1 MARCH CURRENT AFFIARS

1. Cash-strapped Egypt has increased transit fees for ships passing through the Suez Canal with hikes of up to 10%

Cash-strapped Egypt increased transit fees for ships passing through the Suez Canal, one of the world's most crucial waterways, with hikes of up to 10%.

The Suez Canal Authority said on its website the increases were "in line with the significant growth in global trade" and cited the canal's "development and enhancement of the transit service".

Transit fees for liquefied petroleum gas, chemical tankers, and other liquid bulk tankers increased by 10%. Vessels carrying vehicles, natural gas and general cargo, as well as multi-purpose vessels, will see an increase of 7%, while a 5% increase will be imposed on oil and crude tankers and dry bulk vessels. The hikes could later be revised or called off, according to changes in global shipping.

Canal authorities have been working to widen and deepen the waterway's southern part, where a hulking vessel ran aground and closed off the canal in March 2021.

The six-day blockage disrupted global shipment. Some ships were forced to take the long alternate route around the Cape of Good Hope at Africa's southern tip, requiring additional fuel and other costs. Hundreds of other ships waited in place for the blockage to end.

About 10% of global trade, including 7% of the world's oil, flows through the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean and Red seas. For

Egypt, the canal - which first opened in 1869 - is a source of both national pride and foreign currency.

Suez Canal:

The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. The canal separates the African continent from Asia. It provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans. It is one of the world's most heavily used shipping lanes, carrying over 12% of world trade by volume.

2. Zero Discrimination Day observed on 01st March

Discrimination has been prevalent in society as a glaring evil that highlights that underlying glitch in our understanding of humans.

As humans, we have disintegrated ourselves into various categories based on gender identity, race, class, sexual orientation, sex, occupation, income, disability, etc.

The Zero Discrimination Day is held every year on the 1st of March. The day aims to ensure right to equality, inclusion and protection of all people without any discrimination in their law and policies to live a full life with dignity regardless of any barriers.

Zero Discrimination Day highlights how people can become informed about and promote inclusion, compassion, peace and, above all, a movement for change.

Zero Discrimination Day is helping to create a global movement of solidarity to end all forms of discrimination.

The theme of the day:

The theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2022: "Remove laws that harm, create laws that empower", UNAIDS is highlighting the urgent need to take action against discriminatory laws.

History of the day:

Zero Discrimination Day was first celebrated on March 1, 2014, and was launched by UNAIDS Executive Director at Beijing after UNAIDS launched its Zero Discrimination Campaign on World AIDS Day in December 2013.

UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) is the main advocate for accelerated, comprehensive and coordinated global action on the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Executive director: Winnie Byanyima

Founder: Peter Piot

Founded: 26 July 1994

3. Operation Ganga: Sixth flight from Budapest with 240 Indians lands in Delhi

The sixth evacuation flight under Operation Ganga from Hungary's capital Budapest carrying 240 Indian nationals landed at Delhi airport on 28 February 2022.

Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi welcomed the Indian nationals at the airport.

'Operation Ganga': is the initiative launched by the government of India to bring back Indians stranded in Ukraine.

Under this, India has already successfully brought back more than a 1,000 of its nationals from the country.

It has also set up 24×7 control centres to assist in the evacuation of Indians through the border crossing points with Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovak Republic.

4. Vigyan Sarvatre Pujyate Science Week Festival concludes in Leh

Vigyan Sarvatre Pujyate Science Week Festival concluded on 28 February 2022 in Leh.

Leh is amongst the 75 centres in the country observed Science Week, under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

According to Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur, Ladakh need to use the science in achieving UNESCOs sustainable development goals, SDGs.

The food security, birth rate and education the SDGs include digital literacy and ecologically smart future.

5. GST collection crosses 1.30 lakh crore mark in February

According to the Finance Ministry, more than one lakh 33 thousand crore rupees Gross GST Revenue was collected during the month of February 2022.

The collection of revenues for the month of February this year is 18 percent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year and 26 percent higher than the GST revenues in February 2020.

The GST collection has crossed one lakh 30 thousand crore mark for the fifth time so far.

Goods and Services Tax (GST): is an indirect tax (or consumption tax) used in India on the supply of goods and services.

Goods and services are divided into five different tax slabs for collection of tax: 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%.

6. NASA's first crewed landing of the Artemis program on the moon is expected to take place in 2026

NASA said it needed time to develop and test the human landing system and NASA's next generation spacesuits.

Artemis stands for Acceleration, Reconnection, Turbulence and Electrodynamics of Moon's Interaction with the Sun. It is NASA's next mission to the Moon. To measure what happens when the Sun's radiation hits our rocky moon, where there is no magnetic field to protect it. Artemis was the twin sister of Apollo and goddess of the Moon in Greek mythology.

