



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

DECEMBER, 2022

Week-4

22-31 Dec., 2022

★★ *Useful for* ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

22nd DECEMBER, 2022

Social Progress Index

- **Context:** The report titled 'Social Progress Index: States and Districts of India' released by the Economic Advisory Council to PM (EAC-PM).

Key Highlights

- Social Progress Index (SPI) for States and Districts made by the Institute for Competitiveness and Social Progress Imperative was submitted to Economic Advisory Council- Prime Minister.
- Based on the SPI scores, states and districts have been ranked under six tiers of social progress. The tiers are-Very High Social Progress, High Social Progress; Upper Middle Social Progress, Lower Middle Social Progress, Low Social Progress and Very Low Social Progress.
- Puducherry has the highest SPI score of 65.99 in the country, attributable to its remarkable performance across components like Personal Freedom and Choice, Shelter, and Water and Sanitation.
- Lakshadweep and Goa closely follow it with scores of 65.89 and 65.53, respectively.
- Jharkhand and Bihar scored the lowest, 43.95 and 44.47, respectively.
- For the dimension of Basic Human Needs, Goa, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, and Chandigarh are the top four states with the best performance in Water and Sanitation and Shelter as compared to the other states and union territories.
- In addition, Goa has the highest component score for Water and Sanitation, followed by Kerala, scoring the highest across the Nutrition and Basic Medical Care component.
- For Shelter and Personal Safety, Chandigarh and Nagaland have emerged as the front-runners, respectively.
- Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, and Goa have emerged as the best-performing states for the Foundations of Wellbeing.

- Within the dimension for the Access to Basic Knowledge component, Punjab has the highest component score of 62.92.
- Delhi has topped the list for Access to Information and Communication with a score of 71.30.
- For Health and Wellness, Rajasthan has the highest component score of 73.74.
- For Environmental Quality, the top three states belong to the northeast region, namely, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya.
- Lastly, Tamil Nadu has achieved the highest component score of 72.00 for the Opportunity dimension.

About Social progress Index

- SPI is a comprehensive tool that can serve as a holistic measure of a country's social progress at the national and sub-national levels.
- The index assesses states and districts based on 12 components across three critical dimensions of social progress - Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity.
- The index uses an extensive framework comprising 89 indicators at the state level and 49 at the district level.

Patriot System

- **Context:** U.S.A recently announced that it would send its most advanced ground-based defence battery (Patriot system) to Ukraine.

Key Highlights

- US will send to Ukraine the most advanced air defense weapon in its arsenal, the Patriot missile system, marking the most significant addition to American military support for the government in Kyiv in months.
- The Patriot will be included in a nearly \$2 billion package of weapons.
- U.S. forces will train Ukrainians to operate and maintain the system in a third country, probably Germany.

- The new weapons package will bring the total amount of military support for Ukraine approved by the US to about \$22 billion.

About 'Patriot System'

- The Patriot stands for Phased Array Tracking Radar to Intercept on Target.
- Initially developed as a system to intercept high-flying aircraft, by U.S. aerospace and defence giant Raytheon Technologies Corp.
- The Patriot system's radar has a range of over 150 km and it can track over 50 potential targets at the same time.
- Currently, Patriot batteries can defend against ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, drones, jets and "other threats".
- It has been deployed in 18 countries, including the U.S.
- It is operational across NATO geography.
- It is in high demand in West Asia, where America's allies such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Israel have been using it.
- However it has a limitation that it doesn't offer protection against low-flying small drones.

New method for freezing and storing coral larvae

- **Context:** Scientists working on Australia's Great Barrier Reef have successfully tried a new method for freezing and storing coral larvae that could eventually help rewild reefs threatened by climate change.

Key Highlights

- Scientists are trying to protect coral reefs as rising ocean temperatures destabilise delicate ecosystems.
- The Great Barrier Reef has suffered four bleaching events in the last seven years, including the first-ever bleach during a La Niña phenomenon, which typically brings cooler temperatures.
- Scientists used the cryomesh to freeze coral larvae at the Australian Institute of Marine Sciences (AIMS).

- Cryomesh is lightweight and can be manufactured cheaply. It better preserves coral and has the properties of cryoplates.
- The mesh technology can help store coral larvae at -196°C (-320.8°F).
- This cryogenically frozen coral can be stored and later reintroduced to the wild.

