



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

*Weekly Competition*

“ 07 JUNE TO 13 JULY ”



# KARNATAKA BILL FOR GIG WORKERS

## Why in News?

The Karnataka government has proposed a bill aimed at regulating the social security and welfare of platform-based gig workers. This initiative positions Karnataka as the second state in India to introduce such measures, following Rajasthan.

## KEY PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

### Definition of Gig Workers:

The bill defines a gig worker as an individual engaged in a work arrangement resulting in a fixed rate of payment. The work is delivered through a platform, under specified terms and conditions.

### Scope and Coverage:

The bill includes all forms of gig work, including piece-rate work and contract-based work. Estimates suggest India will have 23.5 million gig workers by 2029-30, with significant numbers in urban centers.

### Grievance Redressal Mechanisms:

The bill proposes safeguards against unfair dismissals and a two-level grievance redressal system. Aggregators are required to provide clear reasons for worker terminations and ensure transparency.

### Transparency and Accountability:

Contracts between aggregators and workers must be in a simple language, with any changes notified at least 14 days in advance. Aggregators must maintain a worker termination register, detailing valid reasons for terminations.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BILL

### Workers' Rights:

Introduction of safeguards against unfair dismissals and reduced payments. Transparency in payments, including reasons for deductions.

### Grievance Mechanisms:

Two-level grievance redressal systems to handle worker complaints. Workers have the right to refuse a specific number of gigs without adverse consequences.

### Contracts and Termination:

Detailed conditions under which contracts can be terminated. Workers must be given reasons for any adverse actions and have a 14-day notice period for contract changes.



## IMPORTANCE OF THE BILL

### Arbitrary Terminations:

The bill addresses the issue of arbitrary terminations and blacklisting without justification. It ensures that gig workers have protections similar to traditional employment.

### Worker Welfare:

Aims to protect gig workers from exploitative practices. Ensures fair wages, job security, and a structured grievance redressal process.

## SIMILAR INITIATIVES IN OTHER STATES

### Rajasthan:

Rajasthan introduced the Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill last year. This bill has been a pioneer in providing social security and welfare measures for gig workers.

### Haryana:

Haryana is also considering similar legislation. This move underscores a growing recognition of the need to protect gig workers across India.

## Conclusion

“ The Karnataka Bill for gig workers marks a significant step towards formalizing the gig economy and ensuring social security for its workers. By incorporating comprehensive rights and protections, the bill aims to provide a balanced approach to the emerging challenges in the gig economy. It reflects an evolving understanding of labor rights and the necessity for regulatory frameworks that keep pace with changing work patterns. ”

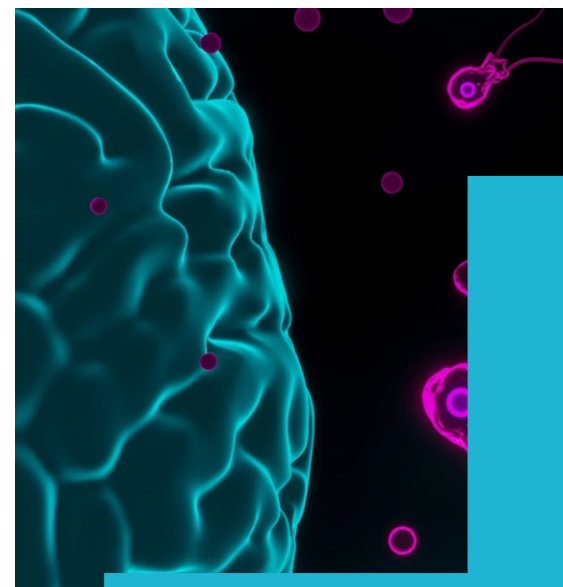
## MANAGING BRAIN-EATING AMOEBAS CASES

### Why in News?

Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a rare but fatal disease caused by the amoeba *Naegleria fowleri*. This deadly infection has recently gained attention due to a series of cases in Kerala.

### Recent Cases and Fatalities

In the past two months, Kerala has reported four cases of PAM, resulting in three fatalities. The affected individuals include E.P. Mridul (12), V. Dakshina (13), and Fadva (5), who succumbed to the infection in different hospitals across the state. A 14-year-old boy from Thikkodi in Kozhikode is currently undergoing treatment, highlighting the urgency of addressing this health concern.



## Understanding PAM

PAM is caused by *Naegleria fowleri*, an amoeba that thrives in warm freshwater bodies such as lakes, ponds, and rivers. This organism can also survive in poorly maintained swimming pools. The infection occurs when the amoeba enters the body through the nose, eventually reaching the brain where it destroys brain tissues. Early symptoms include headache, fever, nausea, and vomiting, which can quickly progress to stiff neck, confusion, hallucinations, and loss of balance. The disease is highly fatal, with most patients dying within 1 to 18 days after the onset of symptoms.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Diagnosing PAM involves PCR tests of cerebrospinal fluid, though detection is often challenging due to the rarity of the disease. There are no standard treatment protocols for PAM. However, the State Health Department has procured miltefosine, a broad-spectrum anti-microbial drug recommended by the CDC for such cases.

## Historical Occurrence in Kerala

Kerala has encountered previous instances of PAM, with the first detection in Alappuzha in 2016. Subsequent cases were reported in various districts, including Malappuram, Kozhikode, and Thrissur, over the years. In response to the recent cases, Health Minister Veena George convened meetings to develop special treatment guidelines, and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan issued directives to maintain cleanliness in water resources to prevent further infections.

## Preventive Measures

To reduce the risk of PAM, individuals should avoid swimming in warm freshwater bodies, especially during the summer. Using nose clips or refraining from activities that force water into the nose, such as diving, can also help prevent infection. Public health measures include chlorinating swimming pools and water in amusement parks, as well as regularly cleaning and maintaining water bodies to ensure they are safe for use.

## Conclusion

“ Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a severe and often fatal disease that necessitates immediate attention. The recent cases in Kerala underline the importance of stringent preventive measures and increased public awareness about the risks associated with *Naegleria fowleri*. Early diagnosis and prompt treatment are essential in managing this deadly infection and preventing further fatalities. ”

# Chimeroids: A Breakthrough in Brain Modeling

## Why in News?

Scientists have successfully developed 3D brain models, known as chimeroids, for the first time using cells from multiple individuals. This innovative approach aims to replicate human brain biology more accurately than traditional 2D cellular models or animal models such as lab mice.

## Advantages of Chimeroids

Brain organoids, typically derived from a single donor's cells, lack genetic diversity, which is crucial for accurate brain development and drug response studies. Chimeroids address this limitation by incorporating genetic material from multiple donors. When exposed to neurotoxic chemicals like ethanol and valproic acid, chimeroids demonstrated varied growth inhibition responses, reflecting the genetic diversity among the donors.

