



Sri Lanka's Much-Awaited Bailout Package

❖ Context

- Recently the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund approved Sri Lanka's bailout program under an Extended Fund Facility.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The package of 2.286 billion special drawing rights equivalent to about **3 billion dollars will be available over 4 years.**
- The Executive Board's decision will enable an immediate disbursement of 333 million dollars.
- With the approval of the much-awaited bailout, Sri Lanka will look to restore **macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability**, while safeguarding financial stability, and stepping up structural reforms to unlock its growth potential.
- India had provided unprecedented and generous assistance of 4 billion dollars to the island nation to tide over the crisis.

❖ Extended Fund Facility:

- The Extended Fund Facility (EFF) is a financial assistance program provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to member countries facing **serious balance of payments problems.**
- It is a longer-term program than the IMF's **regular Stand-By Arrangements (SBA)** and is designed to support countries that need more time to implement economic reforms & stabilize their economies.
- The EFF program is typically implemented over a period of **three to four years** and requires countries to implement significant economic reforms in exchange for IMF financing.
- These reforms may include measures such as **fiscal consolidation, monetary policy reform, and structural economic reforms**, with the aim of promoting sustainable economic growth, reducing poverty, and improving the balance of payments.
- The EFF program is considered a **last resort option for countries** facing severe economic challenges, and it is only provided after other financing options have been **exhausted or deemed insufficient.**

TN-KET (Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam) : TB Death-free Project

❖ Context

- Tamil Nadu has pioneered an initiative across the State to reduce the mortality rate among people with tuberculosis.

❖ Key Highlights

- The initiative is **-TN-KET (Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam)**, meaning TB death-free project
- It which began in April 2022 in 2,500-odd public healthcare facilities that diagnosed TB in 30 districts.
- It has already achieved significant reduction in the number of early TB deaths.
- ❖ **National TB Prevalence Survey Report**
 - The survey was carried out between **2019 & 2021.**
 - There has been an **increase in the mortality rate** due to all forms of TB between 2019-2020 by 11%.
 - The **highest pulmonary TB prevalence (PTB) of 534/lakh in Delhi** and the lowest pulmonary TB Prevalence of 115/lakh in Kerala.
 - Higher PTB Prevalence was **observed in older age groups, males, malnourished, smokers, alcoholics and known diabetics.**
 - There is a need to prioritize the interventions in high prevalent States and plan for elimination in low prevalent States.

❖ About Tuberculosis Disease

- TB is an **infectious disease** caused by the **bacillus Mycobacterium tuberculosis.**
- It typically **affects the lungs (pulmonary TB)** but can also affect other sites like the brain, eyes and spine.
- The disease is spread when people who are sick with pulmonary TB **expel bacteria into the air, for example by coughing.**
- **Directly observed treatment (DOTs) :**
 - **Short-course** (DOTS, also known as TB-DOTS) is the name given to tuberculosis (TB) control strategy recommended by the World Health Organization.
 - It was also deployed by India to curb the menace of TB.
- ❖ **Govt Initiative: Dare2eraD TB :**
 - The government announced the launch of **Data-Driven Research to Eradicate TB- "Dare2eraD TB"** by the Department of Biotechnology, M/o Science & Technology, on the occasion of World TB Day in 2022.
 - Dare2eraD TB will be the **umbrella TB program of DBT** comprising of following key initiatives :
 - **InTGS** - Indian Tuberculosis Genomic Surveillance Consortium
 - **InTBK Hub**- Indian TB Knowledge Hub- Webinar Series
 - **Host Directed therapies against TB** and developing an evidence-based regimen for treating extra-pulmonary Tuberculosis.
 - Indian Tuberculosis Genomic Surveillance Consortium (InTGS) is proposed on lines of the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG) for Whole Genome Sequencing, (WSG) TB surveillance.

