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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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# HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Social Issues)

## Produce full Hema panel report: HC

Kerala High Court admits PIL for registering criminal cases for sexual exploitation and harassment of women in Malayalam film industry; it adds that if govt. does not take any action, all exercise done to constitute the committee will become futile

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday admitted a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking a directive to the Kerala government to initiate criminal proceedings against those who had committed sexual exploitation and harassment of women in the film industry as found by the Justice K. Hema Committee.

The court also directed the State government to produce a copy of the entire report of the committee in a sealed cover before it.

The Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque and Justice S. Manu observed that if any cognizable offence is disclosed in the committee report, whether a criminal action is necessary or not is to be decided by the court.

**No complaints**

The State government is, as of now, unable to proceed in this matter for the simple reason that no one has come forward with a complaint. But the fact remains that the report discloses sexual exploitation and harassment of women.

"How to protect these vulnerable women and what action can be taken against the perpetrators of the crime are something that the court needs to address," the court said, adding that it is awaiting the government's stand on this aspect.

The court said serious issues had been highlighted in the report. The women who had deposed before the committee wanted to maintain anonymity. The report indicates instances of sexual harassment and exploitation of women working in the Malayalam film industry.



> How to protect these vulnerable women and what action can be taken against the perpetrators of the crime are something that the court needs to address
>
> KERALA HIGH COURT

**Vulnerable section**

The government could not ignore the report. The parties who deposed before the committee were a vulnerable section who do not wish to disclose about the harassment in public. If the government did not take any action, all exercise done to constitute the committee would become futile. Therefore action needs to be taken to protect these vulnerable women, it said.

The petition, filed by Navas from Thiruvananthapuram, sought a directive to the State government to produce the uncensored version of the Hema Committee report and called for the production of all the records with the committee.

## 'UDF will act if it comes to power in 2026'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president K. Sudhakaran has said the United Democratic Front (UDF) would prosecute sexual predators in the Malayalam film industry, irrespective of their influence, wealth or public stature, if it comes to power in Kerala in 2026.

"The Pinarayi Vijayan government's neglect of the K. Hema Committee's grave findings ran against the grain of criminal jurisprudence and natural justice," Mr. Sudhakaran added.

**Context**: The Kerala High Court's Division Bench has admitted a PIL urging the Kerala government to initiate criminal proceedings against individuals involved in sexual exploitation and harassment of women in the film industry, as reported by **the Justice K. Hema Committee.**

**Hema committee Report**

- **Formation**: The Kerala government established the Justice Hema Committee in July 2017.
- **Purpose**: It was created in response to the abduction and sexual assault of a prominent Malayalam actress, highlighting widespread gender discrimination in the Malayalam film industry.
- **Mandate**: The committee was assigned to investigate issues related to sexual harassment and gender inequality within the industry.
- **Key findings:**
  - **Pervasive Sexual Harassment:** The Malayalam film industry is rife with sexual harassment, including the casting couch, vulgar comments, and male co-actors invading women's private spaces.
  - **Fear of Retribution**: Victims often avoid reporting harassment due to fear of retribution, including potential cyber harassment from toxic fan clubs.
  - **All-Male Power Structure**: A dominant group of male actors and producers controls the industry, silencing anyone who opposes them.
  - **Inadequate Facilities for Women**: The industry fails to provide basic facilities like toilets and changing rooms for women on film sets, leading to health risks.
  - **Gender Pay Disparity**: The absence of written contracts contributes to significant gender pay gaps in the industry.

INDIAN EXPRESS

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# GLASS CEILING FOR WOMEN

(Syllabus GS Paper 2 – Social Issues)

## GLASS CEILING

A metaphor for the invisible barriers against women reaching senior career positions

RISHIKA SINGH
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 22

FORMER US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in her speech at the Democratic National Convention on Monday that Vice President Kamala Harris' confirmation as the party's presidential candidate will help break the "highest, hardest glass ceiling".

Clinton also used this term after she lost the 2016 presidential election to Donald Trump. "To all the women... I know we have still not shattered that highest and hardest glass ceiling, but someday, someone will and hopefully sooner than we might think...," she said.

