



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**SEPTEMBER, 2023**

**Week-3**

**15-21 Sept., 2023**

★★ Useful for ★★

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

15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023

## National Strategy for Robotics (NSR)

- **Context:** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has invited public comments as well as inputs from stakeholders on the draft “National Strategy for Robotics (NSR)”.

### Key Highlights:

- According to the World Robotics Report 2022, India ranks 10th globally in terms of annual industrial installations of robots.
- Draft National Strategy for Robotics (NSR) aim is to strengthen all pillars in the innovation cycle of robotic technology, while also providing a robust institutional framework for ensuring the effective implementation of these interventions.
- Its objectives are to make India a global robotics leader by 2030.
- To build upon the mandates of the Make in India 2.0 plans, which identify robotics as one of the 27 sub-sectors to further enhance India’s integration in the global value chain.
- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) will serve as the nodal agency for robotics, overseeing the NSR through the ‘National Robotics Mission’ (NRM).
- The strategy has identified manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, and national security as the four core sectors to prioritize robotics automation.
- The strategy proposes fiscal and non-fiscal interventions by the NRM for upscaling innovation in robotics. These interventions will be specifically aimed at developing funding mechanisms for robotics start-ups as well as promoting exports.
- Major recommendations are to create a strong regulatory framework led by the Robotics Innovation

Unit (RIU) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

- To Establish Centers of Excellence (CoEs) in Robotics for both foundational and applied research. Encourage private sector involvement in priority sectors for experimental prototyping and initial commercialization.
- To Provide support to startups, leverage research potential in higher education institutions, and develop dedicated robotics industrial zones.
- The central government should be a major buyer of Indian-made robotic systems. This can be achieved through a Public Procurement Policy for Robotics, which incentivizes domestic production by giving preference to suppliers with a minimum local content requirement.

## National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) Portal

- **Context:** The Chief Justice of India has announced that the Supreme Court is now “onboard” the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) Portal.

### Key Highlights:

- National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) is a national repository of data relating to cases instituted, pending and disposed of by the courts across the country.
- The portal contains a database of orders, judgments and case details of 18,735 District and subordinate Courts and High Courts.
- Its key feature is that the data is updated in real-time and has granular data up to the Taluka level.
- Its is developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC) in close coordination with the in-house software development team of the Computer Cell, Registry of the Supreme Court with an interactive interface and analytics dashboard.

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- The portal was built as part of Phase II of the e-Courts project which is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

## International Organisation of Legal Metrology

- **Context:** The Union Consumer Affairs Ministry has announced that India can now issue International Organisation of Legal Metrology certificates which are accepted globally. India has now become the 13th country that can issue such certificates.

### Key Highlights:

- OIML is an intergovernmental organisation created in 1955.
- It is an international standard-setting body. It develops model regulations, standards and related documents for use by legal metrology authorities and industry.
- It plays a crucial role in harmonising national laws and regulations on the performance of measuring instruments like clinical thermometers, alcohol breath analysers, radar speed measuring instruments, ship tanks found at ports and petrol dispensing units.
- It has 63 Member States and 64 Corresponding Members. India became its member in 1956 and its headquarters at Paris, France.
- An OIML Pattern Approval certificate is mandatory to sell a weight or measure in the international market which India can now issue.
- This will help domestic manufacturers as they can export their weighing and measuring instruments worldwide without incurring additional testing fees, resulting in significant cost savings.
- India has now become the 13th country that can issue OIML certificates. The other countries include Australia, Switzerland, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, France, United Kingdom, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden and Slovakia.

## PM Vishwakarma Scheme

- **Context:** On the occasion of Vishwakarma Jayanti, the Prime Minister launched a new scheme named “PM Vishwakarma”.