23rd DECEMBER, 2022

Drone Insurance Policy

- **Context:** Recently, various companies such as HDFC Ergo, ICICI Lombard, Bajaj Allianz, and Tata AIG and public sector companies such as New India Assurance have launched its unmanned aircraft system insurance.

Key Highlights

- Insurance players are now offering drone coverage within the framework set by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)
- The 'New India Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS/ UAV/ RPAS/ Drone) Insurance' will cover large aircraft to solo flying gliders. Coverage will be offered to drone owners, operators, and manufacturers
- The product provides a diverse option of over 15 different add-on covers for customers to pick and choose from. These add-on covers are designed as per the drone industry's requirements.
- The policy covers physical damage to the aircraft and its theft. It also provides cover for accidental physical injury to the third party and/or damage to their property due to the aircraft's operations.
- The policy is designed to cover fixed wing, rotor wing and hybrid UAS that can be controlled remotely (with pilot intervention) or autonomous drones (without pilot intervention). These aircraft are generally deployed for military and non-military applications, including surveillance, geography and infrastructure inspections and aerial photography.

- Third-party liability coverage will cover legal liabilities like bodily damage or property damage claims to third parties arising out of the usage and operation of drones

Drone market in India

- India's potential: Drones and allied component industries can boost India's manufacturing potential by approximately \$23 billion by 2030.
- Market size: India's drone manufacturing industry crossed annual sales of Rs 60 crore in FY 2021 and is expected to grow to Rs 900 crore by FY 2024.

Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill

- **Context:** Recently, the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry introduced the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2022 in the Lok Sabha.

Key Highlights

- The Bill promotes ease of doing business by decriminalising minor offences.
- It proposes to decriminalise many minor offences by replacing them with monetary penalties.
- A unique feature of the proposal is an increase of 10% of the minimum amount of fine and penalty levied after the expiry of every three years once the bill becomes a law.
- Need of the hour is to achieve Minimum Government, Maximum Governance, redefining the regulatory landscape of the country under the Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business reforms.

Greenwashing

- **Context:** Recently, the RBI Deputy Governor stressed on the need for regulated entities to assess climate-linked financial risks along with a demand for a formal definition of green finance.

Key Highlights

- There is a need for regulated entities to develop and implement comprehensive frameworks for

understanding and assessing the potential impact of climate-related financial risks in their business strategy and operations.

- Green financing refers to lending to environmentally sustainable economic activities.
- A taxonomy would also help banks and financial institutions in better assessing the climate risk in their loan portfolio, scaling up green and sustainable finance and mitigating the risk of greenwashing."
- It will enable more precise tracking of finance flows to green sectors in India.

About Greenwashing

- Greenwashing refers to dishonest practices designed to deceive people.
- When a firm spends more effort and money on presenting itself as environmentally friendly than on minimizing its environmental impact, this is referred to as greenwashing.
- It is a deceptive marketing ploy meant to deceive investors who prefer investments with a positive environmental impact and attempt to capitalize on the growing demand for environmentally sound products.

24th DECEMBER, 2022

'Right to Repair' Portal

- **Context:** Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal recently launched the Right to Repair portal.

Key Highlights

- On the 'right to repair' portal, manufacturers will share the manual of product details with customers so that they can either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers.
- Initially, mobile phones, electronic, consumer durables, automobile and farming equipment will be covered.
- There will be a ramp up in the disposal of pending cases and elimination of the backlog in the days to come.

- Notably, under the Consumer Protection law, a complaint is required to be disposed of within 90 days of its filing and within 150 days wherever expert evidence is required to be taken.

Competition Commission of India (CCI)

- **Context:** Google has challenged the fine of Rs 1,338 crore by CCI to NCLAT.

Key Highlights

- Google has legally challenged the order of the Competition Commission of India (CCI), terming the decision as a "major setback" for Android's Indian users as well as businesses, which use the ubiquitous operating system.
- Google has approached the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) against the action.
- Google has challenged the order on grounds that it may harm consumers indirectly through third-party software or apps that may not be as safe as Android. Further, additional costs that maybe levied by Google for licensing to mobile phone makers which would be passed on to consumers.
- During its investigation, the CCI had noted that Google's business model is driven with an intent of increasing users on its platforms which gives it an upper hand in showcasing its services such as its search browser, and other apps first to the users through exclusive licensing agreements with handset makers. This deprives smartphone makers and app developers to present their apps or services to the customers.
- Further, the end users also don't get a choice to access app stores to access content or avail other services.

