

JULY

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MK Yadav Sir

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Incidental expenses on education & health fall under LRS, to attract TCS

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

PURCHASE of an international travel ticket, hotel accommodation or any other expenditure of similar nature — at least two of these expenses would qualify as overseas tour package under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme and hence attract tax collected at source (TCS), the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under the Ministry of Finance clarified in a circular issued Friday.

The government has also clarified about the eligible expenses for medical and education, keeping incidental expenses for both categories within the ambit of LRS as against the earlier expectation of a separate tax treatment.

The circular said to qualify as 'overseas tour program package', the "package should include at least two of the following: (i) international travel ticket, (ii) hotel accommodation (with or without food)/boarding/lodging, (iii) any other expenditure of similar nature or in relation thereto." Purchase of only an international travel ticket or purchase of only hotel accommodation, by itself, is not covered within the definition of overseas tour program package", it said.

For medical expenses, the circular said it would include "remittance for purchase of tickets of the person to be treated medically overseas as (and his attendant) for commuting between India and the overseas destination; medical expense; and other day to day expenses required for

such purpose".

Remittance for the purpose of education will include "purchase of tickets of the person undertaking study overseas for commuting between India and the overseas destination; the tuition and other fees to be paid to an educational institute; and other day to day expenses required for undertaking such study".

In addition, authorised dealers, foreign exchange dealers and sellers of overseas tour packages will have to take an "undertaking" from customers about their past remittances and overseas travel during a financial year for the purpose of deducting TCS.

The CBDT said since the facility to provide real time update of remittances is still under development by the RBI, it is clarified that the details of earlier remit-

stances under LRS by the remitter during the financial year may be taken by the authorised dealer through an undertaking at the time of remittance. "If the authorised dealer correctly collects the tax at source based on information given in this undertaking, he will not be treated as 'assessee in default'. However, for any false information in the undertaking, appropriate action may be taken against the remitter under the Act," it said, adding that the same methodology of taking undertaking from the buyer of an overseas tour program package may be followed by the seller of such package.

On Wednesday, in a reversal of its earlier decision, the government had deferred the move to include international credit card spends outside India under the

LRS, implying there will be no levy of TCS on international credit card spends outside India as of now. The government had also extended the timeline to levy the higher proposed TCS rates with effect from October 1 instead of July 1 this year.

There will be no TCS upto Rs 7 lakh remittance under LRS. Beyond this Rs 7 lakh threshold, TCS shall be levied at the rate of 0.5 per cent (if remittance for education is financed by education loan); 5 per cent (in case of remittance for education/medical treatment); and 20 per cent for others.

On purchase of overseas tour packages, TCS of 5 per cent will be applicable on payments upto Rs 7 lakh. Above the Rs 7 lakh threshold, 20 per cent TCS would be levied from October 1.

Context: Purchase of an international travel ticket, hotel accommodation or any other expenditure of similar nature - at least two of these expenses would qualify as overseas tour package under the **Liberalised Remittance Scheme** and hence, attract tax collected at source (TCS), the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under Ministry of Finance clarified in a circular.

- The government has also **clarified about the eligible expenses for medical and education**, keeping incidental expenses for both categories within the ambit of LRS as against the earlier expectation of a separate tax treatment.

Liberalised Remittance Scheme

- **About:** LRS is facility provided by RBI for all resident individuals including minors to freely remit up to certain amount in terms of US Dollar for current and capital account purposes or combination of both.
- **Origin:** The scheme was introduced in February 2004 and its regulations are provided under **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999**.
- **LRS Limit:** After it was launched, the **LRS limit was US \$25,000**, but it has been revised in stages consistent with prevailing macro and micro economic conditions.
 - At present, LRS limit for all resident individuals, including minors, is **US \$2,50,000** (Rs. 1.5 crore) per financial year.
- **Benefits:** Under LRS, individuals can make **remittances for overseas education**, travel, medical treatment, maintenance to relatives living abroad, gifting and donations.
 - The remitted money can be **used for purchase of shares and property as well**.
 - Individuals can also **open, maintain and hold foreign currency accounts** with overseas banks for carrying out transactions under it.

