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The Yearly
**CURRENT
AFFAIRS**
2025 | for Competitive Examinations



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NOVEMBER 11-22

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BRASIL 2024
BUILDING A JUST WORLD
AND A SUSTAINABLE PLANET

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- Articles & Essays on Hot Topics
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- 2024 PYQ Questions + Practice Questions for 2025
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- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS)
- Redistribution of Private Property
- Internet Shutdown in India
- Project Nexus

✂ Mind Map

CA-15-19

- ULFA Peace Pact
- Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)
- Electoral Reforms
- Digital Public Infrastructure in India
- Bharat Small Reactors

✂ Policies & Schemes 2024

CA-132-135

✂ Bills & Acts 2024

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This sample book is prepared from the book "The Yearly Current Affairs 2025 for Competitive Exams - 10th Edition | Previous Year & Practice Questions | UPSC, State PSC, CUET, SSC, Bank PO/ Clerk, BBA, MBA, RRB, NDA, CDS, CAPF, CRPF".



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CONTENTS

✂ Timeline : National 2024	CA-1-4
✂ Timeline : International 2024	CA-5-9
✂ Swot Analysis	CA-10-14
• Regional Benches of the Supreme Court	
• Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS)	
• Redistribution of Private Property	
• Internet Shutdown in India	
• Project Nexus	
✂ Mind Map	CA-15-19
• ULFA Peace Pact	
• Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)	
• Electoral Reforms	
• Digital Public Infrastructure in India	
• Bharat Small Reactors	
✂ Cause & Effect	CA-20-22
• Human Trafficking in India	
• Depreciation of Indian Rupee against the US Dollar	
• Sub-categorization of SC and ST	
✂ A Snapshot	CA-23-30
• India's Space/ Defence Endeavours in 2024	
• India's Sports Journey in 2024	
• International Sports: A Quick Glance	
✂ A Glimpse of 2024	CA-31-40
• Agriculture/Banking/Railways/Environment/Finance & Insurance/ Science & Technology	
✂ State-wise Comparison	CA-41-43
• Top 10 richest states in India by GDSP and GDP per capita, as of 2024	
• SDG India Index 2023-24	
• Latest Crime Rate Report of India 2024	
• Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan 2024	

✂ From the Archives: 50 Years/100 Years Ago	CA-44-45
✂ Places in News in 2024: India/World	CA-46-51
✂ Emerging Trends in 2024	CA-52-53
✂ Game Changers in 2024	CA-54-55
✂ Current Affairs : National/International	CA-56-114
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Polity & Governance • Banking • Environment • Agriculture • Healthcare • Defence • Trade & Commerce • International Relations • Law & Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science & Technology • Transport • Space • Social • Energy • Information Technology • Rural & Urban Development • Art & Culture • MoU's & Agreements • Conferences & Summits
✂ People in News in 2024	CA-115-124
✂ Report & Indices 2024	CA-125-131
✂ Policies & Schemes 2024	CA-132-135
✂ Bills & Acts 2024	CA-136-137
✂ Books & Authors 2024	CA-138-140
✂ Sports 2024	CA-141-152
✂ Important Appointments 2024	CA-153-158
✂ Awards & Honours 2024	CA-159-173
✂ Important Days: National/International 2024	CA-174-177
✂ Important Supreme Court Judgements	CA-178-181
✂ Obituaries 2024	CA-182-195
✂ States Current Affairs	CA-196-205
✂ Upcoming Events	CA-206-207
✂ Cover Story	CA-208-214
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th BRICS Summit • COP 29 Summit 2024 • Ratan Tata: A Visionary Leader and Philanthropist 	

✂ Analytical Articles

CA-215-224

- Overview of Cloud Storage
- Winds System of the World

✂ Exclusive Essay

CA-225-239

- Uniform Civil Code : Significance, Concerns & Challenges in its Implementation
- Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in India : Government Initiatives to Support SHGs, Challenges Faced by SHGs in Enhancing Socio-economic Empowerment, Measures to Overcome These Hurdles
- India's E-commerce Market : Current Status of the E-commerce Sector in India, Factors that Contribute to Booming E-commerce, Challenges, Government Initiatives Related to the E-commerce Sector in India
- India's MSMEs Sector : Significance of MSMEs in India's Growth Trajectory, Government Initiatives Related to MSMEs, Challenges Related to MSMEs
- Legal Loopholes and Gender Bias : Why Sexual Violence Laws Remain Skewed Against Women

✂ Previous Years' Current Affairs Questions

CA-240-246

✂ Practice MCQs for Competitive Exams

CA-247-266

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SWOT ANALYSIS

Regional Benches of the Supreme Court

Strengths

- Would make justice more accessible to people living in remote areas, reducing the need for individuals to travel to Delhi for legal matters.
- Could specialize in handling appellate cases, allowing for a more focused adjudication of specific legal issues.
- Decentralizing the workload of the Supreme Court could lead to faster case resolution, potentially reducing the backlog of cases and improving overall judicial effectiveness.

