

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 06-10-2023

UAE-India MoU to drive investment and collaboration in industry and advanced technologies.



- UAE and India to collaborate in Industry and Advanced Technology, including Supply Chain Resilience, Clean Energy Technology, Healthcare, Space, Industry 4.0 and industrial standards.
- Agreement also aims to accelerate development of technologies that can help decarbonize industry and advance renewable energy.
- The UAE and India will cooperate more closely in sustainable industrial development following a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed on Thursday at Emirates Palace.

Focusing on facilitating industrial investments, technology transfer and enabling the deployment of key technologies in industries, the MoU will benefit both countries through joint industrial and technological developments. In line with the UAE leadership's vision, we are committed to strengthening bilateral relations to enhance sustainable and economic growth. Given the UAE's strong relationship with India across the economic, technological, and social domains, we are pleased to sign this MoU to further develop the industrial sector in line with advanced technology and sustainability standards. This aligns with the objectives of the national industrial strategy, and 'Make it in the Emirates'

initiative, aimed at transforming the UAE into a global hub for advanced industry, especially industries of the future.”

- The MoU encompasses various aspects of cooperation aimed at promoting industrial investments in priority sectors for the national economies of both countries.
- including advanced industries, energy transition solutions, healthcare, and space. It also aims to develop innovative and technological solutions that support sustainability and climate neutrality efforts.
- By working closely within these strategic sectors, the UAE and India can accelerate sustainable growth and diversify their economies, promoting industries that are more competitive, efficient, and sustainable.”
- The MoU focuses on seven key areas, including supply chain resilience, renewable energy and energy efficiency, health and life sciences, space systems, AI, Industry 4.0 and advanced technologies, as well as standardization and metrology.
- To build supply chain resilience, the UAE and India will collaborate to identify opportunities to supply raw materials. They will also share best practices on industrial enablement and incentivization for industrial growth and development, for instance in areas such as energy, land, CAPEX, OPEX, technology, and labor.

Citizens can now become drone pilots with any government issued identity and address proof.

- Exercising the power bestowed upon it by section 5, sub-section 2 of section 10 and sections 10A, 10B, and 12A of the Aircraft Act, 1934 (22 of 1934), the Ministry of Civil Aviation has notified the new Drone (Amendment) Rules 2023 for drone pilots. After the amendment, it has now been made clear that a

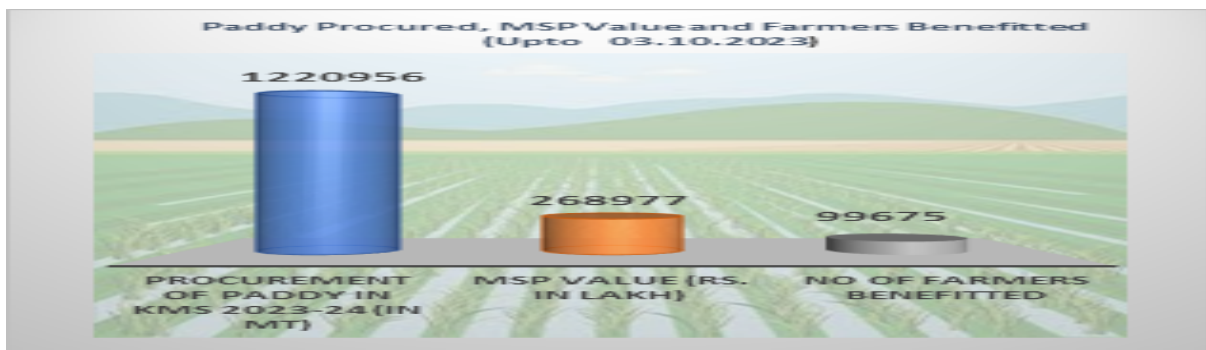
Government issued proof of identity and a government issued proof of address i.e. Voter ID, Ration Card or Driving License can now be accepted to apply for a Remote Pilot Certificate if the drone pilot does not have a passport.



- The prerequisite of having a passport was becoming a hurdle for aspiring drone pilots especially in the agricultural sector across rural India. This effort is to further liberalise, promote and facilitate drone operations across the country and make India a global drone hub by 2030.
- The rule is effective from the 27th of September 2023.

12.21 LMT paddy procured in Kharif Marketing Season 2023-24 in three states benefitting 99,675 farmers

Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2023-24 has commenced recently and upto 03.10.2023, a quantity of 12.21 LMT of paddy has been procured in the states of Tamil Nadu, Punjab & Haryana, benefitting 99,675 farmers with MSP (Minimum Support Price) value of ₹2689.77 crore.



