26 September 2018

Daily News Pedia

India Ranks 158th In 'Human Capital' Score, Behind Sudan

A study published in The Lancet says India is ranked at 158 out of 195 countries in 2016. The study ranks the countries based on the level of investment in human capital.

Human capital- Human capital is recognised as the level of education and health in a population and is considered an important determinant of economic growth.

India ranks 158th in the world for its investment in education and health sector. South Asian countries ranking below India are Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Countries that are ahead of India in the region are Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives. India is behind Sudan and ahead of Namibia in the ranking. The U.S. is ranked 27th, China at 44th and Pakistan at 164th. The study concluded that there is association between investment in education and health and improved human capital and GDP.

Stimulating economy: As the world economy grows increasingly dependent on digital technology, from agriculture to manufacturing to the service industry, human capital grows increasingly important for stimulating local and national economies. The study underscores that when a country's human capital score increases, its economy grows. Components measured in the functional health score include stunting, wasting, anaemia, cognitive impairments, hearing and vision loss, and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. And Learning is based on average student scores on internationally comparable tests.

Source: The Hindu.

Psbloansin59minutes.com

It is one of its kind platforms in MSME segment which integrates advanced fintech to ensure seamless loan approval and management. The loans are undertaken without human intervention till sanction and or disbursement stage.

The Portal sets a new benchmark in loan processing and reduces the turnaround time from 20-25 days to 59 minutes. Subsequent to this in principle approval, the loan will be disbursed in 7-8 working days.

The solution uses sophisticated algorithms to read and analyse data points from various sources such as IT returns, GST data, bank statements, MCA21 etc. in less than an hour while capturing the applicant's basic details.The system simplifies the decision making process for a loan officer as the final output provides a summary of credit, valuation and verification on a user-friendly dashboard in real time.

Source: PIB.

Enact 'Strong Law' To Cleanse Politics: SC

Supreme Court wants Parliament to formulate a strong law to cleanse Political system in India.

Court has referred *N. Vohra Committee report* before passing its orders on decriminalizing politics. Committee report has highlighted the problem of criminal nexus among criminals, politicians and bureaucrats in India which could have been one of the reason behind Mumbai Blast. According to SC, collaboration of a diffused network of criminal, police and political patrons needs to be rectified.

SC over rapid criminalization in politics has demanded: Parliament should frame a law that makes it obligatory for political parties to remove leaders charged with "heinous and grievous" crimes such as rape and murder. Candidate should submit their criminal past record to Election Commission. Political Parties in turn to publish online the pending criminal cases of candidate on their website, newspaper and on TV channel. Political party should refuse tickets to offenders in both parliamentary and assembly poll. Reforms addressing election finance.

*Current Ground for disqualification under RP Act, 1951:***Section 8 and 8A:** Conviction for certain actions and corrupt practices. **Section 9 and 9A:** Corruption or disloyalty and when there is subsisting contract between person and government. **Section 10 and Section 10A:** Disqualification for offices under Government Company and failure to lodge account of election.

Source: The Hindu.

Indian Culinary Institute

The main objective of setting up of the Indian Culinary Institute (ICI) is to institutionalize a mechanism to support efforts intended to preserve, document, promote and disseminate Indian Cuisine, meet the sectoral requirement of specialists specific to Indian Cuisine, as also of promoting Cuisine as a Niche Tourism product.

The ICIs will be Centres of Excellence which will offer structured regular programmes of study specific to culinary arts and culinary management leading to graduate and post graduate level degrees, promote research and innovation, organize demand driven certificate and diploma courses, document and create data base specific to Indian cuisine and commission studies and survey on cuisine.
*Significance:*In India, at present, there is a dearth of state-of-the-art training ground to groom top-of-the-line chefs of international standards. To fill this void, the Indian Culinary Institute would provide the appropriate training platform at par with the elite "Chef Schools" functioning in different parts of the developed world.This effort will facilitate building a super-speciality food production work-force to assure positions of culinary experts in the hospitality industry. The ICIs will also help the local youth to get trained in these streams as well as create entrepreneurs and make them self-sufficient.The hotel and tourism industry in the proximity of these institutes will also get benefitted by getting the trained and skilled manpower which in turn will enhance their business.

Source: The Hindu.

Amazon Arm Backs Data Localisation

Amazon invested in data centres in India so that it can assure the government that all the data stays in the country. There is opposition from experts and foreign firms over proposed data localisation norms in India.

The draft 'The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018' proposes that critical personal data of Indian citizens be processed only in data centres located within the country, while personal data may be transferred outside India. However, at least one copy of the data will need to be stored in India. The proposal has been termed as "regressive" and a "trade barrier" by experts.

Amazon assured that they provide customers with the access to tools so that they can determine where the data is located, they can monitor. It is all about data security, it comes down to whether one can be assured that if one hosts data in a particular location, that's going to stay secure and people don't have access [and] who shouldn't have access to it. In India, an application called Reunite uses Amazon Recognition to find lost children.

Source: The Hindu.

EDITORIAL

To Read

Building from debris

Construction and demolition waste is an environment and public health hazard. Its recycle and reuse offers a sustainable solution

India is urbanising faster than its urban planners can handle. We are building roads, bridges, fly-overs, factories, commercial complexes and also building and renovating our homes and residential properties (sometimes to upgrade the buildings or to take advantage of higher FSI regulations now allowed in many cities). But we do not pay sufficient heed to the construction and demolition (C&D) waste we generate, for example, bricks, concrete, stones, hard core subsoil, topsoil, timber, glass, gypsum, ceramics and also plastics. Neglecting this waste has consequences for public health as well as the environment.

