

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 01-09-2023

Combined Index of Eight Core Industries increases by 8.0% (provisional) in July 2023 as compared to the Index of July 2022

Eight Core Industries (Weightage)



Coal (10.33%)



Crude Oil (8.98%)



Natural Gas (6.88%)



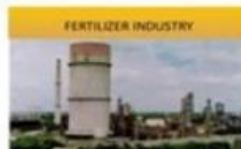
Refinery (28.04%)



Steel (17.92%)



Cement (5.37%)



Fertilizer (2.63%)



Electricity (19.85%)

INDEX OF EIGHT CORE INDUSTRIES (BASE: 2011-12=100) FOR JULY, 2023

The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increased by 8.0 per cent (provisional) in July 2023 as compared to the Index of July 2022.

The production of Coal, Steel, Natural Gas, Cement, Electricity, Refinery Products, Fertilizers and Crude Oil increased in July 2023 over the corresponding month of last year. Details of annual and monthly indices and growth rates are provided at Annex I & II respectively.

ICI measures combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries viz. Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity. The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for April 2023 is revised to 4.6 per cent from its provisional level 3.5 per cent. The cumulative growth rate of ICI during April to July, 2023-24 reported 6.4 per cent (provisional) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The summary of the Index of Eight Core Industries is given below:

Coal - Coal production (weight: 10.33 per cent) increased by 14.9 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 10.1 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of the previous year.



Crude Oil - Crude Oil production (weight: 8.98 per cent) increased by 2.1 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index declined by 1.0 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Natural Gas - Natural Gas production (weight: 6.88 per cent) increased by 8.9 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 2.3 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Petroleum Refinery Products - Petroleum Refinery production (weight: 28.04 per cent) increased by 3.6 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 2.3 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Fertilizers - Fertilizer production (weight: 2.63 per cent) increased by 3.3 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 9.1 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Steel - Steel production (weight: 17.92 per cent) increased by 13.5 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 15.3 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Cement - Cement production (weight: 5.37 per cent) increased by 7.1 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 11.2 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Electricity - Electricity generation (weight: 19.85 per cent) increased by 6.9 per cent in July, 2023 over July, 2022. Its cumulative index increased by 2.7 per cent during April to July, 2023-24 over the corresponding period of previous year.

ASI to launch “Adopt a Heritage 2.0 programme” Indian Heritage app and e-permission portal on 4th September 2023

The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) has 3696 monuments under protection, which are spread throughout the country. These monuments not only exhibit the rich cultural heritage of India but also play a significant role in fostering economic growth. In order to sustain the rich cultural legacy, the heritage sites require time to time enhancement of the amenities. To this end and to further enhance the experience of visitors, ASI will be launching “**Adopt a Heritage 2.0**” programme on 4th September 2023 at Samvet Auditorium, IGNCA, New Delhi. Under this programme, ASI invites corporate stakeholders to enhance the amenities at the monuments by utilizing their CSR funds.

The programme is a revamped version of the earlier scheme launched in 2017 and clearly defines the amenities sought for different monuments as per AMASR Act 1958. The stakeholders can apply for adopting a monument or specific amenity/ amenities at a monument through a dedicated web portal with URL www.indianheritage.gov.in, which contains details of monuments sought for adoption along with gap analysis and financial estimation of amenities.

The selected stakeholders will develop, provide and/or maintain amenities in hygiene, accessibility, safety and knowledge categories. In doing so, they will get an opportunity to be recognized as a responsible and heritage-friendly entity. The term of the appointment will be for a period of five years initially, which may be further extended up to five years.

Further, a user-friendly mobile app, named ‘**Indian Heritage**’ will be launched on the same day, which will showcase the heritage monuments of India. The app will feature state-wise details of monuments along with photographs, list of public amenities available, geo-tagged location and feedback mechanism for citizens. The launch will be in a phased manner, with the ticketed monuments launched in Phase I, followed by the remaining monuments. An e-permission portal, with URL www.asipermisionportal.gov.in for obtaining permission for photography, filming and developmental projects on monuments will also be launched. The portal will fast-track the process for obtaining various permissions and solve operational and logistical bottlenecks involved.

INDIAN NAVY STEPS UP PREPARATIONS FOR SAGAR PARIKRAMA IV

The Indian Navy signalled the formal commencement of its preparations for Sagar Parikrama IV at Goa on 27 Aug 23.



As part of the same, the Ocean Sailing Node signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Cdr Abhilash Tomy (Retd), the ace circumnavigator and Golden Globe Race hero, to be Mentor and Coach to the two volunteer women officers, Lt Cdr Dilna and Lt Cdr Roopa, who will form the team undertaking the circumnavigation sailing expedition on Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini next year.