Weaknesses

- May lead to divergent interpretations of laws and legal principles, resulting in inconsistencies in judicial decisions across different regions of the country.
- Could lead to an increase in frivolous or forum-shopping litigation, as litigants may seek favourable outcomes from specific benches.
- There may be concerns about the potential for regional biases or political influence to impact judicial decisions at regional benches, affecting the consistency and reliability of judicial decisions.
- Would require significant financial resources and investment in infrastructure, potentially straining already limited judicial resources and budgets.

Opportunities

- The opportunity to explore the proposal of splitting the Supreme Court into a Constitutional Division and a Legal Division, allowing for a more specialized focus on constitutional matters.
- The opportunity to establish a National Court of Appeal for Special Leave Petitions, providing a specialized forum for specific types of cases.
- Conducting thorough feasible studies to assess the potential benefits, challenges, & implications of establishing regional benches before implementation.
- Implementing pilot projects or experimental regional benches in select locations to evaluate their effectiveness and impact on access to justice and judicial efficiency.

Threats

- The opportunity to explore the proposal of splitting the Supreme Court into a Constitutional Division and a Legal Division, allowing for a more specialized focus on constitutional matters.
- The opportunity to establish a National Court of Appeal for Special Leave Petitions, providing a specialized forum for specific types of cases.
- Conducting thorough feasible studies to assess the potential benefits, challenges, & implications of establishing regional benches before implementation.
- Implementing pilot projects or experimental regional benches in select locations to evaluate their effectiveness and impact on access to justice and judicial efficiency.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS)

Strengths

- Section 106 (2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), serves as a strong deterrent against hit-and-run incidents by imposing severe penalties
- Can contribute to a safer road environment by encouraging responsible driving and prompt reporting of accidents.
- Reflects a commitment to enforce moral responsibility on offenders by requiring them to report accidents promptly.
- Aligns with societal expectations of responsible behaviour and accountability.
- Section 134 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, showcases the government's commitment to ensuring a prompt and responsible response from drivers in the aftermath of accidents.

Weaknesses

- Penalties, especially the imprisonment term of up to 10 years and the associated fine, are excessively severe.
- Critics argue that the law fails to consider the challenging work conditions of drivers, such as long driving hours and difficult roads.
- Accidents may occur due to factors beyond the driver's control, such as poor visibility or fear of mob violence.
- Drivers claim they are often unfairly blamed for accidents, irrespective of the actual circumstances.
- The punitive approach of the legislation might exacerbate this perception of unfairness.

Opportunities

- The government's assurance to consult stakeholders before implementing the law presents an opportunity to address concerns and make necessary amendments.
- Approach can lead to a more balanced and effective legal framework.
- The focus on hit-and-run incidents provides an opportunity to invest in driver training programs and awareness campaigns, addressing both the drivers and the public to foster a safer road culture.

Threats

- Transport industry faces potential threats from the law, with concerns that the harsh penalties could hurt the industry.
- Limited categorization, such as exceptions for doctors under Section 106 (1) of the BNS, raises concerns about fairness and equality.
- Lack of differentiation between rash and negligent driving and the failure to consider contributory factors in negligent acts may lead to unjust treatment of drivers in different circumstances.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Redistribution of Private Property

(The SC is hearing a three-decade-old case about whether the government can acquire and redistribute privately owned properties if they are considered 'material resources of the community')

Strengths

- **Equity and Social Justice:** Redistribution aims to bridge the inequality gap, ensuring a fairer distribution of resources.
- **Common Good:** Taking over private property for community benefit aligns with the principles of the Constitution's Preamble, which strives to ensure social justice.
- Japan land reforms Post WW2, land reforms in Taiwan and land redistribution in South Korea led to increased agricultural productivity, reduced inequality, and contributed to economic transformation.

Weaknesses

- **Implementation Challenges:** Ensuring effective redistribution without unintended consequences can be complex.
- **Individual Freedom:** Redistributing wealth infringes upon individual freedom and property rights by forcibly transferring wealth from one group to another.
- **Market Efficiency:** Redistribution may interfere with market mechanisms, distorting resource allocation and potentially decreasing overall welfare.
- **Administrative Costs:** Implementing and managing redistribution programs can be costly and inefficient, with significant administrative overhead and potential for bureaucratic abuse and corruption.
- Zimbabwe's Fast-Track Land Reform (2000s), Venezuela's Land Redistribution and Soviet Collectivization, led to Chaotic process, reduced productivity, food shortages, inefficiencies and reduced output of industries and economic decline.

