



## News Analysis (29 Jan, 2019)

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### World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2019

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Recently, the five-day World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2019 ended with discussions on imminent challenges faced by the global economy, including climate change, growing inequality, and US-China trade tensions.

- This year's theme was **Globalization 4.0**, which includes a strong cultural dimension. Globalization is a phenomenon driven by technology and the movement of ideas, people, and goods. While Globalism is an ideology that prioritizes the neoliberal global order over national interests.
- A '**Digital Declaration**', which calls on businesses to respect the privacy of digital citizens; handle personal data securely and transparently; take meaningful steps to mitigate cyber threats, and ensure everyone can participate in the digital economy as it develops whilst combating online harassment, was also signed.

### Waves of Globalisation

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- **Globalization 1.0** was pre-World War 1 globalization, which was launched by a historic drop in trade costs when steam and other forms of mechanical power made it economical to consume goods made far away.
  - This globalization came with almost no government support.
  - There was no global governance.
- **Globalization 2.0** is the post-World War II phase where trade in goods was combined with complementary domestic policies.
  - The market was in charge of efficiency while the government was in charge of justice.
  - Internationally, Globalization 2.0 saw the establishment of institute-based, rule-based international governance, specifically the UN, IMF, World Bank, GATT/WTO and many specialized agencies like the Food and Agricultural Organisation and International Labour Organisation.

- **Globalization 3.0 or hyperglobalization, as termed by Arvind Subramanian** created a new world of manufacturing in which high-tech was combined with low wages. This meant factories crossing borders.
- **Globalization 4.0** is a new stage of globalization which involves cutting-edge new technologies like artificial intelligence that powers forward with the explosion of information technology.

These shrink distances, open up borders and minds and bring people all across the globe closer together.

## World Economic Forum (WEF)

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a **Swiss nonprofit foundation established in 1971**, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for **public-private cooperation**, its mission is cited as, "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas".
- Founder and Executive Chairman- **Klaus Schwab**.
- Some major reports published by WEF are:
  - **Global Competitiveness Report**  
This monitors the performance of countries based on a set of 12 categories called '**pillars of competitiveness**', namely institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size, business application and innovation.
  - **Global IT Report**  
WEF along with INSEAD, and Cornell University publishes this report which examines the increasing proliferation of technology and its effects on advancing global prosperity.
  - **Global Gender Gap Report**
  - **Global Risk Report**  
It enlists the threats which the world will face in future ranging from geopolitical and geo-economic tensions to environmental degradation and **disruptions of the Fourth Industrial Revolution**.
  - **Global Travel and Tourism Report**  
It measures set of factors and policies that enable sustainable development of travel and tourism sector.

India and **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has signed an agreement to enable India's participation in **Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)** to be held in 2021.

- India stayed away from PISA in 2012 and 2015 on account of its dismal performance in 2009, when it was placed 72nd among the 74 participating countries.
- India criticized the method saying that questions were "out of context". Thus, India chose not to participate in the 2012 and 2015 cycle of PISA.

## What is PISA?

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- PISA is an international **survey held every three years**, coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
- **First conducted in 2000**, the major domain of study rotates between **reading, mathematics, and science** in each cycle.
- It is a competency-based test designed to **assess the ability of the 15-year-old candidates** that measures their reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years to apply their knowledge to real-life situations.

## Important features of India's participation in PISA

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- Schools run by **Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and schools in the UT of Chandigarh will participate.**
- PISA uses test items aligned with international benchmarks. OECD has agreed to contextualize the questions for Indian students.
- Learnings from participation in PISA will help to introduce competency-based examination reforms in the school system and help move away from rote learning. The CBSE and NCERT will be part of the process and activities leading to the actual test.
- It would lead to **recognition and acceptability of Indian students** and prepare them for the global economy in the 21st century.