## Creation of Chimeroids

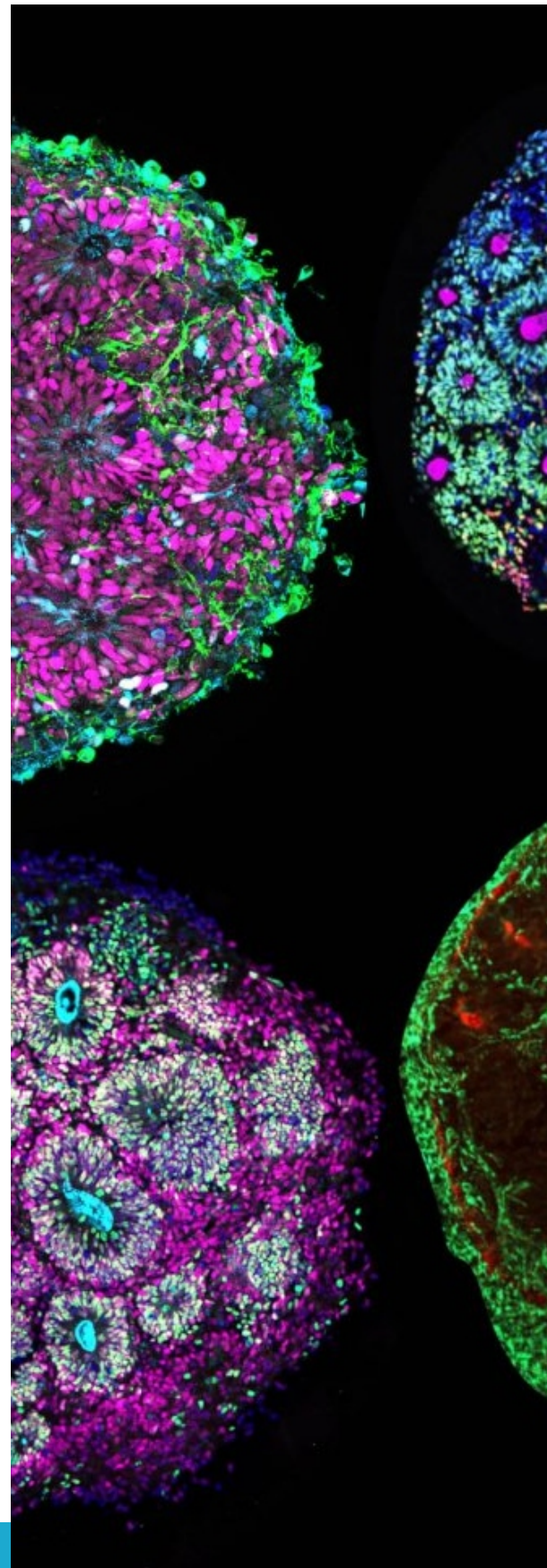
To create chimeroids, researchers collected stem cells from multiple individuals and developed brain organoids from each person's cells using growth-inducing chemicals. The cells were then disassembled and recombined to ensure each chimeroid contained an equal number of cells from each donor, thereby introducing genetic diversity.

## Uses of Chimeroids

Chimeroids hold significant potential for various applications, including disease modeling, drug testing, and neural development studies.

## Understanding Stem Cells

Stem cells are versatile cells capable of developing into many different cell types in the body, serving as a repair system. There are two main types of stem cells: embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells.



# THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE



## Why in News?

President of India Participates in Annual Rath Yatra Festival in Puri.

## THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

**Significance:** One of the Char Dham pilgrimage sites in India.

**Other Dham:** Badrinath, Dwarka, and Rameswaram.

**Deities:** Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra.

## Unique Aspect:

The icon of Jagannath is made of wood and ceremoniously replaced every twelve or nineteen years by a replica.

The process of replacing the idols, known as Nabakalebara (re-embodiment), involves an elaborate ceremony where the deities relinquish their old bodies and assume new ones.

This is in contrast to the stone and metal symbols found in the majority of Hindu temples.

## Rath Yatra

- ➔ **Description:** The annual chariot festival, known as Rath Yatra, is a significant event in Puri.
- ➔ **Occurrence:** The festival takes place during the month of Asadha (June or July).

### Procession:

- ➔ The deities Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra are brought out from the sanctum of the temple.
- ➔ They travel approximately 3 km to the Shri Gundicha Temple in huge, ornately decorated chariots.

### Public Participation:

This procession allows the public to have a direct view of the deities.

## History of Jagannath Temple

**Reconstruction:** The temple was rebuilt by the Ganga dynasty king Anantavarman Chodaganga in the 12th century CE, as indicated by the Kendupatna copper-plate inscription of his descendant Narasimhadeva II.

**Further Development:** The temple complex was further developed during the reigns of subsequent kings, including those of the Ganga dynasty and the Gajapati dynasty.

## Significant Events:

**1174 CE:** King Anang Bhim Deo ascended the throne of Orissa and invested greatly in construction projects, including the ancillary shrines and the walls of Jagannath temple, which took fourteen years to complete in 1198 CE.

**1568:** The temple was invaded and the deities were destroyed by General Kalapahad, who led the victorious army of the Nawab of Bengal, Sultan Suleiman Karani.

**1575:** The deities were restored by Ramachandra Deva I of the Kingdom of Khurda. As an expression of gratitude, devotees bestowed upon him the name 'Abhinav Indrayumna' (Indrayumna incarnate).

Within two decades, Ramachandra Deva I's authority over Puri and the temple was recognized by the Mughal Empire. Raja Mansingh bestowed upon him the title of 'Gajapati Ruler of Khurda and Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple'.

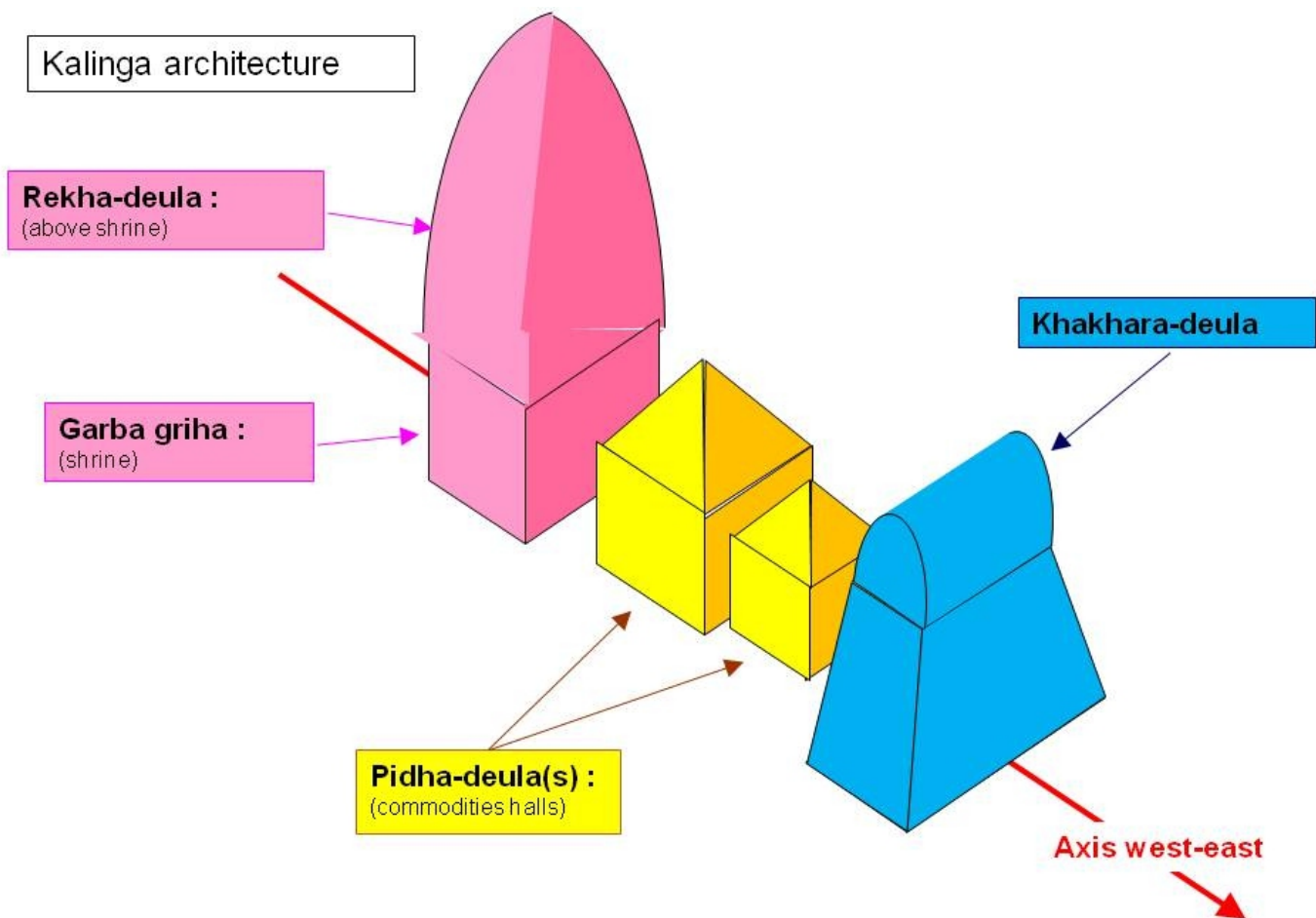
**1692:** Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb ordered the temple's closure. It was reopened only after Aurangzeb's death in 1707.

