



drishti

News Analysis (02 Sep, 2021)

 drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/02-09-2021/print

Resolution 2593 on Taliban: UNSC

Why in News

Recently, the India-led **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** adopted a **Resolution 2593 on Taliban**.

- The resolution, **sponsored by France, UK and the US**, was adopted with 13 members, including India, voting in favour, **none against it**.
Two permanent and veto-wielding members **Russia and China abstained**.
- The adoption of the resolution is a **strong signal from the Security Council and the international community on its expectations** in respect of Afghanistan.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - Reiterates the **importance of combating terrorism in Afghanistan**, including those individuals and entities designated pursuant to **resolution 1267 (1999)**.
 - Called for the **Taliban to facilitate safe passage** for people wanting to leave Afghanistan, allow humanitarians to access the country, **uphold human rights**, including for women and children and inclusive and **negotiated political settlement**.

- **Russia and China's Abstention:**

- **Russia** abstained as the **resolution wasn't specific enough about terror threats**, did not speak of the "brain drain" effect of evacuating Afghans and **did not address the economic and humanitarian consequences** of US freezing the Afghan government's US accounts following the Taliban takeover.
- **China** shared some of Russia's concerns. It believes that the **current chaos was a direct consequence of Western countries' "disorderly withdrawal"**.

China is of the view that **it is necessary for the international community to engage with the Taliban**, and actively provide them with guidance.

- Russia and China wanted all the terrorist groups, especially **Islamic State (ISIS)** and the **Uighur East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)** to be named specifically in the document.

- **India's Recent Steps:**

- India has directed a **high-level group** composed of EAM (External Affairs Minister), **NSA (National Security Adviser)** and senior officials to **focus on the immediate priorities of India**.

The group is **seized of issues pertaining to the safe return of stranded Indians** to India and is **assuring that the territory of Afghanistan is not used in any manner for terrorism** directed against India.

- Recently, **India's ambassador to Qatar met with the head of the Taliban's political office**.
 - It is the first time the government has publicly acknowledged such a meeting which came **at the request of the Taliban**.
 - The Taliban leader assured that **all the issues would be positively addressed**.

- **Afghanistan's Representation in Multilateral Organizations:**

- With uncertainty hanging over the international representation of Afghanistan under the Taliban, **a question has risen over the membership** of the country in the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**.
 - The question on representation of Afghanistan at the SAARC has come up especially since a similar issue is yet to be addressed by the **United Nations**.
 - SAARC is already **facing many issues** and the current situation of Afghanistan has further increased the problems for it.
 - Afghanistan was admitted into the SAARC as the **eighth member in 2007**.
- Conventionally, **countries do not lose membership of regional or global platforms because of a domestic political change**.
- However, a similar question is also likely to come up in the Kathmandu-based intergovernmental organisation the **International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)**.

Way Forward

- India is expected to chair the **1988 Sanctions committee** that looks at Taliban sanctions next and participate in the decision to extend the mandate of the **UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**, where **it will also have to balance competing demands from the US, the UK and France bloc against Russia and China.**
- **India's Afghan policy** is at a major crossroads; to safeguard its assets there as well as to stay relevant in the unfolding 'great game' in and around Afghanistan, **India must reset its Afghanistan policy accordingly.**

Source: IE

Sharp Economic Recovery

Why in News

Recently, the **National Statistical Office** data has revealed that the **Indian economy grew at a record pace of 20.1% in April-June 2021**, as compared to the corresponding period last year.

Last year, **Gross domestic product (GDP) contracted 24.4% in the same period**, when the national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic had nearly halted all economic activities.