World Cerebral Palsy Day will be celebrated on 6th October

- World Cerebral Palsy Day is a global observance that shines a spotlight on cerebral palsy (CP) and its impact on individuals, families, and communities.
- Celebrated every year on **October 6th**, this day serves as a platform to raise awareness about CP, support those living with the condition, and advocate for greater inclusion and understanding.



- Children and adults affected by cerebral palsy often face challenges that hinder their full participation in society.
- The day sheds light on the need for increased awareness, understanding and support for those with cerebral palsy.
- The theme for World Cerebral Palsy Day in 2023 is “Together Stronger.” This theme highlights the importance of unity, collaboration, and mutual support within the cerebral palsy community and beyond.
- It emphasizes that when individuals, families, caregivers, and communities come together, they become a powerful force for positive change and inclusion.

Ministry of Power reviews impact of flash floods in Teesta Basin, Sikkim on Central Hydro Power Projects



Central Government to make a detailed assessment of damage to hydropower projects after the flood water recedes.

NHPC taking all possible measures to get the hydropower projects operational at the earliest.

The Power Ministry is continuously monitoring the situation arising out of flash floods in Teesta Basin in Sikkim

Teesta Basin

- Due to flash floods in the Teesta Basin in the intervening night of 3rd and 4th October 2023, all the bridges downstream to Teesta-V Hydropower Station upto Tarkhola/ Pamphok have been submerged/ washed out thus severely affecting commutation and communication in these areas.
- The flood water over topped the Dam of Teesta V Power Station (510 MW). All connecting roads to the project sites as well as parts of residential colony have been severely damaged.
- Presently, the power station is under shutdown and not generating electricity. NHPC had timely evacuated the manpower on all its projects and ensured that they are shifted to safer places. However, one casualty is reported from Teesta V power station.

Quantum damage

The quantum of damage at all the projects sites will be assessed in detail after the water level recedes. NHPC is making all possible efforts with the help of the state government, disaster management authorities and district administration to maintain the supply of essential commodities like food, medicine, electricity etc. in the affected regions.

18 lakh crores invested since 2014 in the transformation of our cities and towns

Emphasis being laid on providing Urban Local Bodies with greater financial resources and access.

National Workshop on Capacity Building of Urban Local Bodies organized. Annual Capacity Building Plan of MoHUA and six cities released, along with Toolkit for development of Capacity Building Plans of ULBs.



Highlighting the purpose of the Capacity Building Workshop, the Minister said that through this workshop, we aim to cultivate a unified approach towards capacity building for all the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across the country.

Referring to the initiatives undertaken by Government of India for Urban Development since 2014, Shri Puri said that the Prime Minister has brought about a revolution in India's urban development paradigm. More than Rs. 18 lakh crores have been invested since 2014 in the transformation of our cities and towns.

The Minister said that through the AMRUT mission, the government has pressed for cities to go to the markets to raise capital investment. 12 cities have raised more than Rs. 4,384 crores through municipal bonds. Such actions have increased ULB creditworthiness and made them attractive investment destinations, he said.

The government has disbursed funds directly to state governments to undertake urban planning reforms. The reforms such as modernisation of building bye laws; transit-oriented development; adoption of Transferable Development Rights; integration of blue and green infrastructure through nature-based solutions; affordable Housing through in-situ rehabilitation; increased capacity building and recruitment; GIS-based master planning; and Online Building Permission Systems (OBPS) have been prioritised.

The workshop is a crucial step towards realizing the goals of Mission Karmayogi, Prime Minister's vision of a *Naya Bharat* and ensuring that ULBs across the country are equipped to contribute effectively to national development and governance.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Capacity Building Commission remain committed to these objectives and look forward to further collaborative efforts.

About Mission Karmayogi

The Government of India launched the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) - Mission Karmayogi to promote citizen-centred governance and facilitates a shift from a 'rule-based' to a 'role-based' learning system, emphasizing competency-driven capacity building and human resource management.

It is a visionary initiative of Hon'ble Prime Minister and is designed to revolutionize and reinforce the capacity-building framework within the Indian bureaucracy. This mission seeks to equip civil servants with the necessary skills, knowledge, and mindset to contribute to the nation's development and governance effectively. It is committed to realizing the Prime Minister's vision for a reformed civil service, essential to meet the aspirations of a rapidly evolving nation.

BlueWalker 3 satellite

It is a prototype satellite, part of a satellite constellation planned by its owner AST SpaceMobile.

It was one of the brightest objects in the night sky, outshining all the brightest stars.

It was launched in September 2022.

It is the largest-ever commercial communications array deployed in low-Earth orbit and is designed to communicate directly with cellular devices via 3GPP standard frequencies at 5G speeds.

