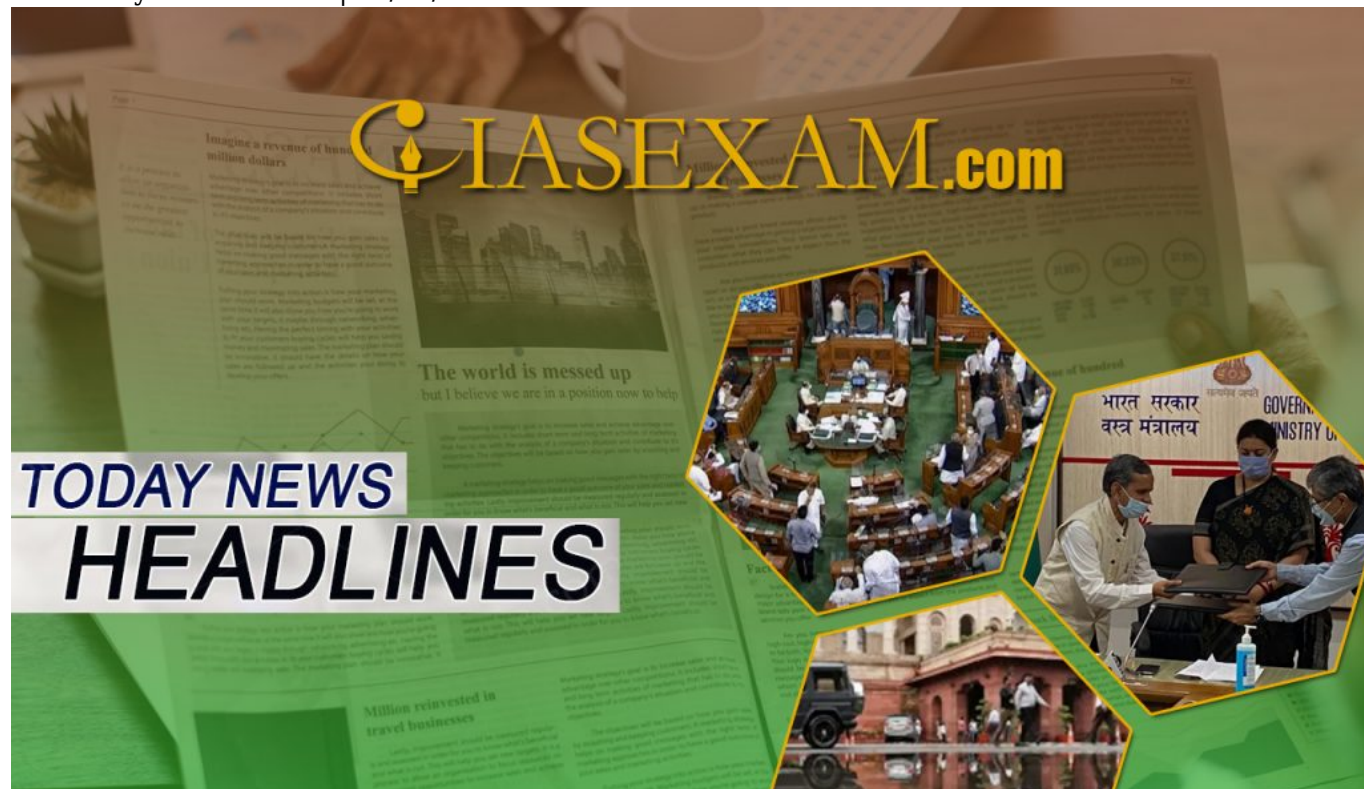


Headlines at a Glance - 3rd December 2020

written by iaseexam.com | 03/12/2020



China's proposed Hydropower project in Brahmaputra, Tibet

China will build a major hydropower project on Brahmaputra river in Tibet and a proposal for this has been clearly put forward in the 14th Five-Year Plan to be implemented from next year, the official media quoted the head of a Chinese company tasked to build the dam as saying. Yan Zhiyong, chairman of the Power Construction Corp of China, said China will "implement hydropower exploitation in the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River" (the Tibetan name for Brahmaputra) and the project could serve to maintain water resources and domestic security. The 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 were adopted by Plenum – a key policy body of the CPC – last month. Details of the plan were expected to be released after the formal ratification by National People's Congress (NPC) early next year. Proposals for dams on the Brahmaputra have evoked concerns in India and Bangladesh, the riparian states, and China has downplayed such anxieties saying it would keep their interests in mind.