Key Points

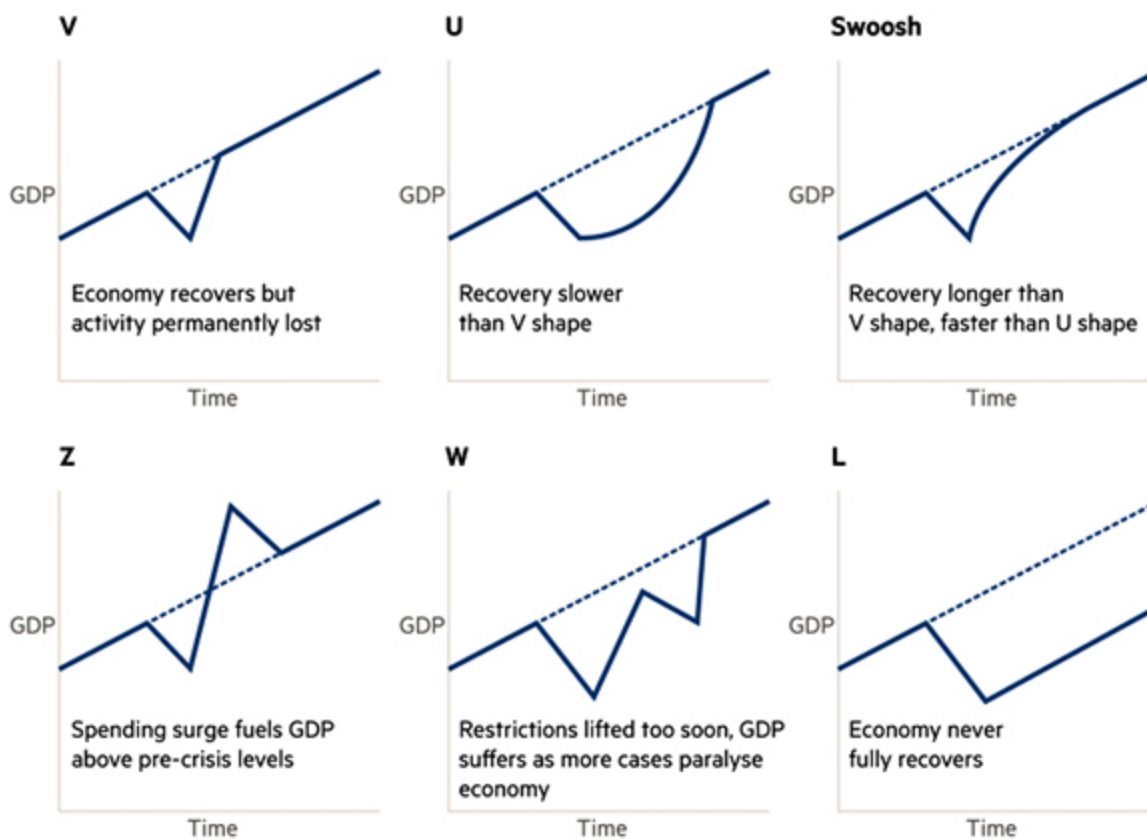
- **About Economic Recovery:**
 - The first quarter's high growth rate, **has come despite a brutal second wave of the pandemic** which peaked in April-May 2021.
 - The sharp increases were **largely due to the low base (-24.4%) of the first quarter of 2020-21.**
 - This growth **reaffirms the government's prediction of an imminent V-shaped recovery** made last year.
 - However, despite phenomenal economic recovery, the **GDP in the first quarter is still 9.2% lower than the GDP in the same period during the pre-Covid year 2019-20.**
 - Amongst sectors, **manufacturing and construction imparted a significant push to the economy** in April-June, growing 49.63% and 68.3% respectively, over April-June 2020.

However, the **services sector continued to lag.**
 - **Sectors** including 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' and 'electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services' are **above the levels of the pre-Covid year of 2019-20.**

- **V-shaped Economic Recovery:**

- A V-shaped recovery is **characterized by a quick and sustained recovery in measures of economic performance after a sharp economic decline.**
- Such recoveries are generally spurred by a significant shift in economic activity caused by rapid readjustment of consumer demand and business investment spending.

Shape of recovery



About NSO:

- It is the **central statistical agency** of the Government mandated under the **Statistical Services Act 1980** under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.**
- It is **responsible for** the development of arrangements for providing statistical information services to meet the needs of the Government and other users for information on which to base policy, planning, monitoring and management decisions.

Measuring Total Output of Economy

- Total Output in an economy can be measured by two ways:
 - Measuring total demand: Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
 - Measuring total supply: Gross Value Added (GVA)

- **About GDP:**

- It is the total monetary value of final goods and services, those that are bought by the final user and produced in a country in a given period of time.
- The GDP data show what is happening to the four engines of economic growth in any economy. These four engines are:
 - Private Final Consumption Expenditure (C)
 - Investment (I)
 - Government Final Consumption Expenditure (G)
 - Net Exports” (NX) (Exports-Imports)
- **GDP = C + I + G + NX**

- **About GVA:**

- It looks at how much value was added (in money terms) in different productive sectors (such as Agriculture, Electricity, etc.) of the economy.
- It tells **which specific sectors are doing well** and which are struggling to add value.