About Competition Commission of India (CCI)

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) was established in 2009 by the Government of India under the Competition Act, 2002 for the administration, implementation, and enforcement of the Act.
- The commission is also a quasi-judicial body that gives opinions to statutory authorities and also deals with other cases.

- CCI consists of a Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the Central Government.
- The CCI orders can be challenged in the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal.
- **Its main objectives are:**
 - Eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition
 - Promote and sustain competition
 - Protect the interests of consumers
 - Ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India
 - Establish a robust competitive environment through

About National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)

National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was constituted under the Companies Act, 2013. NCLAT is the Appellate Tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by:

- National company Law Tribunal (NCLT)
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)
- Competition Commission of India (CCI)

Real-Time Source Apportionment Project

- **Context:** Identification of sources of air pollution on a real-time basis has now started in the Delhi under 'real-time source apportionment project'.

Key Highlights

- 'Real-time Source Apportionment Project' was undertaken by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Kanpur (IIT-K), Indian Institute of Delhi (IIT-D) and TERI.
- The project was approved by the Cabinet in October 2021 and set up in November 2022.
- The IIT team is trying to recognise more detailed identification of the types of sources, exact timing and location of pollution emission.
- The real-time source apportionment study consists of a supersite with state-of-the-art air analysers and a mobile air quality monitoring system that will measure the level of various substances in the air above Delhi.

25th DECEMBER, 2022

KALYANI FeRRESTA: India's first Green Steel brand

- **Context:** Union Steel Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia recently launched India's first Green Steel Brand "KALYANI FeRRESTA" in New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- This first-of-its-kind steel has been manufactured by a Pune-based Steel company, Kalyani group by using renewable energy resources, leaving zero carbon footprints in the environment.
- The Kalyani Group initiative will help transform the steel sector's long-standing identity as a carbon-emitting 'hard to abate sector' to a reduced carbon emitting-green steel-producing industry.
- The steel industry produces 7 % of CO2 emissions internationally.
- Green steel is manufactured using low-carbon energy sources such as hydrogen, coal gasification and electricity instead the widely used coking coal.

World Bank's '2022 in Nine Charts' Report

- **Context:** The "2022 in Nine Charts" report was recently released by the World Bank pointing out the world's "steepest slowdown" since 1970.

Key Highlights

- According to the report, the world is in its "steepest slowdown" since 1970 and 685 million people could be living in extreme poverty.
- This would make 2022 the second-worst year for poverty reduction in the past two decades, after 2020.
- The report said that 7 % of the world's population-roughly 574 million will be in extreme poverty in 2030. It is shorter than the global goal of 3 per cent set earlier by the World Bank.

- It added that the debt crisis in developing countries has intensified in the last one year. 60% of the world's poorest countries are either in debt distress or at risk of it.
- 733 million people currently have no access to electricity and by 2030, 670 million people will remain without it.
- For every 100 children in low and middle-income countries, 60 are now "learning deprived" and 10 are deprived of schools.

India's First Surety Bond Insurance Product

- **Context:** The country's first ever 'Surety Bond Insurance' product developed by Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, a private general insurer, was launched by Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways.

Key Highlights

- In Budget 2022-23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that Surety Bond Insurance would be allowed as a substitute for bank guarantees in case of government procurement and also for gold imports.
- Surety Bond Insurance, which is mainly aimed at infrastructure development, is a risk transfer tool that shields the principal from the losses that may arise in case the contractor fails to perform their contractual obligation.
- The product gives the principal a contract of guarantee that contractual terms and other business deals will be concluded in accordance with the mutually agreed terms.
- In case the contractor doesn't fulfill the contractual terms, the principal can raise a claim on the Surety Bond and recover the losses they have incurred.
- Unlike a bank guarantee, the Surety Bond Insurance does not require large collateral from the contractor, thus freeing up significant funds for the contractor, which can be utilized for the growth of the business.