With the Artemis program, NASA will land the first woman and next man on the Moon by 2024.

NASA's powerful new rocket, the Space Launch System (SLS), will send astronauts aboard the Orion spacecraft nearly a quarter million miles from Earth to lunar orbit. Astronauts will dock Orion at the Gateway and transfer to a human landing system for expeditions to the surface of the Moon. They will return to the orbital outpost to board Orion again before returning safely to Earth.

NASA will fly two missions around the Moon to test its deep space exploration systems.

Artemis 1 is aiming to send an uncrewed spacecraft around the moon using a combination of the never-flown Space Launch System rocket, along with the once-flown Orion spacecraft. NASA hopes to extend the program with the moon-orbiting crewed Artemis 2 mission in 2024, then

a landing on Artemis 3 in 2025, ahead of other crewed missions later in the 2020s.

Find and use water and other critical resources needed for long-term exploration. Investigate the Moon's mysteries and learn more about our home planet and the universe. Learn how to live and operate on the surface of another celestial body where astronauts are just three days from home. Prove the technologies we need before sending astronauts on missions to Mars, which can take up to three years roundtrip. In 1959, the Soviet Union's uncrewed Luna 1 and 2 became the first rover to visit the Moon. Before the USA sent the Apollo 11 mission to the Moon, it sent three classes of robotic missions between 1961 and 1968. After July 1969, 12 American astronauts walked on the surface of the Moon until 1972.

7. Russia and Ukraine are important centres of the global semiconductor supply chain

Russia and Ukraine are important centres of the global semiconductor supply chain, providing rare metals like palladium, and gases like neon, that are needed in the production of the silicon wafers present in almost all modern devices and equipment. Amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis, it is expected that the situation may worsen global chip shortage.

Just as Russia supplies the global semiconductor industry with rare metals, Ukraine supplies (speciality) gases required by the chip-making industry. Thus, there is potential to extend the stress in the supply chain of semiconductors, which are key to manufacturing autos and other electronic equipment in the Asia-Pacific region.

Semiconductors are materials which have a conductivity between conductors and insulators. They can be pure elements, silicon or germanium or compounds; gallium, arsenide or cadmium selenide. They are the basic building blocks that serve as the heart and brain of all modern electronics and information and communications technology products. They are now an integral part of contemporary automobiles, household gadgets and essential medical devices such as ECG machines. The Covid-19 pandemic-driven push to take sizable parts of daily economic and essential activity online, or at least digitally enable them.

The pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns across the world also forced shut crucial chip-making facilities in countries including Japan, South Korea, China and the US. India currently imports all chips and the market is estimated to touch $100 billion by 2025 from $24 billion now.

Earmarked Rs 76,000 crore for semiconductors and display manufacturing segment. Launched the PLI and other schemes to boost semiconductors. Released a vision document for the electronics sector which envisages that the domestic electronic production has potential to reach around Rs 22 lakh crore by 2026. Launched the Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS) under which a budget outlay of Rs 3,285 crore is spread over a period of eight years for manufacturing of electronics components and semiconductors.

- High Investments Required.
- Minimal Fiscal Support from Government.
- Lack of Fab Capacities.
- Insufficient Grants under PLI Scheme.
- Resource Inefficient Sector.

8. The second part of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report was released recently

This second part of the report is about climate change impacts, risks and vulnerabilities, and adaptation options. The first part of the report was released in August last year. That one was centred around the scientific basis of climate change.

The Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the sixth in a series of reports intended to assess scientific, technical, and socio-economic information concerning climate change. This report evaluates the physical science of climate change – looking at the past, present, and future climate. It reveals how human-caused emissions are altering our planet and what that means for our collective future.

The Assessment Reports, the first of which had come out in 1990, are the most comprehensive evaluations of the state of the earth's climate.

So far five reports have been released (1990, 1995, 2001, 2007 and 2015). The latest report has, for the first time, made an assessment of regional and sectoral impacts of climate change.It has included risks to, and vulnerabilities of, mega-cities around the world. For example, it has said Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding, while Ahmedabad faces serious danger of heat-waves. For the first time, the IPCC report has looked at the health impacts of climate change.

It has found that climate change is increasing vector-borne and water-borne diseases such as malaria or dengue, particularly in sub-tropical regions of Asia.

It has also said deaths related to circulatory, respiratory, diabetic and infectious diseases, as well as infant mortality, are likely to increase with a rise in temperature.

Increasing frequency of extreme weather events like heat waves, flooding and drought, and even air pollution was contributing to under-nutrition, allergic diseases and even mental disorders.

The report identifies India as one of the vulnerable hotspots, with several regions and important cities facing very high risk of climate disasters such as flooding, sea-level rise and heat-waves. Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding.

The IPCC was established in the year 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland