

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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1. GHAR (GO Home and Re-Unite) Portal for Restoration and Repatriation of Child launched by NCPCR - PIB
2. Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Shri Pralhad Joshi launches C-CARES, web portal of CMPFO - PIB
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## Important News Articles

### GS II

#### 1. GHAR (GO Home and Re-Unite) Portal for Restoration and Repatriation of Child launched by NCPCR - PIB

**Relevance:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

**News:**

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** has introduced two portals, namely the "**Track Child Portal**" and the "**GHAR - GO Home and Re-Unite**" to address the **issue of missing and found children**.

**Track Child Portal**

- It is developed by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- Implemented with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Railways, and other stakeholders.
- It enables **tracking of the missing and found children** in all States/UTs.
- The portal is integrated with the **Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network Systems (CCTNS)** for **efficient matching of FIRs**.
- One component of TrackChild Portal has "**Khoya-Paya**" where **any citizen can report** for any missing or sighted children.

**GHAR - GO Home and Re-Unite (Portal for Restoration and Repatriation of Child)**

- It is developed and launched by the **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)**.
- Purpose:** To digitally monitor and track the restoration and repatriation of children as per the protocols under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 and Rules thereof.

**Key Features of GHAR Portal**

- Digital tracking and monitoring of children** who are in the Juvenile Justice system and have to be repatriated to another Country/State/District.
- Digital transfer of cases** of children to the concerned Juvenile Justice Board/Child Welfare Committee of the State for **speedy repatriation** of children.
- Where there is a **requirement of a translator/interpreter/expert**, request will be made to the concerned State Government.
- Child Welfare Committees and District Child Protection Officers can ensure proper restoration and rehabilitation of children by digitally monitoring the progress of the case.
- A **checklist format** will be provided so that the children who are being hard to repatriate or children who are not getting their monetary benefits can be identified.
- List of Government implemented schemes** will be provided, so that the Child Welfare Committees can link the child with the schemes to strengthen the family and ensure that the child remains with his/her family.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Track Child Portal
- GHAR - GO Home and Re-Unite
- Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network Systems (CCTNS)
- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

#### 2. Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Shri Pralhad Joshi launches C-CARES, web portal of CMPFO - PIB

**Relevance:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

**News:**

- Recently, the Union Minister of Coal, Mines, and Parliamentary Affairs inaugurated the **C-CARES web portal**.

**C- CARES Portal**

- It is developed and designed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- C- CARES Portal
- Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization (CMPFO)

- The portal signifies a significant step in **Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization (CMPFO)'s digitization** journey.
  - Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization is an **autonomous organisation** under the aegis of **Ministry of Coal** established in the year 1948.
  - **Objective:** Administering Provident Fund and Pension schemes for the purpose of providing social security to the coal sector workers.

#### C-CARES Portal Features

- The portal will allow CMPF subscribers and coal companies to **login and perform various functions** tailored to their needs.
  - The subscribers can access and view their individual details and subscription status
  - The coal companies can submit contribution details, subscribers' particulars and claims for online settlement and payment.
- It will also ensure **paperless working, timely and accurate settlement of claims, improved record management, reduction in processing time, instilling confidence in subscribers and pensioners and grievance redressal.**
- The portal serves as a **public service platform**, benefiting CMPF subscribers and pensioners in the coal sector.

### GS III

## 3. Govt gives ₹ 9,000 cr to Exim Bank as loans extended to foreign countries turn NPAs - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

#### News:

- With loans to some countries extended through **Exim Bank of India being classified as "doubtful debt" in 2023-24,**
- The Ministry of External Affairs has provided Rs 9,013.72 crore to the financial institution after it invoked Government of India (GoI) guarantee on these loans.

#### Key Highlights

- **The Exim Bank had to invoke the guarantees** after decade-plus old loans extended to some African countries turned into non-performing assets.
- **Lines of Credit (LOCs) are given to other countries** and some of these to African countries have turned into NPAs.
- They have been classified as doubtful, but not written off
- The MEA has provided a further Rs 4,383.40 crore in 2024-25 towards payment to Exim Bank towards guarantees
  - That may be invoked against doubtful debts, indicating more such loans to countries might get classified as NPAs in the coming years.
- Government-supported LOCs to countries of Asia (excluding Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan) Africa, Commonwealth of Independent States region and Latin American region are extended under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme.
- Once **guarantees are invoked by a financial institution** or a public sector undertaking,
  - The **funds are paid out of the Guarantee Redemption Fund** established in the Public Account of India since 1999-2000.
- An equivalent amount will be recovered from the Guarantee Redemption Fund.
- For about four decades, the Department of Economic Affairs had been **extending Lines of Credit (LOCs) to "friendly developing foreign countries**
- These LOCs were 'Government-to-Government' credit lines as the agreements were signed between the Indian government and the government of the recipient country.
- Till 2003-04, the LOCs were G-to-G and accordingly, the full amount covered by the LOCs used to be provided in the Budget.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Lines of Credit
- Exim Bank