- The product will also help in reducing the contractors' debts to a large extent. The product will facilitate the growth of upcoming infrastructure projects in the country.
- The Surety insurance business will assist in developing an alternative to bank guarantees for construction projects. This would enable the efficient use of working capital and reduce the requirement of collateral to be provided by construction companies.

26th DECEMBER, 2022

NIRMAN Accelerator Program

- **Context:** Recently, Ministry of Science and Information technology has said that 15 startups are selected for NIRMAN accelerator program.

Key Highlights

- NIRMAN Accelerator Program was launched by Start-ups Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) IIT Kanpur.
- The accelerator program supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India, through its NIDHI scheme portfolio, will help solve challenges in the product development journey of indigenous innovations.
- NIRMAN Accelerator Program is expected to expedite the journey of startups developing cutting-edge, technology-driven innovations in these critical areas from prototype to market.
- The accelerator program will enable comprehensive nurturing and fostering of the start-ups through effective mentoring and market access, and with the completion of the training period, the start-ups will get launched in their journey towards indigenous innovations.
- The programme can build focused solutions to accelerate the journey of indigenous solutions from India to build a sustainable world.

About NIDHI scheme

- It is an umbrella programme conceived and developed by the Innovation & Entrepreneurship division, Department of Science & Technology.
- Aim: To nurture start-ups through scouting, supporting and scaling innovations.
- Key stakeholders: Various departments and ministries of the central government, state governments, academic and R & D institutions, mentors, financial institutions, angel investors, venture capitalists and private sectors.
- Funding: By the National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB).
- NIDHI Accelerator: An accelerator is typically a 3-6 months fast track structured program helping ideas get accelerated to the next orbit.

IIT Kanpur developed artificial heart

- **Context:** IIT Kanpur is ready with an artificial heart that would be of great help to people with acute cardiac problems.

Key Highlights

- IIT Kanpur is ready with an artificial heart that would be of great help to people with acute cardiac problems.
- As per director of IIT Kanpur, the trial on animals would begin next year.
- Now heart transplant will be easy. Artificial hearts can be implanted in serious patients.
- IIT Kanpur and cardiologists from across the country have developed this artificial heart.
- After success in the trial, transplantation can be done in humans in the next two years.
- Artificial heart is being developed to reduce the sufferings of the patients

27th DECEMBER, 2022

INCOVACC

- **Context:** Intranasal vaccine by Bharat Biotech called INCOVACC has been approved for booster dose.

Key Highlights

- iNCOVACC is the world's first intranasal vaccine for COVID to receive approval for the primary two-dose schedule, and as a heterologous booster dose.
- Bharat Biotech received approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) for the use of heterologous booster doses of iNCOVACC.
- Phase-III trials of iNCOVACC (as a two-dose regimen) were conducted for safety, immunogenicity in approximately 3100 subjects, in 14 trial sites across India while Heterologous booster dose studies were conducted for safety and immunogenicity in 875 subjects.
- iNCOVACC was developed in partnership with Washington University, St Louis, which had designed and developed the recombinant adenoviral vectored construct and evaluated in pre-clinical studies for efficacy.

Key attributes of intranasal vaccine

- The nasal route has excellent potential for vaccination due to the organized immune systems of the nasal mucosa.
- Non-invasive, Needle-free.
- Ease of administration – does not require trained health care workers.
- Elimination of needle-associated risks (injuries and infections).
- High compliance.
- Scalable manufacturing – able to meet global demand.

Guidelines for Dark patterns

- **Context:** The central government is reportedly planning to create guidelines for ecommerce platforms to regulate the usage of dark patterns, calling it an unfair trading practice.

Key Highlights

- The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) shared plans of widening its online adverts code about

'dark patterns' in order to protect the interest of online consumers.

- As per an ASCI report, 29% of adverts processed during 2021-22 are related to disguised dark pattern ads promoted by influencers.
- Crypto, fashion, ecommerce, personal care, food and beverage, and finance are some of the sectors promoting dark patterns to lure customers.
- Besides restricting the use of dark patterns, the Centre also seeks to curb fake reviews on ecommerce platforms promoting products.
- Recently, the Indian government framed guidelines for 'Principles and Requirements for their Collection, Moderation and Publication' to restrict fake reviews on ecommerce platforms.

About Dark Patterns

- The term "dark patterns" was coined by Harry Brignull, a U.K.-based user experience specialist and researcher of human-computer interactions.
- Dark patterns refer to a user interface that has been crafted to trick or manipulate users into making choices that are detrimental to their interest.
- A consumer is tricked into buying a more expensive product, paying more than what was initially disclosed, sharing data or making choices based on false or paid-for reviews by deploying 'dark patterns'.
- For Example YouTube nags users to sign up for YouTube Premium with pop-ups, obscuring final seconds of a video with thumbnails of other videos.

'Pralay' ballistic missile

- **Context:** In a major decision, the Defence Ministry has cleared the procurement of around 120 Pralay ballistic missiles for the Indian armed forces that will deploy them along the borders with China and Pakistan.

Key Highlights

- A high-level meeting of the Defence Ministry cleared the acquisition of around 120 missiles for the armed forces and their deployment along the borders.

- The missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation is being further developed and its range can be extended significantly if the forces want it.
- The missile system started getting developed around 2015 and the development of such a capability was given a push by the late Gen Bipin Rawat as Chief of Army Staff.

About Pralay Missile

- Pralay' is a quasi-ballistic surface-to-surface missile which means the object takes a low curved path after being shot.
- The advanced missile has been developed in a way to be able to defeat interceptor missiles.
- The missile is designed to destroy enemy radar, communication installations, command centres and airfields.
- 'Pralay' is powered by a solid propellant rocket motor and other new technologies.
- It also has a speed of at least 2,000 km per hour and its missile guidance system includes state-of-the-art navigation and integrated avionics.
- Pralay also has the ability to evade any anti-ballistic missile (ABM) interceptors by performing mid-air maneuvers by using a maneuverable re-entry vehicle.

28th DECEMBER, 2022

Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA) Bill, 2022

- **Context:** The Karnataka Legislative Assembly passed The Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA) Bill, 2022.

Key Highlights:

- Traffic congestion in Bengaluru, which can potentially deter investors, is a major worry for the state government. Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority aims to fix traffic woes
- The legislation will be applicable to the Urban Mobility Region of Bengaluru.

- It is aimed at the regulation of development, operation, maintenance, monitoring and supervision of urban mobility
- BMLTA will consist of 36 members with the Chief Minister of Karnataka as its ex-officio chairman.
- Representatives from agencies such as BBMP, Bangalore Development Authority, Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Bengaluru City Police, Southwestern Railways and National Highway Authority of India would also be included.
- It can establish an appropriate framework for engagement of the private sector in planning, development and management of mobility service delivery and effective contract execution by the Urban Transport Agencies, Traffic Management Agencies and Infrastructure Development Agencies.
- Recommending policy measures, issuance of permits, registration of vehicles, operation of mobility services, handling of goods, management of traffic flow.
- It will also prepare a parking policy, non-motorised transport policy, transit-oriented development policy, multi-modal integration policy and freight transport policy.
- Any person failing to comply with the rules, regulations, orders or directions of BMLTA can be punished with a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh, which will extend to Rs 2 lakh for a second violation

NTPC to explore Green Methanol production at a commercial scale

- **Context:** Recently, the NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) has signed a non-binding MOU with Tecnimont (Italy) to explore production of green methanol.

Key Highlights:

- NTPC is India's largest power generation company. The objective of the MoU is to jointly evaluate and explore the possibility to develop a commercial-scale Green Methanol production facility at the NTPC project in India.

- The green methanol project involves capturing carbon from NTPC power plants and converting it into a green fuel. NTPC comes under the ministry of power
- Green methanol is a low-carbon fuel that can be made from either biomass gasification or renewable electricity and captured carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- Green Methanol has a wide range of applications including serving as a base material for the Chemical industry, storing renewable electricity, and transportation fuel.
- It is also considered as a substitute fuel for maritime fuel applications.
- Methanol can be blended with gasoline in low-quantities and used in existing road vehicles, or it can be used in high-proportion blends such as M85 in flex-fuel vehicles or M100 in dedicated methanol-fuelled vehicles as a substitute for gasoline or diesel.
- Relocate redundant/old buildings in a cost efficient manner so that space is released for higher priority passenger related activities and future development.
- Club different grades/types of waiting halls and provide good cafeteria/retail facilities as far as possible.
- Suitable low level partitions may be done in waiting halls.
- Provision for minimum two stalls for One Station One Product shall be made.
- Space shall also be created for Executive Lounges and places for small business meetings.
- At least one aesthetically designed hoarding(signage) on each side of the circulating area.
- Widening of roads, removal of unwanted structures, properly designed signages, dedicated pedestrian pathways, well planned parking areas, improved lighting etc.