### Key Highlights:

- PM Vishwakarma is a Central Sector Scheme
- To strengthen and nurture the Guru-Shishya parampara or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.
- To improve the quality as well as the reach of products and services of artisans and craftspeople and to ensure that they are integrated with the domestic and global value chains.
- The scheme will provide support to artisans and craftspeople of rural and urban areas across India.
- Eighteen traditional crafts will be covered under PM Vishwakarma. These include Carpenter; Boat Maker; Armourer; Blacksmith; Hammer and Tool Kit Maker; Locksmith; Goldsmith; Potter; Sculptor, Stone breaker; Cobbler (Shoemaker/ Footwear artisan); Mason (Rajmistri); Basket/Mat/Broom Maker/Coir Weaver; Doll & Toy Maker (Traditional); Barber; Garland maker; Washerman; Tailor; and Fishing Net Maker.
- Under the scheme, the Vishwakarmas will be registered free of charge through Common Services Centres using biometric based PM Vishwakarma portal.
- They will be provided recognition through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card, skill upgradation involving basic and advanced training, toolkit incentive of 15,000 and collateral-free credit supports up to 1 lakh (first tranche) and 2 lakh (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5%, incentive for digital transactions and marketing support.

## Swachhata Hi Seva 2023 Campaign

- **Context:** Union Minister for Jal Shakti and Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs jointly launched the pan-India Swachhata Pakhwada – Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2023 campaign.

### Key Highlights:

- Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) campaign is being celebrated from 15th September to 2nd October this year under the joint aegis of Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The campaign will focus on achieving a visibly higher order of cleanliness across local bodies through the spirit of voluntarism and shramdaan as well as on the welfare of Safai Mitras.
- All Ministries and Departments will be organizing swachhata drives across offices, public places, heritage sites, river fronts in both rural and urban areas.
- Theme for 2023 is “Garbage Free India”.
- As a part of this, all Government of India Ministries, PSUs, State Govts. and local bodies will be organizing massive cleanliness drives across various locations.
- It aims to mobilize youth groups at scale to take sustained ownership for swachhata across beaches, hills and tourist spots.
- The swachhata league will act as a catalyst for triggering action by the youth of the city towards the vision of garbage free cities under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- SafaiMitra Suraksha Shivar will be organized by various cities across the nation.
- These Shivirs (camps) are aimed at saturating welfare schemes for sanitation workers and their dependents and to improve their well-being and quality of life.

- The objective of the shivar is to target all sanitation workers in Solid Waste Management (SWM) & Used Water Management (UWM).
- The key activities will focus on mass awareness, preventive health checkups, yoga shivirs and extending entitlement of various welfare benefits of central & State Schemes in convergence with various ministries.

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## Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

- **Context:** The Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying has launched Matsya Sampada Jagrukta Abhiyan on the occasion of completion of three successful years of implementation of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna (PMMSY).

### Key Highlights:

- Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana is a scheme to bring about the Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of the fisheries sector in India.
- Objectives of the scheme is harnessing of fisheries potential in a sustainable, responsible, inclusive and equitable manner
  - Enhancing fish production and productivity through expansion, intensification, diversification and productive utilization of land and water.
  - Modernizing and strengthening of the value chain–post-harvest management and quality improvement.
  - Doubling fishers and fish farmers incomes and generation of employment.
  - Enhancing contribution to Agriculture GVA and exports.

- Social, physical and economic security for fishers and fish farmers.
- Robust fisheries management and regulatory framework.
- The scheme is being implemented in all States and UTs for a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25.
- Matsya Sampada Jagrukta Abhiyan aim is to disseminate information and knowledge about 9 Years of achievements of the Government of India by highlighting success stories of the beneficiaries and reaching out to 2.8 crore fish farmers and 3477 coastal villages.
- All courses compliant with the National Skilling Qualification Framework (NSQF) will also be accessible on the platform.
- Additionally, the platform integrates with other government portals such as the UDYAM portal for micro and small enterprises and the Atma Nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM) portal.
- The platform also supports multiple Indian languages and ensures secure access with Aadhaar-based eKYC.
- It adopts a mobile-first approach, making learning accessible through handheld devices.
- It showcases individuals' skills and qualifications through Digitally Verified Credentials, offering secure and tamper-proof verification.

## Skill India Digital (SID) Platform

- **Context:** The Ministry of Skill Development has launched the Skill India Digital (SID) platform.

### Key Highlights:

- Skill India Digital (SID) Platform is a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for skilling, education, employment and entrepreneurship ecosystem of India.
- It is a comprehensive digital platform aimed at synergizing and transforming the skills, education, employment, and entrepreneurship landscape of India.
- It is built by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with multiple industry players.
- The platform is part of the World Bank-assisted Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) programme.
- The platform acts as a comprehensive information gateway for government skilling and entrepreneurship initiatives.
- It encompasses training programs from central and state governments, creating a centralized hub for skill development initiatives.
- Digital CVs with personalized QR codes allow potential employers or partners to easily access a candidate's portfolio, including skills, qualifications, experiences and achievements.