There is no agreement on the volume of C&D waste. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in 2010, put the annual estimate of C&D waste at 10-12 million tonnes. The Central Pollution Control Board settled for 12 million tonnes in 2011, but its Guidelines Document of 2017 has upped the estimate to 25-30 million tonnes, based on information from the Ministry of Urban Development. The Centre for Science and Environment, swung to the other extreme and estimated C&D waste at a humongous 530 million tonnes for 2013, as they include the waste from renovations/repairs, assuming that one-third of the existing stock of buildings carried out renovations/repairs in 2013.

The most recent annual estimate of C&D waste in Indian cities is 165-175 million tonnes, jointly prepared for the period 2005 to 2013, by two government agencies, the Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council, and the Centre for Fly Ash Research and Management. This waste is dumped illegally on vacant sites, on the sides of highways, below fly-overs, beside lakes and rivers, in other low-lying areas and open storm water drains. Delhi and Bengaluru provide glaring examples of this practice, commonly known as "fly-tipping". In Bengaluru, C&D waste is increasingly being used to encroach on lake-bed land for construction.
Delhi's air pollution is in no small measure due to the high presence of particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 10), resulting from the construction debris strewn around the city. Waterlogging, with all its adverse impact on public health and the environment, is another consequence as the runoff from smooth surfaces is trapped in the debris.

Other countries have faced similar challenges and have done something about it. Germany faced huge issues in disposing of the post-war bomb rubble. Stuttgart solved this problem by creating a mini-hillock outside the town which is now a recreational hand-gliding spot. While C&D waste was earlier typically sent to dump sites in many countries, in the past 20 years or so there has

been a greater appreciation of the reuse and recycling possibilities of the waste into construction material (recycled aggregate concrete, manufactured sand, etc.) and its implication for the conservation of natural resources.

An EU study has calculated that an average of 28 per cent of all C&D waste was recycled in EU countries in the late 1990s. Since then, most EU members have set goals for recycling C&D waste that range from 50 per cent to 90 per cent of their C&D waste production. The UK's use of recycled aggregates (materials formed from a mass of fragments or particles loosely compacted together) is the highest in Europe and accounts for 25 per cent of all aggregates used in construction. This has created a vibrant recycling industry, which promotes innovation and new products and their uses, while the International Recycling Federation works to harmonise quality standards for recycled materials.

Even in the US which is known for its proliferation of landfills, California, the most progressive state, has promulgated an ordinance which requires 50 per cent recycling of C&D waste and 75 per cent diversion of inert away from landfills.

Closer home, Singapore was recycling 98 per cent of its construction waste by 2007. Hong Kong has been recycling its waste to produce recycled aggregates (RA) for use in government projects and R&D work. In Taiwan, a comprehensive plan for the management of C&D waste was put in place in 1999 as a response to the challenge posed by the severe earthquake that year, which damaged about 100,000 dwellings.

India's record, by comparison, is very poor. Until two years ago, C&D waste was not even looked at separately from the municipal solid waste (MSW). The Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000, merely stated that C&D waste be "separately collected and disposed of in accordance with State laws". Only there were hardly any state laws! But in 2016, recognising the importance of growing volumes of C&D waste in urban areas and the significant differences in the origin and quality of this waste and in the methods of its recycling and reuse, the Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules 2016 were separately notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, and the Solid Waste Management Rules (2016) superseded the 2000 Rules. This reflected the growing recognition of the need to manage C&D waste separately from the municipal solid waste.

The presence of C&D waste in the mixed waste reduces the effectiveness of composting or biomethanation and also reduces the calorific value and combustibility of the MSW. The presence of MSW in debris similarly reduces the quality of recycled C&D waste. While builders and renovators must keep C&D waste unmixed, urban local bodies must ensure that the Rules are enforced. For example, the Rules specify that all government construction projects, at all levels, should utilise between 10 and 20 per cent of C&D recycled products (aggregates, kerb stones, paver blocks, tiles and manufactured sand). This has not happened despite the orders of the National Green Tribunal and other regulatory bodies.

In Delhi itself, which has three C&D waste recycling plants set up by IL&FS Environment, at Burari (2000 TPD capacity), Shastri Park (500 TPD capacity) and Mundka (150 TPD capacity), the government projects have used only 200,000 tonnes of recycled material per annum even as the C&D waste generated has reached 1.5 million tonnes per annum.

The C&D waste recycling industry is in a very nascent stage in India. The challenge is to ensure that C&D waste comes to the recycling plants as segregated input, and the recycled products are picked up for use in construction. The government has to build awareness of the value of recycled products and also provide standard codes to ensure adherence to quality. The government also has to set an example in its own construction activity by complying with the Rules. At the same time, the incentives also have to be aligned for the private sector, for example, the imposition of a reasonable charge for disposal at dumpsites can induce builders or

owners to divert the C&D waste to recycling plants. An important additional step in this direction would be to reduce GST rates on products using recycled materials.

Last but not least, effective management of C&D waste helps in curbing excessive consumption of natural resources and contributes to sustainable development. For example, the demand for sand is expected to more than double between 2010 and 2020. In India, we primarily use river sand for construction. The Supreme Court has recently warned about the adverse environmental consequences of riparian sand mining. Increasing demand, easy availability and limited government oversight have given rise to a thriving illegal trade in sand. Manufactured sand from C&D waste provides an environmentally sustainable alternative.
Since almost 60 per cent of the stock of buildings projected to be there in 2030 is yet to be built, sustainable construction and effective management of C&D waste assume even greater significance.

MAINS QUESTION

Q: Ayushman Bharat is the essential first step on the road to universal health coverage. Comment