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News: Global Drug Policy Index

Global Drug Policy Index (GDPI)

- Recently, the **inaugural Global Drug Policy Index** was released by the **Harm Reduction Consortium**. The Harm Reduction Consortium is a global consortium of networks aiming to challenge the global “war on drugs”, scale up access to harm reduction services, and advocate for increased resources for harm reduction.
- Global Drug Policy Index is a **data-driven global analysis of drug policies and their implementation** which comes at a time when the Indian government is reviewing the provisions of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic substances act 1985.
- It is a **unique tool that documents, measures and compares national-level drug policies**.
- It **provides each country with a score and ranking that shows how much their drug policies and their implementation align with the United Nations principles of human rights, health and development**.
- The Index provides an **essential accountability and evaluation mechanism** in the field of drug policy.

- It evaluates the **performance of 30 countries** covering all regions of the world.
- The global dominance of drug policies based on repression and punishment has led to low scores overall, with a **median score of just 48/100**, and the **top-ranking country (Norway) only reaching 74/100**.
- **Standards and expectations from civil society experts on drug policy implementation vary from country to country.**
- Inequality is deeply seated in global drug policies, with the **top-ranking 5 countries scoring 3 times as much as the lowest-ranking 5 countries**.
- This is in part due to the colonial legacy of the ‘war on drugs’ approach.
- Drug policies disproportionately affect people marginalised on the basis of their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.
- There are wide disparities between state policies and how they are implemented on the ground.
- With a few exceptions, the meaningful participation of civil society and affected communities in drug policy processes remains severely limited.
- **India’s rank is 18 out of 30 countries. It has an overall score of 46/100.**

News: Freedom of air

- Recently, India has launched a direct flight between Srinagar and Sharjah (UAE) operated by budget airline GoFirst (formerly known as GoAir). The flight was to operate through Pakistani airspace.
- However, the flight was denied permission to enter Pakistan and the flight had to take a longer route to reach the destination.
- This has raised the concern of Pakistan violating the first freedom of the air.

Freedom of Air

- The freedom of air means a country grants airlines of a particular country the privilege to use and/or land in another country's airspace.
- Freedom of air rule emanates from the Chicago Convention in 1944.
- The signatories to the convention decided to set rules that would act as fundamental building blocks to international commercial aviation.
- The convention provides Nine freedoms of air but, only the first five freedoms have been officially recognized by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).
- **First Freedom Right:** It is granted by one State to another State or States to fly across its territory without landing.

- In the case of the GoFirst flight (Indian carrier) was using the airspace of Pakistan (the second country) and was landing in the UAE (the third country).
- **Second Freedom Right:** The right or privilege, in respect of scheduled international air services, granted by one State to another State or States **to land in its territory for non-traffic purposes.**
- This means an Air India flight from New Delhi to New York can land at a British airport to get refuelled without embarking or disembarking passengers.
- **Third Freedom Right:** **To put down, in the territory of the first State, traffic coming from the home State of the carrier.**
- **Fourth Freedom Right:** **To take on, in the territory of the first State, traffic destined for the home State of the carrier.**
- **Fifth Freedom Right:** **To put down and to take on,** in the territory of the first State, traffic coming from or destined to a third State.

India's Options

- Pakistan's **denial of airspace is arbitrary and against the principles laid down by the Chicago convention.**
- Earlier also, there are several such instances where Pakistan has denied access to its airspace.

- India can take up this issue with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

- International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is a United Nations (UN) specialized agency under ECOSOC, established in 1944, which laid the foundation for the standards and procedures for peaceful global air navigation.
- The Convention on International Civil Aviation was signed on 7th December 1944 in Chicago.
- It established the core principles permitting international transport by air, and also led to the creation of the ICAO.
- One of the objectives of ICAO is to foster the planning and development of international air transport so as to ensure the safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation throughout the world.
- India is among its 193 members. Every UN recognized nation except Lichtenstein is a member (lacking an international airport), along with Cook Islands. Despite Liechtenstein not being a direct party to ICAO, its government has delegated Switzerland to enter into the treaty on its behalf, and the treaty applies in the territory of Liechtenstein.