THE CURRENT AND PROPOSED TCS RATES

S No.	Type of remittance	Present rate	Proposed rate
(i)	For the purpose of any education, if the amount being remitted out is a loan obtained from any financial institutio as defend in Section 80E	0.5% of the amount or the aggregate of the amounts in excess of Rs. 7 lakh	No change
(ii)	For the purpose of education, other than (i) or for the purpose of medical treatment	5% of the amount of the aggregate of the amounts in excess of Rs. 7 lakh	No change
(iii)	Overseas tour package	5% without any threshold limit	20% without any threshold limit
(iv)	Any other case	5% of the amount or the aggregate of the amounts in excess of Rs. 7 lakh	20% without any threshold limit

Index of Eight Core Industries (Base: 2011-12=100) for May, 2023

Context: The combined **Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI)** increased by 4.3 per cent (provisional) in May 2023 as compared to the Index of May 2022.

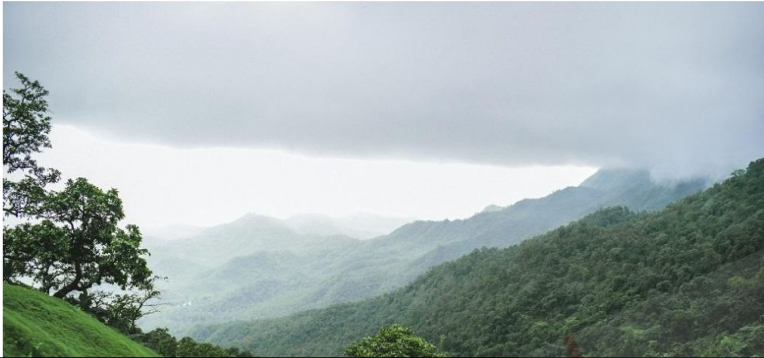
Core Sector

- **About:** Core sectors of an economy are the key industries in the economy.
- **8 Core Sectors of the Indian Economy:** Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertiliser, Steel, Cement, Electricity.
- **Weight in IIP:** These eight industries have a combined share of **above 40.27%** in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
 - **Decreasing order of their weightage:** Refinery Products (28.04) > Electricity (19.85) > Steel (17.92) > Coal (10.33) > Crude Oil (8.98) > Natural Gas (6.88) > Cement (5.37) > Fertilizers (2.63).
- **Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI):** The ICI is a production volume index prepared and released by the Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA), Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, GOI.
 - It is **released every month**.
 - The index is calculated by using the **Laspeyres formula** of the weighted arithmetic mean of quantity relatives.
 - The Laspeyres Index is calculated by working out the cost of a group of commodities at current prices, dividing this by the cost of the same group of commodities at base period prices, and then multiplying by 100.
 - It measures the **individual and collective performances** of the production in these eight core industries.
 - It is used by policymakers including the Ministry of Finance, other Ministries, and Departments.
 - It is also used by banks for financing infrastructure projects and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

This new tool can drive India's eco-restoration initiatives; here's how

The tool helps the user in identifying species that match their restoration objectives

By Himanshu Nilnaware
Published: Friday 30 June 2023



- The tool is **developed with information on 237 socio-economically important** native trees from the Western Ghats, and the numbers and geographies will increase over time.
- The tool is already being used in countries such as **Malaysia, Ethiopia, Columbia, Peru, Burkina Faso, Cameroon etc.**
- It provides a **score of a particular tree species for plantations.**
- This score **helps determine and decide how well the species match** the given site conditions and restoration objectives.
- The tool also **provides varied recommendations** that help in maximising the chances of restoration along with propagation information and monitoring suggestions.
- The user could also **access species-specific information** related to its threat status, its benefits for the local communities and its ecological role, among other factors, making it a holistic tool crucial for socio-ecologically responsible restoration.

Context: Researchers have devised a tool, **Diversity for Restoration (D4R)**, that enables appropriate agroforestry and aids systematic ecosystem restoration.