**What does 'glass ceiling' mean?**

A glass ceiling refers to not-so-obvious barriers that may keep someone from progressing professionally beyond a certain level, despite being qualified to do so. The term is mainly used in context of women.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Society* (2008), "...Ceiling implies that there is a limit to how far someone can climb before he or she bumps up against a barrier... To say that the ceiling is glass suggests that, although it is very real, it is transparent and not obvious to the casual observer. It also implies that what is on the other side is both visible yet inaccessible to those facing it."

**Who coined the term?**

The late American management consultant Marilyn Loden is largely credited for coining the term. In an article for the *BBC* in 2017, she wrote about using it for the first time in 1978, at a panel discussion on women's careers.

Loden disagreed with other panelists who mentioned factors such as "deficiencies in women's socialisation... ways in which women behaved, and [their] poor self-image" as reasons behind women not advancing in their careers. "I argued that the 'invisible glass ceiling' – the barriers to advancement that were cultural not personal – was doing the bulk of the damage to women's career aspirations and opportunities," she wrote.

**Why did the term become popular?**

The term gained currency in the 1980s, as more women entered male-dominated work spaces, and spoke about the challenges they faced.

In 1991, US President George HW Bush established a Glass Ceiling Commission to investigate these issues. It found that while women comprised nearly 46% of the workforce, 95% of senior-level managers were men. A 2018 working paper from economist Marianne Bertrand found that only 23.3% of board members of the largest publicly listed companies and only 5.1% of the CEOs were women, despite women accounting for 45% of the labour force.

The persistance of barriers to women's career advancement continues to drive the term's usage. However, has also been criticised for centring affluent women, and ignoring those who are unlikely to even get a foot in the door – like those from minority groups and backward castes.

**Why does the glass ceiling persist?**

Sheryl Sandberg, former COO of Facebook, argued in her 2013 book *Lean In* that women needed to have greater ambition and make other behavioural changes. Loden wrote a critical response in *The New York Times*, saying, "...'leaning in' is no solution for the gender bias, inflexible work schedules and pay inequities that many working women still face."

Economist Claudia Goldin has said that the real issue is how lucrative, senior-level jobs require substantial time commitments. As long as jobs remain inflexible and don't allow or normalise time-offs for men, the gendered difference in career progression will live on, she says.

**Context**: Former US Secretary of State said Vice President of USA' imminent confirmation as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate will help break through the "highest, **hardest glass ceiling".**

**Glass Ceiling For Women:**

- **Meaning**: The "glass ceiling" refers to an invisible barrier that limits individuals, particularly women, from advancing to higher-level positions despite being qualified.
- **Symbolism**: The term "ceiling" suggests a limit to upward movement, while "glass" implies the barrier is real but not immediately apparent.
- **Barriers to Advancement**: Though no explicit policies may prevent women from advancing, subtle obstacles still hinder their progression to top roles.
- **Origin of the Term**: The term "glass ceiling" was coined by American management consultant Marilyn Loden in 1978 during a panel discussion on women's career progression.
- **Cultural Context**: The phrase gained popularity during the Second Wave of Feminism in the 1960s and '70s when women sought equality in various spheres, including the workplace.
- **Legal Backing**: Laws like Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, 1964, were enacted to combat workplace discrimination, reflecting the societal push for gender equality.
- **Visibility vs. Accessibility**: The glass ceiling metaphor highlights the paradox where higher-level roles are visible yet remain out of reach for those facing the barrier.
- **Impact on Women's Careers**: The concept emphasizes the challenges women face in breaking through to executive positions, even in industries where they are well-represented.

DTE Aug 22

# ALIEN SPECIES ON ANTARTICA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

# Alien species arriving on plastic 'rafts' threaten Antartica's marine ecosystem

**Context**: Alien species hitching rides on plastic debris are posing a significant threat to Antarctica's fragile marine ecosystem. These invasive species could disrupt the region's unique biodiversity and environmental balance.

**Alien Species**

- **About**: These are defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as species whose introduction and/or spread outside their natural past or present distribution threatens biological diversity.
- **Scope**: IAS encompass animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms, affecting various ecosystems.
- **Characteristics**: According to the CBD, IAS exhibit the traits of "arrive, survive, and thrive," needing introduction, native food resources, fast reproduction, and outcompeting native species.
- **Legal Definition in India**: India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (amended in 2022), defines IAS more narrowly as species not native to India, whose introduction or spread may threaten wildlife or its habitat.