29th DECEMBER, 2022

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

- **Context:** Ministry of Railways has formulated a new policy for modernization of stations named “Amrit Bharat Station” scheme.

Key Highlights

- Amrit Bharat Station scheme envisages development of stations on a continuous basis with a long term vision.
- It is based on Master Planning for long term and implementation of the elements of Master Plan as per the needs and patronage of the station.

Following broad scope of work is envisaged for stations selected under the Amrit Bharat Station scheme:

- Roof Plaza to be created in future.
- Cost efficient improvement to facades, provision of wide, well lit aesthetically pleasing entrance porches.
- Existing building usage shall be reviewed and space should be released in favour of passengers near the station entrances and the Railway offices should be suitably relocated.
- Elements of landscaping, green patches and local art and culture should be used to create a pleasant experience for the station users.
- Second Entry Station Building and circulating area shall be improved as per the needs of the station.
- High level platforms(760-840 mm) shall be provided at all categories of stations. Length of the platforms shall generally be 600m.
- Length, location and phasing of Platform shelters shall be decided based on usage of the station.
- Ballast-less tracks would be provided on platform lines and lines with train maintenance facilities.
- Drainage of platform areas is of utmost importance.
- Cables should be covered in aesthetically designed duct and should have provision for future cables as well.
- The Master Plan shall mark the space for Parcel handling spurs, storage and handling facilities etc.
- Provide free WiFi access to its users.
- The Master Plan should have suitable spaces earmarked for 5G towers.

Social Security Exchange (SSE)

- **Context:** National Stock Exchange of India (NSE India) recently received an in-principle approval from the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to set-up SSE as a separate segment.

Key Highlights

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has received in-principle approval from SEBI to set up Social Stock Exchange (SSE) as a separate segment.
- SSE is a novel idea in India, and a stock exchange of this kind is intended to benefit the private and non-profit sectors by directing more capital to them.
- During her Budget speech for the fiscal year 2019–20, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman first proposed the concept of SSE.
- The Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 was then invoked by the government, which subsequently published a gazette notification announcing a new security as "zero coupon zero principal".

About SSE

- The SSE will be a distinct division of the current stock exchanges under which Not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) and for-profit social enterprises with social intent and impact as their primary goal will be eligible to raise funds.
- The social enterprises will have to engage in a social activity out of 16 broad activities listed by the regulator.

The eligible activities include:

- Eradicating hunger poverty, malnutrition and inequality
- Promoting healthcare, supporting education, employability and livelihoods
- Gender equality empowerment of women and LGBTQIA communities
- Supporting incubators of social enterprise.

Corporate foundations, political or religious organisations or activities, professional or trade associations, infrastructure companies, and housing companies, with

the exception of affordable housing, will not be eligible to be identified as social enterprises.

30th DECEMBER, 2022

India-Australia Trade Agreement

- **Context:** The India and Australia Economic Cooperation & Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into force.

Key Highlights

- The agreement aims to provide duty-free access to a number of goods across different sectors.
- The Indo-Australia Trade Pact brings together two major economies of the world – India the 5th largest and Australia the 14th largest economy.
- India's total bilateral trade with Australia is expected to cross \$ 45 – 50 billion in 5 years, from existing \$ 31 billion. India's merchandise exports are expected to increase by \$ 10 billion by 2026-27.
- Economic Cooperation & Trade Agreement or ECTA is a free trade agreement between India and Australia, which was signed on April 2, 2022. It was then ratified on November 21, 2022. Written notifications of the agreement were exchanged on 29 Nov, 2022 and after a month, it is now entering into force.
- Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement eliminates tariffs on over 85 per cent of Australian exports to India and locks them in at zero duty charge. T
- This includes key exports such as wool, lamb, barley, oats, fresh rock lobsters, cosmetics and many metallic ores, critical minerals, non-ferrous metals and titanium dioxide.