Swaminathan congratulated the two women officers for their impressive ocean sailing feats and wished them the very best for their preparation for Sagar Parikrama IV. He also thanked Cdr Abhilash Tomy on behalf of the Indian Navy for his steadfast support to its ocean sailing endeavour.

Over the coming months, the two officers will train rigorously for the challenging mission under Cdr Tomy’s tutelage, including undertaking several short and long sailing voyages in the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. Cdr Tomy would also be mentoring participants of other sailing expeditions and share his experiences at the training establishments through motivational talks with the trainees.

Sagar Parikrama IV will be a never-attempted-before venture and a significant step in India's ocean sailing enterprise.

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project

The Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) has made fresh allegations of stock manipulation against the Adani Group.



- The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) is a global network of investigative journalists with staff on six continents.
- It was founded in 2006 and specialises in organised crime and corruption.
- OCCRP works with and supports 50+ independent media outlets in Europe, Africa, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.
- Initially funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), the OCCRP network first opened an office in Sarajevo.
- The idea is to have a global network of journalists with easy communication and information-sharing so that global networks of corruption and crime can be better understood and exposed.
- The OCCRP is supported both by state and non-state institutional actors, as well as smaller individual donors.

Haryana's Parivar Pehchan Patra

A political party announced plans to scrap the current government's flagship Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) scheme.

About Parivar Pehchan Patra

Under the PPP, a unique eight-digit Identity number is issued to each family as a single unit.

- Any family residing in Haryana is required to enroll in the PPP to avail various government services and social security schemes.
- The PPP ID can be made through three channels:

1. Common Service Centers managed by Village Level Entrepreneurs,



2. SARAL Kendra managed by the state government, and
 3. through PPP operators registered for data collection.
- The data for a family is collected on the basis of a signed self-declaration made by an adult member.

How is the PPP different from the Aadhaar card?

- It is many times more complicated than Aadhaar in its delivery.
- Aadhaar primarily keeps unique identity information, whereas PPP goes far beyond to maintain socio-economic information besides the unique identity information.
- Aadhaar does not verify any data except identity, but the PPP verifies every information field available with it through specific procedure.

International organisations and India

As India will soon host the annual G20 summit in New Delhi, here are some other notable groupings that India is a part of and what is their mandate.

India is member of the following international organisations:

World Bank Group

The World Bank is a developmental institution. It was established with the aim of eradicating poverty and improving living standards for vulnerable people, by promoting sustainable development through loans, guarantees, risk management products, and advisory services. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations.

It further includes:

The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or the World Bank.

IBRD was established in 1945 and has 189 members at present.

- Its aim is to promote sustainable development, through loans, guarantees, etc.
- The IBRD is owned by the member countries whose voting power is linked to its capital subscription based on the country's relative economic strength.
- This forms the basis of their votes' weightage.
- The US has the largest vote share at around 15 per cent, with India at 3.08 per cent.

The International Development Association (IDA).

- IDA was established in 1960 and currently has 174 member countries.
- IDA is the concessional arm of the World Bank and plays a key role in supporting the Bank's poverty reduction mission.



- IDA's assistance is focused on the world's 79 poorest countries, to which it provides interest-free loans or low-interest loans (known as 'credits') and other non-lending services.

International Finance Corporation (IFC).

- Established in 1956, it is owned by 186 member countries, a group that collectively determines the policies.
- It works in more than 100 developing countries, allowing companies and financial institutions in emerging markets to create jobs, generate tax revenues, and improve corporate governance and environmental performance.

Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

- In 1988, an international convention established MIGA and it now has 182 countries with its membership.
- MIGA was created to complement public and private sources of investment insurance against non-commercial risks in developing countries.
- Its mission is to promote foreign direct investment (FDI) into developing countries to help support economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve people's lives.

International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

- ICSID is an autonomous international institution with over 160 member States.
- This is the only World Bank institution that does not have India as a signatory to it.
- The primary purpose of ICSID is to provide facilities for conciliation and arbitration of international investment disputes.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established along with the World Bank at the Conference of 44 nations held at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA, in July 1944.
- It was created to promote international monetary cooperation, for the balanced growth of international trade, promote exchange stability and to help establish a multilateral system of payments. It has 190 members at present.
- India's current quota in the IMF is SDR (Special Drawing Rights) 13,114.4 million, giving it a shareholding of 2.63 per cent.
- The Finance Minister is the ex-officio Governor on the Board of Governors of the IMF.

RBI Governor is the Alternate Governor at the IMF.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- India became a member of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as a founding member in 1966.
- The Bank is engaged in promoting the economic and social progress of its developing member countries (DMCs) in the Asia Pacific Region.



- The main instruments that it uses to do this are loans and equity investments, providing technical assistance for development projects and programs, along with other advisory services, loan guarantees, grants and policy dialogues.
- ADB has 68 members, with its headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

Significance for India:

- India holds 6.317 per cent of shares, with 5.347 per cent voting rights.
- Between 1986 and 1996, ADB provided assistance mainly for India's national programs through central public utilities in the transport and energy sectors.
- In the mid-1990s, the ADB began to shift focus to state-level operations in the transport, power, and urban sectors.