- **Diversity for Restoration (D4R) tool**, devised by Bioversity International, was later modified by another team of researchers to adapt it to the Indian context.
- The team from **Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)**, with the help of Bioversity International, modified it to promote restoration programmes in India.

Key Points

- The researchers have claimed the **tool will help improve the effectiveness of restoration programmes** by providing manifold benefits to interested stakeholders while promoting sustainable development.
- The online tool precisely **aims to help better decision-making** and bring the best outcome for those plantation programmes.
- It could **improve socio-ecological perspectives** and help stakeholders in decision-making.
- The tool helps the user in **identifying species** that match their restoration objectives.
- It further helps **identify species that can resist local stresses** and adapt to evolving environmental conditions.
- It also helps **pinpoint areas and regions** to procure the seeds for the required species.
- The tool has **information about 100 plant functional traits** that have been considered to offer the best possible solution.
- **Functional traits** include information on economic and ecological uses from the tree species chosen for plantation.
- The tool **informs the user whether the tree species** offers timber, fruit, manure or other commercial benefits.
- It also informs if the tree is resilient to **physiological stresses** such as extreme high or low temperatures, salinity or acidity tolerance in the soil among others.
- The tool could **also identify windbreakers** - the trees can act as a barrier against high winds.
- The user can also know **if the species offers better nitrogen fixing** and whether it serves as a good pollinator for birds and bees.

AAP govt moves SC to quash Delhi ordinance

Says It Destroys Federal Structure, Sidelines Govt

New Delhi: Challenging the constitutional validity of the ordinance brought by the Centre to wrest control over transfers and postings of officers in the capital from the elected dispensation, the AAP government on Friday approached the Supreme Court demanding an "immediate stay" on it, reports Atul Mathur.

It has also urged the apex court to quash the Government of NCT (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023, arguing that it destroyed the federal structure of a democratic government and completely sidelined the elected dispensation from control over its civil ser-

SEEKS IMMEDIATE STAY

- AAP govt has urged SC for 'immediate stay' on ordinance
- Govt says it's 'impermissible' for the legislature to simply overrule an SC decision
- Petition says the **National Capital Civil Service Authority**, a 3-member body formed through the ordinance to decide on transfers, postings and disciplinary action against officers, had been **designed in such a way that CM 'presided over his own minority'**

- Govt has also challenged validity of **Sec 45D** of ordinance that gives Centre **control over statutory bodies, commissions, boards and authorities** with power to appoint their members through President
- Petition **also questions timing of ordinance** saying while Cabinet decision approving promulgation was passed May 17, 6 days after SC's ruling, it was promulgated May 19, after SC vacation had begun

▶ DELHI GOVT NOTIFIES ATISHI'S NEW DEPTS, P 9

vice. The ordinance was promulgated on May 19, eight days after the SC gave the elected dispensation control over appointments, transfers and power to take disciplinary action against officers serving in the Delhi government.

The plea said the ordinan-

ce gives control over civil servants to the unelected LG "without seeking to amend the Constitution, in particular Article 239AA" which gives control over services to the elected dispensation.

▶ 'It's impermissible', P 2

Context: Challenging the constitutional validity of the ordinance brought by the Centre to wrest control over transfers and postings of officers in the capital from the elected dispensation, the **AAP government approached the Supreme Court** demanding an "immediate stay" on it.

- It has also urged the apex court to quash the **Government of NCT (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023**, arguing that it destroyed the federal structure of a democratic government and completely sidelined the elected dispensation from control over its civil service.

Government of NCT (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023

- The Ordinance has created a **National Capital Civil Service Authority** to deal with service conditions, transfers and postings of officers.
- Although the committee will be **headed by the chief minister of Delhi** in his ex-officio capacity, it will also have the chief secretary and the principal home secretary of Delhi as ex-officio members with equal say.
- Differences of opinion are to be referred to the LG, whose decision will be final.
- The Authority shall have **responsibility to recommend transfer and postings** of all Group A officers and officers of DANICS serving in Delhi but not officers serving in connection with Entries 1, 2, 18 of List II of 7th Schedule and entries 64-66 if they relate to entries 1, 2 & 18.
- The Authority to **make recommendations to LG**, who may ask for relevant material on Group A officers.
- In case LG differs from the recommendation made by authority, **LG may return a file with reasons in writing**. In case of difference of opinion, LG's decision will be final.

DKS Seeks Time to Resolve Pennar River Row with TN

Our Political Bureau

Bengaluru: Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar asked the Central government on Friday to allow the new Congress regime in Karnataka a chance to resolve the state's South Pennar basin river-water sharing dispute with Tamil Nadu by negotiation, rather than constituting a dispute resolution tribunal right away.

In a letter to union minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Shivakumar sought 12 weeks to restart the negotiations with the neighbouring state. The legal mandate under the Inter State River Water Disputes Act, 1956, is to first find solutions by negotiations, he said, adding: "Any hurried constitution of a tribunal is not in the interest of my state."

Context: Deputy chief minister asked the Central government to allow the new Congress regime in Karnataka a chance to resolve the state's **South Pennar basin river-water sharing dispute** with Tamil Nadu by negotiation, rather than constituting a dispute resolution tribunal right away.

Background

- In 2018, **Tamil Nadu filed an original suit against Karnataka** for constructing check dams and diversion structures on the Pennar river.
- On November 30, 2019, **Tamil Nadu formally requested the Union government to constitute a Tribunal** for adjudication of disputes over the waters of the river.
- In mid-December, the **court gave the Centre three months** to constitute the tribunal to resolve the dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Pennar River

- The river **originates in the Nandi Hills** in the Chikkaballapura district of Karnataka and flows through Tamil Nadu before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- It is also known as the **South Pennar River, Dakshina Pinakini in Kannada and Thenpennai or Ponnaiyar or Pennaiyar in Tamil**.
- This is the second longest river in Tamil Nadu, with a length of 497 km, after the Kaveri.
- It is the **second largest interstate East flowing river basin** among the 12 basins lying between Pennar and Cauvery basins. It covers a large area in the State of Tamil Nadu besides the areas covered in the states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Bangalore, Hosur, Tiruvannamalai, and Cuddalore** are the important cities on the banks of South Pennar river.

DST

July 1

LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Education)

Indian students participate in 72nd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting dedicated to Physiology/Medicine

Context: A total of 17 select students from different research and academic institutions across India are interacting with **Nobel Laureates on various topics** related to medicine and physiology at the **72nd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting**.

Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting

- The **annual Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting** is an international forum for the exchange of ideas through many nations, cultures, and disciplines.
- It provides a **platform for the exchange of ideas** between Nobel Laureates and young scientists solely inclined to educate, inspire and connect young scientists of the world.
- The 17 students from **research and academic institutions** across India who were supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India have not only been exposed to the opportunity to listen to the lectures delivered by the Nobel Laureates but have also participated in the open discussions and presentations.
- They are also interacting with the Nobel Laureates on how to make their research more impactful.

India backs 2016 ruling favouring the Philippines in South China Sea

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

As negotiations continue between China and the ASEAN bloc for a code of conduct in the South China Sea – which diplomatic sources described as a “complex exercise” involving 11 countries – India called for adherence to the 2016 arbitration decision in favour of the Philippines, which has been rejected by China.

A joint statement issued after talks between Enrique A. Manalo, the visiting Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, and his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar on Thursday said that the two leaders “underlined the need for peaceful settlement of disputes and for adherence to international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 2016 Arbitral Award on the South China Sea in this regard.”

Mr. Manalo, who arrived



Bilateral ties: Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar (right) with Philippines counterpart Enrique Manalo in New Delhi. PTI

in India on an official visit on June 27, concluded his visit on Friday.

China disagrees

The Philippines had instituted an arbitration proceeding against China in the Permanent Court of Arbitration under UNCLOS on January 22, 2013. The court ruled in favour of Manila on July 12, 2016, but this was rejected by China, which had called it “null and void.” China, which claims rights to most of the resource-rich South China Sea up to the nine-dash

line, has become more assertive in recent years, leading to flare-ups in the region.

