



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**JULY, 2024**

**Week-2**

**08-14 July, 2024**

★★ Useful for ★★

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

8<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## Digital Bharat Nidhi

- **Context:** The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) released draft rules to operationalise the Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), by the central government at increasing telecom connectivity in rural areas.

### Key Facts

- Digital Bharat Nidhi was established through the Telecommunications Act, 2023. It would replace the erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- USOF is a pool of funds generated by a 5 percent Universal Service Levy charged upon all the telecom fund operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR).
- USOF was established in 2003, and has been criticized for its underutilization.
- Between 2017 and 2022, the government had collected Rs 41,740 crore as part of contributions made by telcos towards the USOF, and only 72 percent of it has been utilized.
- The money would be used to fund the expansion of telecom networks in remote and rural areas, where private companies resist offering their services.

## Project PARI

- **Context:** The Ministry of Culture initiates Project PARI for the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting.

### About Project PARI

- Project PARI (Public Art of India), seeks to bring forth public art that draws inspiration from millennia of artistic heritage while incorporating modern themes and techniques.
- Artists from all over the country have come together to create the various wall paintings, murals, sculptures and installations being prepared under this project.
- The creative canvas inspired by the styles of: Phad paintings (Rajasthan), Thangka painting (Sikkim/

Ladakh), Gond art (Madhya Pradesh), Tanjore paintings (Tamil Nadu), Kalamkari (Andhra Pradesh), Alpona art (West Bengal), Cherial painting (Telangana), Pichhwai Painting (Rajasthan), Lanjia Saura (Odisha), Pattachitra (West Bengal), Bani Thani Painting (Rajasthan), Warli (Maharashtra), Pithora Art (Gujarat), Aipan (Uttarakhand), Kerala Murals (Kerala) and Alpana art (Tripura).

9<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## Right to Repair Portal

- **Context:** The Centre asked the automobile companies to join the unified Right to Repair Portal India.

### Key Highlights

- The portal was launched by the Department of Consumer Affairs to empower consumers by providing them with easy access to information on repairing their products, fostering a circular economy, and reducing e-waste.
- The portal provides consumers with manuals, repair guides, and videos for various products, enabling them to understand the repair process.
- It discloses information on the price and warranty of spare parts, allowing consumers to make informed decisions about repairs.
- The portal initially focuses on key sectors like farming equipment, electronic items, automobile items etc.

## Project Zorawar

- **Context:** The Indian Army plans to acquire a fleet of lightweight tanks, under 'Project Zorawar', aimed at deploying them in high-altitude regions of eastern Ladakh by 2027.

### Key Facts

- Zorawar is a lightweight tank jointly developed by the DRDO and Larsen and Toubro.
- It is named after the 19th century Dogra General Zorawar Singh, who led military expeditions to Ladakh and Western Tibet.

- The tank will be able to navigate steep mountains and cross water bodies like rivers far more easily than its forerunners such as the heavy-weight T-72 and T-90 tanks.
- This will allow it to be deployed in areas like eastern Ladakh's Pangong Tso Lake.

## Kallakkadal Phenomenon

- **Context:** The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), sounded alert, as the coastal areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are likely to experience the 'kallakkadal' phenomenon.

### About Kallakkadal Phenomenon

- Kallakkadal is a term used for the flooding events caused by Swell Waves.
- UNESCO formally accepted term "Kallakkadal" for scientific use in 2012.

### About Swell Waves

- They are high sea waves that are formed by an ocean swell. Ocean swells occur due to distant storms like hurricanes and not due to the local winds.
- During such storms, huge energy transfer takes place from the air into the water, leading to the formation of very high waves.
- Such waves can travel thousands of kilometers from the storm center.

10<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit

- **Context:** Prime Minister Modi paid an official visit to Russia for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit.

### Key Highlights

- PM Modi was conferred Russia's highest national award "The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle" for his contribution to fostering India-Russia ties. The award was announced in 2019.