Saving lives by cutting down delay, beginning treatment

The TN-KET (Tamil Nadu-Kasanoi Erappila Thittam) initiative began in April 2022 in 2,500-odd public healthcare facilities that diagnosed tuberculosis in 30 districts

- The heart of the initiative is the 'Differentiated TB Care' aimed at assessing whether people with TB need ambulatory care or admission in a health facility to manage severe illness at the time of diagnosis



Lacking: Most PHCs, many taluk and block-level healthcare facilities lack clinical and diagnostic capacity

- Nearly 70% of all TB deaths among notified TB patients take place in the first two months after diagnosis
- Preliminary assessment of patients based on just three conditions was sufficient for quick identification at diagnosis and referral for admission in a hospital
- This resulted in admission of people with severe TB illness in a hospital on the same day of diagnosis, thus increasing the chances of saving lives

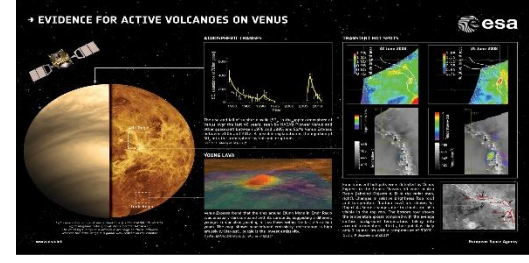
- Around 150 nodal inpatient care facilities have been identified, and nearly 900 beds earmarked for people with TB who are severely ill
- In December 2022, the State achieved 90% triaging of patients, 90% referral and confirmation of severe illness, and 90% admission among confirmed

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Volcanic Activity on the Surface of Venus

❖ Context

- Recently, a new analysis of archival radar images taken around **three decades ago** found **direct geological** evidence of recent volcanic activity on the surface of Venus, for the first time.



❖ Key Highlights

- Scientists made the new discovery by pouring over images of Venus taken by **NASA's Magellan spacecraft between 1990 and 1992**.
- During their examination, they looked at the planet's **Atla Regio area**, where two of the biggest volcanoes of Venus, **Ozza Mons and Maat Mons**, are located.
- **Significance of the Findings :**
 - As volcanoes act like windows to provide information about a planet's interior, the new findings take scientists a step further to understand the geological conditions of not just Venus but also other exoplanets.
 - The findings give us a glimpse of what more is to come regarding Venus as in the next decade
- **New Venus Missions :**
 - Three new Venus missions would be launched, including the European EnVision orbiter and NASA's DAVINCI and VERITAS missions.
- **Previous Missions :**
 - **NASA's** Mariner 2 (1962) and Magellan.
 - **ESA's** Venus Express (which orbited from 2006 until 2016)
 - **Japan's** Akatsuki Venus Climate Orbiter (orbiting since 2016).
 - **NASA's Parker Solar Probe** has made multiple flybys of Venus.

❖ About Venus

- Venus is the second planet from the Sun and is Earth's **closest planetary neighbor**.
- It's one of the four inner, **terrestrial (or rocky)** planets, and it's often called Earth's twin because it's similar in size and density.
- Venus has a **thick, toxic atmosphere** filled with carbon dioxide and it's perpetually shrouded in thick, yellowish clouds of sulfuric acid that trap heat, causing a runaway greenhouse effect.
- It's the **hottest planet** in our solar system, even though Mercury is closer to the Sun.
- The surface is a **rusty color** and it's peppered with intensely crunched mountains and thousands of large volcanoes.
- Venus has **crushing air pressure** at its surface – more than 90 times that of Earth.
- Venus rotates on its axis backward, compared to most of the other planets in the solar system (Uranus spins on its side).
- It takes about 243 Earth days to spin around just once.
- It takes 225 Earth days for Venus to go all the way around the Sun.
- Venus **does not have any moons**.

Merapi Volcano

❖ Context

- Indonesia's Mount Merapi, one of the world's most active volcanoes, erupted recently.



❖ Key Highlights:

- It was Merapi's most powerful eruption since 1930 when about 1,300 people were killed.
- Merapi has been at the second-highest level alert since 2020 following increased volcanic activity and authorities established a restricted zone of seven kilometres from the summit.