**1751 & 1803:** The Maratha and the British assumed control of the temple complex, respectively. However, locally, the Rajas of Khurda retained the trust of the devotees in managing the temple and its rituals.

**1809:** The British East India Company officially returned the charge of the temple to the Rajas, who retained control until British power was uprooted from the Indian subcontinent.

**1975:** The Archaeological Survey of India undertook a project to remove the multiple layers of lime plaster to uncover the original designs beneath. The conservation project lasted for two decades.

## Architecture of the Temple



- ➔ **Style:** The temple is a magnificent example of Kalinga-style architecture, known for its gorgeous sculptures and excellent carvings.
- ➔ **Height:** The temple stands at approximately 214 feet above ground level, making it one of the highest buildings in the Indian subcontinent.
- ➔ **Location:** It is perched atop a roughly ten-acre elevated stone platform in the center of Puri.

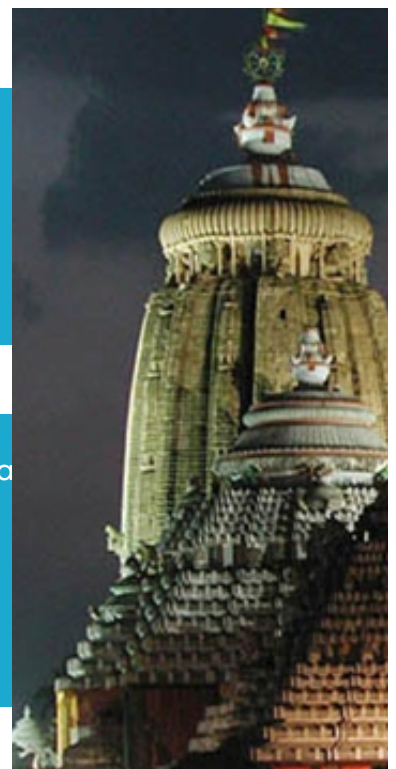
### Compound Walls:

The temple is surrounded by two compound walls

- ➔ Meghanada Pracira: The outer wall.
- ➔ Kurma Pracira: The inner wall.

### Components:

- ➔ Vimana or Deula (Garbagriha): The main sanctuary built in the Nagara style, characterized by a curvilinear tower known as Shikhar.
- ➔ Jagamohana: The assembly hall, built in the Pidha deula style.
- ➔ Natamandapa: The audience hall.
- ➔ Bhogamandapa: The hall for residuary offerings.





## Architectural Elements:

- The Vimana is built on the Pancha Ratha ground plan, where its vertical shape is divided into five projected columns or pillar-like structures (Ratha) on each side.
- The Vimana and Jagamohana are divided into five principal parts along the vertical plane:

**Pishta or Pitha:** The base.

**Bada:** The vertical or perpendicular wall.

**Gandi:** The trunk of the body, represented by a curvilinear tower (Rekha deula) or a pyramidal roof (Pidha deula).

**Mastaka:** The crowning element, featuring the Neelachakra, an eight-spoked wheel made of Ashtadhatu, sacred to Lord Vishnu.

*The unique architectural quality of the Pancha Ratha Rekha deula of Shree Jagannatha lies in its intricate design and structural division.*

## Significance and Cultural Importance

- **Char Dham Pilgrimage:** The Jagannath Temple is one of the four most sacred pilgrimage sites in Hinduism, collectively known as Char Dham.
- **Tourist Attraction:** The temple is a major draw for visitors to Puri, attracting millions of devotees and tourists each year.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The temple's rich history, architectural grandeur, and religious significance make it a vital part of India's cultural heritage.

## Additional Information

- **Archaeological Survey of India:** The temple is currently maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India, which oversees its conservation.
- **Public Access:** Only traditional Hindus are allowed inside the temple. Non-Hindus can view parts of the enclosure from the top of the Emar Matha building near the temple's east-facing gate.

## Trivia:

- The English word "juggernaut" originated from Jagannath, referring to a huge, unstoppable force or vehicle, inspired by the colossal chariots used during the Rath Yatra.

## Private Papers of Eminent Personalities

### Why in News?

The Prime Ministers' Museum & Library (PMML) has decided to impose limits on the declassification conditions for future donors of Private Papers of eminent personalities. This decision aims to balance access to historical documents with respect for privacy.

## Prime Ministers' Museum & Library (PMML)

- ➔ **Original Name:** Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (NMML)
- ➔ **Purpose:** Established in memory of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru
- ➔ **Ministry:** Operates under the Ministry of Culture

## Recent Decision

- ➔ **Embargo on Papers:** New private papers will be subjected to a five-year embargo from the date of receipt, extendable up to ten years in rare cases.
- ➔ **Access to Papers:** Several sets of private papers that have been in custody for decades will be made accessible, including those of:

[G D Mavalankar \(first Speaker of Lok Sabha\)](#)

[Nayantara Sahgal \(Nehru's niece\)](#)

## Collection of Private Papers

- ➔ **First Private Papers:** The Jawaharlal Nehru Papers were the first to be obtained, facilitated by the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund (JNMF) on behalf of Indira Gandhi.
- ➔ **Other Collections:** Papers of notable figures like Mahatma Gandhi, B R Ambedkar, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Bhikaji Cama, Chaudhary Charan Singh, and more.

## Recent Acquisitions: Papers of:

- ➔ Former Himachal Pradesh CM Shanta Kumar, which include letters on topics like One Nation, One Election, and the abrogation of Article 370.
- ➔ Environmentalist Sundarlal Bahuguna, donated by his wife, Vimla Bahuguna.

## Private Papers vs. Personal Papers

### Private Papers:

Includes private correspondences with other personalities, different from personal papers.

### Personal Papers:

Correspondence and documents held in a personal capacity are excluded.

### Official Records:

Held by various government departments and ministries.

## National Archives of India

- ➔ **Role:** Acquires papers that donors agree to declassify.
- ➔ **Collection:** Includes papers of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dadabhai Naoroji, Purushottam Das Tandon, Maulana Azad, Minoo Masani, Sardar Patel, Keshav Dev Malviya, and others.