**Key Points of Study**

- **High Vulnerability**: The Antarctic Peninsula is the most susceptible region to non-native species due to natural oceanic dispersal, ship traffic, and rapid climate warming.
- **Barrier to Establishment**: Antarctica's harsh environmental conditions typically prevent many species from establishing; however, rising temperatures and new ice-free areas are lowering these natural barriers.
- **Human Impact**: The growing human presence and activities in the region, including increased shipping, further elevate the risk of non-native species reaching and thriving in Antarctic ecosystems.

**Antarctica**

- **About**: The world's southernmost and fifth largest continent. Its landmass is almost wholly covered by a vast ice sheet.
- **No human:** Unique continent does not have human settlement.
- **Coldest**: It is also the world's highest, driest, windiest, coldest, and iciest continent.
- **Size**: Antarctica is about 14.2 million square km in size.
- **Prohibited activates:** Military activity, mining, nuclear explosions, and nuclear waste.
- **Regulation**: It is governed by about 30 countries, all of which are parties of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty System.

PIB

Aug 22

# CENTRAL BANKER REPORT CARDS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

## Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi congratulates RBI Governor Shri Shaktikanta Das on being rated "A+" for the second time in a row in Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2024

**Context**: Recently, the RBI Governor has been ranked as the top central banker globally for the second consecutive year by US-based Global Finance magazine.

**Central Banker Report Cards**

- **Purpose:** To recognize central bank governors whose strategies excel through originality, creativity, and persistence.
- **Published by**: Global Finance since 1994.
- **Report Frequency**: Annually
- **Grading Scale**: Grades range from "A+" to "F" scale for success in areas such as inflation control, economic growth goals, currency stability and interest rate management, wherein "A" represents an excellent performance, down through "F" for outright failure.
- **Criteria:** The annual Central Banker Report Cards honor those bank leaders whose strategies outperformed their peers through originality, creativity and tenacity.

**Top 10 central bankers rated A+ and A in 2024:**

| Grade | Central Banker | Country |
|---|---|---|
| A+ | Christian Kettel Thomsen | Denmark |
| A+ | Shaktikanta Das | India |
| A+ | Thomas Jordan | Switzerland |
| A | Roberto Campos Neto | Brazil |
| A | Rosanna Costa | Chile |
| A | Harvesh Kumar Seegolam | Mauritius |
| A | Abdellatif Jouahri | Morocco |
| A | Lesetja Kganyago | South Africa |
| A | Nandalal Weerasinghe | Sri Lanka |
| A | Nguyen Thi Hong | Vietnam |

**Global Finance**

- **About**: It encompasses the international system of economies, regulations, and financial institutions and their interactions.
- **Topics Covered**: It includes various elements such as financial regulations, exchange rates, investments, and international trading.
- **Nature**: The field of global finance is constantly evolving, reflecting changes in economies and financial markets.
- **Impact on International Management:** Effective management in global finance requires navigating the complexities of these ever-changing financial and regulatory environments.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

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# INTERNSHIP PORTAL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 –Economy)

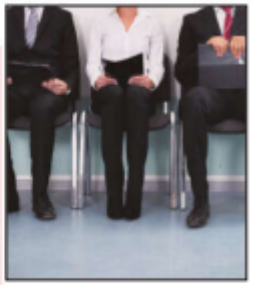
# Internship portal in the works

**Will help match opportunity with youth skill sets**

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
New Delhi, August 22

**AT A GLANCE**

- The portal would facilitate a certain matching of skill sets of the applicants with the type of internship opportunities provided by the companies
- MCA will announce the guidelines for the internship scheme over the next two weeks
- The portal is expected to be functional after the guidelines for the scheme are finalised by the MCA



- The govt is keen to ensure that those at the margins, especially those less skilled and less employable, are able to make the most of this internship scheme
- Internships are to be provided to 10 million youth by India's top 500 companies over the next five years

**A NEW PORTAL** is in the works to enable youths to apply for internships directly with the country's top 500 companies under a special package announced in the Budget.

The portal would facilitate a certain matching of skill sets of the applicants with the type of internship opportunities provided by the companies.

The ministry of corporate affairs (MCA) will announce the guidelines for the internship scheme over the next two weeks, following which the portal will be made active for the prospective applicants, officials involved in the exercise said.

"The idea is not to upload any existing database of the country's youth on the portal, because some may not want to opt for this internship scheme.

