
- The digital nomad visa will allow remote workers to live in Indonesia, which includes Bali that will be tax-free.
- Its purpose is to promote tourism in the country, the visa will be applicable for five years.
- The announcement of the Digital Nomad Visa is aimed at attracting over 3.6 million foreign travellers to the country to visit in the next year.
- **Which countries are providing Nomad Visas?**
- In March, Italy issued a new permit for non-EU citizens or digital nomads who can stay in the country for up to 90 days without a visa.
- Antigua and Barbuda are offering nomadic visas for two years.
- Barbados offers a one-year remote working visa that can be extended.
- Croatia, Costa Rica, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Mauritius, Norway and Spain are also offering nomadic visas.

8. Prasar Bharti launches new logo (July 12, 2022)

India's public broadcaster Prasar Bharati unveiled its new logo on July 11, 2022. The Logo was released by Apurva Chandra, secretary, ministry of information and broadcasting.

- **About Logo**

- The new logo of Prasar Bharati is full of rich meanings.
- The central circle and the elements of the map of India depict trust, security and service of perfection to the common man.
- The dark medium blue colour of the logo represents both the sky and the sea which is associated with open space, freedom, intuition, imagination, inspiration and sensitivity.
- The colour blue also represents the meaning of depth, trust, loyalty, honesty, knowledge, confidence, stability, trust and intelligence.
- The blue colour also pays homage to the Indian ethos and traditions associated with religious figures, mythological characters found in Indian miniature paintings.
- The Logo is defined as a blend of both AIR and Doordarshan.

- **About Prasar Bharati**

- It is the largest statutory autonomous public broadcasting agency in India which was established in 1997.
- It was established under an Act of Parliament and consists of Doordarshan Television Network and All India Radio.
- In September 1990, the Parliament passed the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act.
- This act made provision for the establishment of a Broadcasting Corporation of India named Prasar Bharati.
- Head quarters - New Delhi

9. India will surpass China as the most populous country on earth in 2023: UN (July 11, 2022)

According to a report by the United Nations released on 11 July India will surpass China as the most populous country on earth in 2023.

• Important facts

- The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Population Division has said that the global population is projected to reach eight billion on November 15, 2022.
- As per a UN report, the world's population is growing at its slowest pace since 1950. It has fallen under 1% in 2020.
- According to the United Nations the world's population could grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050.
- This year's World Population Day, July 11, marks a milestone, when the birth of the eight billionth person on Earth is expected.
- More than half of the projected growth in global population by 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Tanzania.

• India's population in 2022

- According to the report, India's population is 1.412 billion in 2022 as compared to China's 1.426 billion.
- India, which will overtake China as the world's most populous country by 2023, is projected to have 1.668 billion people in 2050, far ahead of China's 1.317 billion people by the middle of the century.

• World's most populous regions in 2022

- The world's two most populous regions in 2022 were East and South-East Asia, with 2.3 billion people, representing 29% of the global population.
- Central and Southern Asia, with 2.1 billion, account for 26% of the world's population in 2022.

- With a population of over 1.4 billion in 2022, China and India account for the largest populations in these regions.
- **Outflow of more than 1 million migrants**
- It is estimated that ten countries experienced a net outflow of more than 1 million migrants between 2010 and 2021.
- In many of these countries, these outflows were due to temporary workers leaving their country.
- Pakistan (net outflow of -16.5 million during 2010-2021), India (-3.5 million), Bangladesh (-2.9 million), Nepal (-1.6 million) and Sri Lanka (-1 million).
- **Projections of Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME)**
- Alternative long-term population estimates have also been made by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME).
- In its recent projections, IHME projected that the global population will reach 8.8 billion in 2100.

10. Centre releases guidelines for Mission Vatsalya (July 11, 2022)

The Centre has issued certain guidelines for getting access to central funds and benefits under Mission Vatsalya. Mission Vatsalya is an umbrella scheme for child protection services in the country.

- **What are the new guidelines?**
- The states will have to retain the official name given by the Centre.
- Only correct translation in the local language will be allowed.
- Funds to the states will be sanctioned through Mission Vatsalya Project Approval Board (PAB), which will be headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- States/UTs have also been directed to focus on special needs of children with physical or mental disabilities.
- Institutions will now have to provide specialized teachers, doctors and nurses to provide occupational therapy, speech therapy, verbal therapy and other remedial classes.
- The employees of these special units will have to know sign language, braille etc. as per the new guidelines.
- Mission Vatsalya, in partnership with states and districts, will implement a 24×7 helpline service for children.
- **Mission Vatsalya**
- It promotes family-based non-institutional care of children in difficult situations based on the 'principle of institutionalization of children' as a last resort.

Before the year 2009, three schemes were implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development for children in need of protection -

1. Juvenile justice programs for children as well as children in need of care and protection

2. Integrated Program for Street Children

3. Child Home Assistance Scheme

- In the year 2010, these three schemes were merged into a single scheme which is known as Integrated Child Protection Scheme.
- In the year 2017 its name was changed to "Child Protection Services Scheme" and in the year 2021-22 it was also changed to Mission Vatsalya.
- It aims to ensure a healthy and happy childhood for every child in the country.