## Declassification

**Public Records Rules, 1997:** Covers the declassification of all kinds of records and correspondence in India.

**Responsibility:**  
Respective organizations are responsible for declassifying official records.

**Time Frame:**  
Records should ordinarily be declassified every 25 years.

**Definition of Public Records:**  
Includes records related to the central government and any ministry, department, or office, including the PMO and the President's Office.

**Private Papers:** The 1997 Rules do not grant sweeping powers for papers owned by private individuals and families; access to these is voluntary.

## Declassification in the US

- ➔ Library of Congress Manuscript Division: Holds Personal Papers and significant organizational records in American history.
- ➔ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA): Official depository for US government records, similar to the National Archives of India.

### Summary

The Prime Ministers' Museum & Library (PMML) has implemented a new policy limiting the declassification conditions for private papers to ensure a balance between historical access and privacy. This includes a five-year embargo on new papers and the release of long-held documents. The distinction between private and personal papers is clarified, with a focus on the accessibility and preservation of historical documents.

## Emergency in India

### Why in News?

On June 25, 2024, India commemorated fifty years since the National Emergency (1975-1977), a time marked by the suspension of civil liberties, press restrictions, mass arrests, and postponed elections.

## Aftermath of the National Emergency (1975)

### Political Changes

- 1977 Elections:
  - Four major opposition parties united to form the Janata Party.
  - This coalition led to the establishment of India's first non-Congress government.

## 44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978

- ➔ Reversal of 42nd Amendment Act (1976): Limited the President's authority to declare a National Emergency under Article 352.
- ➔ Required written advice from the Cabinet and parliamentary approval within a month.
- ➔ Restricted the emergency period to six months unless renewed by a special majority in Parliament.
- ➔ Restored the ability of the judiciary to review emergency proclamations.
- ➔ Restricted the grounds for an emergency to armed rebellion, war, and external aggression.
- ➔ Limited the duration of President's Rule (Article 356) in states to one year, extendable by six months with parliamentary approval

## The Shah Commission Report

- ➔ **Formation:** Created by the Janata government to investigate the imposition and effects of the emergency.
- ➔ **Findings:** The report was highly critical, stating that the decision was unilateral and led to a violation of civil liberties during the emergency period.



## During National Emergency

### Powers of Parliament

- ➔ **Extension of Lok Sabha's Term:** Parliament can extend the Lok Sabha's term by one year at a time.
- ➔ **Legislation on State Subjects:** The central government can legislate on state matters.
- ➔ **Financial Provisions:** The President can alter constitutional provisions on financial resource allocation between the center and states with parliamentary approval.

## President's Rule

- ➔ **Provision:** Article 356 allows the central government to take direct control of a state when it cannot function according to constitutional provisions.
- ➔ **Functions Assumed by President:** The President can take over all or some functions of the state government.

## Key Provisions of President's Rule

- ➔ **Initial Duration:** Imposed for six months initially.
- ➔ **Extension:** Can be extended for up to three years with parliamentary approval every six months.
- ➔ **Approval Requirement:** Both Houses of Parliament must approve the imposition within two months.
- ➔ **Revocation:** The President can revoke the proclamation at any time. If the Lok Sabha rejects the continuation, it must be revoked.
- ➔ **State Assembly:** Suspended or dissolved during President's Rule.

## Judicial Interventions and Commission Recommendations

### S.R. Bommai Case (1994)

- Supreme Court Ruling: The imposition of President's Rule is subject to judicial review.
- Recommendation: A floor test to verify the government majority.

### 88th Amendment (2003)

- New Clause in Article 361: Provided immunity to the Governor for exercising powers under Article 356.

### Sarkaria Commission (1988)

- Recommendation: Use President's Rule sparingly and issue a warning before imposing it.

### Punchhi Commission (2010)

- Recommendation: Time-bound response from the President and non-dissolution of the state assembly before parliamentary approval.

### Article 365

- Additional Grounds: Provides grounds for invoking Article 356 if a state government fails to comply with or implement directions from the central government under constitutional provisions.

# BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

## Why in News?

India recorded a current account surplus in Q4 of the 2023-24 financial year, the first surplus in 11 quarters. Despite the Q4 surplus, the full-year data indicates a current account deficit, primarily due to capital goods imports aimed at boosting exports.

## BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (BOP)

**Definition:** The BoP is a comprehensive ledger that records all financial transactions between a country and the rest of the world, indicating in flows and outflows of money.

**Purpose:** It reflects the demand for the rupee compared to foreign currencies and helps determine the exchange rate of the rupee.

**Management:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) manages the BoP by adjusting foreign exchange reserves to maintain the rupee's competitiveness.

09/07/24



## Components of the BoP

### Current Account:

**Trade Account:** Tracks the import and export of physical goods. A trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports.

**Services Account:** Tracks the trade in services such as banking, IT, and tourism, including remittances from Indians working abroad.

**Transfers and Income:** Includes transactions such as gifts, pensions, and income from investments



### Capital Account:

**Investment Flows:** Records investments such as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Foreign Institutional Investment (FII).

### Current Account Deficit (CAD)

**Economic Indicator:** CAD is not always negative for a developing economy like India. It can indicate strong domestic demand and investment in capital goods.

**Sustainable CAD:** A CAD of 1.5%-2% of GDP is consistent with India's target GDP growth rate of 7%-8%.

## Q4 (2023-24) Highlights

- **Trade Deficit:** India experienced a deficit in the trade of goods during Q4.
- **Surplus in Invisibles:** There was a surplus in invisible transactions such as services, transfers, and income.
- **Capital Account Surplus:** A net surplus of \$25 billion in Q4 due to inflows from foreign investments.

## Digital Bharat Nidhi

### Why in News?

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has released draft rules to operationalize the Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), replacing the erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Contributions from telecom companies towards DBN will first be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India, with periodic transfers to DBN.



## Operationalization of Digital Bharat Nidhi

The Centre will appoint an "administrator" to oversee the implementation of DBN, selecting "DBN implementers" through bidding or inviting applications from eligible persons. The administrator will determine funding modalities on a case-by-case basis, ensuring efficient and flexible allocation of funds.

## Utilization of DBN Funds

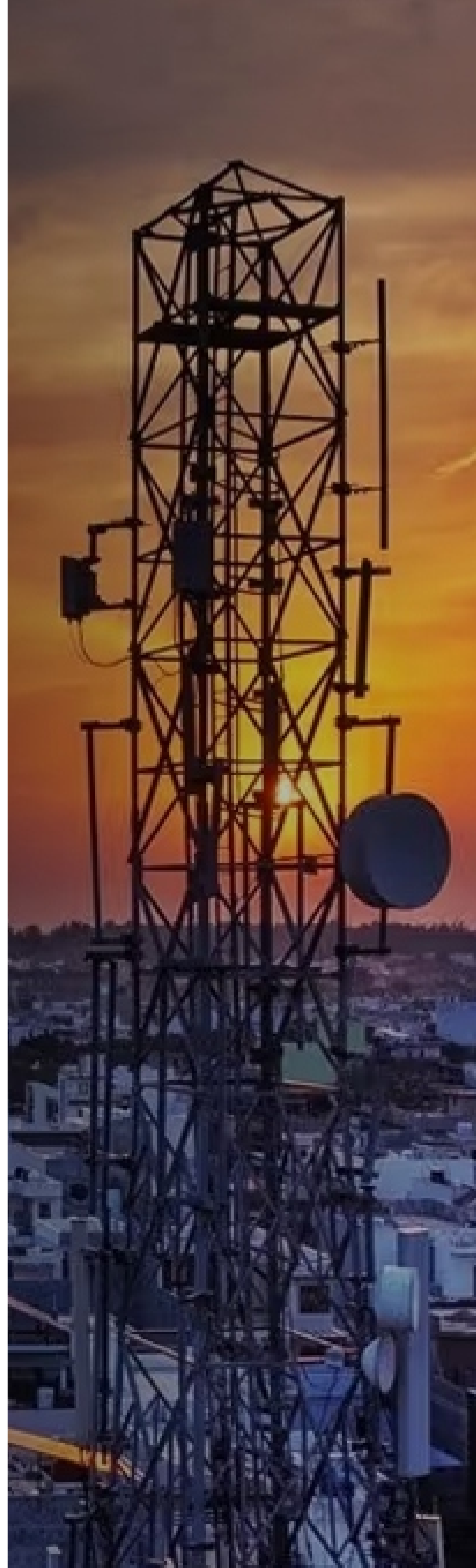
Funds collected under DBN will promote universal telecommunication services in underserved rural, remote, and urban areas. Additionally, funds will support research and development (R&D) of telecommunication services, technologies, and products, and provide consultancy assistance and advisory support to improve connectivity and introduce new telecommunication services and products.

