

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS Week-1 1-7 Sept., 2024

1st SEPTEMBER 2024

New Flag & Insignia of Supreme Court

- **Context:** President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the new flag and insignia of the Supreme Court to mark the 75th year of its establishment.

Key Facts

- The flag features the Ashoka Chakra, the Supreme Court building and the book of the Constitution of India.
- The new Supreme Court flag is blue in colour. The insignia has 'Supreme Court of India' and 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah' (in Devanagari script) inscribed on it.
 - The phrase "Yato Dharmastato Jayah" is a Sanskrit expression that translates to "Where there is Dharma, there is victory" or "Victory lies where Dharma (righteousness) prevails."
 - Ashok Chakra represents the dharmachakra or "wheel of the law". This symbol is inspired by the Sarnath Lion Capital, which was created by the 3rd-century BC Mauryan Emperor Ashoka.

About Supreme Court of India

- Article 124 of the Constitution states that "There shall be a Supreme Court of India."
- On 28 January 1950, two days after India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic, the Supreme Court was inaugurated.
- The first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad inaugurated the present building of the Supreme Court of India on 4 August 1958.
- The original Constitution of 1950 envisaged a Supreme Court with a Chief Justice and 7 puisne Judges – leaving it to Parliament to increase this number.
 - Considering the increase in workload, Parliament increased the number of Judges from 8 in 1950 to 11 in 1956, 14 in 1960, 18 in 1978, 26 in 1986, 31 in 2009 and 34 in 2019 (current strength).

- The Supreme Court Officers and Servants (Conditions of Service and Conduct) Rules, 1961 contains the rules with respect to the conditions of service and conduct of the staff attached to the Supreme Court of India.

Telecommunications (Administration of Digital Bharat Nidhi) Rules, 2024

- **Context:** The Department of Telecommunication, notified 'Telecommunications (Administration of Digital Bharat Nidhi) Rules, 2024', the first set of rules under the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

Key Highlights

- The Universal Service Obligation Fund created under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 has been rechristened as Digital Bharat Nidhi under the Telecommunications Act, 2024.
- It stipulates that fund from the Digital Bharat Nidhi will be allocated to projects aimed at improving telecommunication services in underserved and remote areas and for underserved groups of the society.

About Telecommunications Rules, 2024

- The rules provide for powers and functions of administrator, who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and administration of the Digital Bharat Nidhi.
- The Implementer, receiving funding from the Digital Bharat Nidhi for operating telecommunication network, shall make available such network/services on an open and non-discriminatory basis.
- The rules also provide for criteria for undertaking schemes and projects under Digital Bharat Nidhi and selection process for implementers.

Vadhvan Port

- **Context:** Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for the Vadhvan Port project in Palghar, Maharashtra.

Key Facts

- JNPA, in collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and Maharashtra Maritime Board, proposed the development of Vadhvan Port.
- It will be one of India's largest deep-water ports. The project is estimated to cost around 76,000 crore.
- The port will be developed based on the Landlord Port. In the landlord model, private players take over the operational aspects, while the port authority acts as a regulator and landlord.
- **Capacity:** Expected to be among the top 10 ports globally, with a handling capacity of 23.2 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs).
- **Functionality:** Designed to handle large container vessels, offer deeper drafts, and accommodate ultra-large cargo ships.

2nd SEPTEMBER 2024

EU's 2030 Emission Targets

- **Context:** Recently, Non-profit groups in Europe have taken legal action against the European Commission, arguing that the European Union's (EU) 2030 emission targets are falling short of the ambitious goals set by the Paris Agreement.

About the Paris Agreement

- It was adopted during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France in 2015.
- It represents a collective effort by 196 Parties to address the urgent challenge of global warming.

Temperature Goals

- The overarching goal of the Paris Agreement is to limit the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.
- **Additionally, there's a strong emphasis on efforts to limit the temperature rise to an even more ambitious target: 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.**
- **Why the Focus on 1.5°C:** Scientific evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

suggests that crossing the 1.5°C threshold could lead to severe climate impacts, including more frequent and intense droughts, heatwaves, and extreme rainfall events.