- Since 2003-04, **this system has been substituted by extending GoI-supported LOCs through Exim Bank of India.**

#### 4. Reducing ammonia emissions through fertilizer management - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation  
**News:**

- Based on machine learning, recently, researchers have come up with detailed **estimates of ammonia emissions** from rice, wheat and maize crops.
- The study provides a **cropland-specific analysis**, emphasizing the environmental impact and health implications of atmospheric ammonia.

##### Prelims Takeaway

- Ammonia
- Greenhouse Gas
- Kyoto Protocol

##### Ammonia Emissions: A Global Issue

- Atmospheric ammonia is a key **environmental pollutant** that affects ecosystems across the planet, as well as human health.
- Around **51-60% of anthropogenic ammonia emissions** can be traced back to **crop cultivation**.
  - About half of these emissions are associated with three main staple crops: rice, wheat and maize.
- However, quantifying any potential reductions in ammonia emissions related to specific croplands at high resolution is challenging.

##### Machine Learning Approach

- Researchers utilized machine learning to model **ammonia output based on diverse variables**.
  - These include climate, soil characteristics, crop types, irrigation, tillage, and fertilization practices.
- A comprehensive dataset derived from over 2,700 observations informed the model.

##### Global Ammonia Emission Estimates

- The machine learning model estimates global ammonia emissions at **4.3 teragrams (4.3 billion kilograms) in 2018**.
- Spatially optimizing fertilizer management, guided by the model, could potentially **reduce atmospheric ammonia emissions** from the three crops by **up to 38%**.
- It involves **deeper placement of enhanced-efficiency fertilizers** into the soil **during the growing season**, utilizing conventional tillage practices.
- Without effective management strategies, a potential increase in ammonia emissions **between 4.6% to 15.8% by 2100** is projected.

#### 5. How many trees do we have? - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation  
**News:**

- Several years ago, an **analysis of the world's trees** was conducted, employing ground-based sample counts and satellite imagery.
- The study revealed a surprising estimate of **three trillion trees on Earth**, significantly higher than previous scholarly projections.

##### Prelims Takeaway

- India State of Forest Report
- National Forest Policy, 1988

##### Global Tree Distribution

- On average, there are slightly **over 400 trees per human**, with **South American rainforests housing 15-20% of all trees**.
- The Boreal forests in Canada and Russia boast a high concentration of conifers, providing every Canadian resident with nearly 9,000 trees.
- In contrast, the Middle Eastern nation of Bahrain, with a population of 1.5 million, has a meagre 3,100 trees, averaging five trees per square kilometre.

##### Diversity in Oxygen Sources

- While trees are essential oxygen sources, **vast grasslands contribute almost as much oxygen as trees**.

- Additionally, **marine cyanobacteria and algae** play a significant role in **oxygen production**, contributing as much as land plants.

### Carbon Sequestration

- Apart from oxygen production, trees play a **crucial role in carbon sequestration**.
- Millennia-old trees, turned into coal after submersion and burial, lock up carbon for an extended period.

### India's Forest Cover

- India's estimate stands at **28 trees per person**, influenced by high population density and a history of deforestation.
  - Bangladesh, with three times the population density of India, has only six trees per citizen.
  - Nepal and Sri Lanka have slightly over a hundred trees per person.
- The **diversity in India's geography** results in large differences in natural forest cover.
- Moist tropical forests with dense canopies, high rainfall, and rich biodiversity are prominent in the Western and Eastern Ghats, the Northeast, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- 80% of the land area in Arunachal Pradesh is under forest cover; in Rajasthan it is less than 10%.

### Forest Policy Goals in India

- Despite reforestation efforts, India is still working towards achieving its **Forest Policy goal** of one-third of the country under forest cover.
- The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021 identifies **Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu** as the states with the **most significant improvement in forest cover**.