On the ongoing negotiations on a code of conduct, the source said that it involved a lot of details and 11 countries. Though it has a common agenda, ASEAN does not have a common stance on all issues, given the differing views of its member nations. “It goes into a lot of details like what to do and what rules to observe when there is a collision at sea, how to deal with third parties. Also in

the end, we have to agree if the code is legally binding or not, and if so who will enforce it, and if it is not legally binding, then what is its status. Negotiations are going on regularly at the technical and legal levels,” the source added.

Seeking support

Referring to the 2016 arbitral ruling, the anniversary of which is in two weeks, the source noted that China does not recognise the ruling and did not participate in the deliberations at The Hague.

On the Philippines’ ongoing tensions with China, the source said that Manila was also doing other things beyond the 2016 ruling to deal with the actual issue, which is the “presence of China in the South China Sea”. Manila is trying to send as many assets there as possible, to show that it is the Philippines’ Exclusive Economic Zone, even while stressing that it only wants to “assert its rights and protect its fishermen”.

Context: As negotiations continue between **China and the ASEAN bloc** for a code of conduct in the South China Sea – which diplomatic sources described as a “complex exercise” involving 11 countries – India called for adherence to the 2016 arbitration decision in favour of the Philippines, which has been rejected by China.

Background

- The **Philippines** had instituted an arbitration proceeding against China in the Permanent Court of Arbitration under UNCLOS on January 22, 2013.
- The court ruled in favour of Manila on July 12, 2016, but **this was rejected by China, which had called it “null and void.”**
- **China, which claims rights to most of the resource-rich South China Sea** up to the nine-dash line, has become more assertive in recent years, leading to flare-ups in the region.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- **About:** a regional organization which was established to promote political and social stability amid rising tensions among the Asia-Pacific’s post-colonial states.
- **Origin:** ASEAN international organization **established by the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand in 1967** to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development and to promote peace and security in Southeast Asia.
- **Motto of ASEAN:** “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.
- **Current Member Nations:** Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
 - **Two observer States:** Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste (East Timor).
- **ASEAN-led Forums:**
 - **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF):** It was launched in 1993. It is a **twenty-seven-member multilateral grouping** that was developed to facilitate cooperation on political and security issues to contribute to regional confidence-building and preventive diplomacy.
 - **ASEAN Plus Three:** The consultative group initiated in **1997 brings together ASEAN’s ten members, China, Japan, and South Korea.**
 - **East Asia Summit (EAS):** First held in 2005, the summit seeks to promote security and prosperity in the region and is usually attended by the heads of state from ASEAN, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, and the United States.

CERT-In rules to plug security gaps at govt offices

SOURABH LELE
New Delhi, 30 June

To bridge the technical and policy gaps in cybersecurity of government organisations, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) on Friday released guidelines on information security practices for all government entities.

The guidelines require government organisations to mandatorily report cyber incidents to CERT-In within six hours of noticing them, like private entities do. They must do so even if third parties flag such incidents. The information shall be shared with stakeholders like sectoral CERTs and regulators.

"We are expanding and accelerating on Cyber Security - with focus on capabilities, system, human resources and awareness. The guidelines are an important part of our larger cybersecurity framework being built under the leadership of our PM Narendra Modi ji as India takes rapid strides towards a \$1

MAKING FOOLPROOF

- Report security breaches within six hours of being noticed
- Mandatory cyber security audits every six months
- Employees to be logged out when inactive for more than 15 minutes
- Admin access to system only with the approval of chief information security officer

trillion digital economy," said Rajeev Chandrasekhar, minister of state for electronics and IT on Friday.

Government offices need to conduct an internal and external audit of their entire cyber infrastructure and deploy appropriate security controls based on the audit. Internal information security audits shall be conducted at least once in six months, while third-party security audits need to be conducted annually.

Services of CERT-In empanelled auditors can be utilised for external audits, the guidelines say. Government organisation need to appoint a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), who would be accompanied by a dedicated cybersecurity team, separate from the IT operations team.

The move comes days after private data collected on Covid-19 vaccine platform CoWin was allegedly leaked. Last year, key government departments, including Railways and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), witnessed incidents of data breaches and cyber-attacks. CERT-In recorded 12,67,564 cyber-attacks till November last year.