Opportunities

- **Reducing Disparities:** Redistribution can create a more balanced society by providing resources to those in need.
- **Enhanced Social Cohesion:** Bridging economic disparities fosters greater social cohesion and solidarity among different socio-economic groups.
- **Addressing Social Issues:** Wise redistribution enables the government to tackle social issues like poverty, homelessness, and environmental degradation.

Threats

- **Legal and Ethical Debates:** Balancing property rights and societal welfare raises ethical questions.
- **Resistance from Affluent Groups:** Wealthy individuals may resist redistribution efforts, leading to legal complications.
- **Disincentivizing Work:** If people believe the government will provide for them, it may discourage hard work and risk-taking.
- **Judicial and Political Turmoil:** Historical examples, such as nationalization and land ceiling reforms during Indira Gandhi's era, highlight potential challenges.
- **Impact on Entrepreneurship and Manufacturing:** Excessive redistribution could disincentivize entrepreneurial endeavors and industrial growth.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Internet Shutdown in India

(For 5 straight years, India has topped the global list of countries imposing Internet Bans)

Strengths

- Conducting shutdowns is considered to be cost-effective for authorities.
- Shutdowns are seen as a measure to restore law and order.
- Authorities claim that shutdowns prevent the spread of fake news and misinformation.
- Internet shutdowns can help to prevent the spread of hate speech and fake news that could incite violence and riots.

Weaknesses

- Internet shutdowns violate Fundamental Rights under Article 19(1)(a) and Article 19(1)(g).
- Disruptions affect businesses, education, and daily life.
- Lack of clear guidelines and accountability hence Internet shutdowns are arbitrary and prone to abuse, as they are often imposed without following due process, transparency, or judicial oversight.
- Internet shutdowns also do not prevent misinformation or hate speech, but rather create information vacuums that can be exploited by malicious actors.
- Internet shutdowns undermine democracy and accountability, as they prevent citizens from accessing information, expressing opinions, participating in public debates, and holding authorities responsible for their actions.

Opportunities

- Finding a middle ground between security concerns and individual rights.
- The authorities should follow the directions of the Supreme Court in the Anuradha Bhasin case (2020).
- The government should consider other less intrusive measures to deal with law-and-order disturbances, such as blocking specific websites or content, issuing warnings or advisories, engaging with civil society and media, or deploying more security forces.
- Increasing transparency and accountability of the authorities that order and implement internet shutdowns, and providing effective remedies for those affected by them.
- Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework that governs internet shutdowns and ensuring that they are only used as a last resort, in accordance with international human rights standards.

Threats

- Shutdowns may suppress collective action and hide abuses.
- Internet shutdowns can erode trust in government and authorities. They can also lead to concerns about censorship and a lack of transparency.
- Internet shutdowns can attract international attention and condemnation, potentially damaging a country's reputation and relationships with other nations. India accounted for 58% of all documented shutdowns globally.
- Impact on Journalism and Reporting: Journalists rely on the internet to report on events and share news with the public. Shutdowns can obstruct their ability to gather and disseminate information, compromising the public's right to know.
- Internet shutdowns can also enable authoritarian governments to silence critics and create distorted information echo chambers.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Project Nexus

Recently, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has joined **Project Nexus**, a **multilateral international initiative** to enable **instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic Fast Payments Systems (FPSs)**.

Strengths

- Enhances India's integration into the global financial system.
- Enables real-time, low-cost cross-border payments.
- Supported by RBI, ensuring trust and regulatory oversight.
- Drives fintech innovation and market expansion.
- Boosts consumer convenience and business efficiency.
- Facilitates easier international trade for Indian businesses.

Weaknesses

- Complex and resource-intensive implementation.
- Increased security risks with cross-border transactions.
- Interoperability and compliance challenges across countries.
- High costs associated with regulatory adherence.
- Dependence on foreign payment infrastructure.
- Slow initial adoption due to required upgrades.

Opportunities

- Expands global market access for Indian businesses.
- Promotes financial inclusion and affordable remittances.
- Fosters strategic international partnerships.
- Creates new revenue streams for banks and fintech firms.
- Positions India as a digital payment leader globally.
- Enhances remittance services, benefiting expatriates.

Threats

- Geopolitical tensions could disrupt services.
- Regulatory hurdles across different countries.
- Competition from other cross-border payment initiatives.
- High reliance on advanced technology, risking disruptions.
- Data privacy and protection concerns.
- Economic instability affecting transaction volumes.

MIND MAP

ULFA Peace Pact

About:

- United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) is an armed militant organisation operating in the Northeast Indian state of Assam.
- Was formed in 1979, advocating for an independent Assam through armed struggle against the Indian state.
- Govt banned the organisation in 1990 citing it as a terrorist organisation, while the United States Department of State lists it under "other groups of concern."