## 6. Unending woes - The Hindu

**Relevance:** India and its neighbourhood- relations.

**Context:**

- Despite diplomatic efforts, the **persistent arrests of fishermen** from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry by the Sri Lankan Navy in the Palk Bay, coupled with **mid-sea attacks by armed civilians**, raise serious concerns.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Bottom Trawling
- Blue Revolution Scheme
- Map Based Questions

### Increasing Arrests and Detentions

- The detention of 23 fishermen and the seizure of two trawlers off Delft island bring the total arrests to 69 this year, compared to 240 in the entire previous year.
- Additionally, 34 fishermen have been released, but over 45 remain in custody, with concerns about the confiscation of expensive fishing equipment and vessels.

### Destructive Bottom Trawling Accusations

- Sri Lankan northern province fishermen accuse Tamil Nadu fishermen of engaging in **destructive bottom trawling**, a practice **banned by Sri Lanka since July 2017**.
- Despite India's promises to address the issue through the **Blue Revolution Scheme and end bottom trawling**, the prohibited practice persists.

### Challenges Faced by Indian Fishermen

- Fishermen also face challenges under the **Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1983**.
- Under it, **mechanised fishing boats** are permitted to fish only **beyond three nautical miles** from the coast.
- However, due to the **proximity of the International Maritime Boundary Line**, breaches occur.

### Inconsistent Handling and Diplomatic Efforts

- Despite an agreement in 2016 to establish a **Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries** that would meet every three months, **only five sittings have taken place**, with the last one in 2022.
- The Indian Prime Minister's call to treat the issue as a **"humanitarian concern"** underscores the **need for consistent efforts** from both sides.

### Call for Tangible and Targeted Action

- **Tangible and targeted actions**, including promoting deep-sea fishing, abandoning bottom trawling, and resolving the issue through mutual compassion and regular diplomatic talks is necessary.
- Failure to address these concerns would **perpetuate the perilous conditions** for Indian fishermen in the Palk Bay.

## 7. India-made typhoid vaccine efficacy lasts for 4 years: study - The Hindu

- **Relevance:** Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.
- **News:**

### Prelims Takeaway

- Typhoid
- Types of Vaccines

## Protective in children of all age groups under 12 years

The trial was carried out in in Malawi, Africa, a typhoid fever-endemic setting, in children aged nine months to 12 years

- Children were vaccinated with a single dose of the vaccine during the period February to September 2018
- 14,069 children received the typhoid vaccine while the remaining 14,061 children received the control vaccine (MenA)
- The efficacy at the end of 4.3 years of median follow-up was 70-6% in children aged nine months to two years
- The efficacy in children aged two-four years was 79-6%, while the efficacy was 79-3% in children aged five-12 years
- The absolute risk reduction was 6.1 typhoid infections per 1,000 vaccinated children
- The estimated reduction in vaccine efficacy over time was only 1.3% per year over four years



**Greenlighted:** Conjugated typhoid vaccine manufactured by Bharat Biotech received WHO prequalification in 2017

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

## 8. The dispute over Varanasi, Mathura mosques - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

**Context:**

- The **Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**, is back in the spotlight due to civil suits challenging the **religious character of mosques in Varanasi and Mathura**.

- Hindu claimants are making determined legal efforts to replace these mosques with temples.
- These developments show that legislation freezing the status of places of worship is inadequate.

<p><b>Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Act was enacted in 1991 during the Babri-Masjid Ram Janmabhoomi dispute to freeze the status of places of worship as of August 15, 1947.</li> <li>• Its main features include maintaining the religious character as of that date, prohibiting conversion of places of worship, and abating pending proceedings.</li> <li>• Exceptions include ancient monuments covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, settled disputes, and conversions by acquiescence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Gyanvapi Mosque Cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Varanasi, a 2022 suit by Hindu women claims the right to worship deities in the Gyanvapi mosque.</li> <li>• Another batch of suits from 1991 seeks to declare part of the mosque site as belonging to Lord Vishweshwar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The basis is that a temple was allegedly demolished on the order of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1669.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• So far, court orders have favoured the suits, with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) finding evidence of a pre-existing temple.</li> <li>• Subsequently, the court has allowed the conduct of Hindu prayers in the premises, contested by the mosque committee.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Shahi Idgah Mosque Cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The suites in Mathura pertain to the Shahi Idgah mosque that stands adjacent to the Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple there.</li> <li>• These suits claim that the mosque was built over the birthplace of Lord Krishna.</li> <li>• The dispute was settled through a compromise in 1968; the Sansthan gave up a portion of the land to the Idgah.</li> <li>• The current suits challenge this compromise as 'fraudulent' and seek the transfer of the entire parcel of land to the deity.</li> <li>• The Allahabad High Court has transferred to itself all suits pertaining to the Mathura dispute.</li> </ul> <p><b>Places of Worship Act's Bar on Lawsuits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both mosque committees argued that the Places of Worship Act bars these suits, but court rulings state otherwise.</li> <li>• In the Gyanvapi case, the Act does not bar suits as they assert the right of worship of the Hindu deities without converting the status of the mosque.</li> <li>• The Allahabad High Court, in the earlier batch of suits, ruled that evidence, and not the Act, determines 'religious character'.</li> <li>• In Mathura, the district court holds that the Act doesn't bar suits challenging the 1968 agreement as it predates the commencement of the 1991 Act.</li> </ul>
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## 9. Why is fiscal consolidation so important? - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Context:**