❖ About Volcano:

- A volcano is an opening in the Earth's surface through which **molten rock, ash, and gases escape from the planet's interior**.
- Volcanoes can be found all around the world, but the majority of them are located in areas where tectonic plates meet.
- Volcanoes can be classified into three types based on their activity: **active, dormant, and extinct**.
 - **Active volcanoes** are those that have erupted recently or are still erupting.
 - **Dormant volcanoes** have not erupted in a long time but could potentially erupt again in the future.
 - **Extinct volcanoes** are those that have not erupted in thousands of years and are unlikely to erupt again.

- Volcanic eruptions can be **explosive or non-explosive**, depending on the type of magma and the gases it contains.
- Explosive eruptions can produce ash clouds, lava flows, pyroclastic flows, and lahars, which are fast-moving volcanic mudflows.
- **Significance:** Volcanoes can have positive effects on the environment by creating new land and providing nutrient-rich soils.



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News in Between the Lines

Vienna Convention



VIENNA CONVENTION
ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

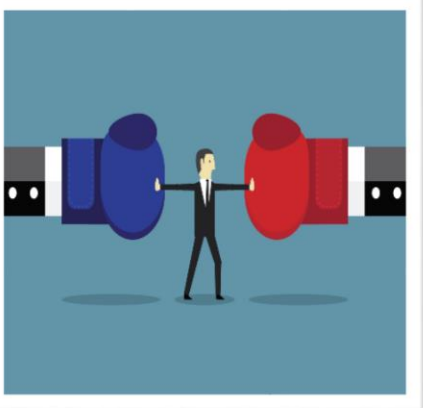
❖ Context

- Hours after a group of people chanting pro-Khalistan slogans **took down the Indian flag at the High Commission in London**, the Indian government on Sunday summoned the “senior-most” UK diplomat, and lodged a strong protest.
- She (Dy High Commissioner Scott) was reminded in this regard of the basic obligations of the UK Government under the **Vienna Convention**.

❖ About Vienna Convention

- The term “Vienna Convention” can refer to any of a number of treaties signed in Vienna, most of which are related to the harmonisation or formalisation of the procedures of international diplomacy.
- The treaty being referred to by the MEA in this instance is the **Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961)**.
- The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations **entered into force on April 24, 1964** and is nearly universally ratified, with Palau and South Sudan being the exceptions.
- It “provides a complete framework for the **establishment, maintenance and termination of diplomatic relations** on a basis of consent between independent sovereign States”.
- Most notably, the Convention codifies the longstanding custom of diplomatic immunity, in which diplomatic missions are granted privileges that enable diplomats to perform their functions without fear of coercion or harassment by the host country.
- It affirms the concept of “inviolability” of a diplomatic mission, which has been one of the enduring cornerstones of international diplomacy.

Double Jeopardy



❖ Context

- A Delhi court on Saturday sentenced two former Delhi Jal Board (DJB) officials to three years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 5,000 each, in a money laundering case registered by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in 2009.

❖ Key Highlights

- Though the accused(s) completed around 4-5 years of their sentences in the CBI case.
- In doing so, the court rejected the accused’s argument alleging double jeopardy and said that “to operate as a bar of double jeopardy, the second prosecution and consequential punishment must be for the same offense”.
- If the two offences are distinct then the ban under Section 300 CrPC cannot be invoked.

❖ Double Jeopardy

- Double jeopardy” comes from the Latin maxim “Nemo bis punitur pro eodem delicto”, which means that no one can be tried for the same offence twice.
- **Legal Provision :**
 - **Section 300 of the Criminal Procedure Code of 1973-** It says that a person once convicted or acquitted cannot be tried for the same offence.
 - The doctrine of double jeopardy is enshrined in the Indian Constitution under **Article 20 (2)**, which says, “No person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once.”
 - **Article 20(2)** does not bar subsequent trials if the ingredients of the offences in the previous and subsequent trials are distinct.

The Number of Airports Doubled



❖ Context

- Civil Aviation Minister recently said that the government has doubled the number of Airports over the last eight years from **74 in 2014 to 148 Airports**.