## Project Qualification for DBN Funding

Projects must meet criteria such as provisioning telecommunication services in underserved rural areas, introducing next-generation technologies, promoting sustainable and green technologies, and fostering R&D towards Atmanirbhar Bharat. Networks established with DBN funding must be shared on a non-discriminatory basis to ensure broader access.

## Background of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)

USOF was funded by a 5% Universal Service Levy on telecom operators' Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). The Telecommunications Bill, 2023, aims to regulate telecommunications activities, replacing older acts and amending the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act, 1997.



## Features of the Telecommunications Bill, 2023

The Bill grants the Government of India (Gol) exclusive powers to lay telecom infrastructure, operate networks, and provide services. Other stakeholders will need prior authorization from the Gol for providing telecommunication services, establishing, operating, maintaining, or expanding networks, and possessing radio equipment. The Gol can direct telecom services to transmit specific messages for public interest and take control of services in national security or war situations. The Bill also regulates the conditions under which press messages may be intercepted or prohibited.

## Spectrum Assignment and Telecommunication Services

Spectrum will be assigned primarily through auctions, with administrative allocations for specific uses such as national security, disaster management, and transport. The Bill includes provisions for administrative allocation of spectrum for satellite broadband services and allows telecom companies to reform spectrum use, harmonize spectrum across geographies, and share, trade, or lease spectrum. Telecommunication services defined under the Bill include voice calling, SMS, internet and broadband services, data communication services, interpersonal communication services, and satellite communication services.

## Powers of Interception and Search

The Gol may intercept, monitor, or block messages on grounds such as public safety, national security, friendly relations with other countries, prevention of offenses, and public order. Telecom services may be suspended on similar grounds. Authorized officers can search premises or vehicles for unauthorized telecom networks or equipment.

## Temporary Possession and Standards

The Gol may temporarily possess telecom infrastructure, networks, or services during public emergencies. It can prescribe standards for telecom equipment, infrastructure, networks, and services to ensure compliance and safety.

## User Protection and Identification

The Gol may implement measures to protect users, including obtaining prior consent for advertising messages, creating Do Not Disturb registers, and providing mechanisms to report malware or unwanted messages. Telecom service providers must establish online grievance redressal mechanisms. Biometric authentication and identification of users are mandated to curb fraud, with penalties for furnishing false information or impersonation.

## Amendments to TRAI

The Bill specifies the professional experience required for appointments to TRAI, allowing individuals from the private sector to be eligible. It removes the requirement for Gol to seek TRAI recommendations for new service providers and licensing terms, streamlining the process.





## Offenses and Penalties

The Bill outlines various criminal and civil offenses related to unauthorized telecom services, network access, and equipment possession. A tiered adjudication process involving an adjudicating officer, appeals committee, and the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) is established to resolve disputes.

## Role of TDSAT

TDSAT is empowered to adjudicate disputes between licensors and licensees, service providers, and between service providers and consumer groups, ensuring a fair and structured resolution process.

## Key Issues and Analysis

### Interception of Communication

The Bill may enable mass surveillance, potentially violating the right to privacy. It lacks procedural safeguards mandated by the Supreme Court (SC) in the case of interception of communication. Currently, these safeguards are provided through rules under the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885, which the Bill replaces. The Bill states that interception orders may remain in effect as long as a public emergency or threat to public safety exists. Orders can be issued by specially authorized officers from the central or state government, but the Bill does not provide an oversight mechanism for these orders.

### Supreme Court on Interception and Fundamental Rights

In *PUCL vs Union of India* (1996), the SC mandated a fair procedure to regulate interception powers, safeguarding citizens' rights under Articles 19(1)(a) and 21 of the Indian Constitution. The SC's safeguards include:

**Establishing Necessity:**  
Orders should highlight the objective and necessity for interception.



**Purpose Limitation:**  
Use of intercepted material should be minimal and necessary to meet the objective.



**Time Limit:**  
Initial orders are valid for two months, with possible extensions up to six months.



**Oversight Mechanism:**  
Oversight should be conducted by a committee of government officials exclusively.

**Issuance of Orders:**  
High-ranked officials (e.g., Home Secretary) should issue orders, with mandatory review by a committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary.



In *KS Puttaswamy's* (2017) case, the SC recognized the right to privacy as a facet of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution. In *Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India* (2020), the SC held that freedom of speech and expression, and freedom of trade and business over the Internet, are protected under Articles 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

## Other Issues

- The Bill's classification as a money bill limits Rajya Sabha's scrutiny. Ministries of Finance, Corporate Affairs, and Commerce and Industry argue that DoT cannot legislate on subjects outside its domain that have revenue implications for the Gol.
- The Bill gives Gol the power to issue licenses for telecom networks and services, raising questions about whether they should be regulated similarly. Excluding TRAI from licensing consultations weakens its role.
- The Bill does not protect employees from liability if they lack knowledge or have exercised due diligence in case of offenses by companies. Directors, managers, or officers are not held liable for connivance or neglect.
- The role of Rajya Sabha in passing a money bill is limited to providing recommendations; it cannot reject or amend the bill.
- Some definitions, such as wireless equipment, may need re-evaluation, as mobile phones could fall under this category, implying the need for prior authorization to possess a mobile phone.
- Experts argue that Gol cannot coerce states or municipal corporations to impose right-of-way rules, as land is a state subject. Biometric authentication for user identification raises privacy concerns. It is unclear how the provisions impact end-to-end encrypted calls over platforms like WhatsApp.
- The Bill may lead to dual regulation for online services like Google Pay and Paytm, which offer messaging as an ancillary service.

## Significance of the Bill

The Bill enhances security measures by allowing government intervention in telecom services during emergencies, focusing on national security and public safety. It balances security with the need to safeguard press freedom, with specific rules for accredited correspondents.

By replacing outdated laws, the Bill aims to create a regulatory environment aligned with current technological advancements and societal needs. The Bill's provisions for spectrum assignment, both through auction and administrative allocation, reflect a modern approach to resource management, acknowledging the benefits of administrative assignment for specific uses.



## Project PARI

### Why in News?

The Ministry of Culture has initiated Project PARI (Public Art of India), a significant endeavor to exhibit the nation's rich artistic heritage. The inaugural phase is being conducted in Delhi, in conjunction with the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee, with the aim of enhancing the city's aesthetic and cultural ambiance.