- India will set up two new consulates in the Russian cities of Kazan and Yekaterinburg.
- Russia agreed to India's demand to ensure early release and return to home of the Indian nationals working in the Russian military as support staff.
- India and Russia are working on the Eastern Maritime Corridor and the two countries were discovering each other through the Ganga-Volga dialogue.
  - The Eastern Maritime Corridor is a proposed sea route between Chennai, India, and Vladivostok, Russia, passing through the Sea of Japan, the South China Sea, and the Malacca Strait.
- Both the Leaders agreed to set the bilateral trade target of USD 100 billion by 2030.

## Quantum Science and Technology

- **Context:** The United Nations proclaimed 2025 as the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology (IYQ) to raise awareness about quantum science and technology).

### Key Facts

- Quantum science delves into the peculiar and counterintuitive behaviour of particles at the smallest scales.
- Governments and private sectors worldwide are heavily investing in quantum technologies.

### Applications

- **Quantum Computing:** Quantum computers leverage quantum bits (qubits), which can exist in multiple states simultaneously, enabling computations at speeds exponentially faster than classical computers.
  - Applications range from cryptography and materials science to complex simulations and optimization problems.
- **Quantum Sensors:** These devices use quantum principles to achieve unprecedented levels of sensitivity and accuracy.

- Quantum sensors are poised to enhance fields like healthcare (through precise medical imaging), environmental monitoring (for detecting minute changes), and navigation (with ultra-precise positioning systems).
- **Quantum Communications:** Quantum communication utilizes quantum entanglement to secure data transmission.

## Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved India to sign the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement.

### Key Facts

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences will spearhead the country's implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.
- The Agreement allows India to enhance its strategic presence in areas beyond the EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone).
- It would also contribute to achieving several SDGs, particularly SDG14 (Life Below Water).

### About BBNJ Agreement

- The BBNJ Agreement, or the 'High Seas Treaty', is an international treaty under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- It sets precise mechanisms for the sustainable use of marine biological diversity through international cooperation and coordination.
- Parties cannot claim or exercise sovereign rights over marine resources derived from the high seas and ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits.
- High Seas (areas beyond national jurisdiction) are the global common oceans open to all for internationally lawful purposes such as navigation, overflight, laying submarine cables and pipelines, etc.

### About United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- UNCLOS was adopted in 1982, and came into force in 1994.
- It lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources.
- It establishes the International Seabed Authority to regulate mining and related activities on the ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction.
- As of today, more than 160 countries have ratified UNCLOS.

11<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

### Divorced Muslim Women Entitled to Maintenance

- **Context:** The Supreme Court held that a divorced Muslim woman is entitled to a claim of maintenance under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973, against her former husband.

### Key Highlights

- SC said that Section 125 CrPC was introduced as a measure of social justice to protect women and children.
- It pointed out that the provision manifested the commitment under Article 15(3) of the Constitution towards special measures to ensure a life of dignity for women at all stages of their lives.
- The ruling reiterated that maintenance under Section 125 CrPC exists in addition to the provisions for maintenance under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 (MWPRD Act), not against it.
- Earlier, The Telangana High Court directed a Muslim man to pay ₹10,000 interim maintenance to his former wife. However, the husband contended that the provisions of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, being a special law, should prevail over Section 125 of the CrPC.

## Evolution of law on Maintenance

- The law governing maintenance for destitute wives, children, and parents has been codified under Section 125 of the CrPC. It stipulates that if any person “having sufficient means neglects or refuses to maintain” his wife, then a magistrate of the first class may, upon proof of such neglect or refusal, order such a person to make a monthly allowance for the maintenance of his wife at a monthly rate as the magistrate thinks fit.
- The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, is a religion-specific law that provides for a procedure for a Muslim woman to claim maintenance during divorce. Section 3 of the Act guarantees the payment of maintenance only during the period of Iddat — a period, usually of three months.
- It was enacted to essentially nullify the Supreme Court’s 1985 decision in the case of Mohd. Ahmad Khan v. Shah Bano Begum which upheld a Muslim woman’s right to seek maintenance from her divorced husband under Section 125 of the CrPC.