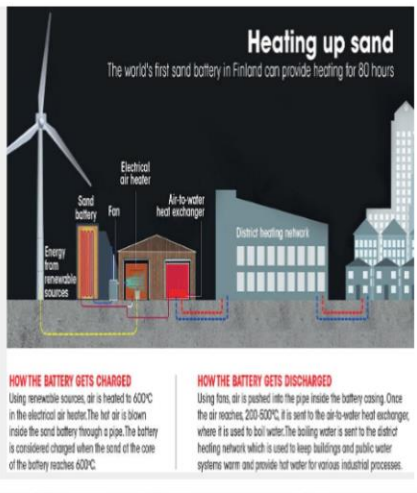
❖ Key Highlights:

- India is the third largest domestic market in the world in terms of seat capacity, but in terms of international seat capacity, India is still ranked the 18th position.
- The number of domestic passengers has more than doubled in six years from 2014 to 2020.
- India will have more than 140 million passengers in 2024 alone.

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Sand Battery



❖ Context

- Finland has installed the world's first sand battery that can store heat from renewable energy sources for months.

❖ Key Highlights

- The battery, a **massive steel silo**, 7 m tall and 4 m wide with 100 tonnes of sand, was installed in Finland's Kankaanpää town in June 2022. The renewable sector has several water-based storage systems that can heat buildings for short durations.
- Sand can be heated up to 600 degrees Celsius (°C), whereas water starts to boil at 100°C. It also has low heat conductivity, which reduces energy loss.
- The storage system has three main components: the sand silo, an electrical air heater and an air-to-water heat exchanger.
- **Mechanism :**
 - For charging the sand silo, air is heated to 600°C in the electrical air heater.
 - The hot air is then circulated inside the silo using a heat-exchange pipe and blowers to raise the temperature of the sand at the silo's core to 600°C.
 - When the storage enters the discharging stage, the blowers are used to pump air into the pipe inside the sand silo.
 - Once the air reaches 200°C, it is transferred to the air-to-water heat exchanger, where it is used to boil water. It is then sent to the heating network. The storage system requires electricity at all times.
 - It is needed to charge the battery, monitor the temperature during standby and run the blowers when the battery is used.
 - 1,000 times more power is discharged as heat than is used as electricity.

Biratnagar Declaration



❖ Context

- The three-day Nepal-India Literature Festival concluded recently with the adoption of a 10-point **Biratnagar declaration**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The festival was jointly organized by **Biratnagar Metropolitan City and Krantidhara Literature Academy of Meerut, India**.
- As many as 350 literary writers representing all seven provinces of Nepal and the majority of states of India participated in the festival.
- The declaration included -
 - translating Nepali literature into Hindi and Hindi into Nepali for mutual promotion.
 - undertaking further research on connecting Mahabharat-era King Birat's palace with the Mahabharat Circuit in coordination with the **Department of Archeology and historians** and encouraging young literary writers to further explore the **archaeological artefacts**.

Women and Men in India 2022 Report



❖ Context

- The Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation recently released the Women and Men in India 2022 report, which provides insights into gender disparities in various aspects of life in the country.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The report shows that India's sex ratio is expected to improve **from 943 in 2011 to 952 by 2036**. However, the report also highlights the gender disparity in labor force participation rates, with women severely **lagging behind men**.
- The report indicates that women are still largely excluded from the labor force, which restricts their financial independence. Moreover, the report highlights the gender disparity in wages, with men in rural areas earning more than women in urban areas.
- Gender influences people's access to and experience with healthcare, with women and girls facing more difficulties than men and boys due to restrictions on mobility, **lack of access to resources, and decision-making power**.
- Despite some improvements, gender inequality remains a significant issue in India.
- The report calls for efforts to **promote gender equality**, including providing equal opportunities for women in the labor force & eliminating gender-based wage disparities.
- These efforts will not only benefit women but also contribute to **India's overall economic growth and development**.

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