"As ICT infrastructure of the government entities is one of the preferred targets of malicious actors. The responsibility of implementing good cyber security practices for protecting computers, servers, applications, electronic systems, networks, and data from digital attacks, also remains with the ICT

assets' owner i.e. government entity," says the rulebook of CERT-IN.

Government employees can now use only standard user (non-administrator) accounts for accessing the computers for regular work and admin access will be given to users only with the approval of the chief information security officer (CISO). The employees must be logged out of their accounts after 15 minutes of inactivity and must be activated only after re-entering their passwords, the guidelines state.

All government employees, including temporary, contractual, and outsourced professionals are required to strictly adhere to the guidelines.

Apart from this, the government bodies shall maintain an inventory of authorised hardware and software for their organisation along with a mechanism for automated scanning to detect any unauthorised device or software. Use of personal devices would only be as authorised by the network administrator of the organisation concerned.

Context: To bridge the technical and policy gaps in cybersecurity of government organisations, the **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERTIn)** released guidelines on information security practices for all government entities.

- The guidelines require government organisations to mandatorily report cyber incidents to CERTIn within six hours of noticing them, like private entities do.

Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)

- **About:** It is an organisation of the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** with the objective of securing Indian cyberspace.
- **Functions:** It is the nodal agency which deals with cybersecurity threats like hacking and phishing.
 - CERT-IN provides **Incident Prevention and Response Services** as well as **Security Quality Management Services**.
- **Power:** empowered under **Section 70B of the Information Technology Act** to collect, analyse and disseminate information on cyber security incidents.
- **Mandates of the CERT-In:**
 - **Mandatorily Enable Logs:** It mandates all service providers, intermediaries, data centres, corporates and government organisations to mandatorily enable logs of all their ICT (Information and Communication Technology) systems.
 - **Connect and Synchronize all ICT systems:** To ensure the chain of events is accurately reflected in the time frame, service providers have been asked to connect and synchronize all their ICT systems clocks to the Network Time Protocol (NTP) Server of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) or National Physical Laboratory (NPL).
 - **Requires Maintaining Records:** It also require virtual asset, exchange, and custodian wallet providers to maintain records on KYC and financial transactions for a period of five years.

Cyber Attacks - Levels of concern

Threat Level	Condition
Level 1 Guarded Scope: Individual Organisation	Large scale attacks on the IT infrastructure of an organisation
Level 2 Elevated Scope: Multiple Organisations	Simultaneous large scale attacks onto IT infrastructure of multiple organisations
Level 3 Heightened Scope: State/Multiple States	Cyber attacks on infrastructure of critical sector and Government across a state or multiple states
Level 4 Serious Scope: Entire Nation	Cyber attacks on infrastructure of critical sector and Government across the nation.

Department of Consumer Affairs urges online platforms to refrain from adopting 'dark patterns' harming consumer interest

Context: The Department of Consumer Affairs has urged online platforms to refrain from incorporating any design or pattern in the online interface of their platform that may deceive or manipulate consumer choice and fall in the **category of dark patterns**.

Dark Patterns

- **About** Dark patterns are **manipulative or deceptive practices built into user interfaces** by developers that have the effect, intentionally or unintentionally, of obscuring, subverting, or impairing consumer autonomy, decision-making, or choice.
 - Dark patterns are often carefully **designed to alter decision-making by users** or trick users into actions they did not intend to take.
- **Origin:** **Harry Brignull**, a user experience consultant and researcher of human-computer interactions who is based in the UK, is the author of the phrase "dark patterns."
 - He coined the phrase to **explain the subtle ways in which software can deceive users** into taking actions they weren't intending to.
- **Some examples of dark pattern usage include:**
 - **Deception:** Use of dark patterns to induce false beliefs, such as a countdown timer that is irrelevant to an offer expiring.
 - **Hidden Costs:** Hiding fees or costs from users until they spend time and enter their information to get to a checkout page, only to find there are significant additional fees that were not disclosed up front.
 - **Asymmetric Presentation:** Making one option (such as agreeing to information sharing) very prominent and accessible, while the other options (such as opting out of information-sharing) are difficult to locate.
 - **Covert Ask:** Presenting an offer that asks for the consumer to provide certain data in exchange for a reward (e.g. provide their email for \$25 discount), and then asks the consumer for more information (e.g. their phone number).
 - **Forced Continuity:** A consumer signs up for a free trial and is required to enter credit card information. There is then no opt out email or reminder to cancel before the free trial is over, and the consumer automatically begins paying.
- **India's Strategy:** The Indian advertising industry's self-regulatory body, the **Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)**, recently said that it intends to broaden its code to address issues with "dark patterns" in digital advertising.
 - According to ASCI, influencers used ordinary content to pass off nearly a third of the advertisements it processed in FY22 as advertisements.
 - An **investigation task force** has been established by the ASCI.