"Instead, the companies will list out their internship opportunities and these will get matched with the information provided by the applicants, enabling a free flow of information on the portal," a senior government official said.

The portal is expected to be functional after the guidelines for the scheme are finalised by the MCA. The ministry is in discussion with the companies, the official said.

In the Union Budget for 2024-25 presented by the NDA government on July 23, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the Prime Minister's Package for Employment and Skilling with an overall outlay of ₹2 lakh crore.

The government is keen to ensure that those at the margins, especially those less skilled and less employable, are able to make the most of this internship scheme.

As part of the package announced in the Budget, internships are to be provided to 10 million youth by India's top 500 companies over the next five years.

"They will gain exposure for 12 months to real-life business environments, varied professions and employment opportunities.

"An internship allowance of ₹5,000 per month along with a one-time assistance of ₹6,000 will be provided.

"Companies will be expected to bear the training cost and 10% of the internship cost from their CSR funds," Sitharaman had said.

In July, then finance secretary TV Somanathan, who is now cabinet secretary, had said that the government plans to talk to the top 500 companies and mutually agree on a "voluntary quota system" for taking on board interns under the employment package announced in the Budget 2024-25.

The "quota system" would be based on the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure of these companies.

"We won't be giving them (companies) the type of people they would normally recruit because we don't want to give them a subsidy for people they would have hired anyway.

"We will have a negative list also: Say, nobody from IITs, IIMs, chartered accountants, cost accountants, nobody who is paying income tax, nobody whose parent is a government servant, etc.

"We want it for the people who are left out of the normal channels of recruitment," Somanathan had said.

**Context**: A internship portal is in the works to enable youths to apply for internships directly with the country's top 500 companies under a special package announced in the Budget.

**Internship Portal**

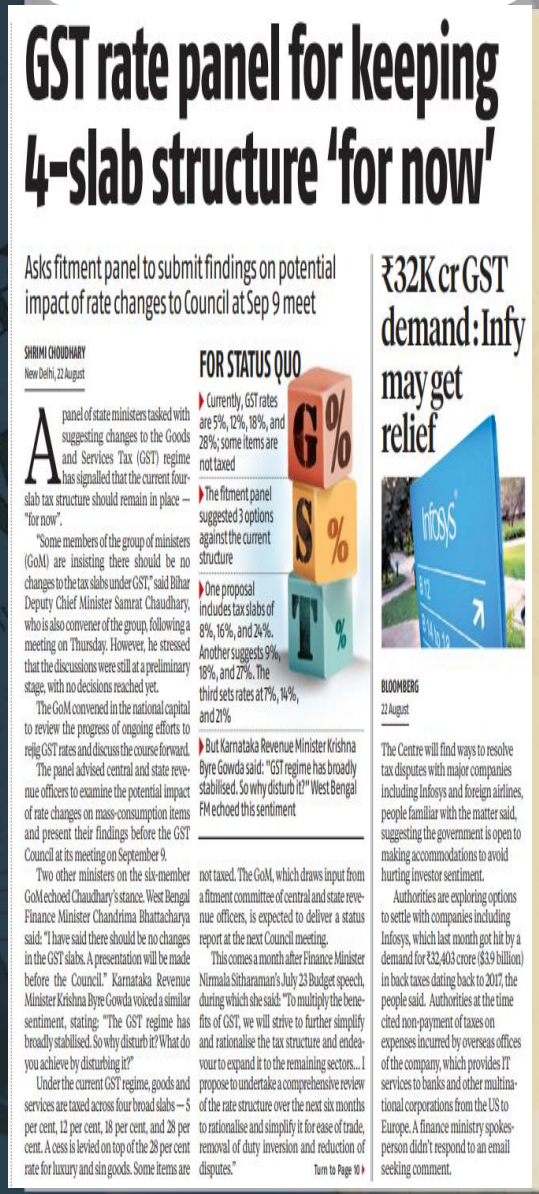
- **About**: The portal will facilitate matching of skill sets of the applicants with the type of internship opportunities provided by the companies.
- **Nodal Agency**: Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)
- **Eligible for internship**: An individual between 21 to 24 years of age is eligible to apply for internship.
- **Objective**: The scheme aims to provide internships to 1 crore youth over the next five years to enhance their skills and employability.
- **Target Audience:** Special focus on marginalized groups, particularly those with fewer skills and lower employability, to maximize benefits from the internship program.
- **Implementation**: Internships will be offered by India's top 500 companies, providing 12 months of exposure to real-life business environments and diverse professions.
- **Financial Support:** Interns will receive a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000 and a one-time assistance of Rs 6,000 during their internship period.
- **Company Contributions**: Companies will cover the training costs and 10% of the internship expenses from their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

# GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)

**(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)**



GST rate panel for keeping 4-slab structure 'for now'

Asks fitment panel to submit findings on potential impact of rate changes to Council at Sep 9 meet

SHRIMI CHOUDHARY
New Delhi, 22 August

A panel of state ministers tasked with suggesting changes to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime has signalled that the current four-slab tax structure should remain in place — "for now".

"Some members of the group of ministers (GoM) are insisting there should be no changes to the tax slabs under GST," said Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, who is also convener of the group, following a meeting on Thursday. However, he stressed that the discussions were still at a preliminary stage, with no decisions reached yet.

The GoM convened in the national capital to review the progress of ongoing efforts to rejig GST rates and discuss the course forward.

The panel advised central and state revenue officers to examine the potential impact of rate changes on mass-consumption items and present their findings before the GST Council at its meeting on September 9.

Two other ministers on the six-member GoM echoed Chaudhary's stance. West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said: "I have said there should be no changes in the GST slabs. A presentation will be made before the Council." Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda voiced a similar sentiment, stating: "The GST regime has broadly stabilised. So why disturb it? What do you achieve by disturbing it?"

Under the current GST regime, goods and services are taxed across four broad slabs — 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent, and 28 per cent. A cess is levied on top of the 28 per cent rate for luxury and sin goods. Some items are not taxed. The GoM, which draws input from a fitment committee of central and state revenue officers, is expected to deliver a status report at the next Council meeting.

This comes a month after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's July 23 Budget speech, during which she said: "To multiply the benefits of GST, we will strive to further simplify and rationalise the tax structure and endeavour to expand it to the remaining sectors... I propose to undertake a comprehensive review of the rate structure over the next six months to rationalise and simplify it for ease of trade, removal of duty inversion and reduction of disputes."

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FOR STATUS QUO

- Currently, GST rates are 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%; some items are not taxed
- The fitment panel suggested 3 options against the current structure
- One proposal includes tax slabs of 8%, 16%, and 24%. Another suggests 9%, 18%, and 27%. The third sets rates at 7%, 14%, and 21%
- But Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said: "GST regime has broadly stabilised. So why disturb it?" West Bengal FM echoed this sentiment

₹32K cr GST demand: Infy may get relief

BLOOMBERG
22 August

The Centre will find ways to resolve tax disputes with major companies including Infosys and foreign airlines, people familiar with the matter said, suggesting the government is open to making accommodations to avoid hurting investor sentiment.

Authorities are exploring options to settle with companies including Infosys, which last month got hit by a demand for ₹32,403 crore ($3.9 billion) in back taxes dating back to 2017, the people said. Authorities at the time cited non-payment of taxes on expenses incurred by overseas offices of the company, which provides IT services to banks and other multinational corporations from the US to Europe. A finance ministry spokesperson didn't respond to an email seeking comment.

**Context**: A panel of state ministers tasked with suggesting changes to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime has signalled that the current four-slab tax structure should remain in place —"for now".

**Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

- **About**: It is a comprehensive, multi-stage, destination-based, that is levied on every value addition, focusing on the consumption of goods and Services.
  - **Destination tax** refers to a tax collected by the authority with jurisdiction over the place of consumption, also known as the place of supply.
- **Introduced by:** The Constitution (101st Amendment) Act, 2016, introduced by 122nd Amendment Bill.
- **Came into effect**: From 1st July 2017.
- **Origin:** GST was first implemented as a tax regime in 1954 in France and later adopted by several countries, including Australia, Cnanada, UK, Spain etc.
- **In India**: It came into consideration after a committee **headed by Vijay L. Kelkar** concluded that GST could help improve tax structure in India.
- **State Ministers Panel**: First formed in 2021, Reconstituted in November 2023
- **GST Tax Structure:** Central GST (CGST), State GST (SGST), Integrated GST (IGST) and Union Territory GST (UTGST).
- **Current GST regime**: Goods and Services are taxed across five broad slabs — 0%, 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%. A cess is levied on top of the 28% rate for luxury and sin goods.
- **Suggestions:** One proposal includes tax slabs of 8%, 16%, and 24%.
  - Another suggests 9%, 18%, and 27%.
  - A third alternative sets rates at 7%, 14%, and 21%.
  - Each model aims to shield essential goods from significant tax increases and may include a provision of tax abatements.