### About Project PARI

Project PARI is designed to create public art that merges traditional practices with modern themes and techniques. The project will be implemented by the Lalit Kala Akademi and the National Gallery of Modern Art. The artworks take inspiration from diverse Indian art forms such as:

- Phad Paintings (Rajasthan)
- Thangka Paintings (Sikkim/Ladakh)
- Gond Art (Madhya Pradesh)

Additionally, some sculptures draw from World Heritage Sites like Bhimbetka, particularly highlighting India's seven natural World Heritage Sites. The sculptures for Project PARI celebrate nature, Indian concepts like Natyashastra, historical figures like Gandhi, and ancient knowledge systems.

A key feature of Project PARI is the inclusion of women artists, underscoring India's dedication to empowering its NARI SHAKTI (women's power). This project turns urban areas into open-air art galleries, making art accessible to everyone. It fosters dialogue, contemplation, and inspiration, thus enriching the cultural fabric of the nation.

### Lalit Kala Akademi

The Lalit Kala Akademi is an autonomous organization registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. It serves as the government's premier cultural body in the field of visual arts in India, fully funded by the Ministry of Culture. The academy promotes Indian arts both domestically and internationally, and it organizes an international contemporary art exhibition in New Delhi every three years.

### Headquarters and Regional Centers:

- HQ: New Delhi
- Rennai, Kolkata, Lucknow
- Regional Centers: Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Shimla

### Publications:

- Lalit Kala Contemporary (English)
- Lalit Kala Ancient (English)
- Samkaleen Kala (Hindi)

The Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) was the first of the three academies to be established in 1953, followed by the Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA) and the Sahitya Akademi (SA).



# UNIFORM CHARGE STRUCTURE

## FOR STOCK MARKET INSTITUTIONS

### Why in News?

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has mandated that stock exchanges and other market institutions implement a uniform charge structure for all members, regardless of transaction volume. Traditionally, stock exchanges have levied transaction fees on stockbrokers based on their trading volume, with brokers handling higher volumes paying lower fees per transaction.

### Need for SEBI's Intervention:

- The directive aims to establish a "level playing field" for all brokers by eliminating volume-based charge disparities.
- There was a mismatch between the daily charges collected by brokers and the monthly payments made to exchanges, leading to brokers collecting more than they paid.
- SEBI raised concerns about possible misleading disclosures to clients regarding exchange charges.
- The current charge structure could potentially impede equal and fair access for all market participants.

### Key Points on the Directive:

- SEBI has mandated that charges recovered from end clients must accurately reflect the charges imposed by exchanges.
- The regulator has suggested considering the current per-unit transaction charges to potentially reduce costs for end clients.

### Potential Impact on Stockbrokers:

- The discrepancy between what brokers collect from clients and pay to exchanges is a significant revenue source for some brokers. The impact of the directive will vary based on a broker's reliance on this income stream and the availability of alternative revenue sources.

- Discount brokers, who often benefit from volume-based discounts, are expected to be most affected.
  - ➔ For example, Zerodha earns approximately 10% of its revenue from the difference between charges paid and collected.
  - ➔ In FY24, this difference constituted a small percentage of Geojit Financial's total income and profit before tax.

## National Security Council

Why in News?

The central government has appointed Rajinder Khanna, former RAW chief, as Additional National Security Adviser (ANSA), a newly created post.

### Key Changes in the Structure of NSCS:

- ➔ The Centre has restructured the reporting relationships within the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and between the National Security Advisor (NSA) and the Union ministries.
- ➔ The NSA now presides over a larger organization, with an ANSA and three deputy NSAs. His role is now more advisory and less operational.
- ➔ The NSA will deal with advisory bodies such as the National Security Advisory Board and the Strategic Policy Group.
- ➔ The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the three service chiefs, along with the Union defence, home, foreign, and other secretaries, are required to report to the NSA in addition to their daily reporting to a minister.
- ➔ The ANSA will act as the gatekeeper in the communication chain between six mid-level unit heads (three Dy NSAs and three service officers) and the NSA.

### National Security Advisor (NSA):

- ➔ The NSA is the senior member of the Indian National Security Council and the Prime Minister's principal advisor on foreign and national security policy.
- ➔ Receives all intelligence reports (R&AW and IB) and coordinates their presentation to the PM.
- ➔ Participates in high-level diplomatic conversations on security issues.
- ➔ Serves as the Secretary of the Prime Minister-led National Security Council.

### National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS):

- ➔ Overseen by the Prime Minister, with the NSA as its secretary. It serves as the apex body for all matters concerning internal and external security.
- ➔ It has four verticals: Strategic Planning, Internal Affairs, Intelligence and Technology, Military.

### National Security Council (NSC):

- ➔ A three-tiered organization overseeing political, economic, energy, and security issues of strategic concern.
- ➔ Established by the Vajpayee government in 1998 following the nuclear tests by India & Pakistan.
- ➔ Operates within the executive office of the Prime Minister of India, liaising between the government's executive branch and the intelligence services, advising leadership on intelligence and security issues.

- ➔ Members include the NSA, Deputy and Additional National Security Advisors, Ministers of Defence, External Affairs, Home, Finance, and the Vice Chairman of the NITI Aayog. The military has no representation in this tier.
- ➔ The NSC is headed by the Prime Minister. The NSA acts as the secretary of the NSC. (Brajesh Mishra was the first NSA).
- ➔ **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- ➔ **Primary objective:** To provide authoritative and holistic assessments of India's security challenges across military, internal security, economic, technological, and external relations domains.

### Organizational Structure:

- ➔ Principal mechanism for inter-ministerial coordination and integration of relevant inputs in formulating national security policies.
- ➔ Headed by the NSA. It includes the chiefs of the Armed Forces, the Intelligence Bureau, and Research and Analysis Wing.
- ➔ Main task: Make policy recommendations to the National Security Council. The Cabinet Secretary coordinates the implementation of SPG decisions by the Union Ministries, departments, and State governments.
- ➔ The Cabinet Secretary coordinates the implementation of SPG decisions by the Union Ministries, departments, and State governments.

### National Security Advisory Board (NSAB):

- ➔ Advises the Council on issues relating to national security that the Council may refer to.
- ➔ Consists of a convener and other eminent persons with expertise in foreign affairs, external security, defence and armed forces, strategic analysis, etc.
- ➔ Undertakes long-term analysis and provides perspectives on issues of national security.
- ➔ The first NSAB was set up in 1998 with K. Subrahmanyam as its convener.

The restructuring aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the NSC in addressing India's complex security challenges, ensuring that all relevant inputs are considered in national security policy formulation and implementation.

## Geospatial Analysis of Maternal Healthcare for Tribal Populations in Gujarat

### Why in News?

A UN report in May 2023 highlighted that India accounted for 17% of global maternal deaths in 2020, holding the highest share among the 10 countries responsible for 60% of global maternal deaths, stillbirths, and newborn deaths. This underscores the need to focus on maternal healthcare to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at improving maternal and child health outcomes.

### Study Focus

The study examines maternal and pregnancy care in Gujarat's tribal population, which constitutes 14.8% of the state's total population. It emphasizes geographical and socio-economic factors affecting access to healthcare facilities. The study uses data from the National Family Health Survey and geographical information system (GIS) data to analyze healthcare accessibility across 46 districts with significant tribal populations.

