

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### **First Assembly of the International Solar Alliance**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first 3 -day Assembly of the International Solar Alliance at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018. It was co-chaired by French Minister Brune Poirson.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said that in the last 150 to 200 years, mankind has depended on fossil fuels for energy needs. He said nature is now indicating that options such as solar, wind and water, offer more sustainable energy solutions.

He said that the effect of increased use of renewable energy is now visible in India. He added that India is working towards the goals of the Paris Agreement through an action plan. He also said that the target is to generate 40 percent of India's total energy requirements in 2030, by non fossil fuel based sources. He said India is developing with a new self-confidence of "Poverty to Power".

Prime minister emphasised that if the dream of "One World, One Sun and One Grid" is followed, uninterrupted power supply can be ensured. He announced plans to launch a National Energy Storage Mission that will look at manufacturing, deployment, technology development and policy framework.

A short film on the 'Journey of Renewable Energy in India' was screened. Another film on Student Initiative on Solar Lamp was also shown on the occasion. 100 students from various schools lit the Solar Study Lamp at the inaugural function.

ISA's 5<sup>th</sup> program on Scaling-up Solar E-Mobility and Storage was also launched. It aims to promote, assess potential, harmonise demand and pool resources to implement and upgrade solar e-mobility and associated Storage infrastructure in urban and rural areas of ISA member countries. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Guterres, was present on the occasion.

### **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on visited to India**

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres arrived India on three-day visit. It coincided with 149<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday.

#### **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressed the following meetings:**

- 1) First Assembly of the International Solar Alliance
- 2) Second Energy ministers meet of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORM) member countries and
- 3) Second Re-invest 2018

He also attended the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention in New Delhi. It was organised to mark the beginning of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. Fifty-three Ministers of Sanitation from around the world and more than 160 international representatives from 68 countries participated the convention.

He also delivered a lecture at the India Habitat Centre on the theme of 'Global challenges, global solutions'. He appraised India's commitment to attain Sustainable Development Goals.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres presented the Champions of the Earth' award to PM Narendra Modi. The award is shared between PM Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron. Antonio Guterres formally inaugurated the UN House at Delhi.

Modi and UN Secretary-General had delegation level talks regarding global issues such as climate change and terrorism. Cooperation between the UN and India on strengthening capacity in combating terror financing also discussed. He also met President of India Ram Nath Kovind. They discussed on reform of the UN Security Council as per the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **RBI approved formation of 'Kerala Bank'**

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, RBI approved the proposal of Kerala government for the formation of Kerala Bank, as per the statement given by the chief minister of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan.

The decision was taken by special task force headed by Chairman M S Sriram. The bank is expected to see a merger of around 823 branches of 14 district cooperative banks and the State Cooperative Bank within the time.

As per the present estimates, the new 'Kerala Bank' will have a net deposit amount of Rs.650 billion. Kerala Bank will provide modern facilities to the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS). The merger will be completed by March 2019.

The merger would also help in bridging the gap created for a local bank after the merger of State Bank of Travancore with State Bank of India.

## **U – 19 Asia ACC cup lifted by India**

2018 Under-19 Asia Cup is the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of ACC (Asia Cricket Council) Under-19 Cup. Between 29 September and 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the game hosted by Bangladesh. Afghanistan was the defending champions. India defeated Sri Lanka in the final match by 144 runs.

The final match was hosted by Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur, Bangladesh. Eight teams participated in the event. Pawan shah is the Indian Captain.

By this, India became winner of U – 19 Asia Cricket cup for 6 times and Yashasvi Jaiswal (India) was declared as Player of The Series and Harsh Tyagi of India got Man of the Match Award in Final match.

## **4<sup>th</sup> India International Science Festival inaugurated**

On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018, President Ramnath Kovind formally inaugurated the 4<sup>th</sup> India International Science Festival (IISF) 2018 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

The theme of this year's festival is "Science for Transformation". This Festival aims to apply science and technology for transformation of the country and enable positive change for social and economic progress.

A "science village" was set up at National Botanical Garden in Lucknow for interaction of science with common people.

Apart from this, Science and Technology Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Young Scientists Conference, Mega Science, Technology & Industry Expo and Global Indian Science & Technology Stakeholders' Meet (GIST).

It would provide a platform to young scientists, entrepreneurs and researchers to present their innovative ideas.

IIST is conceivably biggest platform in India that brings together students, researchers, artists and general public to celebrate nation's achievements in science and technology. It serves as a medium to encourage young minds towards field of science and to promote networking of stakeholders working towards the propagation of science.

## **MODEL QUESTIONS**

1. Who is interim Director General of International Solar Alliance?

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|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1) Indu Bhushan     | 2) Amitab Kanth |
| 3) Upendra Tripathy | 4) R.P. Singh   |
| 5) Piyush Goyal     |                 |