The Recent Peace Pact:

Government to:

- Address ULFA's concerns regarding Assamese identity, culture, and land rights.
- Allow a ₹1.5 lakh crore investment for Assam's holistic development.
- Follow the principles applied for the 2023 delimitation exercise for future delimitation exercises in Assam.

ULFA to:

- Renounce violence and disband their organization.
- Join the democratic process.
- Surrender weapons and camps.

United
Liberation Front
of Assam Peace
Pact

Considerations to Strengthen the Recent Peace Pact:

- Establishing mechanisms for transparent implementation of the pact's provisions and holding responsible parties accountable for their commitments.
- Strategically engaging with the ULFA's anti-talks faction to work towards a unified resolution and wider acceptance of the peace pact.
- Ensuring that legislative changes or reforms align with constitutional principles and protect the rights of all residents, ensuring no discrimination based on ethnicity or origin.
- Collaboration with neighbouring countries to prevent cross-border insurgencies and maintain regional stability.
- Creating sustainable and detailed developmental strategies beyond immediate investments to foster holistic growth in the region.

Challenges:

- ULFA has survived in some parts due to help from outside India.
- ULFA has links to other insurgent outfits in the Northeast and Myanmar, as well as Islamic terror outfits like Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami and Al-Qaeda.
- The other faction known as ULFA-I led by Paresh Baruah, has not joined the peace process. ULFA-I has support of 100 cadres.

MIND MAP

Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)

(RBI Governor emphasised the innovative features being developed for India's CBDC)



Central
Bank Digital
Currency
(CBDC)

About

- Digital currencies issued by a country's central bank.
- The RBI launched the first pilot of the retail digital rupee, also known as e₹-R, on December 1, 2022.
- Are similar to stablecoins, but their value is fixed by the central bank and is equivalent to the country's fiat currency.
- Function as an electronic version of cash, exchangeable one-to-one with the fiat currency.
- Primarily intended for retail transactions and represent a direct liability of the central bank.

Advantages of CBDC

- Offer benefits like privacy, efficiency, and wider access for businesses and consumers.
- Increased CBDC use could formalize the informal economy, improving tax collection and regulations.
- Offline functionality (e.g., India's e-rupee) could address rural internet limitations.
- Programmable features could distribute aid and incentivize financial behavior, promoting financial inclusion.
- CBDCs can revolutionize cross-border transactions and may lead to a shift towards digital currency, reducing costs.
- Central banks might gain greater control over monetary policy with CBDCs.