## Findings

- **Healthcare Disparities:** The study reveals disparities in healthcare access between urban and rural areas, with rural areas facing more significant challenges.
- **ANC and PNC Coverage:** Coverage of antenatal care (ANC) and postnatal care (PNC) is lower in districts like Banaskantha, Mahisagar, Sabarkantha, Dahod, and Bharuch. In these areas, pregnancy care falls below WHO-prescribed thresholds.
- **Transportation Issues:** Distance and time to healthcare facilities significantly impact access, with many areas requiring extensive travel to reach hospitals.
- **Infrastructure and Affordability:** Affordability and infrastructure remain primary concerns, particularly in rural areas.

## Implications

The study highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve maternal and child healthcare in tribal areas. Implementing policies to enhance accessibility and infrastructure, particularly in underserved regions, is crucial. Ensuring affordable and equitable healthcare access for vulnerable populations will help address the maternal healthcare crisis.

## Steps Taken in India to Reduce Maternal Mortality Rates

### 1. National Health Mission (NHM)

The NHM, launched in 2013, includes the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM). It aims to provide accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare to the rural and urban population, with a special focus on reducing maternal and child mortality.

### 2. Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)

JSY is a safe motherhood intervention under the NHM, launched in 2005, that promotes institutional deliveries by providing cash incentives to pregnant women, especially those from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds.

### 3. Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

Launched in 2011, JSSK aims to eliminate out-of-pocket expenses for pregnant women and sick infants by providing free drugs, diagnostics, diet, delivery, and transport services in public health institutions.

### 4. Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)

PMSMA, launched in 2016, provides assured, comprehensive, and quality antenatal care to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month. The initiative focuses on early detection and management of high-risk pregnancies.

### 5. LaQshya Program

LaQshya (Labour Room Quality Improvement Initiative) aims to improve the quality of care in labor rooms and maternity operation theatres in public health facilities. It focuses on ensuring respectful maternity care, enhancing labor room services, and reducing maternal and newborn mortality.

### 6. Midwifery Services

The government has introduced professional midwifery services to provide quality maternal and newborn care. The initiative aims to create a cadre of nurse practitioners in midwifery to offer specialized care during childbirth.

## 7. Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS)

MCTS is an online system that tracks pregnant women and children to ensure timely and complete ANC, PNC, and immunization services. It helps in monitoring and ensuring the delivery of essential maternal and child health services.

## 8. Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI)

IMI aims to reach every child and pregnant woman who has been left out of routine immunization programs. It focuses on increasing full immunization coverage to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates.

## 9. Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) Services

To provide safe and legal abortion services, the government has expanded access to Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) services, ensuring the availability of trained providers and equipment in public health facilities.

## 10. Nutrition Programs

Programs like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) aim to improve the nutritional status of pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children to prevent malnutrition-related complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

### Summary

India has implemented several programs and initiatives, including NHM, JSY, JSSK, PMSMA, LaQshya, professional midwifery services, MCTS, IMI, CAC services, and nutrition programs, to reduce maternal mortality rates. These efforts focus on providing comprehensive antenatal and postnatal care, promoting institutional deliveries, enhancing healthcare quality, and ensuring nutritional support for pregnant women and infants.

11/07/24





## The Supreme Court upholds Muslim women's maintenance rights after divorce under secular law

The secular provisions of Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) grant maintenance to divorced Muslim women, according to a ruling by the Supreme Court of India. This ruling emphasizes that the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, does not supersede the remedy granted by Section 125 CrPC.

### Key Judgment Highlights

The ruling of the court is consistent with the views put up by senior counsel Gaurav Agrawal, the amicus curiae, who highlighted that divorced Muslim women are subject to the secular statutory provisions of Section 125 CrPC. With this verdict, Muslim women who have divorced would have the same access to maintenance rights as other Indian women.

A Muslim man appealed a Telangana High Court ruling, and Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih handled the matter in a concurring opinion. Despite the man's argument that his wife should only have access to the 1986 Act, the High Court maintained a Family Court's judgment providing her interim maintenance under Section 125 CrPC.

### Arguments and Counterarguments:

The appellant, Mohd. Abdul Samad, contended that Section 125 CrPC ought to yield to the 1986 Act, which is a unique legislation. He argued that a divorced Muslim woman is only entitled to maintenance during the iddat period, after which the obligation ends, in accordance with the 1986 Act. On the other hand, regardless of the wife's religious beliefs, Section 125 CrPC requires monthly maintenance if she hasn't remarried and her ex-husband has enough money but hasn't supported her.

### Children's Maintenance

The 1986 Act restricts a Muslim man's duty to support his children to two years from the date of birth, whereas Section 125 CrPC mandates maintenance until the children attain the age of majority. This is only one of the significant differences between the two statutes that the court emphasized.

### Constitutional Commitment and Harmonious Interpretation:

Judge Masih pointed out that the fundamental guarantee of a life of dignity for women, irrespective of their faith, is reflected in Section 125 CrPC. He made it clear that a divorced Muslim woman's ability to request support under Section 125 CrPC is unaffected by the 1986 Act. The woman is still free to choose whether to seek for maintenance under any clause depending on her financial situation. Courts are urged to use a meaningful and harmonious interpretation of both statutes.

With this historic decision, the Supreme Court has once again demonstrated its commitment to preserving Muslim women's rights to maintenance, dignity, and welfare under secular law.

## Rajasthan budget gives a boost to health, promises job growth

### Budget overview

On Wednesday, Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari presented the state budget for 2024 - 25, which emphasizes new policies in finance, agriculture, urban development, tourism, transport and a tech-driven economy. The ₹4.95 lakh crore budget aims to fulfill key promises of the ruling BJP.

## Key allocations

₹27,000 crore for the health sector and ₹15,000 crore to provide tap water connections to 25 lakh rural households are among the key disbursements. The budget also proposes to create 4 lakh jobs in 5 years through reforms and export promotion.

### Development initiatives

Ms Kumari highlighted plans for green infrastructure, financial stewardship and express highway construction to boost growth and public welfare.

The green budget, along with provisions for new tourism, sports and data center policies, aims to attract investments and create opportunities.

### Opposition reactions

The budget faced disruptions from Congress legislators over the issue of the old pension scheme. While the BJP praised the budget as a 'welfare document', the opposition termed it 'disappointing' and inadequate to meet public expectations.



## India and Russia agree to pursue trade in national currency

### Historic agreement

India and Russia have agreed to establish a national currency settlement system, Russian Embassy Charge d'Affaires Roman Babushkin announced after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Russia. Babushkin described the visit as "historic and game-changing" and criticized Western support for Ukraine.

### Strengthening economic ties

During Modi's July 8-9 visit, he held talks with President Vladimir Putin focusing on economic cooperation. Trade between India and Russia has increased since the imposition of Western sanctions on Russia in 2022, especially in the energy sector. Babushkin highlighted the importance of a currency settlement system in his discussions.

### Addressing military recruitment

The leaders also discussed Indian citizens being fraudulently recruited into the Russian army. Babushkin has assured that these individuals will be returned soon and stressed that Russia never had the intention to recruit Indians into its army.

### Global impact and Ukraine crisis

Babushkin underlined the global importance of the Modi – Putin meeting and also advocated Ukraine's neutrality and non-alignment. He criticized Western countries for supporting Ukraine and mentioned the emergence of new independent power centers like India and Russia in the global arena.

# San Fernando becomes first ship to arrive at Kerala's Vizhinjam Port with 1,930 containers



## Historic arrival at Vizhinjam Port

In a historic milestone, Vizhinjam International Port, India's first deep-water container transshipment port, welcomed its first mothership on Thursday morning.

The Marshall Island-flagged container ship 'San Fernando' arrived from Xiamen Port, China, marking a new chapter in India's maritime history.