## Project Cheetah in India

- **Context:** September 17th, 2023 marked the first anniversary of the Project Cheetah.

### Key Highlights:

- Project Cheetah is an initiative in India aimed at relocating cheetahs. It was the first intercontinental transfer of wild cats into India since independence.
- The project plans to bring 12-14 cheetahs from South Africa/Namibia/ other African Countries, annually for the next 5 years and after that, as and when required.
- In total, 20 adult African cheetahs have been imported so far. The first batch of eight cheetahs arrived and another batch of 12 cheetahs from South Africa arrived.
- Recently, one of the females gave birth to a litter of four cubs which were conceived in India.



- Six of the cheetahs which came from Africa have died. Four while still in captivity and two in the wild.
- In 2022, Government of India had released Cheetah Action Plan that lists six short-term success criteria such as 50% survival of the introduced cheetahs for the first year, establishment of home ranges in Kuno National Park, successful cheetah reproduction in the wild, survival of wild-born cheetah cubs past one-year, successful F1 generation breeding and cheetah-based revenues contributing to community livelihoods. F1 stands for the first generation of offspring.
- On completion of one year of Project Cheetah, the Government released a report which said that the project has achieved four of these criteria which are – 50% survival of the introduced cheetahs, establishment of home ranges, birth of cubs in Kuno National Park, and direct revenue contributions to local communities through the engagement of cheetah trackers and indirect appreciation of land value in surrounding areas.

18<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023

## Shantiniketan added to UNESCO World Heritage List

- **Context:** Shantiniketan, the historical heritage located in Birbhum district of West Bengal, has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage sites list.

### Key Highlights:

- Shantiniketan is a town located in West Bengal's Birbhum district.
- The name of the city literally means the 'abode of peace'. It was named after a local dacoit Bhuban and was earlier called 'Bhubandanga'.
- It was originally an ashram built by Debendranath Tagore (father of Rabindranath Tagore) where

anyone, irrespective of caste and creed, could come and spend time meditating on the one Supreme God.

- Later, Rabindranath Tagore envisioned it as a university town and established a school. It was called Brahmachary Ashram, and was later expanded into the Visva-Bharati University.
- Distinct from the prevailing British colonial architectural orientations of the early 20th century and of European modernism, Shantiniketan represents approaches toward a pan-Asian modernity, drawing on ancient, medieval and folk traditions from across the region.
- Shantiniketan is also adorned with splendid sculptures, frescoes, murals, and paintings created by renowned artists such as Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose (one of the pioneers of modern Indian art) and Ramkinkar Baij (master sculptor and painter) among others.
- Visva-Bharati in Shantiniketan is a Central University. The Prime Minister is the chancellor of the varsity.

## Yashobhoomi : State-of-the-art Convention Centre

- **Context:** The Prime Minister has announced that he will inaugurate a state-of-the-art convention centre —'Yashobhoomi'.

### Key Highlights:

- Yashobhoomi is India's new world-class convention center. It is located in Dwarka, New Delhi.
- The facility consists of a Convention Centre, multiple exhibition halls and other facilities.
- The Convention Centre, built across more than 73,000 square metres of area, comprises 15 convention rooms, including the main auditorium, the grand ballroom, and 13 meeting rooms with a capacity of holding 11,000 delegates.