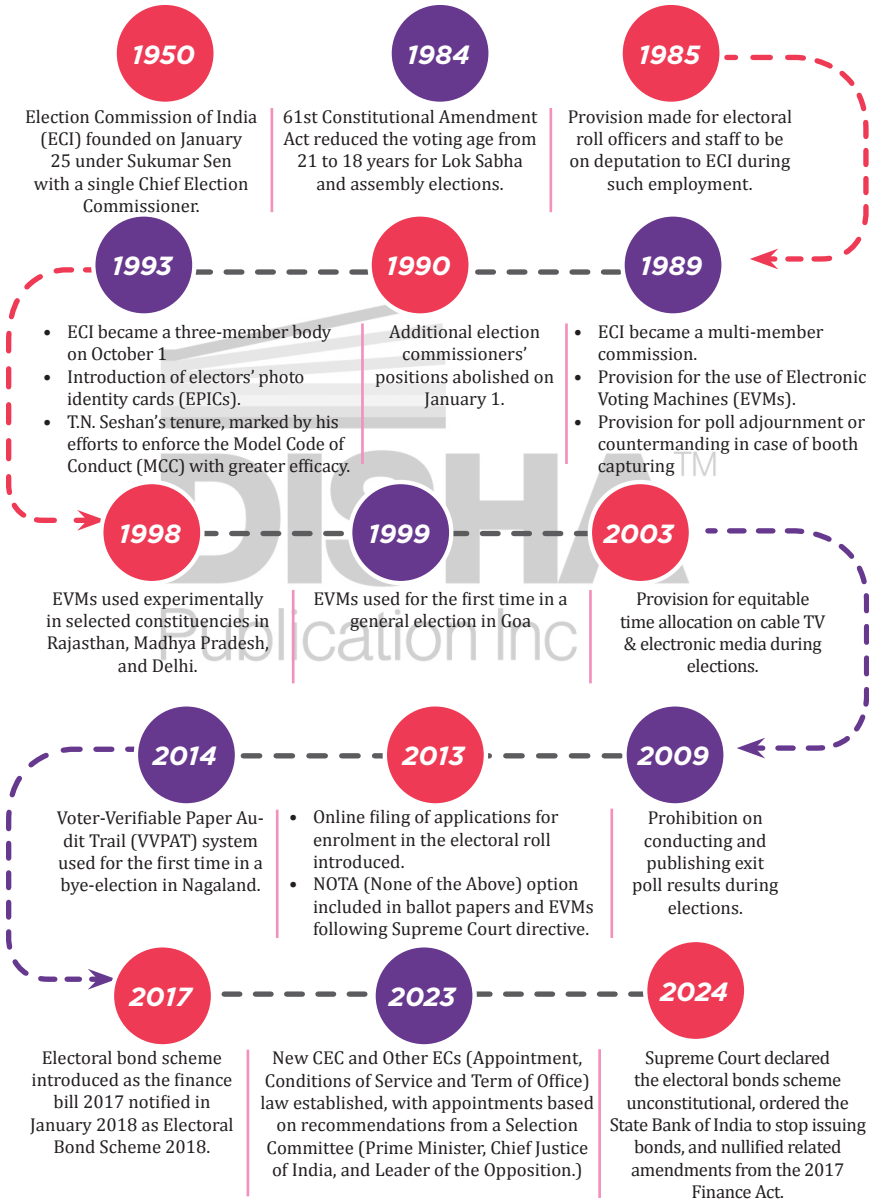
Challenges

- E-rupee needs robust defenses against cyberattacks.
- Balancing user privacy with anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CFT) is key. CBDC transactions may lack cash's anonymity.
- UPI remains popular for retail payments despite CBDC promotion. RBI aims for interoperability.
- CBDCs are non-interest-bearing to avoid bank disintermediation. Non-banks are included for wider reach.
- CBDCs could compete with banks for deposits, hindering lending. Coexistence is crucial.
- CBDC's impact on monetary tools like interest rates needs study. Central banks must adapt policies.

MIND MAP

Electoral Reforms

(With India's General Elections 2024, there's a spotlight on past electoral reforms)



MIND MAP

Digital Public Infrastructure in India

Digital Public Infrastructure in India

Digital Public Infrastructure refers to the foundational technology systems and platforms that enable public services, digital transactions, and data management for citizens and governments.

History

India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) began with Aadhaar in 2009, providing a unique digital identity. In 2015, the Digital India initiative expanded DPI's scope, followed by the launch of UPI in 2016, revolutionizing digital payments. DigiLocker further secured digital document storage. Over time, DPI grew to encompass financial inclusion, e-governance, and healthcare, with key platforms like CoWIN and Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission enhancing service delivery and governance efficiency.

Success of UPI

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a real-time payment system in India that allows users to send and receive money between mobile banks developed by NPCI currently used by approx 350 million users domestically, accepted by 7 countries including France, UAE and Singapore and targeted to expand to 20 countries by 2028-29.

Positive Implications

- DPI has brought banking services to millions, particularly in rural areas, through UPI and Jan Dhan Yojana.
- Aadhaar enables transparent delivery of government benefits, reducing leakages.
- Accurate data collection through DPI aids in formulating effective policies.
- DPI has sparked innovation, especially in fintech, healthtech, and edtech sectors.
- Marginalized groups can now access essential services & participate more fully in society.
- Aadhaar simplifies identity verification across banking, telecom, & government services.



Negative Implications

- Exclusion of those without internet access or digital literacy, widening inequality.
- Increased vulnerability to cyberattacks and data breaches.
- Over dependence on DPI can lead to disruptions during tech failures.
- Centralized data raises fears of government surveillance infringing on civil liberties.
- Centralized systems can obscure responsibility, complicating redress for grievances.
- DPI's rapid growth often outpaces regulatory frameworks, leading to gaps in consumer protection.

Key Platforms

- **Aadhaar:** Biometric-based digital identity system.
- **UPI:** Instant bank-to-bank payment system.
- **NPCI:** Governs payment systems and financial inclusion.
- **Digital India Platform:** Enhances online services and digital literacy.
- **e-Governance Platforms:** Includes DigiLocker and e-Stamping for digital document management.
- **GSTN:** IT infrastructure for GST management.
- **NDHM:** Digital health ecosystem for comprehensive healthcare.

MIND MAP

Bharat Small Reactors

About

- BSRs are compact nuclear reactors for smaller-scale electricity generation.
- They use India's proven 220 MW pressurized Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) technology.
- The design is being developed at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center in Mumbai.

Significance of Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs)

- This marks a historic shift in India's nuclear policy, as the Atomic Energy Act of 1962 previously did not permit private sector participation in nuclear energy generation.
- It is expected to open up new avenues for financing and accelerate the growth of nuclear power in India.