SOURCE: The Hindu

ADB Loan for Meghalaya Power Distribution Sector

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Indian government on Monday signed a \$132.8 million loan agreement to strengthen the power distribution system of Meghalaya. The loan amount will be used to modernize the distribution network and improve the quality of power supplied to households, industries, and businesses in Meghalaya. The signatories to the Meghalaya Power

Distribution Sector Improvement Project were Dr. CS Mohapatra, Additional Secretary (Fund Bank & ADB), Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance who signed for the Government of India, and Mr. Takeo Konishi, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission who signed for ADB. After signing the loan agreement, Dr Mohapatra stated that the project supports the state government's "24x7 Power for All" initiative and will help the state reduce its high technical and commercial losses through network strengthening, metering and billing efficiency improvements. Though Meghalaya has achieved 100% electrification, remote rural areas in the state suffer from frequent power interruptions due to overloaded distribution networks and substations that use outdated technology, resulting in high aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses. The Government of India and the state government of Meghalaya embarked on a joint 24x7 power for All Meghalaya initiative to provide uninterrupted, quality, reliable, and affordable power supply to all electricity consumers, said a statement issued by the Union finance ministry.

SOURCE: The New Indian Express

Cabinet Secy discusses with states possible Covid-19 vaccine roll-out

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Tuesday reviewed with top officials of states the arrangements for the roll-out of vaccines after these are available and asked them to prepare a database of people like health workers who will be administered on priority, officials said. The meeting was attended by chief secretaries, health secretaries and other senior officials of the states and union territories. The cabinet secretary reviewed the arrangements for COVID-19 vaccine roll-out and asked the state and union territories to prepare a database of the prioritised group of people who will receive the vaccine during the initial stages, a government official said. The meeting came three days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Pune to review the development and manufacturing process of coronavirus vaccines at facilities in these cities. The central government has been putting in place measures for quick and effective distribution of coronavirus vaccine when it becomes available.

SOURCE: Business Standard

All SCO member nations barring India reaffirm support to China's OBOR project

Barring India, all other member nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) reaffirmed their support to China's ambitious 'One Belt and One Road' (OBOR) project during a virtual meeting of the influential grouping.

India has been severely critical of the mega project as the USD 50 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is part of the OBOR, passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). A joint communique, issued at the end of the 19th meeting of the Council of Heads of Governments of the SCO, said Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reaffirming their support for the OBOR initiative. The virtual summit was hosted by India and it was chaired by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu. Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs Vikas Swarup said the SCO member states of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan attended today's meeting at the level of prime ministers.

SOURCE: The Indian Express

New Military Deal between China and Pakistan

General Wei Fenghe, China's defence minister, met Pakistan's President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad on Tuesday. Chinese state media reports how Gen Wei urged both nations to "push the military-to-military relationship to a higher level". He said this will "firmly safeguard the sovereignty and security interests of the two countries and safeguard the regional peace and stability". President Alvi "firmly supports China's stand on issues related to the South China Sea, Taiwan, Xinjiang, Tibet and so on", according to Chinese state media. The meeting followed a visit to Nepal where Gen Wei offered his support for Nepal against India. According to The Communist Party-run Global Times, Gen. Wei said: "China firmly supports Nepal to safeguard its national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity." The situation between India and China on the long-disputed Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh has been a source of major tension. The conflict has long roots as the countries first went to war over the boundary in 1962 but despite multiple negotiations, there has been no lasting resolution. The 1962 truce introduced a 2,100-mile-long stretch of Himalayan land between the countries and no official border has been negotiated. In June, 20 Indian soldiers died when a hand-to-hand battle erupted on the steep slopes. In October, India captured a Chinese soldier after he strayed across the LAC. Russia has called for a deescalation of the seven-month long standoff over fears it could destabilise the region.

SOURCE: Hindustan Times