## A Glance at Indian Education System

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- **Education in schools is one dimensional**, with an obsessive focus on marks. Further, there is lack of availability of trained teachers at all levels. Quality teachers are the missing link in the Indian education system.
- **A majority of students in the university are unemployable because of their inability to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.** This is because of a poor foundation in schools, where the emphasis is more on rote learning, rather than testing a student's creative skills.
- **As per UNESCO data, India has one of the lowest public expenditure rates on**

**education per student, especially compared to other Asian countries like China.**

- With a literacy rate of about 74 percent, India lags behind other BRICS nations, which have literacy rates above 90 percent.

## Benefits of PISA

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- **PISA data reveals common patterns among high performing school systems.**

Likewise, the data also shows that school systems with the greatest improvement have used common tactics at different points in the reform process.

- The data is also used for benchmarking. Successful school systems have many internal measures but it is difficult to understand what the “best” really is. So an International benchmark like PISA can be a healthy driver for reform efforts worldwide.

## Criticism of PISA

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- Academicians raised concern about **PISA that it has contributed to an obsession with standardized testing relying heavily on quantitative measures** rather than qualitative aspects of education.
- It is criticized for **shifting focus from long-term and enduring solutions to temporary measures** which are being increasingly adopted by countries to improve their ranking.

## Important Facts for Prelims (29th January 2019)

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### New Delhi Superbug Gene Reaches the Arctic

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- Recently soil samples taken in Svalbard (a Norwegian archipelago between mainland Norway and the North Pole) have confirmed the presence of **blaNDM-1** (called New Delhi Metallo-beta-lactamase-1) into the **High Arctic**.
- blaNDM-1 is **Antibiotic-Resistant Gene** (ARG) which results in **multi-drug resistance** (MDR) in microorganisms.
- It got **New Delhi** in its name because it was first detected in a **Swedish patient of Indian origin** who travelled to **India in 2008**.
- British scientists later found the "**superbug**" in New Delhi's public water supply. Since then, the resistant gene has been found in over 100 countries, including new variants.
- According to researchers blaNDM-1 and other ARGs found in Arctic soils were likely spread through the faecal matter of birds, other wildlife and human visitors to the area.
- Encroachment into areas like the Arctic reinforces how rapid and far-reaching the spread of antibiotic resistance has become.

## Multidrug-resistant organisms

- Multidrug-resistant organisms are bacteria that have become resistant to certain antibiotics, and these antibiotics can no longer be used to control or kill the bacteria.
- Antibiotics are important medicines. They help fight infections that are caused by bacteria. Bacteria that resist treatment with more than one antibiotic are called multidrug-resistant organisms.

## Sangrai dance

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- Sangrai dance is performed by the **Mog tribal community** on the occasion of Sangrai festival during the month of Chaitra (in April) of the Bengali calendar year.
- The Mogs are one of the 19 tribes in **Tripura**.
- The Mogs are Arakanese descendants who migrated to Tripura through Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- Mogs' language is grouped under Tibeto-Chinese family which is also linked with Assam-Burmese section of language.

## India Becomes 2nd Top Steel Producer

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- **India** has **replaced Japan** as **world's second largest steel producing country**, while **China is the largest producer of crude steel** accounting for more than 51 percent of production, according to World Steel Association (worldsteel).
- Others in the top 10 steel producing countries include the United States (4th place), South Korea (5th place), Russia (6th), Germany (7th), Turkey (8th), Brazil (9th) and Iran (10th).

## World Steel Association

- The World Steel Association (worldsteel) is a **non-profit organisation** with headquarters in **Brussels, Belgium**. A second office in **Beijing, China**, opened in April 2006.
  - Worldsteel represents over 160 steel producers (including 9 of the world's 10 largest steel companies), national and regional steel industry associations, and steel research institutes. worldsteel members **cover around 85% of world steel production**.
  - It was founded as the International Iron and Steel Institute on 10 July 1967. It changed its name to the World Steel Association on 6 October 2008. The association celebrated its 50th year anniversary in 2017.
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