- **Difference Between GDP And GVA:**

- On the face of it, the total output **should be the same** in the case of **measuring Total Demand or Total Supply**.
- However, every economy has a **government, which imposes taxes and also provides subsidies**.
- As such, **GDP is “derived” by taking the GVA data and adding the taxes on different products and then subtracting all the subsidies on products**.
- In other words, **GDP = (GVA) + (Taxes earned by the government) — (Subsidies provided by the government)**.
- The difference between these two absolute values **will provide a sense of the role the government played**.
 - If the government earned more from taxes than what it spent on subsidies, **GDP will be higher than GVA**.
 - If, on the other hand, the government provided subsidies in excess of its tax revenues, the **absolute level of GVA would be higher than the absolute level of GDP**.

Source: IE

World Social Protection Report: ILO

Why in News

Recently, a **International Labour Organization** report titled ‘**World Social Protection Report 2020–22**’ has revealed that, **globally 4.1 billion people are living without any social safety net of any kind**.

- The report highlighted that the pandemic response was uneven and insufficient. Thereby, Covid-19 has further underscored the critical importance of achieving **universal social protection**.
- ILO is a **specialized agency of the United Nations**. It is the only tripartite UN agency. It brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

Key Points

- **Social Security (Concept):**
 - It is a **comprehensive approach** designed to prevent deprivation, **give assurance to the individual of a basic minimum income for himself and his dependents** and to protect the individual from any uncertainties.
 - Social protection **includes** access to health care and income security measures related especially to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity or the loss of the main breadwinner in a family, as well as extra support for families with children.

- **Highlights of the Report:**

- **Global Population with Social Protection:** In 2020, **only 46.9% of the global population benefitted from at least one protection** under the ambit of social security.
- **Challenges Put Forward by Covid-19 Pandemic:** Pervasive challenges such as high levels of economic insecurity, persistent poverty, rising inequality, extensive informality and a fragile social contract have been exacerbated by Covid-19.
- **Persisting Inequalities:** There are significant regional inequalities in social protection, with **Europe and Central Asia having the highest rates of coverage** - 84% of people are covered by at least one benefit.
 - The Americas are also above the global average, with 64.3%, while Asia and the Pacific (44%), the Arab States (40%), and Africa (17.4%) have marked coverage gaps.
- **Disparity in Social Security Expenditure:** Countries spend on average 12.9% of their GDP on social protection (excluding health), but this figure masks staggering variations.
 - High-income countries spend on average 16.4%, upper-middle-income countries 8%, lower-middle income countries 2.5%, and low-income countries 1.1%.
- **Limited Protection to Women, Children And Disabled Peoples:** Globally, the vast majority of children still have no effective social protection coverage – only one in four children (26.4%) receives a social protection benefit.
 - Just 45% of women with newborns receive a cash maternity benefit.
 - Only one in three people with severe disabilities (33.5%) worldwide receive a disability benefit.
- **Limited Unemployment Protection:** A mere 18.6% of unemployed workers worldwide have effective coverage for unemployment and thus actually receive unemployment benefits.
 - This remains the least developed branch of social protection.
- **Barriers to Accessing Healthcare:** Significant progress has been made in increasing population coverage. However, barriers to accessing healthcare remain in the form of:
 - Out-of-pocket payments on health services, Physical distance, Quality and acceptability of health services, Long waiting times, Opportunity costs such as lost working time, etc.

- **Steps Taken by Indian Government to Provide Social Security Benefits:**
 - **Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (PM-JAY)**
 - **National Health Policy 2017**
 - **Social Security Code 2020**
 - **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)**
 - **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**
 - **PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY)**
 - **One Nation One Ration Card**
 - **Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana**
 - **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**

Way Forward

- There is a need to recognize that effective and comprehensive social protection is not just essential for social justice and decent work but for creating a sustainable and resilient future too.
- Establishing universal social protection and realizing the human right to social security for all is the cornerstone of a human-centred approach to obtaining social justice.
- Collective financing, broad risk-pooling and rights-based entitlements are key conditions for supporting effective access to healthcare for all in a shock-responsive manner.
- Stronger linkages and better coordination between mechanisms for accessing medical care and income security are needed to address key determinants of health more effectively.

Source: TH

Poshan 2.0

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry for Women and Child Development** inaugurated **Poshan 2.0** and urged all **Aspirational Districts** to establish a **Poshan Vatika (nutrition garden)** during the **Nutrition Month (Poshan Mah)** from 1st September.