Emission Reductions

- To achieve these temperature goals, countries commit to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Agreement recognises that emissions must peak before 2025 at the latest and decline by 43% by 2030 to stay on track for the 1.5°C target.

About Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

- Each country communicates its climate action plan through its NDC.
- NDCs outline both mitigation (emission reduction) and adaptation measures.
- Countries are encouraged to progressively enhance the ambition of their NDCs over time.

India Post Payments Bank

- **Context:** Recently, India Post Payments Bank has established many new dimensions in its journey of 6 years by promoting 'Aapka Bank, Aapke Dwar'.

About the India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)

- It is an undertaking of the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication & Technology, launched nationwide in 2018.
- It was established with a mission to promote financial inclusion and contribute to Digital India, and has become a vital player in rural areas.
- IPPB targets some of the most financially excluded and vulnerable sections of society.
- Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks act as mobile banks, delivering various services like Aadhaar enrollment for children up to 5 years old; Mobile updates through CELC service; Digital life certificates; Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT); Aadhaar-enabled payment system; Bill payments; Insurance

services (vehicle, health, accident, and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana); Online deposits in Sukanya, RD, PPF, and Postal Life Insurance.

- **Women Empowerment:** A remarkable 44% of IPPB customers are women, highlighting its crucial role in empowering women through financial services.

3rd SEPTEMBER 2024

23rd Law Commission

- **Context:** President Droupadi Murmu has sanctioned the constitution of the 23rd Law Commission of India, which will serve from September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2027.

About Law Commission of India

- Law Commission of India is a non-statutory body.
- It is constituted by a notification of the Government of India, Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs.
- It is constituted with definite terms of reference to carry out research in the field of law.
- The Commission makes recommendations to the Government in the form of Reports as per its terms of reference. However, these recommendations are not binding on the Government.
- The first law commission in independent India was established in 1955, with its chairman M.C.Setalvad.
- Constitution of the 23rd Law Commission
- **The Commission will consist of**
 - A full-time Chairperson
 - four full-time Members (including Member-Secretary);
 - Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs as ex officio Member
 - Secretary, Legislative Department as ex officio Member; and not more than five part-time Members.

Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2024

- **Context:** The Union Minister of Women and Child Development launched the seventh edition of nationwide "Rashtriya Poshan Mah" at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar.

About Poshan Maah

- It is promoting community mobilization through people's participation for addressing malnutrition amongst young children and women.
 - The initiative is ensuring health and nutrition for everyone.
- It will focus on the themes of Anaemia, Growth Monitoring, Complementary Feeding, Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi, Technology for better Governance, and Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam.

About Mission Poshan 2.0

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development through its Mission Poshan 2.0, is committed to fight malnutrition among children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers across the country".
- The Poshan Maah aims to intensify efforts to combat malnutrition and promote holistic well-being across the nation.

Digital Agriculture Mission

- **Context:** Recently, the Union Cabinet Committee approved the Digital Agriculture Mission with an outlay of Rs. 2817 Crore, including the central share of Rs. 1940 Crore.

Key Facts

- It aims to nurture agri-tech start-ups by harnessing cutting-edge advancements in cloud computing, earth observation, remote sensing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence/machine learning models.
- It is conceived as an umbrella scheme to support digital agriculture initiatives, such as creating Digital Public Infrastructure, implementing the Digital General Crop Estimation Survey (DGCES), and taking up other IT initiatives by the Central Government, State Governments, and Academic and Research Institutions.
- At its core, DAM seeks to transform India's agricultural landscape by infusing it with digital nutrients.

- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Agriculture:** It aims to provide authenticated demographic details, land holdings, and crop information for cultivators and tenant farmers.
 - It's like giving each farmer a digital identity (akin to Aadhaar) – a trusted 'Kisan ki Pehchaan' (a digital Farmer ID) – while connecting them to relevant state and central government databases.
 - This data-driven approach promises innovative, farmer-centric services.