- The convention centre has the largest LED media facade in the country. The plenary hall in the convention centre is equipped with a seating capacity of around 6,000 guests.
- The auditorium has an innovative automated seating system which allows the floor to be a flat floor or an auditorium style tiered seating for different configurations along with wooden floors and acoustic wall panels.
- The centre has one of the world's largest MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) facilities.
- The centre also offers some of the largest exhibition halls in the world. These halls will be utilized for hosting exhibitions, trade fairs, and business events, and are connected to a grand foyer space designed with copper ceiling which filters light in the space through various skylights.
- Yashobhoomi is the second convention centre with world-class infrastructure for exhibitions and conferences after the Bharat Mandapam, which played host to world leaders at the recently concluded G20 Summit.
- Later on, it hoped to play a role in furthering Indo-British friendship in the post-independence era.
- The India Club is shutting down due to a combination of factors. The owners have been running the establishment since 1997. In 2018, they faced a threat of partial demolition when the landlords wanted to modernize the building. They launched a "Save India Club" campaign and initially succeeded in preventing demolition.
- However, the COVID-19 lockdowns in the UK severely affected restaurant businesses, and the owners also faced steep rent increases during a cost-of-living crisis. These challenges made it financially unsustainable for them to continue running the India Club.
- Personalities visited India Club: VK Krishna Menon, the diplomat and former Indian Defence Minister had a role to play in the founding of the Club as one of the secretaries of the India Club. Dr Rajendra Prasad, the first President of independent India, Lord Mountbatten – the last Viceroy of India, former Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the first British Indian MP Dadabhai Naoroji visited this club.

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## London's India Club

- **Context:** London's India Club is set to close down permanently after decades of operations.

### Key Highlights:

- India club is located in the Strand Continental Hotel in London, UK.
- It was started in 1951 by the India League, a British organization that started out as an advocate for Indian independence and self-rule (swaraj) and included members of the elite in British society.

## Swavlamban 2023

- **Context:** The 2nd Edition of the Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation (NIIO) Seminar – 'Swavlamban 2023' is scheduled to be conducted.

### Key Highlights:

- Swavlamban 2023' organized by Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation (NIIO)
- To engage Indian industry and academia towards achieving self-reliance in the Defence sector.
- SPRINT is a collaborative initiative being undertaken by Naval Innovation and Indigenisation (NIIO) in conjunction with the Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO).

- SPRINT stands for Supporting Pole-Vaulting in R&D through Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), NIIO and Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC).
- To give a boost to the usage of indigenous technology in the Indian Navy.
- As part of this initiative, Indian Navy aims to induct at least 75 new indigenous technologies/products into the Indian Navy.

## Operation Sajag

- **Context:** The Indian Coast Guard conducted a drill called "Operation Sajag" along the west coast.

### Key Highlights:

- Operation Sajag is a monthly drill conducted by Indian Coast Guard
- To revalidate the coastal security system while raising awareness among fishermen at sea.
- The drill involves a thorough review of various coastal security measures and highlights important lessons and emerging trends in coastal security.
- The measures taken to strengthen coastal security are: Issuance of Biometric cards for the fishermen, colour coding of fishing boats as per each state, manning of fish landing centers and access control at entry/exit check points, coastal mapping, designating specific marine band frequency for security agencies, training of marine police personnel by Indian Coast Guard amongst others.

20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023

## SHREYAS Scheme

- **Context:** SHREYAS scheme empowers thousands, over 2300 crore rupees allocated for education of SC and OBC students since 2014.

### Key Highlights:

- Its nodal ministry is Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- SHREYAS stands for Scholarships for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme.
- The objective of the Scheme is to provide coaching of good quality for economically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) candidates to enable them appear in competitive and entrance examinations for obtaining appropriate jobs in Public/Private Sector as well as for securing admission in reputed technical and professional higher education institutions.
- The ceiling of the total family income under the scheme is 8 lakhs per annum. 3500 slots are allotted per annum.
- The ratio of SC: OBC students is 70:30 and 30% slots are reserved for females in each category. In case of non-availability of the adequate number of candidates in SC category, the Ministry can relax this ratio. However, in no case, less than 50% SC students shall be permitted.
- The Scheme aims at recognizing and promoting quality education amongst students belonging to SCs, by providing full financial support. The Scheme will cover SC students for pursuing studies beyond 12th class.
- The scholarship, once awarded, will continue till the completion of the course, subject to satisfactory performance of the student.
- The ceiling of the total family income under the scheme is 8 lakhs per annum.
- The scheme provides financial assistance to the selected students from SCs (115 slots); De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (6 slots); landless agricultural laborers and traditional artisan categories (4 slots), for pursuing masters and Ph.D. level courses abroad. Presently, 125 slots are allotted under the scheme.