A month-long celebration of the **POSHAN Abhiyan** mission places special attention on **Severe Acute Malnourished** (SAM) children.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - It is an umbrella scheme covering the **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** (Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme For Adolescent Girls, National Creche Scheme).
 - It was announced in **Union Budget 2021-22** by merging **supplementary nutrition programmes and the POSHAN Abhiyaan**.
 - It was launched to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcome, with renewed focus on **developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition** in the country.
- **Poshan Maah:**
 - Month of September is celebrated as POSHAN Maah since 2018 to **improve nutritional outcomes for children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers**.
 - It includes a month-long activities focussed on antenatal care, optimal breastfeeding, **Anaemia**, growth monitoring, girls education, diet, **right age of marriage**, hygiene and sanitation and eating healthy (Food Fortification).
 - The activities focus on **Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC)** and are based on Jan Andolan Guidelines.
 - SBCC is the strategic use of communication approaches to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs and behaviours.
- **Poshan Vatika:**
 - It's main objective is **to ensure supply of nutrition through organically home grown vegetables** and fruits simultaneously ensuring that the soil must also remain healthy.
 - Plantation drives for Poshan Vatikas would be taken up by all the stakeholders in the **space available at anganwadis, school premises and gram panchayats**.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan:**
 - Also called National Nutrition Mission, was launched by the government on the occasion of the **International Women's Day** on **8th March, 2018**.
 - The Abhiyaan targets to **reduce Stunting, undernutrition, Anemia** (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by **2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively**.
 - It also targets to **bring down stunting among children in the age group 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by 2022**.

- **Scenario of Malnutrition in India:**

- According to a 2010 **World Bank** report, India suffered an economic loss of Rs 24,000 crore due to lack of toilets. And that the health impact on the economy was 38 million dollars.
- According to an Assocham study of the year 2018, the **GDP (Gross Domestic Product)** suffered a decline of 4% due to malnutrition.

The report also found that **children suffering from malnutrition** after growing up **earn 20% less** than those who have had healthy childhoods.

- The number of **SAM children** in the country was earlier **80 lakh**, which has now come down to 10 lakh.

- **Related Government Initiatives:**

- **Anemia Mukh Bharat Abhiyan**
- **Mid-day Meal (MDM) scheme**
- **The National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013**
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**

Malnutrition

- It refers to **deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients**. The term malnutrition addresses 3 broad groups of conditions:
 - **Undernutrition:** It includes wasting (low weight-for-height), stunting (low height-for-age) and underweight (low weight-for-age).
 - **Micronutrient-related:** It includes micronutrient deficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals) or micronutrient excess;
 - **Overweight:** Obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers).
- The **Sustainable Development Goal** (SDG 2: Zero hunger) aims to **end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030**, making sure all people – especially children – have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round.

Source: IE

Special Drawing Rights: IMF

Why in News

Recently, the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has made **an allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) 12.57 billion** (equivalent to around \$17.86 billion at the latest **exchange rate**) to India.

Now, the **total SDR holdings of India stand at SDR 13.66 billion**.

Key Points

- **Special Drawing Rights (SDR):**

- The SDR is **neither a currency nor a claim on the IMF**. Rather, it is a **potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members**. SDRs can be exchanged for these currencies.
- The SDR serves as the **unit of account of the IMF** and some other international organizations.
- The currency value of the SDR is determined by summing the values in US dollars, based on market exchange rates, of a SDR basket of currencies.
- The SDR **basket of currencies** includes the **US dollar, Euro, Japanese yen, pound sterling** and the **Chinese renminbi** (included in 2016).
- The SDR currency value is **calculated daily** (except on IMF holidays or whenever the IMF is closed for business) and the valuation basket is **reviewed and adjusted every five years**.
- **Quota (the amount contributed to the IMF)** of a country is denominated in SDRs.
 - Members' **voting power is related directly** to their quotas.
 - IMF **makes the general SDR allocation to its members** in proportion to their existing quotas in the IMF.
- **India's foreign exchange reserves** also incorporate SDR other than gold reserves, foreign currency assets and Reserve Tranche in the IMF.

- **International Monetary Fund (IMF):**

- The IMF was **set up along with the World Bank after the Second World War** to assist in the reconstruction of war-ravaged countries.

The two organisations were agreed to be set up at a conference in Bretton Woods in the US. Hence, they are known as the **Bretton Woods twins**.

- Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 190 countries that make up its near-global membership. India joined in December 1945.
- The IMF's primary purpose is to **ensure the stability of the international monetary system** — the system of exchange rates and international payments that enable countries (and their citizens) to transact with each other.

Its mandate was **updated in 2012 to include all macroeconomic and financial sector issues** that bear on global stability.

Source: IE

ZAPAD 2021: Russia

The **Indian Army contingent** will participate in a two-week **multinational military exercise** named '**ZAPAD 2021**' at Nizhny in Russia.