World Trade Organisation (WTO)

- The WTO began in 1995.
- Since 1948, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) provided the rules for a global system and was later replaced by the WTO.
- India has been a member since its inception.
- WTO also serves as a forum for its members to negotiate trade agreements and resolve the trade problems they face with each other.

Significance for India:

According to the Trade Promotion Council of India, India is involved in a number of trade disputes:

most related to its concern regarding developed nations like the United States raising objections to India's protections for its producers.

This mechanism for resolving disputes stopped functioning in 2019, but India is seeking its re-establishment based on the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility'.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- It was one of the major outcomes of the 1974 World Food Conference in Rome.
- The conference was organised by the United Nations in response to the food crises of the early 1970s, when global food shortages were causing widespread famine and malnutrition.
- The Fund shall provide financing primarily for projects and programmes specifically designed to introduce, expand or improve food production systems and to strengthen related policies and institutions.

Significance for India:

India is its founding member and the largest recipient of IFAD investments.

Its contributions to IFAD's regular resources amount to over US \$218.2 million.

Projects in states such as Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Mizoram and Odisha range from developing women's enterprises to programmes for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).



The Convergence of Agricultural Interventions in Maharashtra's Distressed Districts Programme led to partnerships with the private sector, to link farmers with input and output markets and aid contract farming arrangements with multiple market players.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

- Established in 1991 on the eve of the 1992 Rio Summit, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides grant funds to developing countries for projects and activities that aim to protect the global environment.
- This is to cover areas like biodiversity, climate change, international waters, ozone depletion, land degradation, desertification, deforestation and persistent organic pollutants.
- GEF is a global partnership among 185 member countries, international institutions, NGOs and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives.
- It further assists countries in meeting their obligations under the conventions that they have signed and ratified.

Responsibility for implementing GEF activities is shared by:

the United Nations Development Program (UNDP),

the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP),

the World Bank and some other agencies.

GEF was to serve as the financial mechanism for five international environmental conventions:

- the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),
- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
- the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs),
- the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and
- Minamata Convention on Mercury.

African Development Bank (AfDB)

- The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) comprises:
- the African Development Bank,
- the African Development Fund and
- the Nigeria Trust Fund.
- It was established in 1963.

India was one of the first few countries to become a non-regional member, in 1983.

Significance for India:

- Apart from trade, India has undertaken significant investment initiatives in recent years to strengthen its strategic partnership with Africa, and has become one of the largest investors, mainly in energy, construction, ICT, and the railway and auto industries.



- India's voting share is only 0.233 per cent.

Regional organisations:

- Regional organisations are also international organisations, as they **incorporate international membership** and encompass geopolitical entities that operationally transcend a single nation-state.
- Due to India's geographical expansion and diversity, **major regional organisations** that took part in its growth are:
 - **SAARC**- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation,
 - **BIMSTEC**- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation,
 - **BRICS**- Brazil Russia India China and South Africa (recently expanded to include six new countries - Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, Argentina and Egypt).

Significance of international organisations for India and vice-versa:

- **Impact on national development:**
 - India has served as a **distinguished** and often **founding member** of many international organisations.
 - International organisations play a central role that **positively or negatively impacts** a nation's **political and socio-economic development**.
 - International organisations **work towards different ends** and, depending on their respective interests, states choose to join them.
- **A challenge to unipolar ideology:**
 - In pursuit of the goal of the **multilateral world order**, India uses international organisations as a **platform to challenge the unipolar world**.
 - One of the tenets of **India's foreign policy**, and rightly so, is **confidence in the United Nations**.
 - On the other hand, India has **availed the services** of international institutions by **taking loans**, especially from World Bank, IMF, Asian Development Bank etc., for its development purposes.
 - However, the **structure of the U.N. Security Council** has **not been broadened** since its inception **despite the representations** of certain nations such as **India, Germany, Japan and Brazil** that argue they are qualified for permanent membership.

Formation of regional organisations:



- India has been one of the precursors of some organisations, for instance, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- India has been diversifying its interests in the maritime domain by forming the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in order to strengthen regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean Region.
- It has also co-founded the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to promote shared and accelerated growth through cooperation amongst regional countries.

Representation in the International Court of Justice:

- One of the significant victories of India's diplomacy was the re-election of Dalbir Bhandari to the post of judge in the International Court of Justice.
- The victory underscored India's increasing importance in the changing world order, as it bolstered its diplomatic mission to seek support not only from the West but also from developing countries.

Non-Permanent member of UNSC:

- In 2021, India managed to get its eighth two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- Here India hosted United Nations Security Council members for a special meeting on counter-terrorism in 2022.

