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NITI Aayog presents India's second Voluntary National Review at UN, titled 'Decade of Action: Taking SDGs From Global to Local'



Niti Aayog

नीति आयोग
National Institution for Transforming India

NITI Aayog presented India's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, 2020.

The India VNR 2020 report was titled Decade of Action: Taking SDGs from Global to Local.

The report was presented by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog.

The HLPF is the foremost international platform for countries to present its follow-up and review of progress on achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is organised annually in July for eight days under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.

HLPF 2020 is being hosted virtually in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic between 10 to 16 July 2020. 47 Member States are set to present their VNRs.

United States remains India's top trading partner for 2nd consecutive year in 2019-20

The United States has retained its position as India's top trading partner for the second consecutive financial year in 2019-20.



As per the data of the Ministry of Commerce, the bilateral trade between the US and India in 2019-20 stood at **\$88.75 billion** as against \$87.96 billion in 2018-19.

In 2018-19, the US for the first time surpassed China to become India's top trading partner.

China was India's top trading partner since 2013-14 till 2017-18 and before China, UAE was the largest trading nation in India.

The bilateral trade between India and China dropped to \$81.87 billion in 2019-20 from \$87.08 billion in 2018-19.

United Nations organises 2020 Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week from 6-10 July 2020



The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism organised its Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week 2020 from 6-10 July 2020.

The theme of 2020 Counter-Terrorism

Week was “Strategic and Practical Challenges of Countering Terrorism in a

Global Pandemic Environment”.

- This was the second edition of the UN Counter-Terrorism Week while the first time that the event was held virtually due to covid-19 pandemic.
- Originally the second Counter-Terrorism Week was to take place from 29 June to 3 July 2020 at the UN Headquarters, New York, but due to the COVID-19 crisis the entire 2020 Counter-Terrorism Week was postponed.

FICCI survey predicts India’s GDP to contract by 4.5% in FY21

Industry body FICCI has projected the Indian economy to contract by (-) **4.5 percent in 2020-21**, as per its latest Economic Outlook Survey released on 12 July 2020.

The minimum and maximum GDP growth estimate stood at (-) 6.4 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively, for FY21.

The downward revision is due to the halt in economic activities amid the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown.

NTPC’s Singrauli Unit 1 emerges as India’s top-performing plant in first quarter of FY21



The state-run electricity giant **National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Singrauli’s Unit 1** has emerged as the **top-performing unit in the country** in the first quarter of the financial year 2020-21 as per the data released by Central Electricity Authority.

The Unit-1 of the NTPC Singrauli power plant registered a plant load

factor (PLF) or capacity utilisation of 101.96 percent in the April-June 2020 period.

Apart from this, Unit 4 & 5 registered PLF of 101.85 percent and 100.35 percent in First Quarter of Financial Year 20-21 among the Coal-fired Units.

Singrauli Super Thermal Power Plant

Singrauli Super Thermal Power Plant is located at Shaktinagar in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh. The power plant is the first power plant of NTPC.

The first unit of the station, with an installed capacity of 200 MW, started generating electricity on February 13, 1982.

NTPC Singrauli has total 7 units with an overall installed capacity of 2,000 Mega Watt. It includes five units of 200 Mega Watt each and two units of 500 Mega Watt each.

Google Launches \$10 Billion Digitization Fund in India



On 13 July, after a virtual meeting with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Alphabet Inc. Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai announced an investment of \$10 billion (Rs 75,000 crore) in India which will be utilised in another five to seven years to digitize the Indian Economy.

Key Points:

The fund will be used to accelerate Google's effort through a mix of Investments, partnerships, operations, infrastructure, and ecosystem investments. Google will partner with CBSE and provide new initiatives to digitize classrooms. It partners with Prasar Bharti, a public broadcasting agency for edutainment series for small and medium-sized business in the country.

IAA named ISRO Chief K Sivan As the Recipient of 2020 Von Karman Award



The International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) has announced Dr. Kailasavadivoo Sivan, Chief of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as the recipient of the 2020 Von Karman Award, the

highest distinction of the IAA. The award will be presented to Dr. K. Sivan in March 2021 at Paris.

IAA's Von Karman Award:

- i. The premier award of IAA was instituted in 1982 in the memory of Dr. Theodore Von Karman, renowned aerospace scientist and the founder and the first President of IAA.
- ii. The Award is annually presented to recognise the distinguished contributions and lifetime achievements in any branch of science.

Dr.K.Sivan:

- i. Dr.K.Sivan joined ISRO in 1982 in the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) project.
- ii. He worked on the mission design and strategies for PSLV which was the foundation of ISRO launch vehicles like Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), GSLV Mk-III and Reusable Launch Vehicle-Technology Demonstrator(RLV-TD).
- iii. He was the chief architect of **SITARA** – 6D trajectory simulation software.
- iv. He became the Chairman of ISRO in January 2018 succeeding AS Kiran Kumar.

Awards:

- i. He received the Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) from Sathyabama University, Chennai in April 2014.
- ii. He received the Dr. Biren Roy Space Science award in 2011.

NTPC Wins CII-ITC Sustainability Awards 2019



NTPC Limited(formerly- National Thermal Power Corporation Limited) wins **CII-ITC Sustainability Award 2019** under the category **Corporate Excellence** for Outstanding Accomplishment. In addition to this, it has also received a Commendation for Significant Achievement in the category of Corporate Social

Responsibility(CSR).

NTPC's Initiatives

- i. **GEM(Girl Empowerment Mission)**, a 4 weeks residential program is its flagship CSR program. It is institutionalized near its power stations to help school girls from underprivileged backgrounds to support their overall development.

ii. It has initiated Contractors' Labour Information Management System (CLIMS) to make payment to contract labourers on the last day of the month at project sites.

Gist about CII-ITC Sustainability Award

CII-ITC Sustainability Award was instituted in **2006**. It recognises and rewards excellence in businesses that seek ways to be more sustainable and inclusive in their activities.

It is considered to be the most credible platform for sustainability recognition in the country.

Sachin Awasthi is honoured as the Top Publicist in Global Humanitarian Award 2020 – London



Sachin Awasthi, the president of National Media Club and Founder of Shri Ram Seva Mission was honoured with the “Top Publicist” award in the Global Humanitarian Awards 2020 held as a webinar over a virtual platform in London.

ii. The Global Humanitarian Award 2020 is instituted as a part of the “Honoring the Honorable” initiative of the World

Humanitarian Drive(WHD).

iii. He inaugurated the Swachh Bharat – Sundar Bharat Mission in 2014 and released a first toll free number for cleanliness in India.