## Maritime Organisation (IMO) 2024

### Award

- **Context:** Indian seafarers to be honored for exceptional bravery at sea by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in its 2024 awards for Bravery at Sea.

### Key Highlights

- The IMO Council has honoured Captain Avhilash Rawat and the crew of the oil tanker Marlin Luanda for their extraordinary bravery, leadership, and determination.
- Three categories of honour are the Award, Certificates of Commendation and Letters of Commendation.
- The honours are awarded annually and were established by the Organization to provide international recognition for those who, at the risk of losing their own life, perform acts of exceptional bravery.

## About IMO

- It is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating maritime transport.
- The IMO was established following agreement at a UN conference held in Geneva in 1948 and the IMO came into existence ten years later, meeting for the first time in 1958.

## Exercise Pitch Black

- **Context:** An Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent reached at the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Darwin, Australia for participating in Exercise Pitch Black 2024.

## About Exercise ‘Pitch Black’

- It is a biennial, multi-national exercise hosted by the RAAF.
- The name ‘Pitch Black’ was derived from the emphasis on night time flying over large unpopulated areas.
- The 2024 edition is slated to be the largest in the 43-year long history of Ex Pitch Black, which includes participation by 20 countries, with over 140 aircraft and 4400 military personnel of various air forces.
- The exercise would provide IAF with an opportunity towards force integration with participating nations and mutual exchange of best practices.
- The IAF has previously participated in the 2018 and 2022 editions of this exercise.

12<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## India’s E-Vehicle (EV) Policy

- **Context:** The government plans to expand its Electric vehicles (EVs) policy to include retrospective benefits for prior investors.

## About Electric vehicles (EVs)

- Electric vehicles (EVs) have gained significant traction in recent years as a cleaner and more efficient alternative to traditional gasoline-powered cars.

- With advancements in battery technology, a growing network of charging infrastructure, and increasing consumer demand, EVs have become a viable option for many drivers around the world.
- Significant investor support is essential to tap into the \$100 billion-plus EV opportunity in India.
- India, being the third-largest automotive market in the world, could potentially “lead the global transition” from internal combustion engine (ICE) to decarbonised electric counterparts.

### About E-Vehicle Policy

- The government in March 2024 approved the E-Vehicle policy to promote India as a manufacturing destination for EVs and attract investment from reputed global EV manufacturers.
- **Focus:** Enhance access to latest technology, strengthen the EV ecosystem, and promote competition among players.
  - Aim to lower production costs and improve EV economics for Indian consumers.
  - Mandated 50% value addition in manufacturing to occur domestically within five years.
  - Reduced import duty on completely built units (CBUs) with a cost, insurance, and freight (CIF) value of \$35,000 from 70%-100% to 15%.

### Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

- **Context:** Recently, India sent humanitarian aid to landslide-hit Papua New Guinea, showcasing FIPIC partnership.

### About the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

- FIPIC includes 14 of the island countries – Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- Though these countries are relatively small in land area and distant from India, many have

large exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and offer promising possibilities for fruitful cooperation.

- It is a testament to India’s strategic engagement with the Pacific Island countries, scattered across the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. They hold immense significance from both an economic and geostrategic standpoint.
- The Prime Minister of India, in 2014, convened the inaugural FIPIC gathering in Fiji, which marked a pivotal moment in India’s Act East Policy — a vision that extends beyond the Asian continent to embrace the Indo-Pacific region.
- India unveiled the 12-Step Initiative at the third FIPIC Summit, held in Papua New Guinea.

### Zika Virus

- **Context:** Cases of Zika virus infection reported in Pune city.