THE HINDU Page 16

# SEAPLANE OPERATIONS

**(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Infrastructure (Govt. policies)**

## Centre announces simplified norms for seaplane operations

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The Civil Aviation Ministry on Thursday released new rules for seaplanes, allowing non-scheduled operators to provide such services.

The rules have also been simplified with an aim to encourage seaplane operations under the regional air connectivity scheme UDAN, which has so far seen poor response.

Under the relaxed norms of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), there will be no need for a waterdrome licence, and compliance requirements have also been reduced. Pilots with a commercial pilot licence (CPL) can now qualify as seaplane-rated pilots.

Non-scheduled operators are entities other than commercial airlines that have to operate their fleet as per a published schedule of flights.

"We urge States to identify waterbodies and we will find ways to activate them," Vumlunmang Vualnam, Secretary, Civil Aviation Ministry, said.

The guidelines define responsibilities of various stakeholders such as State governments, seaplane operators, and the Centre.

"Seaplane hold the opportunity of revolutionising connectivity in regions where conventional airport infrastructure is not feasible due to obvious land constraints," Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu said.

He said seaplanes could also open opportunities for economic growth by providing new avenues for tourism.

**Context**: The Union government released new Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) rules for seaplanes allowing non-scheduled operators to provide such services.

**Seaplane**

- **Definition**: A seaplane is a fixed-wing aeroplane designed for taking off and landing on water.
- **Types of Seaplanes**
  - **Flying Boats**: Fixed-winged seaplanes with a hull for water landings and no land-based landing gear. The hull provides buoyancy, and smaller floats may be added near the wingtips.
  - **Floatplanes**: Supported on water by pontoons or floats.
- **Global Presence**: Seaplanes operate in the Philippines, Canada, Australia, the United States, Finland, the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, the Maldives, and Hong Kong.
- **Seaplanes in India**
- **Jal Hans Service**: Launched in December 2010 in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Jal Hans is a commercial seaplane service with a 10-passenger capacity.
- **India's Seaplane Project**: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has sought proposals from Gujarat, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Andaman & Nicobar for water airports to enhance tourism.
  - **Under**: UDAN Scheme
  - **India's first seaplane Project**: Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.

**New Rules**

- Under the relaxed norms of the DGCA, there will be no need for a waterdrome licence and compliance requirements have also been reduced.
- Pilots with a commercial pilot licence (CPL) can now qualify as seaplane rated pilots.
- Non-scheduled operators are entities other than commercial airlines that have to operate their fleet as per a published schedule of flights.
- The guidelines also define responsibilities of various stakeholders such as State government, seaplane operators and the Centre.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

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# UDAN SCHEME

**(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Infrastructure (Govt. policies)**

## Govt planning to extend UDAN scheme by 10 yrs

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, August 22

CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER K Rammohan Naidu said on Thursday that the government is considering a proposal to extend the regional connectivity scheme UDAN by 10 years. Speaking at an industry event here, he said, "The scheme was envisioned for 10 years. It is probably going to end in two more years, so we want to extend it for another 10 years."



K Rammohan Naidu

"We also want to bring in improvements wherever necessary... We are going to launch RCS 2.0. It is still under discussion, but we are strongly for it," he said. At the same event, civil aviation secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam said Udan "has been a path-breaking scheme that has provided connectivity to different corners of our country." "Over 500 routes have been taken up...," he said. According to the secretary, some of these have become thriving commercial routes now.

On Thursday, the ministry launched guidelines for seaplane operations under the UDAN scheme. The guidelines have been designed to not only integrate seaplane operations into India's aviation landscape for transportation but also create jobs and foster economic empowerment.

**Context:** The Indian government plans to extend the regional air connectivity scheme by an additional ten years, according to Civil Aviation Minister.