- Recently, the Union Finance Minister announced that the Centre would **reduce its fiscal deficit to 5.1% of GDP in 2024-25**.
- She further added that the **fiscal deficit** would be pared to **below 4.5% of GDP by 2025-26**.
- The government's revised estimates also lowered the **fiscal deficit projection for 2023-24 to 5.8% of GDP**.



**Fiscal Deficit**

- It refers to the shortfall in a government's revenue when compared to its expenditure.
- When a government's expenditure exceeds its revenues, the government will have to borrow money or sell assets to fund the deficit.
  - Taxes are the most important source of revenue for any government.
- When a government runs a fiscal surplus, on the other hand, its revenues exceed expenditure.
  - It is, however, quite rare for governments to run a surplus.
- Most governments today focus on keeping the fiscal deficit under control rather than on generating a fiscal surplus or on balancing the budget.

**Fiscal Deficit vs National Debt**

- The national debt is the total amount of money that the government of a country owes its lenders at a particular point in time.
- It is usually the amount of debt that a government has accumulated over many years of running fiscal deficits and borrowing to bridge the deficits.
- The fiscal deficit is generally expressed as a percentage of a country's GDP since the figure shows how easily the government will be able to pay its lenders.
- The higher a government's fiscal deficit as a share of GDP, the less likely its lenders will be paid back without trouble.
- Countries with larger economies can run higher fiscal deficits (in terms of absolute numbers of money).

**Funding Fiscal Deficit**

- The government mainly borrows money from the bond market where lenders compete to lend to the government by purchasing bonds issued by the government.
  - In 2024-25, the Centre is expected to borrow a gross amount of ₹14.13 lakh crore from the market, which is lower than its borrowing goal for 2023-24.
- When a government borrows from the bond market, it not only borrows from private lenders but also indirectly from the central bank.
- The RBI may purchase government bonds in the secondary market, from private lenders who have already purchased bonds from the government.
- As a government's financial situation deteriorates, demand for its bonds decreases, necessitating higher interest rates to attract lenders.

**Impact of Monetary Policy**

- The impact of monetary policy is significant, with central bank lending rates, previously low, rising after the pandemic.
- This increase in rates makes it more costly for governments to borrow money, potentially driving the Centre's focus on reducing its fiscal deficit.

**Significance of Fiscal Deficit**

- There is a strong direct relationship between the government's fiscal deficit and inflation in the country.
- When a country's government runs a persistently high fiscal deficit, this can eventually lead to higher inflation.
  - The government will be forced to use fresh money issued by the central bank to fund its fiscal deficit.
- The fiscal deficit also signals to the market the degree of fiscal discipline maintained by the government.
  - A lower fiscal deficit may thus help improve the ratings assigned to the Indian government's bonds.
- When the government is able to fund more of its spending through tax revenues, it gives more confidence to lenders and drives down the government's borrowing cost.
- A high fiscal deficit can also adversely affect the ability of the government to manage its overall public debt.
- A lower fiscal deficit may help the government to more easily sell its bonds overseas and access cheaper credit.

## 10. Micro-credentials, the next chapter in higher education - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

**Context:**

- Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in India need to actively **address the employability gap** by connecting students with the skills required in the job market.
- **Micro-credentials** are emerging as a transformative solution to bridge this gap by providing **just-in-time modern skills and competencies**.

