

Australia-India Water Security Initiative (AIWASI)

(GS Paper 2, International Relation)

Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet was apprised the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Government of Australia for Technical Cooperation in urban water management.
- The MoU has been signed in December 2021.

Key Highlights



Way Forward:

- MoU will enable both sides to learn about technological advancements gained by two nations in key areas of urban water security and will promote exchange of learning, best practices and capacity building of institutions.
- This will help towards realisation of AatmaNirbhar Bharat.

MoU between India & Japan for joint research on air quality and climate change

(GS Paper 3, Environment)

Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet was apprised of the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish collaborative guidelines between **the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan** and **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), India**.
- **It aims** to carry out and implement joint research (hereinafter referred to as "Joint Research") on air quality and climate change.

About ARIES:

- Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) is an Autonomous Research Institute established under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- ARIES is a centre of excellence for research in Astronomy & Astrophysics and Atmospheric Sciences.
- It carries out research on air pollution and climate change on earth, formation and evolution of sun, stars and galaxies.

The following are some of the possible activities

Joint use and operation of scientific instruments	Exchange of scientific and technical information on observing methods	Joint analysis of observational data and making scientific reports	Joint educational and research activities	Exchange of visiting scholars, including PhD students for the purpose of conducting research	Joint scientific workshops and/or seminars
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About NIES:

- The National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) is Japan's only research institute that undertakes a broad range of environmental research in an interdisciplinary and comprehensive manner.
- NIES works to produce scientific findings on environmental protection.
- NIES is working on research projects that include consolidating the institute's research foundation through basic research, data acquisition and analysis, preservation and provision of environmental samples.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and United Arab Emirates (UAE)

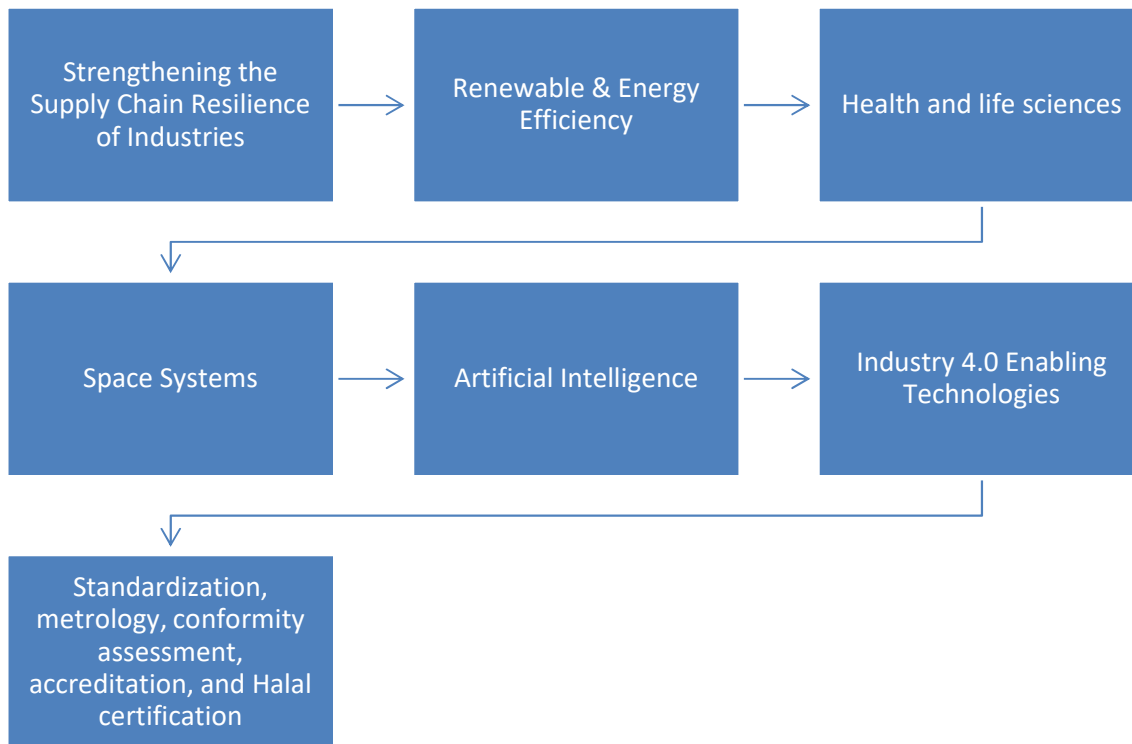
Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for signing a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Cooperation in the field of Industries and Advanced Technologies.

Key Highlights:

- The MoU aims at strengthening and developing industries in both nations through investments, technology transfer and the deployment of key technologies in industries. This is likely to generate employment across the economy.
- The implementation of MoU may lead to increase in research and innovation in all areas of mutual cooperation, particularly in the areas of Renewable Energy, Artificial Intelligence, Industry Enabling technologies and Health and Life science.
- This may lead to growth of these sectors, increased domestic production, enhanced exports and reduction in imports.