Advantages BSR

- SMRs provide reliable 24/7 low-carbon electricity.
- They use existing sites, generate less nuclear waste, and reduce costs with simpler design and serial production.
- BSRs rely on low-enriched uranium, avoiding the geopolitical risks of critical minerals.
- They enhance energy security, supporting India's 2070 net-zero goal.

Need of Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs)

- Reduces reliance on fossil fuels and enhances energy stability.
- Tailored to India's specific energy needs and conditions.
- Can be deployed at existing sites, minimizing new infrastructure needs.
- Improves power access in remote or underserved areas.

Bharat Small Reactors

Bharat Small Reactor VS Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

- BSR uses indigenous technology for India's specific needs, while SMRs are global, modular designs.
- BSR is sized for India; SMRs range from 10-300 MW(e) for global flexibility.
- BSR lacks modular focus; SMRs emphasize it for cost-effective deployment.
- BSR targets India; SMRs cater to both domestic and international markets.
- BSR is in development with Indian regulations; SMRs have some designs already in use globally.



Policies & Schemes 2024

PM-eBus Sewa Scheme

DATE: 14th January 2023

The ambitious PM-eBus Sewa scheme, which was announced on August 16, seeks to introduce 10,000 e-buses across 169 cities. This will be done through a 10-year public-private partnership (PPP) arrangement. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is overseeing this endeavour.

Key Points:

- It will cover cities with a population of 300,000 and above and will include all the capital cities of the 'Union Territories, North Eastern Region, and Hill States'.
- Under the PM-eBus Sewa Scheme, 10,000 e-buses will be deployed across cities in the country.
- While the scheme has a total budget of Rs 57,613 crore, only Rs 20,000 crore will be allocated from the central government's budget. The rest will be secured through contributions from various state governments.
- The scheme was introduced to give a push to the slow adoption of e-buses in public transport.
- This scheme will support bus operations for 10 years.

Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana

DATE: 23rd January 2024

PM announced 'Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana', a new government scheme to promote rooftop solar power systems.

Key Points:

- Aims to rapidly expand rooftop solar capacity by installing solar power systems on one crore houses.
- It will provide incentives and financial assistance to make it affordable for residential consumers to adopt rooftop solar.
- This scheme comes after India missed its initial target of 40 gigawatts of rooftop solar capacity by 2022 under the existing Rooftop Solar Programme.
- As of December 2022, India's total installed solar capacity stands at around 73GW. However, rooftop solar accounts for only around 11GW out of this.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana

DATE: 8th February 2024

The Union Cabinet approved the "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY).

Key Points:

- PM-MKSSY is a Central Sector Sub-scheme operating within the framework of the Pradhan Mantri MatsyaSampada (PMMSY).
- It aims to formalize the fisheries sector and provide support to micro and small enterprises in the fisheries industry.
- The scheme involves a substantial investment of more than Rs. 6,000 crores, spread over the next four years, from FY 2023-24 to FY 2026-27, encompassing all States and Union Territories.

NAMASTE Scheme

DATE: 13th March 2024

The National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme, a joint initiative by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, aims to eliminate the hazardous practice of manual sewer and septic tank cleaning.

Key Points:

- The scheme, implemented by the National SafaiKaramcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) from FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26, has a budget allocation of 349.73 crores and focuses on providing a range of entitlements to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs).
- The NAMASTE Scheme comprises several components designed to support and empower SSWs:
 - Profiling of SSWs in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) through digital tools, with the goal of identifying approximately 1 lakh SSWs.
 - Providing health insurance to SSWs under the Pradhan Mantri Jan ArogyaYojana (PM-JAY).
 - Offering occupational safety training to SSWs and establishing Sanitation Response Units for NAMASTE.
 - Providing capital subsidy up to Rs. 5.00 lakh for the procurement of sanitation-related vehicles and equipment.

New Standards to Enhance EV Safety and Quality in India

DATE: 24th June 2024

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has introduced new safety and performance standards for electric vehicles and e-rickshaws/e-karts.

Key Points

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has introduced two new standards, IS 18590: 2024 and IS 18606: 2024, aimed at enhancing the safety and quality of electric vehicles (EVs) in the L, M, and N categories.
- These standards focus on critical components such as the power train and batteries, ensuring they meet stringent safety and performance requirements.
- Additionally, BIS has introduced IS 18294: 2023 for e-rickshaws and e-karts, covering their construction and functionality to ensure the safety of drivers and passengers.
- With these new additions, BIS now has a total of 30 standards dedicated to EVs and their accessories, playing a crucial role in promoting sustainable and efficient transportation in India.

PM SVANidhi Scheme

DATE: 20th July 2024

Madhya Pradesh has been awarded as the 'Best Performing State' under the PM SVANidhi scheme for effectively supporting urban street vendors with collateral-free loans.