**Micro-Credentials**

- Micro-credentials are short-duration learning activities with proof of specific learning outcomes that are validated through a standard and reliable assessment process.
- They offer flexibility, accessibility, and advantages, making them a new norm in higher education.
- They are offered in online, physical, or hybrid modes at various levels, such as beginning, intermediate, or advanced.
- Hiring practices are shifting towards prioritising skills over degrees, contributing to the growing endorsement of micro-credentials.

**Players in the Micro-Credential Space**

- Various platforms and organizations, including Atingi, Alison.com, Coursera, and Microsoft, offer micro-credentials.
- Many universities worldwide, including Australia, Canada, Europe, the UK, and the US, are actively engaged in providing these short-duration learning opportunities.

**Micro-Credentials vs. Macro-Credentials**

- In contrast to macro-credentials like undergraduate degrees that require several years of study, micro-credentials offer a quicker path to acquiring essential skills.
- They are also designed for life-long learners, catering to working professionals who cannot attend formal degree programs.
- Micro-credentials associate credits with the notional hours spent acquiring a defined minimum competency, aligning with conventional higher education.
- Clear quality benchmarking and regulation are essential to ensure consistency and universal recognition.

**Opportunities for Indian Students**

- Micro-credentials present opportunities for Indian students to integrate diverse skills into their education, storing credits on the ABC platform for later use.
- Depending on duration and learning outcomes, they can be stand-alone or part of a degree program.

**National Credit Framework in India**

- India has implemented the National Credit Framework (NCrF), defining learning outcomes and corresponding credits for student progression.
- Micro-credentials, being portable and stackable on digital platforms like the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), align with the NCrF.

**Potential Impact and Demand in India**

- With the National Education Policy 2020 emphasizing skill-based education and employers seeking skilled individuals, there is a growing demand for micro-credentials in India.
- HEIs should consider introducing them as a strategic element in their institutional objectives.

**Conclusion**

- Indian HEIs, regulators, and industry partners must **collaborate to harmonize micro-credentials** with existing academic programs.
- They must leverage the potential of this transformative approach to **enhance the tertiary education system**.

## 11. Crown Jewel That Was - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

**Context:**

- The upcoming **WTO's 13th ministerial meeting in Abu Dhabi** will focus on the critical issue of the ongoing crisis in the **Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM)**.

<p><b>The Appellate Body (AB) Standstill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WTO's DSM, comprises a binding two-tiered process with a panel and an appellate body (AB).</li> <li>The DSM, a key element of the WTO, has faced challenges since the US blocked the appointment of new members to the appellate body in 2019.</li> <li>This leads to a situation where countries can easily avoid complying with panel rulings, making the WTO toothless.</li> </ul> <p><b>Past Resolutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the 12th WTO ministerial meeting, countries aimed to restore a fully functioning DSM by 2024.</li> <li>Developing countries, including India, advocate for the restoration of the AB to its pre-2019 status with the checks and balances.</li> <li>The US's reluctance, driven by its desire to de-judicialize international trade relations, poses a significant hurdle to the DSM's full functionality.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Options for Developing Countries</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Joining the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing countries have the option to join the European Union-led MPIA, offering a voluntary mechanism similar to the AB.</li> <li>However, though binding on the parties, it lacks the mandatory adoption of rulings by all WTO members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This affects the certainty and predictability of dispute resolution.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Also, its voluntary nature means that each MPIA tribunal would be an ad hoc one.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Diluted Appellate Body (AB)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite US opposition, a compromised option involves a diluted AB with limited powers.</li> <li>This approach, however, contradicts the role the DSM should play in providing security and predictability to the multilateral trading regime.</li> <li>It will also be inimical to the interests of countries like India.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Resurrecting AB with Opt-Out Option</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholars propose resurrecting the AB in its original form but with an opt-out provision for countries.</li> <li>This allows countries, like the US, to opt out of the AB's compulsory jurisdiction while maintaining a functional AB for other disputes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A country opting out cannot participate in an appellate process either as a complainant or as a respondent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Critics argue that the opt-out provision may alter the nature of the two-tier binding DSM.</li> <li>However, it may be a necessary compromise to safeguard the AB's existence in its current form, even if the US chooses not to participate.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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**Conclusion**

- India and other developing countries should continue **striving for the ideal solution - the restoration of the AB**.
- While advocating for the restoration of the AB in its pre-2019 form, developing countries, including India, may need to **consider other interim solutions to ensure a functional DSM**.