The MoU envisages cooperation on a mutually beneficial basis in the following areas:



India-UAE bilateral trade:

- Growing India-UAE economic and commercial relations contribute to the stability and strength of a rapid diversifying and deepening bilateral relationship between the two countries.
- India-UAE bilateral trade, valued at US\$ 180 million (Rs.1373 crore) per annum in the 1970s has increased to US\$ 60 billion (Rs.4.57 lakh crore) making the UAE, **India's third largest trading partner for the year 2019-20 after China and the US.**
- Moreover, the **UAE is the second largest export destination of India (after US)** with an export value of US\$ 29 billion (Rs.2.21 lakh crore) for the year 2019-2020.
- The UAE is **eighth largest investor in India** with an estimated investment of US\$ 18 billion (Rs.1.37 lakh crore). Indian investments in the UAE are estimated at around US\$ 85 billion (Rs.6.48 lakh crore).
- India and the UAE have signed a bilateral **“Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement” (CEPA)** on 18th March 2022. This agreement has potential to increase trade between India and the UAE from US\$ 60 billion (Rs.4.57 lakh crore) to US\$ 100 billion (Rs.7.63 lakh crore) in the next five years.

Way Forward:

- Signing of the MoU will result in fulfilling the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat, a clarion call given by Prime Minister of India in making India a self-reliant nation.

ASCI frames guidelines to ask advertisers to break gender stereotypes **(GS Paper 2, Social Justice)**

Why in news?

- Recently, the Union Minister for Women and Child Development released the eight new guidelines on harmful gender stereotyping in ads framed by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

Background:

- It was a follow-up to the regulator's 2021 GenderNext study in partnership with consulting firm Futurebrands that looked at the depiction of women with an aim to guide brands.

- The guidelines are a timely intervention, coming only days after the watchdog suspended controversial ads by body spray brand Layer'r Shot that drew wide outrage and were viewed as promoting sexual violence against women.



Key guidelines:

- One of the new guidelines says that while advertisements may feature people undertaking gender-stereotypical roles or displaying gender-stereotypical characteristics, they **must not suggest that stereotypical roles or characteristics are:** always uniquely associated with a particular gender; the only options available to a particular gender; or never carried out or displayed by another gender(s).

The other guidelines include:

- While advertisements may feature glamorous and attractive people, they **must not suggest that an individual's happiness or emotional well-being depends on** conforming to these **idealised gender-stereotypical body shapes or physical features.**
- Ads **should not mock people for not conforming to gender stereotypes,** their sexual orientation or gender identity, including in a context that is intended to be humorous, hyperbolic or exaggerated.
- They should not reinforce unrealistic and undesirable gender ideals or expectations.
- An advertisement may not suggest that a person fails to achieve a task specifically because of their gender.
- Where an ad features a person with a physique or physical characteristics that do not match an ideal stereotype associated with their gender, it should not imply that their physique or physical characteristics are a significant reason for them not being successful.
- Ads **should not indulge in the sexual objectification of characters of any gender** or depict people in a sexualised and objectified way for the purposes of titillating viewers.
- No gender should be encouraged to **exert domination or authority over the other(s)** by means of overt or implied threats, actual force or through the use of demeaning language or tone. Ads cannot provoke or trivialise violence (physical or emotional), unlawful or anti-social behaviour based on gender.
- Additionally, they **should not encourage or normalise voyeurism, eve-teasing, stalking, emotional or physical harassment** or any similar offences. This does not prevent the ad from showing these depictions as a means to challenge them.

Way Forward:

- Gender portrayal is a complex and nuanced issue, and with the new guidelines, ASCI aims to address subtle stereotypical messaging in ads that may go unnoticed.
- A recent study by Kantar revealed that 64 per cent of consumers believe advertising reinforces rather than helps eradicate harmful gender stereotypes.

‘Lipstick’ plant rediscovered in Arunachal after 100 years

(GS Paper 3, Science and Tech)

Why in news?

- Researchers at the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have rediscovered a rare plant, which is sometimes called the ‘**Indian lipstick plant**’, from remote **Anjaw district in Arunachal Pradesh** after more than a century.



Background:

- The **plant (Aeschynanthus monetaria Dunn)** was first identified by British botanist Stephen Troyte Dunn in 1912, based on the plant samples gathered from Arunachal Pradesh by another English botanist, Isaac Henry Burkill.
- Due to the appearance of tubular red corolla, some of the species under the genus Aeschynanthus are called lipstick plants.

Key Highlights:

- A review of the relevant documents as well as a critical study of the fresh specimens confirmed that the specimens were Aeschynanthus monetaria, which had never been obtained from India since Burkill in 1912.
- The genus name Aeschynanthus is derived from the Greek aischyne or aischyn, which means shame or to feel embarrassed respectively, and anthos, which means flower.

Characteristics of Aeschynanthus monetaria Dunn:

- Aeschynanthus monetaria Dunn is morphologically unique and distinct among all the Aeschynanthus species known from India by **its fleshy orbicular leaves with a greenish upper surface** and purplish-green lower surface. The specific epithet 'monetaria' means ‘mint-like’, alluding to the appearance of its leaves.

- The plant grows in moist and evergreen forests, at elevations ranging from 543 to 1134 m. The flowering and fruiting time is between October and January.
- The species has been provisionally **assessed here as 'endangered'**, following the guidelines of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

Threats:

- Landslides are frequent in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh. Developmental activities such as broadening of roads, construction of schools, new settlements and markets, and jhum cultivation are some of the major threats to this species in Arunachal Pradesh.