Key Points

- The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced this accolade, with Assam securing the second position in the 'Best Performing States – Innovation and Best Practices Award' category.
- The PM SVANidhi scheme provides micro-credit to street vendors in urban areas to help them recover from the economic impact of the crisis.
- The scheme offers collateral-free loans up to ₹ 50,000, repayable within a year, aiming to enhance financial stability and support small businesses.

New Scheme to Provide 'Digital Identities' to Fisheries Industry Workers

DATE: 12th September 2024

The Union Minister unveiled National Fisheries Development Program (NFDP) portal, which will provide digital identities to fisheries industry workers and enterprises across the value chain.

Key Points

- This initiative, part of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY) under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), offers fish workers access to institutional credit, performance grants, and aquaculture insurance.
- The Minister announced the development of 100 coastal villages into Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages (CRCFVs) with a Rs. 200 crore budget.
- A pilot project for fish transportation using drone technology, led by the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), was launched.
- The Mandapam Regional Centre of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI) will be established as a Centre of Excellence for seaweed farming.

PM Internship Scheme

DATE: 12th October 2024

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs launched the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme, announced in the Union Budget 2024, to offer hands-on experience to students.

Key points

- The scheme aims to address youth unemployment by providing internship opportunities to 1 crore young people over the next five years.

- Applicants will receive a monthly stipend of ₹4,500 from the government and ₹500 from companies under Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives for one year.
- Upon enrollment, applicants will receive a one-time grant of ₹6,000 and insurance coverage under PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana.
- The scheme offers practical skills in a real-world environment while providing financial support to young individuals.

Humsafar Policy

DATE : 11th October 2024

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has launched the Humsafar Policy to transform travel on India's national highways by enhancing infrastructure and services for millions of travelers.

Key Points:

- This policy introduces essential amenities along national highways, such as clean toilets, baby care rooms, wheelchair access, EV charging stations, parking, and dormitory services at fuel stations.
- The initiative seeks to establish Humsafar as a brand synonymous with utmost safety, comfort, reliability, and quality service for travelers.
- The policy supports India's vision for world-class highway infrastructure by complementing initiatives to improve road quality, enhance safety, reduce travel time, and boost transportation efficiency.

Aditi 2.0 and DISC 12

DATE: 7th October 2024

India's Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, launched ADITI 2.0 and DISC 12 at DefConnect 4.0 in Delhi to boost defence technology through innovation and financial support.

Key Points:

- ADITI 2.0 addresses 19 technology challenges, including advanced fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum technology, military communication systems, and anti-drone technology.
- The 12th Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC 12) introduces 41 new technology challenges, emphasizing innovations in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and medical technologies, including the MIRA initiative for the Armed Forces.
- These initiatives aim to shift from replicating existing military technologies to creating innovative solutions, urging private sector innovators to develop technologies for future defense challenges.

PM-Vidyalaxmi Scheme

DATE: 6th November 2024

The Union Cabinet has approved the Pradhan Mantri Vidyalaxmi scheme to offer financial assistance to meritorious students pursuing higher education.

Key Points

- The objective of the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme is to align with the National Education Policy 2020, offering collateral-free, guarantor-free loans to students.
- Eligibility for the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme includes students enrolled in institutions ranked within the top 100 by the NIRF and those in the 101-200 range from state and central government institutions.
- PM Vidyalaxmi scheme supplements the Credit Guarantee Fund for Education Loans and Central Sector Interest Subsidy under the existing PM-Uchcharat Shiksha Protsahan scheme.
- PM-USP's CSIS provides full interest subvention for loans up to Rs 10 lakh to students with a family income of up to Rs 4.5 lakh, pursuing technical courses.

Scheme for Strengthening the Medical Device Industry

DATE: 8th November 2024

The Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare launched the Scheme for Strengthening the Medical Device Industry.

Key Points

- The scheme aims to make India self-reliant in medical devices, focusing on innovation, quality, and reducing import dependency.
- Medical devices are essential to healthcare, including diagnostic machines, surgical instruments, stents, and prosthetics.
- India's \$14 billion medical device market is projected to reach \$30 billion by 2030, driven by rising healthcare demand and investment in innovation.
- The scheme aims to improve the availability and affordability of medical devices, boost domestic manufacturing, enhance healthcare outcomes, and create job opportunities.

Telecom Technology Development Fund scheme

DATE: 15th November 2024

The agreement was launched by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), a body under the Department of Telecommunications.

Key Points

- It aims to fund R&D in rural communication technologies and foster collaboration among stakeholders to strengthen the telecom ecosystem.
- The scheme promotes technology ownership, indigenous manufacturing, co-innovation, reduced imports, boosted exports, and the creation of intellectual property.
- The scheme aims to develop national standards and foster an ecosystem for research, design, prototyping, pilots, and proof-of-concept testing.