It uses wavelengths close to those that radio telescopes observe in, the satellite could also hamper radio astronomy.

What is satellite constellation?

It is a group of artificial satellites working together as a system.

Unlike a single satellite, a constellation can provide permanent global or near-global coverage, such that at any time everywhere on Earth at least one satellite is visible.

Satellites are typically placed in sets of complementary orbital planes and connect to globally distributed ground stations. They may also use inter-satellite communication.

Hakki Pikki Tribe



Hakki Pikkis (Hakki in Kannada means ‘bird’ and Pikki means ‘catchers’) are a semi-nomadic tribe, traditionally of bird catchers and hunters.

It is one of the major tribal communities in Karnataka. They also reside in the Western and Southern states of India, mostly near forest areas.

The community migrated from Northern India, mainly Gujarat and Rajasthan, and is now mainly concentrated in Shivamogga, Davanagere, and Mysuru district of Karnataka.

They are recognized as a Scheduled Tribe in India.

Occupation:

After the implementation of stricter wildlife laws, the tribe changed its occupation from hunting to selling spices, flowers, Ayurveda formulations, and herbal oils.

They now travel globally to sell these products, especially in the African continent, where there is a demand for cheaper alternatives to Western medicine.

Language:

Despite being surrounded by Dravidian languages and living in southern India, the community speaks an Indo-Aryan language.

Their mother tongue was designated as 'Vaagri' by scholars.

UNESCO has listed 'Vaagri' as one of the endangered languages.

Rituals and customs:

The tribe follows Hindu traditions and celebrates Hindu festivals.

The tribe prefers cross-cousin marriages. The society is matriarchal, where the groom gives dowry to the bride's family.

The eldest son in a family is not supposed to cut his hair so that he can be identified easily.

They are non-vegetarians.

Counting Rural Women's Labour

The issue of low female labour force participation rate (LFPR) is an old one and has been a subject of extensive deliberation.



As the International Day of Rural Women approaches, it is disheartening to note that India not only recorded one of the lowest female LFPR in the world, but that it was also lower than other South Asian countries except Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

LFPR is defined as the percentage of persons in labour force (working or seeking or available for work) in the population.

The female LFPR (FLFPR) is the percentage of working-age women currently employed or seeking employment.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Data for Women

The PLFS data indicates that for women in the working age group (15-59 years), LFPR is only 35.6 per cent in India in 2021-22.

The participation rate stands at 39.3 per cent and 26.5 per cent, respectively, in rural and urban areas.

However, from 2017 to 2021, women's LFPR increased relative to men, particularly in rural areas.

Reason Behind Increased LFPR for Rural Women

Larger engagement in Agriculture and Allied Activities: Nearly three-fourth of rural working women were involved in agriculture and allied activities

Increase in Self Employment: Education and age group-wise classification of LFPR reveals that the recent increase in rural women's LFPR is entirely explained by the increase in self-employment.

Challenges Faced by Rural Women Workforce

Higher Gender Wage Gap

Rural women working as regular and casual wage workers faced a higher gender wage gap compared to urban women.

Self-employed women received less than half of men's earnings, indicating a higher gender earning gap as compared to other categories of workers in rural areas.

For the self-employed, this gap has further deteriorated from 2017 to 2021.

No Acknowledgment of Domestic Unpaid Work

A significant proportion of women are involved in unpaid but essential activities and are not considered within the labour force in India.

In rural areas, one third of women remained engaged in unpaid domestic chores in 2021-22.

The Time Use Survey (2019) reveals that on average, women spend over five hours every day in unpaid domestic services and more than two hours in unpaid caregiving services in rural areas which is substantially more than men.

Rural women also spend over seven hours every day growing crops for the market and household use in 2019.

Gender Disparity in Ownership of Landholdings

Despite women's crucial role in agriculture, the agriculture census (2015-16) reported that only 14.7 per cent of the operational landholdings were owned by women.

There is also a concentration of operational holdings (57 per cent) by women in the marginal and small holding categories.

Owning land can enable women to get access to different agricultural schemes, compensation, and relief measures in case of crop loss to sustain their livelihood.

Women Are Lesser Beneficiaries than Men of Government Schemes

Various schemes, such as the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) and PM Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), are initiated by the Union government under the income support and risk management category

But, the gender-wise beneficiary data highlights that only 15 per cent women farmers received financial support from PMFBY in 2023 and only 25 per cent women farmers received financial benefit under PM-KISAN.

Since landowning is the major criterion for getting benefits of these two schemes, many women farmers end up excluded.

Suggestions for the Government to Increase Female LFPR in Rural Areas

Better Support and Targeted Incentives for Women

For India to truly reap the rewards of its vast workforce, the country needs to create a system that adequately supports and incentivises the female workers.