OZONE LAYER DEPLETION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)

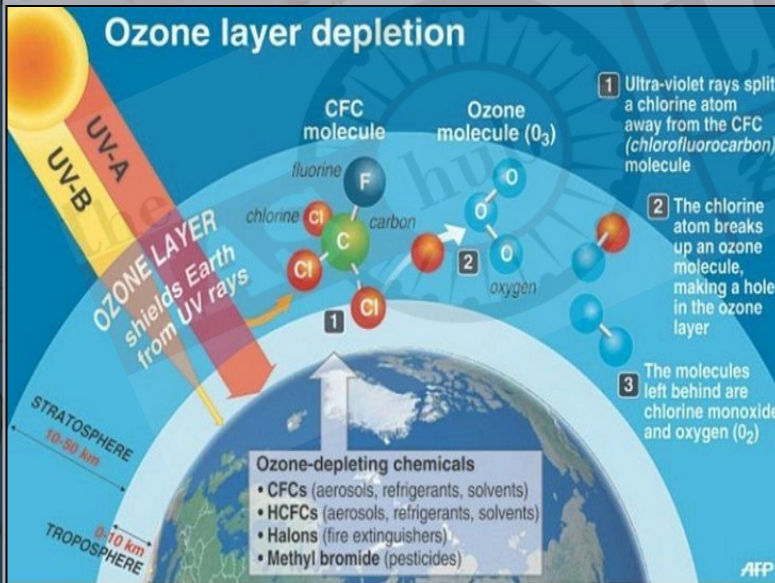
WMO revives ozone-UV bulletin after 7 years, shows steady recovery of ozone layer

Strong signs were recorded that indicate the ozone layer over the Antarctic region is recovering, according to latest update



NEXT NEWS >

By Preetha Banerjee
Published: Friday 30 June 2023



Context: The stratosphere **ozone layer** is slowly recovering and the recovery will be complete in most parts of the atmosphere in the coming decades, according to the latest bulletin by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

- The bulletin with the **updated status of the ozone layer** by WMO-Global Atmosphere Watch bulletin returned after a gap of seven years.
- Until 2016, it was brought out by WMO in collaboration with the European Ozone Research Coordinating Unit.

Key Points

- The **ozone layer protects life on Earth** from harmful solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation.
- Depletion of the ozone layer, which was **first observed in the 1980s**, allows free passage of UV rays into the inhabited layers of the atmosphere, causing skin cancer, cataracts and damages the immune system.
- The rays also harm other ecosystems by altering biochemical processes and growth of species.
- The **Montreal Protocol of 1987** banned the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances.
- As of today, **99 percent of their production** and use has been phased out, according to WMO.
- In 2022, **higher than normal ozone columns** were observed in the tropics and subtropics and lower than normal ozone columns at higher latitudes, particularly in the southern hemisphere.
- In January 2022, **Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption** - the largest in a 100 years - increased the water vapour content of the stratosphere by 5-10 per cent
- The **additional water vapour** has resulted in less ozone in the lower stratosphere of the southern hemisphere in 2022.
- **Enhanced water vapour and aerosol in the polar vortices** are expected for the next several winters, which could result in more polar stratospheric clouds, enhanced ozone depletion, and larger and longer-lasting 'ozone holes'.

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