Bills & Acts 2024

Post Office Bill, 2023

DATE: 23rd December, 2023

The Indian Parliament recently approved the Post Office Bill, 2023, marking a significant overhaul of the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act, 1898.

Key Points:

- The new legislation aims to modernize and consolidate the legal framework governing post offices in India.
- The Bill grants post office employees the authority to open, detain, or intercept any item during transmission in the interest of national security or public safety.
- While providing immunity for post office employees from liability in delivering services, the Bill includes conditions. Officers are exempt unless they act fraudulently or willfully cause loss, delay, or misdelivery of services.
- The Central Government, through notification, can empower officers to intercept, open, or detain items in transit by the post office.
- Post office officers can deliver items, suspected of duty evasion or being prohibited by law, to customs or relevant authorities.

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024

DATE: 7th February 2024

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, has been passed by both Parliament aiming to prevent “Unfair Means” to “bring greater transparency, fairness and credibility to the Public Examinations System.

Key Points:

- A “public examination” under Section 2(k) is defined as any examination conducted by a “public examination authority” listed in the Bill’s Schedule or by any other authority notified by the Central Government.
- In addition to these designated authorities, all Ministries or Departments of the Central Government and their attached and subordinate offices responsible for staff recruitment will fall under the jurisdiction of the new law.
- Section 9 of the Bill stipulates that all offenses shall be cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable.
- Offenses related to resorting to unfair means during examinations carry a penalty of three to five years imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹ 10 lakh.
- Service providers engaged by public examination authorities for conducting examinations can be fined up to Rs 1 crore, and the cost of the examination will also be recovered from them if found involved in illegal practices.
- Section 3 of the Bill outlines at least 15 actions constituting the use of unfair means in public examinations for monetary or wrongful gain.

Finance Bill, 2024

DATE: 9th February 2024

The Lok Sabha passed the Finance Bill, 2024 by voice vote.

Key Points:

- No trade in Income Tax: Due to the upcoming general elections in April-May 2024, the invoice makes a speciality of

keeping the present tax structure for the economic year 2024-2025.

- Focus on certain reliefs: Some minor tax reliefs are included for specific sectors or categories of taxpayers.
- Measures to boost economic increase: Include provisions for infrastructure improvement, investment advertising, and ease of doing enterprise reforms.
- Fiscal consolidation: The government pursues to reduce the monetary deficit through featuring measures to govern spending or increase revenue.

Tribal Affairs Amendment Bills 2024

DATE: 18th February 2024

Rajya Sabha has passed the Constitution (STs) Order Amendment Bill 2024 and the Constitution (SCs and STs) Order Amendment Bill 2024, presented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Key Points:

- This cleared the way for the addition of several new communities to the STs list of Odisha and the inclusion of synonyms and phonetic variations of existing tribes in the ST lists of both Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
- Among the additions were notably seven Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) (a subset of STs) – four in Odisha and three in Andhra Pradesh.
- The independent names of these PVTGs had been specifically added as synonyms or sub-tribes of communities already on the ST lists of these States.
- In Odisha, the PVTG communities added are – PauriBhuyan and PaudiBhuyan as synonyms of the Bhuyan tribe; The ChuktiaBhunja as a synonym of the Bhunja tribe; The Bondo as a sub-tribe of the BondoPoraja tribe; and The Mankidia as a synonym for the Mankirdia tribe.

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024

DATE: 24th June 2024

The Centre has enacted a strict anti-paper leak law amid controversies over NEET

and UGC-NET exams, imposing up to 10 years of imprisonment and a ₹ 1 crore fine to curb exam malpractices.

Key Points:

- The new law, aims to prevent cheating in public exams conducted by entities such as the UPSC, SSC, and NTA.
- The law, which came into force on June 21, 2024, imposes severe penalties, including up to 10 years of imprisonment and a fine of ₹ 1 crore, to curb malpractices in competitive examinations.
- The implementation of this law marks the first major step towards addressing paper leaks in centrally-conducted public examinations.
- It highlights the government's commitment to maintaining the integrity of the examination process, although it has sparked significant political debate and criticism.

National Sports Governance Bill, 2024

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has released the Draft National Sports Governance Bill, 2024, aimed at improving sports administration and ensuring ethical standards.

Key Points:

- The central authority will recognize National Sports Federations (NSFs) and ensure adherence to governance and ethical standards.
- Athletes Commissions represent athletes, allowing them to raise concerns and participate in decision-making, with support from government funding.
- The scheme enforces strict anti-doping measures and adheres to international ethical standards to maintain fairness and integrity in sports.
- The governing body of sports organizations must include at least 30% female representation to ensure gender diversity and inclusion.