Hospital Management Information System (HMIS)

- **Context:** National Health Authority (NHA) has released a beta version of the lightweight, robust, and Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission-compliant Hospital Management Information System (HMIS).

Key Highlights

- It envisions providing a digital platform for healthcare providers, particularly focusing on private clinics and small health facilities.
- This beta version will allow doctors to generate and fetch Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts for patients as well as to manage their calendars, appointments, and patient details in a single window.
- It will also facilitate e-prescription services and view previous health records and prescriptions for registered patients and take video consultations.
- This is also expected that it will digitize small clinics and improve the discoverability of healthcare providers in India.
- The NHA is also inviting healthcare providers to participate in its beta-testing and share their feedback.

About Hospital Management Information System (HMIS)

- All the medical services will be brought under one platform, through the HIMS portal.
- The doctors will be able to see a patient's medical history using the card and the patients will be able to make appointments from home.
- All citizens between 1 and 18 years would be issued a health card linked to their parent's health card.
- All newborns (up to 1 year) would be linked to their mother's health card.

31st DECEMBER, 2022

Election Commission (EC) to launch pilot Remote voting for domestic migrants

- **Context:** The Election Commission (EC) announced that it is ready to pilot remote voting for domestic migrants, so they don't have to travel back to their home states to vote.

Key Highlights

- This comes on the back of EC's acknowledgement of migration-based disenfranchisement.
- EC in a statement said that it hopes that through this move, it will be able to boost voter turnout and strengthen India's democratic process.
- For this, the commission has developed a prototype for a Multi-Constituency Remote Electronic Voting Machine (RVM).
- RVM is developed with the assistance of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and the Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL).
- RVM allows voters to vote remotely, in a safe and controlled environment. It is based on the currently used EVM system.
- RVMs is that a single Remote Ballot Unit (RBU) will be able to cater to multiple constituencies (as many as 72) by using a dynamic ballot display board instead of the usual printed paper ballot sheet on EVMs.

Working of RVMs

- RVMs is a single Remote Ballot Unit (RBU) that will be able to cater to multiple constituencies (as many as 72) by using a dynamic ballot display board instead of the usual printed paper ballot sheet on EVMs.
- The Ballot Unit Overlay Display (BUOD) will show the requisite candidates based on the constituency number read on the voter's Constituency card.
- A barcode scanning system will be used to read these cards.
- After verifying a voter's identity, their constituency card will be read with a public display showing the constituency details and candidates.
- This will also be displayed privately, on the BUOD in the RVM's RBU.
- The voter will then vote and each vote will be stored constituency-wise in the control unit of the voting machine.

National Geospatial Policy, 2022

- **Context:** Ministry of Science and Technology recently notified the National Geospatial Policy, 2022.

Key Highlights

- Guideline aims to promote the country's geospatial data industry and develop a national framework to use such data for improving citizen services.
- Besides developing geospatial infrastructures, skill and knowledge, standards, businesses, among others, the policy aims to develop high resolution topographical survey and mapping, and a high-accuracy digital elevation model for the entire country by 2030.
- The policy takes it further by laying down an overarching framework for holistic development of the geospatial ecosystem.
- The policy will seek to develop a national geospatial data framework, and enable "easy availability" of data to businesses and general public.
- By 2025, the government will seek to put in place a legal framework that "supports liberalisation of the geospatial sector, and democratisation of data for enhanced commercialisation with value added services.
- The government will also look to improve availability and access of "better location data" for companies, including private organisations, by 2025.
- The government will look to establish an Integrated Data and Information Framework, under which a Geospatial Knowledge Infrastructure (GKI) will be developed by 2030.
- It seeks to develop geospatial infrastructures, skill and knowledge, standards, businesses, promote innovation, and strengthen the national and sub-national arrangements for generation and management of geospatial information.
- By 2035, goals of usage of geospatial data will include mapping of sub-surface infrastructure in major cities and towns across India, and development of high resolution, accurate bathymetric geospatial data (resources and economy of inland waters, and sea surface topography of shallow and deep seas) to support India's 'Blue Economy'.