## Quick Look

### 1. Dusted Apollo

- Recently the rare Dusted Apollo butterfly was sighted in Himachal Pradesh.
- This marks the first-ever photographic documentation of the species in the region since its discovery in 1890.
- The Dusted Apollo, known for its high-altitude habitat, has a distribution range spanning from Ladakh to west Nepal, flying at elevations between 3,500 to 4,800 meters in the inner Himalayas.
- Distinguished by its complete discal band on the upper forewing and a narrow dark marginal band on the hind wings, this butterfly closely resembles the Ladakh Banded Apollo.
- With 11 Apollo species recorded in Himachal Pradesh, five declared as Scheduled species, and most facing endangerment, there is a growing need for immediate attention to their conservation.

### 2. Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- PII is any data or information maintained by an organisation or agency that can potentially be used to identify a specific individual.
- This includes information such as Aadhaar, PAN, voter identity, passport, date of birth, contact number, communication address, and biometric information.
- The constituents of PII vary depending on an individual's home country.
- Non-PII in tandem with additional information can be used to identify an individual.
  - Non-PII information includes photographic images (especially of the face or other identifying characteristics), place of birth, religion, geographic indicators, employment information, educational qualifications, and medical records.

### 3. Open Market Sale Scheme

- The FCI from time to time sells surplus food grains from the central pool, especially wheat and rice, in the open market at pre-determined prices.
- FCI does this through e-auctions where open market bidders can buy specified quantities.
- States are allowed to procure food grains through the OMSS without participating in the auctions.
  - This is for their needs beyond what they get from the central pool to distribute to NFSA (National Food Security Act) beneficiaries.
- Purpose
  - To dispose off surplus stocks of food grains held by FCI
  - To regulate the prices in the open market.
- Process of sale
  - FCI conducts weekly auctions on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX) platform.

### 4. Halal Certification

- It guarantees that the food is prepared in accordance with Islamic law and is unadulterated.
- It also ensures that the product does not include any "forbidden" components, and has not been in contact with any substances or objects considered "impure".
- It is mainly applied to meat products and other food products such as milk, canned food, and additives.
- In India, halal certification is usually provided by a third-party body.
- Some private companies that provide halal certification in India include MTR, Venky's, Sufi, and McDonald's.

## 5. INS Sandhayak

- The Indian Navy recently commissioned its latest survey vessel, Sandhayak, at Naval Dockyard in Vizag.
- It is the first in a series of four Survey Vessel (Large) ships being constructed at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
  - INS Sandhayak has an indigenous content of over 80 per cent by cost.
- Purpose: To conduct comprehensive coastal and deep-water Hydrographic Surveys for Port and Harbour approaches, as well as determining navigational channels and routes.
- The operational zone extends up to maritime limits, covering the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and extended continental shelf.
- It is equipped to gather oceanographic and geophysical data, serving both defence and civil applications.
- In its secondary role, the ship can offer limited defence capabilities and serve as a hospital ship during wartime or emergencies.
- It is equipped with cutting-edge hydrographic tools, including a Data Acquisition and Processing System, Autonomous Underwater Vehicle, Remotely Operated Vehicle, DGPS Long-range positioning systems, and Digital side-scan sonar.
- Powered by two diesel engines, the vessel boasts a speed capability exceeding 18 knots.

## 6. Aldabra rail

- The flightless Aldabra rail went extinct over 130,000 years ago, but the species then reappeared via iterative evolution.
  - Iterative evolution is the repeated evolution of a specific trait or body plan from the same ancestral lineage at different points in time.
- Aldabra rail lives on a coral atoll off the southeast coast of Africa.
- It is a subspecies of the white-throated rail (*Dryolimnas cuvieri*) and is the only living flightless bird in the Indian Ocean.
- It's about the size of a chicken, with a flecked gray back, a rusty red head and chest and a white throat.
- In losing its ability to fly once again, the Aldabra rail has essentially evolved twice, rising from the dead through a process called iterative evolution.
- A 2019 study found evidence of a flightless rail on the atoll from before it was submerged beneath the waves 136,000 years ago.

## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. With reference to Track Child Portal, consider the following statements**

1. It has been developed by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
2. It is being integrated with the Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network Systems (CCTNS).
3. Any citizen can report any missing or sighted children on the portal.
4. The details of the missing child after filing FIR will be put on the portal.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q2. With reference to C-CARES Portal, consider the following statements**

1. It is developed and designed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
2. It is part of the PM-CARES Fund.
3. It provides medical details of the Covid-19 mutants.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q3. With reference to EXIM Bank, consider the following statements**

1. It is the premier export finance institution of the country providing financial assistance to exporters and importers.
2. It was established under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q4. Consider the following statements with reference to Ammonia**

1. It is a colourless gas with a low energy density.

2. The production of ammonia relies on the Haber-Bosch process.
3. The Green Hydrogen/ Green Ammonia Policy provides various incentives and support measures to the manufacturers of green hydrogen and green ammonia using renewable power.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q5. Consider the following statements**

1. Under the India State of Forest Report, the forest canopy area includes all tree patches which have a canopy density of more than 50% and an area of 1 ha or more in size.
2. The Indian Forest Act, 1927 envisages a goal of achieving 33% of the geographical area of the country under forest and tree cover.

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q6. Arrange the following water bodies from South to North**

1. Palk Bay
2. Gulf of Mannar
3. Palk Strait

**Select the correct code**

- A. 1-2-3
- B. 2-3-1
- C. 3-2-1
- D. 2-1-3

**Q7. Consider the following statements about the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**

1. It provides for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship.
2. As per the Act, the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on August 15, 1947.
3. The disputed site at Ayodhya is also included under the Act.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q8. Consider the following statements**

1. Fiscal Deficit is the total amount of money that the government of a country owes its lenders at a particular point in time.
2. A high fiscal deficit can lead to inflation and devaluation of the currency.
3. A lower fiscal deficit is seen as a positive sign of fiscal discipline and a healthy economy.

**How many of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q9. Consider the following Frameworks under the National Education Policy 2020:**

1. National School Education Qualification Framework

2. National Higher Education Qualification Framework
3. National Skills Qualification Framework
4. National Curriculum Framework

**How many of the above frameworks are part of the National Credit Framework?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q10. Consider the following statements with reference to the WTO Dispute Settlement Process**

1. There are three ways to settle a dispute once a complaint has been filed in the WTO.
2. The Appellate Body re-examines the existing evidence and reviews the legal interpretations.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

## Prelims Track Answer

### Answer 1 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- Track Child Portal is developed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It is implemented with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Railways, and other stakeholders.
- It enables tracking of the missing and found children in all States/UTs.
- The portal is integrated with the Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network Systems (CCTNS) for efficient matching of FIRs. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- One component of TrackChild Portal has “Khoya-Paya” where any citizen can report for any missing or sighted children. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- The details of the missing child after filing FIR will be put on the portal. **Hence, statement 4 is correct.**

### Answer 2 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- C- CARES Portal is developed and designed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The portal signifies a significant step in Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization (CMPFO)'s digitization journey. **Hence, statements 2 and 3 are incorrect.**
- The portal will allow CMPF subscribers and coal companies to login and perform various functions tailored to their needs.
- The subscribers can access and view their individual details and subscription status.
- The coal companies can submit contribution details, subscribers' particulars and claims for online settlement and payment.
- It will also ensure paperless working, timely and accurate settlement of claims, improved record management, reduction in processing time, instilling confidence in subscribers and pensioners and grievance redressal.
- The portal serves as a public service platform, benefiting CMPF subscribers and pensioners in the coal sector.

### Answer 3 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- EXIM Bank is the premier export finance institution of the country.
- It was established by the Government of India, under the Export-Import Bank of India Act, 1981. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Wholly owned by the Government of India, it provides financial assistance to exporters and importers. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It extends Lines of Credit (LOCs) to overseas financial institutions, regional development banks, sovereign governments and other entities overseas, to enable buyers in those countries to import developmental and infrastructure projects, equipment, goods and services from India, on deferred credit terms.
- It functions as the principal financial institution for coordinating the work of institutions engaged in financing export and import of goods and services with a view to promoting the country's international trade.

### Answer 4 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- Ammonia is a chemical compound with the formula  $NH_3$ . It is a colourless gas with a pungent odour.
- It has a high energy density, which means it can store and release a significant amount of energy, making it suitable for long term applications. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It has the potential to produce near-zero carbon dioxide ( $CO_2$ ) emissions during combustion, making it an environmentally friendly choice, especially when compared to fossil fuels.
- It can serve as a bridge fuel, helping reduce dependence on traditional fossil fuels and offering a transitional buffer toward cleaner energy sources.
- The production of ammonia typically relies on the Haber-Bosch process, which consumes a significant amount of energy and relies on fossil fuels. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Ammonia is highly toxic, posing health risks to humans and the environment if not managed properly.