Leadership of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

- India has taken over the SCO Presidency until September 2023.
- At the SCO summit in Samarkand, India emphasized the transformation of India into a manufacturing hub and the role of the SCO in the post-Covid-19 era, especially in revitalizing the economy and strengthening supply chains.

New initiatives:

India has played a leading role in **advocating for new initiatives**.

International Millet Year:

India's efforts to observe an International Millet Year in 2023 were endorsed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the U.N. General Assembly.

Formation of ISA:

- In the realm of sustainable power generation India, along with France, has initiated the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- It is an initiative of India which is India's first international and inter-governmental organization.
- It is aimed at the establishment of a platform where the solar resource-rich countries can come together to promote renewable and clean energy, thereby contributing to the mitigation of climate change.

Global Solar Network project:

It was during CoP26 that India and the United Kingdom launched the Global Solar Network Project, which the United States backed.



Significance of G20:

- G20 is crucial for India because it brings together the P5 countries of the United Nations Security Council, all the G7 members, members of NAFTA and all BRICS members.
- During its presidency, India must narrow the existing differences in international politics and promote shared interests.
- India has to bring in highly polarized democracies and authoritarian regimes together, given that it has so far balanced its relations with both sides and can therefore act as a mediator.
- India has to deal with rising food and energy prices which are leading to political instability in major economies.
- Another responsibility rests with India, namely the addition of the African Union in the G20 group, in order to make it more inclusive and to give representation to Africa as a whole.

Other roles played by India in international organisations:

- In addition, India has taken a leading role in institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Conference of the Parties (CoP) summits, where India represents the interests of developing and least-developed countries.
- At the WTO India has consistently supported rules-based global trade governance.
- For protecting its geo-economic interests at the WTO, India still strongly supports higher levels of protectionist policies.
- At the same time, the country objects to any inclusion of non-trade issues.

Way forward:

- Since its independence, India has actively participated in international organisations and tried to make the U.N., WTO, IMF and other major international ones more inclusive by better representing the interests of developing and underdeveloped countries.
- India has sought alternatives to Western-dominated international institutions, such as the BRICS while maintaining good relations with ASEAN, the European Union and several others.
- India needs to increase its emphasis on diplomatic sensitization so that it can more effectively engage with international organizations.
- India has been collaborating with multilateral agencies worldwide to achieve its goals and enhance its interaction and dialogue to find global solutions to political and economic problems and advance its national interest.

Ramon Magsaysay award

Assam-based oncologist Ravi Kannan wins 2023 Ramon Magsaysay award



About the award:

- It was established in 1957.
- It was founded to preserve former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance and idealism in a democratic society.
- It was funded by the Rockefeller Brothers trustees with Philippine government's agreement.
- Ramon Magsaysay was the third president of the Philippines after World War II.
- The foundation gives the prize to Asians achieving excellence in their field.

Selection and presentation

- The Award 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.
- The trustees of the foundation annually select the awardees who are then presented with a certificate and a medal.
- The first Ramon Magsaysay Awards were given to five individuals working in India, Indonesia, the Philippines, China (Taiwan) and Sri Lanka, and a Philippine-based organisation.

Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) report for 2023





The world's 50 most polluted regions belong to the Northern Plains of India, showed the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) report for 2023 by the

Seven states and Union territories that include Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, comprise a majority of this region.

- They also face the greatest health burden due to particulate pollution in India.
- In north India, fine particulate air pollution (particulate matter 2.5) shortens lives by eight years.
- This underscores the outsized benefits effective pollution policy would have, allowing residents of north India to gain 4.2 billion life years in total.

Delhi is the most polluted city in India and the world.

- All of the 521.2 million people living in the Northern Plains — 38.9 per cent of India's population — live in areas where the annual average particulate pollution level is 17.3 times higher than the WHO guideline.
- The particulate pollution in the Northern Plains is exacerbated by geological and meteorological factors.
- The AQLI's dust and sea salt-removed PM2.5 data implies that human activity plays a key role in generating the severe particulate pollution that these residents face.
- This is likely due to the fact that the region's population density is nearly three times that of the rest of the country, meaning more pollution from vehicular, residential and agricultural sources.
- A denser population also means more human lives are impacted by each pollution source.

About AQLI:

- AQLI is a pollution index that translates particulate air pollution into its impact on life expectancy.
- It is developed by the University of Chicago.
- The AQLI is rooted in research that quantifies the causal relationship between long-term human exposure to air pollution and life expectancy.
- The index then combines this research with hyper-localised, satellite measurements of global particulate matter (PM2.5), yielding unprecedented insight into the true cost of pollution in communities around the world.
- The index also illustrates how air pollution policies can increase life expectancy when they meet the WHO's guideline for what is considered a safe level of exposure, existing national air quality standards or user-defined air quality levels.