4th SEPTEMBER 2024

AgriSURE Fund & Krishi Nivesh Portal

- **Context:** The Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister launched the AgriSURE Fund and Krishi Nivesh Portal in New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- **AgriSURE Fund:** It aims to support start-ups and agripreneurs in the agriculture and allied sectors.
 - The fund will provide both equity and debt support.
 - The fund will support sector-specific, sector-agnostic, and debt AIFs.
 - It will also offer direct equity support to start-ups.
 - **Focus:** Investments will target high-risk, high-impact activities within the agriculture value chain.
 - The initiative aims to foster innovation and sustainability in India's agricultural sector.
- **Krishi Nivesh Portal:** It aims to boost agricultural investment in India.
 - The portal will serve as an integrated, centralized platform.
 - It aims to provide a one-stop solution for agri-investors.
 - The portal will help investors access various government schemes and benefits.

Operation Bhediya

- **Context:** The Uttar Pradesh government has launched Operation Bhediya to capture a pack of wolves in Bahraich district.

Key Highlights

- The forest department has initiated an innovative effort of using colourful teddy dolls soaked in children's urine as bait to capture them.
- The recently swelling Ghaghara river surfing jungles have disrupted their original habitat.
- Year 1997 saw the biggest-ever wolf attack in UP that led to the deaths of 42 children in Jaunpur.
- Indian wolves have been known to act as scavengers, preying on dead livestock.
 - However, they are known to feed on livestock when natural prey is scarce. The animals also have a history of preying on children.
- The exact numbers of the Indian wolf are not known, though estimates suggest there are between 2,000 and 3,000 individuals across Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka.
 - **IUCN Status:** Least Concern
 - Wolf is categorised as Schedule-I under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

Ramon Magsaysay Award, 2024

- **Context:** Hayao Miyazaki, the acclaimed Japanese animator and co-founder of Studio Ghibli, has been honoured with the Ramon Magsaysay Award of 2024.

About the Ramon Magsaysay Award

- It is Asia's premier prize and highest honour which recognises greatness of spirit shown in selfless service to the peoples of Asia.
- It is often referred to as Asia's Nobel Prize that recognises outstanding contributions to various fields, including environmental protection and peace.
- Awardees are annually selected by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) board of trustees
- It recognises and honours individuals and organisations in Asia, regardless of race, creed, gender, or nationality, who have achieved distinction and have helped others generously without aiming for public recognition.

Aparajita Bill

- **Context:** The West Bengal Legislative Assembly unanimously passed the Aparajita Women and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill, 2024.

Major Highlights

- It seeks changes in several sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023 so that 10 or 20-year jail terms in rape, gangrape and murder cases are replaced with death penalty or imprisonment for remaining life of the convict.
- The Bill introduces three critical elements — increased punishment, speedy investigation, and rapid dispensation of justice, specifically targeting cases of sexual assault under the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.
- The State government will form a special 'Aparajita Task Force' from among the State police to ensure time-bound completion of the probe.
- The Bill has provisions for capital punishment for those convicted of rape if their actions resulted in the victim's death or left her in a vegetative state.
- The legislation also requires that investigation into rape cases must be concluded within 21 days of the initial report.
- The bill will require Presidential assent under Article 254(2) of the Constitution to become law within the geographical jurisdiction of West Bengal.
 - According to Article 254(2), a state legislature can seek to amend an existing Union law on a subject mentioned in the Concurrent List, but it cannot become law without assent from the President.

Vishanu Yudh Abhyas

- **Context:** The central government conducted a five-day mock drill named Vishanu Yudh Abhyas (Virus War Exercise)

About Vishanu Yudh Abhyas

- The drill took place over five days in Ajmer district, Rajasthan.
- It is conducted under the National One Health Mission (NOHM).
- It aims to assess pandemic preparedness and response to zoonotic disease outbreaks.
 - Zoonotic Diseases include infections spread between people and animals, such as avian influenza, Nipah, and Zika, caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi.
- **Objective:** To evaluate the readiness and response of the National Joint Outbreak Response Team (NJORT), which includes experts from human health, animal husbandry, and wildlife sectors.
- **Outcome:** The drill provided valuable insights to improve India's preparedness and response to zoonotic disease outbreaks and promoted a coordinated and efficient approach across relevant

Smart Cities Mission

- **Context:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has said that 90% of the total projects under the Smart Cities Mission have been completed.