**UDAN Scheme (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik)**

- **About:** UDAN is a regional connectivity scheme spearheaded by the Government of India (GoI).
- **Launched**: In 2017. The scheme is a component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016. Over the period of 6 years, various versions of UDAN Scheme were launched.
- **Nodal Agency**: Ministry of Civil Aviation
- **Objective**: To develop a regional aviation market. It seeks to connect under-served and unserved airports in India through the revival of existing airstrips and airports.
- **Financial Incentives**: Under the Udan scheme, financial incentives—through viability gap funding—are extended from the Centre, state governments, and airport operators to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports.

**Impact of the UDAN Scheme**:

- Some routes have been discontinued due to low passenger load factors, airline shutdowns, and visibility issues at VFR (Visual Flight Rules) airports.
- The inclusion of seaplane operations under the UDAN scheme is expected to enhance tourism and support critical activities such as research, environmental monitoring, and coastal management.
- The scheme is a significant step towards improving regional air connectivity and infrastructure development, contributing to broader economic growth.

ECONOMIC TIMES
Aug 22

# NATIONAL SPACE DAY
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Sci and Tech)

## All about Chandrayaan 3's historic landing and its role in India's inaugural National Space Day

**Context**: India is commemorating its first-ever National Space Day on August 23, 2024, marking a historic achievement with the successful landing of ISRO's Vikram Lander from Chandrayaan-3 on August 23, 2023.

**National Space Day**

- **About:** ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 mission successfully landed the Vikram Lander on the moon's surface, making India the fourth country to achieve this and the first to land near the southern pole. The landing site was named 'Shiv Shakti' point, and the date was declared National Space Day.
- **Theme**: Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India's Space Saga."
- **Significance**:
  - This landmark event signifies India's growing prowess in space exploration, celebrating the importance of space science and technology.
  - The celebrations of National Space Day are a testament to India's remarkable strides in space exploration and its continued efforts to inspire future generations.
  - The events and initiatives planned for this day highlight the nation's dedication to leveraging space technology for societal benefit and advancing human knowledge.

**Chandrayaan 3's Findings a Year Later**

- **Uniform Terrain**: The terrain around Chandrayaan 3's landing site is relatively uniform, providing a consistent basis for further analysis.
- **Lunar Crust Formation:** The data supports the hypothesis that the Moon's crust formed in layers, reinforcing the lunar magma ocean (LMO) theory.
- **Topsoil Composition**: The topsoil at the lunar south pole contains more minerals than previously expected, suggesting the presence of materials from the lower crust.
- **Molten Material Hypothesis**: The findings align with the idea that the Moon's surface was once covered by a sea of molten material shortly after its formation.
- **Elemental Data from APXS:** The Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer (APXS) has provided new insights into the elemental composition of the Moon's surface, aiding in understanding its evolutionary history.

PIB Aug 22

# BHARAT ZERO EMISSION TRUCKING POLICY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

## Launch of "Bharat Zero Emission Trucking (ZET) Policy Advisory" document

**Context:** Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India, launched the advisory document titled "Bharat Zero Emission Trucking (ZET) Policy Advisory" at Vigyan Bhawan Annexe, New Delhi.

**Bharat Zero Emission Trucking (ZET) Policy**

- **About**: It is a comprehensive document aimed at guiding India's transition to zero-emission trucking.
- **Aim:** The policy seeks to promote zero-emission trucking initiatives and strategies to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector.
- **Sales Penetration Target:** The goal is to achieve 100% zero-emission truck (ZET) sales penetration by 2050 to support India's Net Zero 2070 commitment.
- **Focus Areas**: The document includes 30 policy interventions across five key areas: incentives, regulations, infrastructure, business and financing, and stakeholder initiatives.
- **Nodal Agency Responsibility:** Each policy intervention is assigned to a specific nodal agency responsible for its execution and oversight.
- **Key Stakeholders:** Involves central ministries, central and state agencies, financiers, private companies, research organizations, and labor unions.
- **Development:** The Policy Advisory Panel (PAP), under the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA), led the development, with drafting managed by the Centre of Excellence for Zero Emission Trucking (CoEZET), IIT Madras.
- **Strategic Importance**: The policy is vital for shaping India's strategy towards zero-emission trucking, aligning with broader environmental and energy objectives.
- **Zero-Emission Trucks:** These trucks, powered by electric batteries or hydrogen fuel cells, produce no tailpipe emissions, crucial for reducing greenhouse gases and enhancing air quality, and are key to the transition to sustainable transportation.

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