India has an immense potential to create a thriving and prosperous workforce due to its vast talent pool.

Increasing Women's Mobility

Increasing women's mobility encourages them to continue their education and participate in the labour force.

For instance, Bihar's bicycle programme, which provides girls in grade 9 with money to buy bicycles.

Studies found the programme reduced the gender gap in age-appropriate secondary school enrolment by 40% and it led to a 32% increase in enrolment of girls in secondary school.

Easy Access to Microfinance: Greater access to microfinance loans lead to a significant increase in female labour force participation with the effect driven by self-employment and not by salaried jobs.

CAPE TOWN CONVENTION AND IDERAs

Government notification exempting transactions and agreements related to aircraft, aircraft engines, airframes, and helicopters from certain sections of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).



The exemption from the IBC's moratorium on asset recovery provides much-needed relief to aircraft leasing firms. These firms had faced difficulties in repossessing their aircraft from airlines like Go First when the latter filed for insolvency. The inability to recover assets had adversely affected the reputation of India as an aviation market among global aircraft financiers and lessors.

Cape Town Convention and IDERAs

The Cape Town Convention (CTC) and its associated protocols, including the Aircraft Protocol, play a crucial role in the international aviation industry by providing a legal framework for the financing and leasing of high-value mobile assets like aircraft.

The Irrevocable De-Registration and Export Request Authorisation (IDERA) is a key feature of the Aircraft Protocol, designed to enhance the security and rights of creditors and lessors in the event of default or insolvency of the aircraft owner or operator.

Key points about the Cape Town Convention and IDERAs

Purpose of CTC and Aircraft Protocol: The CTC and its protocols were established to create a standardized legal framework that promotes the financing and leasing of high-value mobile assets while safeguarding the interests of creditors and lessors.

The Aircraft Protocol, a part of the CTC, specifically deals with aircraft and helicopters that meet certain criteria in terms of size and capacity.

IDERA: An IDERA is a critical tool provided by the Aircraft Protocol. It allows the owner of an aircraft to authorize a creditor or lessor to de-register and export the aircraft from the country where it is registered without needing the owner's consent. Importantly, an IDERA is irrevocable, meaning it cannot be cancelled or withdrawn by the owner once issued.

IDERAs provide greater security and certainty to creditors and lessors. They allow for the swift and efficient repossession and recovery of the aircraft in the event of default or insolvency, reducing the need for lengthy legal processes or interference from local authorities.

Challenges in India

While India ratified the CTC and the Aircraft Protocol in 2008, the full implementation of these agreements has faced challenges, as mentioned in the text. These challenges include issues with the clarity and consistency of procedures for IDERAs, delays in obtaining necessary approvals, conflicts with local laws such as the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), and reluctance by some Indian courts to recognize and enforce IDERAs.

Impact on Aviation Financing

These challenges have affected the confidence of creditors and lessors in the Indian aviation market. The case of Go First, mentioned in the text, illustrates the practical difficulties faced by creditors and lessors when attempting to enforce their IDERAs.

Way Forward

To enhance its reputation as an attractive destination for aviation financing and leasing, India needs to address these challenges. This includes aligning its legal and regulatory framework more effectively with the CTC and its protocols and ensuring timely and effective enforcement of IDERAs. Achieving this would benefit the Indian aviation industry by improving access to capital, reducing costs, and facilitating fleet expansion.

PUSA-44

Recently, Punjab Chief Minister announced that the state will ban the cultivation of the PUSA-44 paddy variety from next year onwards.



About PUSA-44:

It is a paddy variety which was developed in 1993 by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

By the end of 2010s, it had gained widespread popularity among farmers across the Punjab, covering approximately 70 to 80% of the area under paddy cultivation.

Farmers claim that PUSA-44 yields nearly 85 to 100 mann (34 to 40 quintals) per acre, while other varieties' yield average is 28 to 30 quintals per acre.

Concerns

It is a long-duration variety, taking around 160 days to mature.

This is around 35 to 40 days more than other varieties, requiring 5-6 extra cycles of irrigation.



With Punjab facing severe groundwater depletion and the availability of short-duration paddy varieties, the government aims to conserve one month of irrigation water by banning the variety.

Moreover, this variety is also known to exacerbate the long-running issue of stubble burning in the state.

This variety generates around 2 per cent more stubble than short varieties, which becomes a significant concern when cultivated on a large scale.

Key facts about the ICAR

It is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

It was formerly known as Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

It was established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 in pursuance of the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture.

The Council is the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.

With 113 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world.

Headquarters: New Delhi.