- The Ministry of Power has notified the Green Hydrogen/ Green Ammonia Policy which provides various incentives and support measures for the manufacturers of green hydrogen and green ammonia using renewable power. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

**Answer 5 Option C is correct**

**Explanation**

- As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR), the forest canopy area is covered on the ground irrespective of the legal status of the land.
- It includes all tree patches which have a canopy density of more than 10% and an area of 1 ha or more in size. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- National Forest Policy of India, 1988 envisages a goal of achieving 33% of the geographical area of the country under forest and tree cover. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

**Answer 6 Option D is correct**

**Explanation**

- Palk Strait is a narrow stretch of water that separates the Indian state of Tamil Nadu from the northern part of Sri Lanka.
- Palk Bay, located to the south of Palk Strait, is a shallow bay that lies between the southeastern coast of India (Tamil Nadu) and the northern coast of Sri Lanka.
- It is larger and extends further south than the Palk Strait.
- The Gulf of Mannar is situated to the south of both Palk Strait and Palk Bay.
- It is a large bay in the Indian Ocean that lies between the southeastern tip of India (Tamil Nadu) and the western coast of Sri Lanka. **Hence, option D is correct.**

**Answer 7 Option B is correct**

**Explanation**

- Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 is described as an Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The Act declares that the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on August 15, 1947. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It says that no person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination

into one of a different denomination or section.

- Exemption
  - The disputed site at Ayodhya was exempted from the Act. Due to this exemption, the trial in the Ayodhya case proceeded even after the enforcement of this law. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
  - Any place of worship which is an ancient and historical monument, or an archaeological site covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.
  - A suit that has been finally settled or disposed of.
  - Any dispute that has been settled by the parties or conversion of any place that took place by acquiescence before the Act commenced.

**Answer 8 Option A is correct**

**Explanation**

- Fiscal deficit is the difference between the government's total expenditure and its total revenue (excluding borrowings). **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It is an indicator of the extent to which the government must borrow in order to finance its operations and is expressed as a percentage of the country's GDP.
- A high fiscal deficit can lead to inflation, devaluation of the currency and an increase in the debt burden. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- While a lower fiscal deficit is seen as a positive sign of fiscal discipline and a healthy economy. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- The national debt is the total amount of money that the government of a country owes its lenders at a particular point in time.

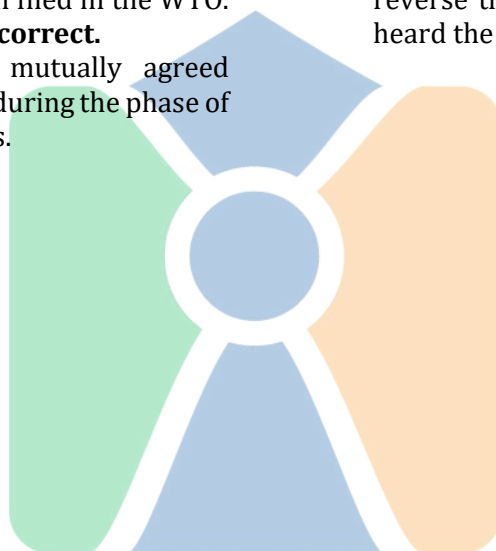
**Answer 9 Option C is correct**

**Explanation**

- According to the framework, an academic year will be defined by the number of hours a student puts in and credits will be provided to them accordingly at the end of each academic year.
- National Credit Framework is a meta-framework that consists of three verticals:
  - National School Education Qualification Framework (NSEQF). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**



- National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF). **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
  - The National Curriculum Framework is not part of the National Credit Framework. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**
- Answer 10 Option D is correct**
- Explanation**
- A dispute arises when a member government believes another member government is violating an agreement that it has made in the WTO.
  - There are two main ways to settle a dispute once a complaint has been filed in the WTO. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
    - The parties find a mutually agreed solution, particularly during the phase of bilateral consultations.
    - Through adjudication which are binding upon the parties once adopted by the Dispute Settlement Body.
  - The Appellate Body, set up in 1995, presides over appeals against judgments passed in trade-related disputes brought by WTO members.
  - Countries can approach the Appellate Body if they feel the report of the panel set up to examine the issue needs to be reviewed on points of law.
  - However, existing evidence is not re-examined but legal interpretations are reviewed. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
  - The Appellate Body can uphold, modify, or reverse the legal findings of the panel that heard the dispute.



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