- Eligibility: Total family income including the candidate is less than Rs. 8 lakhs per annum, secured more than 60% marks in the qualifying examination, are below 35 years of age and secured admission in top 500 QS ranking foreign Institutes/ Universities.
- The scheme provides total tuition fee, maintenance and contingency allowance, visa fee, to and fro air passage etc to the awardees.
- The scheme provides fellowship to Scheduled Castes students for pursuing higher education leading to M.Phil/ Ph.D degrees in Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences in Indian Universities/Institutions/ Colleges recognized by University Grants Commission (UGC).
- The scheme provides for 2000 new slots per year (500 for science stream and 1500 for Humanities and Social Sciences) who have qualified the National Eligibility Test- Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC and Junior Research Fellows for Science stream qualifying UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) Joint Test.

## Kisan Rin Portal and WINDS Portal

- **Context:** The Union Finance Minister and Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare have inaugurated the 'Kisan Rin Portal' and WINDS portal.

### Key Highlights:

- Kisan Rin Portal aims to give farmers subsidized loans under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme.
- The portal will offer a comprehensive view of farmer data, scheme utilization progress, loan disbursement specifics and interest subvention claim to increase seamless integration with banks for more effective and efficient agriculture.
- WINDS stands for Weather Information Network Data Systems.

- To leverage advanced weather data analytics to give stakeholders actionable insight to make informed weather decisions on agriculture.

21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023

## Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar

- **Context:** The Government of India has decided to constitute a new set of awards for scientists called Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar.

### Key Highlights:

- Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar has been constituted to felicitate scientists, technologists and innovators.
- These awards will be given annually for 13 domains: physics, chemistry, biological sciences, mathematics and computer science, earth science, medicine, engineering science, agricultural science, environmental science, technology and innovation, atomic energy, space science and technology, and others.
- There will only be three Vigyan Ratnas awarded yearly, 25 Vigyan Shri, 25 Vigyan Yuva, and 3 Vigyan Team. Only Vigyan Yuva will have an age limit of 45 years.
- The awards can also be given to Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs). However, only one PIO can receive the Vigyan Ratna award, while three PIOs can be selected for both the Vigyan Shri and the Vigyan Yuva awards. PIOs are not eligible for the Vigyan Team awards.
- Nominations for the awards will be accepted every year between January 14 and February 28, which is recognised as National Science Day.
- The awards will be announced on National Technology Day, May 11.
- The award ceremony will be held every year on the National Space Day, August 23, to mark the day India's Chandrayaan-3 landed on the Moon.

- A committee under the chairmanship of the principal scientific adviser will select the awardees. This committee will be constituted annually.
- The awards processes will be managed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for the first two years and will be taken over by the newly instituted National Research Foundation.

### The award will be given under four categories:

- 1. Vigyan Ratna:** It will recognise the lifetime achievement of scientists
- 2. Vigyan Shri:** It will recognise distinguished contributions to a field
- 3. Vigyan Yuva Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar:** It will encourage young scientists who have made exceptional contributions in their field
- 4. Vigyan Team:** It will recognise teams of three or more.

### Women's Reservation Bill

- **Context:** The Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023, was introduced in Parliament, proposing a 33% reservation for women in legislative bodies.

### Key Highlights:

- The Women's Reservation Bill aims to increase women's representation. Increased female presence will boost confidence in being heard and will build a supportive ecosystem for women's rights.
- The Women's Reservation Bill could increase women MPs from 82 to 181. It seeks sub-reservation for SCs, STs, and Anglo Indians.

- It proposes adding a clause to Article 330 A, reserving one-third of Lok Sabha seats for women within the SC and ST categories and one-third directly elected women.
- The Bill also seeks to insert a subsection in Clause 2 of Article 239 AA, reserving seats for women in Delhi's legislative assembly, with one-third within SC and ST categories.
- Therefore, this legislative effort is considered a progressive step for participatory democracy, which values inclusion rather than exclusion. However, despite this, there are still concerns present with the Bill.
- Reserving seats for women in local government positions like sarpanches, block pramukhs, etc. increased their respect at home and in the community, reduced domestic abuse, and ensured that women in similar roles were heard and respected.
- Women's empowerment is often viewed as urban-centrally, but reservations in local bodies, like panchayat elections, offer rural women a distinct experience that brings them respect and recognition in their communities.
- The Bill ensures women's representation, transforming politics and addressing social inequalities.
- It aims to create an enlightened democracy by removing entry barriers and fundamentally reshaping parliamentary democracy, giving Indian women their rightful place in Parliament.