- It is headquartered in **Montreal, Canada (Montreal Convention)**.
- The ICAO **standards never supersede the primacy of national regulatory requirements**. It is always the local, national regulations which are enforced in, and by, sovereign states, and which must be legally adhered to by air operators making use of applicable airspace and airports.

News: Delivery of fourth scorpene submarine 'Vela' to Indian Navy

Kalvari Class Submarines (Project 75)

- 'Project-75 ' is a **programme by the Indian Navy along with French Navy that entails building six Scorpene / Kalvari Class attack submarines**.
- The first submarine '**INS Kalvari**' under this project was **commissioned** on 2017.
- The **second ship of the class 'INS Khanderi'** was **commissioned** on 2019.
- The **third ship of the class 'INS Karanj'** was **commissioned** on 2021.
- The **fourth ship of the class 'INS Vela'** was **delivered** to the Navy by 2021 November.
- **Fifth and Sixth ships, 'INS Vagir', and 'INS Vagsheer' respectively, is on the cards.**

Scorpene Class Submarines

- The submarines in the P75 Scorpene Class are powered by **conventional diesel-electric propulsion system**.
- Scorpene is one of the most sophisticated submarines, capable of undertaking **multifarious missions including anti-surface ship warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying, and area surveillance**.
- However, **few submarines are expected to be equipped with air-independent propulsion (AIP) technology, which is developed by DRDO to provide long-range and extended endurance capabilities under sea**.

News: DRDO signs Bilateral Innovation Agreement with Israel for the development of dual use technologies

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Directorate of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D), Ministry of Defence, Israel have entered into a Bilateral Innovation Agreement (BIA) to promote innovation and accelerated research and development in start-ups and MSMEs for the development of dual use technologies**.
- Both countries will work together to bring out next-generation technologies and products in the areas such as **Drones, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum technology, Photonics, Energy Storage and Natural Language Processing**.

Dual-use technology

- Dual use goods are **products and technologies normally used for civilian purposes but which may have military applications.**
- Biggest example of Dual use goods is **Nuclear isotopes, which can be used as a civilian equipment (nuclear energy reactor) as well as military equipment (nuclear warheads).**
- **Wassenaar Arrangement** is a multilateral convention which regulates the use and proliferation of dual use goods.

Wassenaar Arrangement

- The Wassenaar Arrangement is a **voluntary export control regime.** The Arrangement, formally established in July 1996, has **42 members who exchange information on transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.**
- Dual-use refers to the ability of a good or technology to be used for multiple purposes - usually peaceful and military.
- The Wassenaar Arrangement has been established in order to **contribute to regional and international security and stability, by promoting transparency and**

greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies.

- Wassenaar Arrangement's Secretariat is in **Vienna, Austria**.
- It has **42 member states** comprising mostly NATO and EU states.
- Participating States seek, through their national policies, to **ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities which undermine these goals, and are not diverted to support such capabilities**.
- The aim is also to **prevent the acquisition of these items by terrorists**.
- Participating States are required to report their arms transfers and transfers/denials of certain dual-use goods and technologies to destinations outside the Arrangement on a six-monthly basis.
- It is a **successor to the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) from the Cold War era**.
- The Wassenaar Arrangement has control lists that document the dual-use goods and technologies. These lists are updated regularly.
- The Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary is the decision-making body of the Arrangement.
- It is composed of representatives of all Participating States and normally meets once a year, usually in December.

- The position of Plenary Chair is subject to annual rotation among Participating States.
- All Plenary decisions are taken by consensus.
- India was inducted to the Wassenaar Arrangement on 7 December, 2017 as the 42nd member.
- India joining the Wassenaar Arrangement implies that India is also recognised to have dual use technology. There is an exchange of notes when countries meet in such arrangements. So, India will gain access to high technology which will help to address the demands of its defence & space sectors.