### About Zika Virus

- It is an Arbovirus belonging to the Flaviviridae Family. It is a single stranded, Positive sense RNA virus.
- It is a mosquito-borne virus first identified in Uganda in 1947 in a Rhesus macaque monkey, and was found in humans in African countries in the 1950s.
- It spreads through the bite of infected Aedes mosquitoes, mainly Aedes aegypti, which also transmits dengue and chikungunya.
- Its symptoms start 3–14 days after infection and are generally mild, including rash, fever, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain.
- Zika virus in pregnant women can cause congenital microcephaly, Guillain-Barre syndrome. Microcephaly is a condition in which an infant’s head is smaller than what is typical for their age and can be caused by the brain not developing properly. Guillain-Barré syndrome is a rare condition that causes a person’s immune system to attack the peripheral nerves.
- No vaccine is as yet available for the prevention or treatment of Zika virus infection.

13<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## Constitution Assassination Day

- **Context:** The government has decided to observe the 25th of June every year as 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas'.

### About Constitution Assassination Day

- On 25 June in 1975, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed an Emergency in the country which lasted until March 21, 1977.
- There was large-scale suspension of fundamental rights for the citizenry, detention and arrest of Opposition leaders and critics, and press censorship.
  - The 38th Amendment Act of 1975 also made declaration of a national emergency immune to judicial review (this was later removed by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978).
- This day will commemorate the massive contributions of all those who endured the inhuman pains of the 1975 Emergency.

## Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)

- **Context:** Union IT Ministry and Ministry of Home Affairs are making a strong pitch for the ownership of Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In), the country's nodal cybersecurity watchdog. At present, Cert-In comes under the administrative control of the IT Ministry.

### About CERT-In

- It is an office, established in 2004, within the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Government of India.
- It's the national nodal agency for handling computer security incidents.
- It is dedicated to preventing, detecting, and responding to cybersecurity incidents.
- It plays a crucial role in incident reporting and alerting organizations about malware. Its technical

expertise is invaluable in safeguarding India's digital infrastructure.

## BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat

- **Context:** Recently, India hosted the first BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat held in New Delhi, carrying particular weight given the major developments unfolding in neighbouring Myanmar.

### About BIMSTEC

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a multilateral regional organisation that was established with the aim of accelerating shared growth and cooperation between littoral and adjacent countries in the Bay of Bengal region.
- It was founded as BIST-EC, in 1997, with the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration, with Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand as members.
- It became BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation) with the entry of Myanmar in late 1997, and eventually, it was named in its current form, when Nepal and Bhutan became members in 2004.

14<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

## Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Jammu and Kashmir

- **Context:** Recently, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) amended the Rules to widen the administrative role of Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Key Changes

- **Police and Public Order:** The L-G now has more say in matters related to police and public order, aiming to strengthen the L-G's role in maintaining law and order within the Union Territory. Any proposal requiring prior concurrence of the Finance Department in these areas must be placed before the L-G first.

- **All India Service (AIS):** Transfers and postings of AIS officers now fall under the L-G's purview. This change grants the L-G greater authority in managing the bureaucracy.
- **Legal Appointments and Prosecution:** Proposals regarding the appointment of the Advocate-General, Law Officers, and decisions on prosecution sanctions or appeals will now be submitted to the L-G for approval. The Department of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs will play a crucial role in this process.
- **Prisons and Forensic Science:** Matters connected with Prisons and the Directorate of Prosecution and Forensic Science Laboratory will also be submitted to the L-G.

## SDG India Index 2023-24

- **Context:** Recently, NITI Aayog released SDG India Index 2023-24.

### About SDG India Index 2023-24

- SDG India Index 2023-24, the fourth edition of the country's principal tool for measuring national and subnational progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
- It measures and tracks national progress of all States and UTs on 113 indicators aligned to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's (MoSPI) National Indicator Framework (NIF).
- The SDG India Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and UT. Overall State and UT scores or Composite Scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure the aggregate performance of the sub-national unit based on its performance across the 16 SDGs. These scores range between 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the targets. The higher the score of a State/UT, the greater the distance covered to the target.

### About Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDGs were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- The 17 SDGs are integrated—they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