## Ship details and operations

Owned by SFL Corporation Limited, chartered by Maersk (AP Moller Group) and managed by Bernhard Schulte Ship Management, Singapore, San Fernando carried 1,930 containers.

Adani Port pilots boarded the ship at 7:45 am and guided it through the port's buoy channel to the berth, assisted by 4 tugs.

## Ceremonial welcome

The ship was accorded a water salute on its arrival. The unloading of cargo from the ship began at 2 pm, with the ship scheduled to leave for Colombo on Friday after an official welcome by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

## Background of the port project

The Rs 7,700 crore Vizhinjam port project in partnership between the Kerala government and the Adani Group began in December 2015. Despite the delay, the trial run of the port will officially begin on July 12, ahead of its revised commissioning in December 2024.

**India hosts BIMSTEC foreign ministers amid Myanmar crisis**

## Call for internal solution

During the first BIMSTEC foreign ministers' meeting on Thursday, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar stressed the need for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to address regional challenges internally.

They have highlighted the urgent need for capacity building and economic cooperation within the grouping, which includes Nepal, Bhutan, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand.

## Myanmar instability concerns

The meeting is taking place against the backdrop of instability in Myanmar, where the military junta is facing significant resistance from ethnic armed organizations (EAOs). This instability poses challenges to development and connectivity projects in the region.

## Focus on connectivity and stability

After meeting Myanmar Deputy Prime Minister U Than Swe, Jaishankar discussed important connectivity projects and border stability. While India's humanitarian assistance to Myanmar is limited to displaced populations and military personnel taking refuge in Mizoram.

The country continues to cooperate with Myanmar and Thailand to combat transnational crimes such as cyber, narcotics and illegal arms trafficking.

## Indian ship crew wins 'Exceptional Bravery' award for rescue operations in Red Sea

### Valiant response to missile attack

On January 26, 2024, Marlin Luanda, carrying 84,147 tonnes of naphtha, was hit by an anti-ship missile fired by Iran-backed Houthi rebels while en route from Suez to Incheon.

The explosion ignited a cargo tank, posing a major fire risk. 'Captain Rawat' had swiftly organized firefighting efforts, while ensuring the safety of the crew and maintaining the ship's navigability.

### Assistance from INS Visakhapatnam

Captain Brijesh Nambiar and the crew of Indian Naval Ship INS Visakhapatnam received a letter of commendation for their cooperation during the incident. Despite extreme danger and threat of further attacks, the Marlin Luanda crew doused the fire using seawater after their foam supplies were exhausted.



# BOOST FINANCING FOR GREEN PROJECTS

## Why in the news ?

The Finance Minister has placed a greater emphasis on green growth in his budget speeches, in line with PM Modi's declaration at COP26 that India will reach 500GW of fossil fuel-free capacity by 2030 and net zero by 2070.

It is imperative that these promises be reaffirmed in the Budget speech. The usage of fossil fuels must peak, plateau, and then decline as quickly as feasible if India is to achieve net zero. In order to achieve net zero, this would reduce the expenses for businesses and the economy.

To prevent making large, unfavorable capital investments in an economy dependent on fossil fuels, investors should take this viewpoint into account before making important investment decisions.

In a cutthroat market, private investment is developing renewable energy (RE) capacities at a falling cost. Renewable energy is currently less expensive than new thermal power when paired with storage for continuous supply. It will take far greater RE capacities to reach 500GW of fossil fuel-free capacity by 2030, which means that additional RE bids will need to be invited.

This goal ought to be made public. Large-scale storage is necessary to fulfill changing demand because renewable energy (RE) output is sporadic and rigid. A strong strategy to create storage through an invitation to bid should be included in the budget speech. This would motivate prospective investors to get ready for the rapidly expanding demand for massive storage.



Hydro pump storage in rivers and off-rivers are both feasible choices, while concentrated solar thermal energy stored in molten salt for use in conventional thermal turbines is a well-developed and reasonably priced technology. These storage initiatives feature large upfront expenditures, lengthy payback periods, and low ongoing expenses.

# Centre amends rules to broaden the administrative role of J&K L-G

## Why in the news?

The modifications increase the Lieutenant Governor's (L-G) jurisdiction over matters pertaining to public order and law enforcement in Jammu & Kashmir. By changing the Transaction of Business Rules, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) increased the L-G's administrative authority. With the approval of the Finance Department beforehand, these revisions provide greater authority on the L-G with regard to matters pertaining to law enforcement, public order, All India Services (AIS), and their postings and transfers. The L-G must be consulted first on recommendations for the nomination of the Advocate-General, Law Officers, and judgments about criminal sanctions or appeals.

J&K's unique status under Article 370 of the Constitution was removed on August 5, 2019, resulting in the division of the former state into two Union Territories: J&K and Ladakh, the latter of which lacks an assembly. Since June 2018, J&K has been governed by the Central government, which has pledged to reinstate statehood following Assembly elections. Elections for the J&K Assembly must be held by the Election Commission by September 30, 2024, as directed by the Supreme Court. New provisions outlining the L-G's responsibilities were added to the modified Rules under Section 55 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which were issued by the MHA.

According to the notification, the Chief Secretary must provide any plan to the L-G regarding "Police," "Public Order," "All India Service," and "Anti Corruption Bureau" that needs the Finance Department's approval in advance. Furthermore, through the Chief Secretary and the Chief Minister, suggestions for the appointment of the Advocate-General and other Law Officers to support legal procedures must be made to the L-G for approval.

Appeals and recommendations for prosecution sanctions must also be sent to the L-G by the Department of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs through the Chief Secretary. The L-G should also be consulted on issues pertaining to the Forensic Science Laboratory, the Directorate of Prosecution, and prisons.

## Food inflation accelerates to 9.4%, highest in 6 months

### Why in the news?

Costlier fruits, vegetables, and cereals increased food prices by 9.4% in June, a six-month high. The retail inflation rate increased from 4.8% in May to a four-month high of 5.08% as a result of this jump.

Inflation for rural consumers grew to 5.66% from 5.3% in May, while prices for urban consumers jumped by 4.4% from 4.2%. The rate of food inflation in cities was 9.55%, while it was 9.2% in rural areas.

Retail inflation is above the central bank's 4% objective even though it hasn't exceeded 6% since September 2023. Given that the Reserve Bank of India is waiting for inflation to return to its target rate, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data from June lessens the chance of an interest rate drop this year. Retail inflation was 4.87% in June 2023, with a 4.55% increase in the food price index.



Vegetable prices increased by 29.3% in June, up from 27.3% in May, due to the warmth and delayed monsoon start in some areas of the nation. This is the ninth consecutive month of double-digit price rises.

Fruit prices grew by 7.15%, but pulse prices increased by 16.1%, marking the twelfth straight month of 10% inflation.

## **"Significant Concern"**

Dharmakirti Joshi, the chief economist of Crisil, acknowledged that food inflation in vegetables and grains was a significant worry, but he also voiced optimism that the monsoon's advancement would help contain it in the upcoming months.

He issued a warning that growing international freight costs, rising crude prices, and telecom rate hikes could cause non-food inflation, which dropped for the seventeenth consecutive month to a record low of 2.3% in June, to rebound.

Because manufacturers are raising their costs, personal care items continue to see significant inflation of 8.2%, according to Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at Bank of Baroda.

Additionally, he made note of the fact that half of India's states had inflation rates higher than the 5.1% national average, with Odisha seeing the largest increase at 7.2%.

