

IMPLICATIONS OF INDIA'S NEW VPN RULES

In News:

- Recently, India's cybersecurity watchdog Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issued new rules for companies offering virtual private networks (VPNs).
- The new rules require VPN providers to keep a wide range of data on their customers, including contact numbers, email addresses and IP addresses, for five years.

About VPN and implications of new VPN rules:

- **What is a VPN?**
 - A VPN is a service that protects users online by preventing their IP address from being tracked by websites, law enforcement agencies, cybercriminals and others.
 - Corporate employees are the most frequent VPN users, mainly for securely accessing company networks.
 - A VPN's primary benefit is that it ensures privacy and creates a safe and secure connection while using a public network such as the internet.
 - Simply put, they mask online id, making it difficult for third parties to track, steal and store data.
- **About the new rules:**
 - These are drafted by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.
 - It mandates VPN companies to record personal information of their users including names, email id, phone number and IP address for a period of **five years** and to record and keep their customers' logs for 180 days.
 - The VPN providers also have to record usage patterns, purpose of hiring services and various other information.
 - Apart from VPN companies, the new norms are also applicable to data centres, virtual private server (VPS) providers, cloud service providers, Government organisations, etc. However, the corporate entities are not under the scanner.

- A virtual server is a simulated server environment built on an actual physical server.
 - It recreates the functionality of a dedicated physical server, but offers higher security than the latter.
 - Service providers who do not have a physical presence in India but offer services to the users in the country, have to designate a point of contact to liaise with CERT-In.
 - It further mandated that any cybercrime recorded must be reported to the CERT-In within 6 hours of the crime.
 - The directives will take effect at the end of June (2022) and if the data is not handed over to the government by then, the entities would face punitive action.
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G7 PROPOSES \$600-BN GLOBAL INFRA PLAN TO RIVAL CHINA

In News:

- US President Joe Biden and other G7 leaders formally launched in Germany the Partnership for Global Infrastructure (PGII).
- The 48th G7 summit is being held in Germany.

Partnership for Global Infrastructure (PGII)

- At the 2021 G7 Summit, G7 leaders had announced their intent to develop a values-driven, high-impact, and transparent infrastructure partnership.
- It was to meet the enormous infrastructure needs of low- and middle-income countries and support the US' and its allies' economic and national security interests.
- At the 2022 G7 summit, the participating leaders formally launched the **Partnership for Global Infrastructure (PGII)**.
- Under this, G7 leaders pledged to raise \$600 billion in private and public funds over five years to finance needed infrastructure in the developing countries.

Aim

- To deliver quality, sustainable infrastructure that makes a difference in people's lives around the world;



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- To build infrastructure that strengthens and diversifies supply chains, creates new opportunities, and advances national security of member countries.

Four priority pillars

- **Climate and energy security**
 - Tackling the climate crisis and bolstering global energy security through investments in climate resilient infrastructure, transformational energy technologies.
- **Digital connectivity**
 - Developing, expanding, and deploying secure ICT networks and infrastructure to power economic growth and facilitate open digital societies.
- **Gender equality and equity**
 - Advancing gender equality and equity by investing in
 - care infrastructure that increases opportunities for economic participation by women,
 - improved water and sanitation infrastructure that addresses gender gaps in unpaid work and time use.
- **Health and health security**
 - Developing and upgrading the infrastructure of health systems and contributing to global health security.

India and PGII

- The US announced several flagship projects under the PGII. One of these projects will back Indian infrastructural initiatives.
- Under this, the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) will be investing up to \$30 million in Omnivore Agritech and Climate Sustainability Fund.
 - This is an impact venture capital fund that invests in entrepreneurs building the future of agriculture, food systems, climate and the rural economy in India.
 - The Fund seeks to invest in companies that increase food security and promote both climate resilience and climate adaptation in India.
 - It also seeks to improve the profitability and agricultural productivity of smallholder farms.

PGII and China

- The PGII is seen as an attempt to check China’s influence in the developing world by delivering game-changing projects to close the infrastructure gap in these countries.
- It is aimed at countering China’s multitrillion-dollar Belt and Road project.

China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)



- China’s Belt and Road Initiative (also known as One Belt, One Road (OBOR)) envisages the construction of a maze of road, rail and port projects through a number of countries.
- It aims to strengthen Beijing’s economic leadership through a vast program of infrastructure building throughout China’s neighbouring regions.
- This initiative is called “21st century silk road,” and is made up of
 - a belt of overland corridors (also known as silk road economic belt)
 - a maritime road of shipping lanes.

News Summary

- The G7 group has unveiled Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) to counter China’s flagship trade-and-infrastructure initiative.

RUCHIRA KAMBOJ

Senior Diplomat Ruchira Kamboj has been appointed as the next Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations.



About:

- A 1987 batch Indian Foreign Service officer, Ruchira Kamboj is presently serving as Ambassador of India to Bhutan. She will succeed TS Tirumurti as the Indian ambassador to the United Nation.
- Ministry of External Affairs said, Ruchira Kamboj is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

DISCOVERY OF MICROPLASTICS IN ANTARCTICA

For the first time, microplastics have been found in freshly fallen snow in Antarctica.



About:

- Researchers collected snow samples from 19 sites in the Ross Island region of Antarctica and found that all contained

microplastics.

- While microplastics have been found across the world, from the world's deepest ocean floors to the peak of Mount Everest, researchers say that this is the first time that they have been found in freshly fallen snow in Antarctica.
- **How did they reach Antarctica?** These particles, due to their light weight and low density, might have travelled through air from more than 6,000 km away. However, there is also a possibility that the human presence in Antarctica created a microplastic 'footprint'.

Why is this discovery troubling?

- It shows that the spread of microplastics is so widespread, that even the remotest and least habitable places in the world are now infested by these particles.
- Microplastics are not biodegradable and can be toxic for plants and animals.
- The microplastics deposited in ice and snow can accelerate the melting of the cryosphere — regions where water is in solid form, like the planet's North and South Poles. Dark-coloured microplastics are better at absorbing sunlight and retain more heat.

What are microplastics?

- Microplastics are tiny plastic debris that are smaller than 5 mm in length, tinier than even a grain of rice. There are two types of microplastics.
- Primary microplastics are tiny particles that are purposely designed as such for commercial use, like in cosmetics, nurdles-plastic pellets used in industrial manufacturing and in fibres from synthetic textiles like nylon.

- Secondary microplastics are formed through the degradation of larger plastic items like bottles, fishing nets and plastic bags. This occurs through exposure to the environment, like radiation from the sun, wind and ocean waves.
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SURYA NUTAN

Indian Oil and Ministry of Petroleum & Natural gas have developed an indigenous indoor solar cooking system named “Surya Nutan”.



About:

- Surya Nutan is a Stationary, rechargeable, and always kitchen-connected indoor solar cooking.
 - This is a patented product designed and developed by IndianOil R&D Centre, Faridabad.
 - It works on a Hybrid Mode (i.e. can work on both solar & auxiliary energy source simultaneously) which makes the Surya Nutan a reliable cooking solution for all weather conditions.
 - Surya Nutan can be used in all weather and seasons including when the Sun is not available for long durations or for continuous days, such as monsoons and extreme winters.
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PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA (PMKSY)

Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India is inviting applications under the various sub-schemes of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) to set up food processing related facilities / units.



These sub-schemes are:

- Scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro Processing Clusters(APC)



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- Scheme for Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities [Unit Scheme] (CEFPPC)
 - Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure (Cold Chain)
 - Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure (FTL)
 - Operation Greens- long Term Interventions (OG)
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