Key Highlights

- The remaining 10% of the projects which are at the implementation stage have been delayed due to legal issues, delays in obtaining clearances from different departments, land acquisition challenges, construction in hilly areas, and challenges in vendor and resource availability in small and medium cities.
- Out of the total 100 smart cities, 17 cities have completed 100% of their projects.
- While 75% of projects have been completed in 75 smart cities, 34 cities have completed more than 90% of the projects.

About Smart Cities Mission

- It is an initiative of the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, launched in 2015. The Mission is operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

- **Objective:** To promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment and give a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions'.
- 100 cities have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities through a two-stage competition for five years.

6th SEPTEMBER 2024

Project Strawberry

- **Context:** OpenAI is reportedly planning to release its most powerful AI model (codenamed Project Strawberry), and could integrate it into ChatGPT-5.

Key Facts

- Earlier known as Project Q* (Q-star), it has been billed as OpenAI's push to create Artificial General Intelligence with capabilities similar to that of the human brain.
- It will be able to solve math problems even if it has never been trained on them, perform high-level tasks like designing market strategies and solving complex word puzzles and do "deep research."
- It will also help the AI firm develop their next large language model (LLM) called Orion.

Assam Accord

- **Context:** The Assam government has decided to fulfill most of the recommendations of the high-powered committee appointed by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, 1985.

Key Facts

- The Assam Accord was signed in 1985 amongst Union of India, Govt. of Assam, All Assam Student of Union, All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad.
- To implement the various Clauses of Assam Accord a new Department has been established in the name of "Implementation of Assam Accord Department" during the year 1986.

- The Accord set March 24, 1971, as a cut-off. Anyone who had come to Assam before midnight on that date would be an Indian citizen, while those who had come after would be dealt with as foreigners.
- The same cut-off was used in updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
- The Assam Accord's Clause 6 says, "Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people."
 - Clause 6 focuses on protecting the cultural, social, and linguistic identity of the Assamese people.

7th SEPTEMBER 2024

Africa Urban Forum

- **Context:** African bureaucrats and development experts have gathered in Ethiopia for the inaugural African Urban Forum (AUF)

About Africa Urban Forum

- It is a continental platform that promotes sustainable development in African human settlements.
- It is a platform through which governments collaborate to enhance African cities, enabling them to fulfill their potential as centers of hope, growth, and prosperity.
- The African Union Commission and its member-states established the Africa Urban Forum in 2022 in response to the rising consciousness of the rapid urbanization in Africa, its opportunities, & challenges, and the need to create a continental scale forum to support an inclusive and holistic approach to unlocking the potential of urbanization in the continent.

National Awards for e-Governance

- **Context:** Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) has received the The national awards for e-governance by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).

Key Facts

- The objective of the award is to recognise and promote excellence in implementation of e-Governance initiatives and to encourage innovation in successful e-Governance solutions.
- ONDC is an initiative of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- It aims to promote an open platform for all aspects of e-commerce retail and help small retailers expand their business through e-commerce medium and reduce dominance of giants in the sector.
- The network is now enabling more than 12 million orders per month, spread across categories ranging from fashion to electronics in products, and ride-hailing to metro ticketing in services.
- Over 6 lakh sellers across India have been onboarded so far.

National Exit Test (NExT)

- **Context:** National Exit Test (NExT) for Ayush to be Effective from 2021-2022 Batch.

Key Facts

- The test is mandatory for licensing and enrollment in State or National Registers after completing a one-year internship.
- This will grant license to practice as medical practitioner of respective discipline of Indian system of medicine

- The National Exit Test (NeXT) is required to be conducted by the Commissions under the provisions of National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) Act 2020 and the National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH) Act, 2020.

Eastern Economic Forum

- **Context:** The Eastern Economic Forum 2024 was held in Vladivostok, Russia.

About Eastern Economic Forum

- It is an annual international event held in Vladivostok, Russia, since 2015.
- Its primary aim is to promote economic development in the Russian Far East and to encourage investment, collaboration, and cooperation between Russia and Asia-Pacific nations.
- The forum brings together government officials, business leaders, investors, and policymakers to discuss key economic issues, opportunities in various sectors, and enhance regional connectivity.
- It plays a vital role in shaping economic diplomacy and fostering partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region.
- It borders two oceans, the Pacific and the Arctic, and five countries (China, Japan, Mongolia, the United States and North Korea).