Key Points

- It is **one of the theatre level exercises of the Russian Armed Forces** and will focus primarily on **operations against terrorists**.
- Over a dozen countries from **Eurasian and South Asian Region** will participate in the exercise.
 - **Nine are Participating countries** which include Mongolia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Russia, India and Belarus.
 - **Eight countries are Observers** which include Pakistan, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Uzbekistan and Sri Lanka.
- The **aim** is to enhance military and strategic ties amongst the participating nations.
- The **NAG Battalion group** (from **India**) will participate in the exercise.
 - The Naga Regiment is an **infantry regiment of the Indian Army**.
- India also participated in the **exercise TSENTR 2019**, which is part of the annual series of large scale exercises that form part of the Russian Armed Forces' annual training cycle.
- **Military Exercise between India and Russia:**
 - Indra 2021:** Joint Tri-Services (Army, Navy, Air Force) Exercise.

Source: PIB

Maiden Navy Exercise: India-Algeria

Why in News

Recently, the Indian and Algerian navies participated in a **maiden naval exercise off the Algerian coast** in a bid to increase maritime cooperation.

The naval exercise with Algeria is crucial for India **as it is strategically located in the Maghreb region** (region of North Africa bordering the **Mediterranean Sea**) and is the largest country of Africa.



Key Points

- **About:**
 - **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Tabar** took part in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with **Algerian Navy ship 'Ezzadjer'**.
INS Tabar, is a **Talwar-class Stealth Frigate** built for the Indian Navy in Russia.
 - India has been focussing on **boosting defence and security ties** with various **African Nations** in the last few years.
- **India and Africa – Maritime Security:**
 - **Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050 of the African Union:**
It consists of the **overarching, concerted and coherent long-term multilayered plans** of actions that will achieve the objectives of the **AU (African Union)** to enhance maritime viability for a prosperous Africa.
 - **Maritime Domain Awareness:**
To monitor the activities in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR), Maritime Domain Awareness**, a robust information sharing mechanism has been set up by India, and efforts have been made to encourage African participation in **various multilateral frameworks in the IOR**.
 - **Indian Ocean Rim Association:**
It is an **Indian-led initiative** that seeks to **build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation** through a consensus-based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach.
 - **Maritime Security Infrastructure:**
India has been gradually increasing its engagements **with the navies in the African continent through frequent naval deployments and port visits**. Also inclusive **regional maritime security infrastructure** has been set up which are **strategically located** and there are constant interactions at the operational level.

Source: PIB

Pashmina Shawls: Kashmir

Why in News

The **Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir** has announced a **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Geographical Indication (GI)-certified hand-made Pashmina shawls** “to sustain the old techniques”.

Earlier, the **Kashmir saffron** got **GI tag status**.



Key Points

- **About Kashmiri Shawls:**

- Shawls are produced by **two techniques**, loom woven or **kani shawls** and the needle embroidered or **sozni shawls**.
- The basic **fabric is of the three types** - Shah Tush, Pashmina and Raffal.
- **Shah Tush (King of wool)** passes through a ring and **is also known as Ring shawl**. It comes from a **rare Tibetan antelope** living at a height of over 14000 ft in the wilds of the Himalayas.
- **Pashmina** is known world over **as cashmere wool**, it **comes from a special goat (Capra hircus)** living at an altitude of 12000 to 14000 ft.
- **Raffal** is spun out of **merino wool tops** and is a popular type of shawl.

- **Geographical Indication (GI) Certification:**

- **About:**

- GI is an indication used **to identify goods having special characteristics originating from a definite geographical territory.**
It is used for **agricultural, natural and manufactured goods.**
- The **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- It is also a part of the **World Trade Organisation's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).**

- **Administered By:**

The **Controller General of Patents, Designs and TradeMarks**- who is the Registrar of Geographical Indications.

The Geographical Indications Registry is located at **Chennai.**

- **Validity of Registration:**

- The registration of a geographical indication is **valid for a period of 10 years.**
- It can be **renewed from time to time for a further period of 10 years each.**

Source: TH

River Umngot: Meghalaya

Why in News

Recently, the Meghalaya government has scrapped an agreement with private power developers to execute the proposed **Umngot hydroelectric project on river Umngot.**

Key Points

- Popularly known as **Dawki river**, the Umngot river in Meghalaya is undisputedly the **cleanest river in Asia with its crystal clear water.** It originates from the Eastern Shillong Peak, which is located 1,800 m above sea level.
- The **river is in the village of Mawlynnong ("God's Own Garden") in Meghalaya,** close to India's border with Bangladesh, which is touted as **Asia's Cleanest Village.**
Alongside cleanliness, the village has also achieved a rare feat — a **100% literacy rate.**
- It **acts as a natural divide between Jaintia and Khasi hills,** before finally flowing into Bangladesh.

Source: TH
