

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

BIMA SAKHI YOJANA



The Prime Minister of India recently launched the Bima Sakhi Yojana in Haryana's Panipat.

- It is an initiative of the State-owned **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)**.
- It is designed to **empower women** aged **18-70 years** who have **passed out of Class 10**.
- They will receive specialised **training** and a **stipend** for the **first three years** to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.
- After training, they can serve as **LIC agents** and the **graduate Bima Sakhis** would have the opportunity to qualify for being considered for **Development Officer** roles in LIC.
- Women LIC agents will get a stipend of **Rs. 7,000 per month** for the **first year**, **Rs. 6,000 per month** in the **second year**, and **Rs. 5,000 per month** in the **third year**.
- Bima Sakhis will **also get commission** of Rs 48,000 (excluding bonus) for the first year.
- The plan is to appoint two lakh Bima Sakhis over a period of three years.
- **Relatives of existing agents and employees** are **not eligible** for the scheme. **Retired employees** are also ineligible.

WHAT IS VORONEZH RADAR?



India is set to finalise a landmark **USD 4 billion** defence agreement with Russia, aimed at acquiring a Russian Voronezh ballistic missile attack early warning radar.

- The Voronezh radar system is a critical component of **Russia's early warning and missile defence infrastructure**.
- It is capable of identifying and **tracking a range of threats**, including **ballistic missiles and aircraft**, over distances of **up to 8,000 kilometers**.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

- These radars are strategically deployed across Russia to provide extensive coverage against potential missile threats.
- They employ **phased array technology**, which allows for rapid electronic steering of the beam. This makes them highly efficient and less mechanically complex than older systems.
- There are several varieties of these radars operating **in the meter (Voronezh-M), decimeter (Voronezh-DM), or centimeter (Voronezh-CM) wavelength** range, as well as a few others that combine several ranges.
- Multiple Voronezh radars **can work in unison as part of an integrated Missile Attack Early Warning System** to generate a comprehensive radar picture of potential missile threats and space activity.

ARTICLE 67(B) OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA



Opposition parties have decided to move a notice under Article 67(b) of the Constitution to remove the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha from his office.

- The **Vice President of India** serves as the **ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha**.
- **Article 67(b)** of the Constitution of India outlines how the Vice President can be **removed from office**.
- It states that the Vice President may be removed from her/his office **by a resolution of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) passed by the special majority and agreed to by the House of the People (Lok Sabha) by a simple majority**.
- No such resolution can be moved unless **‘at least a 14-day notice has been given of the intention to move the resolution**. The notice must clearly state the intention to initiate the resolution and outline the reasons for it.
- The **Constitution does not specify particular grounds** for removal, leaving it to the **discretion of the Members of Parliament**.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

GG TAU A SYSTEM



Recently, researchers from the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER) in Odisha, studied a unique triple-star system called GG Tau A.

- It is a **unique triple-star system** which is located 489 light-years away from Earth.
- The system is young - **1 to 5 million years old**, which makes it perfect for studying the early stages of planet formation.
- Around these stars is a **disk made of gas and dust**, which is where planets begin to form.
- The three stars in GG Tau A interact with each other and **affect the disk of gas and dust** around them, making it harder to predict how planets might form.
- The forces between the stars could cause the disk to behave differently than in a system with just one star, unlike our solar system.
- This makes GG Tau A, a perfect system to study how planets can form in more complicated, multi-star environments.

AMRIT GYAAN KOSH PORTAL



• It has been jointly developed by the **Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat**.

- It is a platform to promote **self-reliance in governance training** and strengthen governance training.
- It is developed on the **iGOT platform**, serves as a comprehensive repository of best practices in **governance and policy implementation**.
- It aligns with **15 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, covering critical themes such as health, education, agriculture, and digital governance.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

- The curated resources enable faculty to align their teaching with global standards while addressing India's unique administrative challenges.

What is Karmayogi Bharat?

- Under the Mission Karmayogi, a comprehensive Institutional Framework has been designed to deliver the program objectives effectively.
- The **Karmayogi Bharat**, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), forms a key pillar of the institutional framework with an aim to operate the iGOT Karmayogi platform, manage its overall governance and ensure that it meets the objective of anytime, anywhere, any-device learning for civil service officials to enhance their overall competency.
- The SPV has been incorporated in the name of Karmayogi Bharat under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 as a 100% Government **owned not for profit Company**.

NATIONAL PANCHAYAT AWARDS



The National Panchayat Awards Conferment Ceremony 2024, organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, will take place at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

- These awards are pivotal in recognizing and encouraging Panchayats for their **efforts in poverty alleviation, health, child welfare, water conservation, sanitation, infrastructure, social justice, governance, and women empowerment**.
- These awards have been revamped and launched during the year 2022 aligning them with **9 Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)** themes aggregating 17 SDGs.
- Primary objective through this competition is to assess the performance of Panchayats in attainment of SDGs, **promote competitive spirit** among them and catalyze the process of LSDGs through Panchayati Raj Institutions for attaining LSDGs by 2030.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

- These **9 LSDG themes** are: Poverty-Free and Enhanced Livelihoods Panchayat, Healthy Panchayat, Child-Friendly Panchayat, Water-Sufficient Panchayat, Clean and Green Panchayat, Self-Sufficient Infrastructure in Panchayat, Socially Just and Socially Secured Panchayat, Panchayat with Good Governance and Women-Friendly Panchayat.
- This award has been conferred under the **following categories**:
 - **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP)**: This award is for top-3 ranking GPs/Equivalent bodies for their outstanding performance under each of the above mentioned 9 award themes.
 - **Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar**: This award is for top 3 Gram, Block and District Panchayats each for their aggregate performance under all the 9 award themes of DDUPSVP.
- **Special categories of Awards**:
 - **Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar** is for top 3 GPs/Equivalent Bodies for their performance in adoption and usage of renewable sources of energy.
 - **Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar** is for top 3 GPs/Equivalent Bodies for their performance in adoption and **usage of renewable sources of energy**. This year, total 3 awards have been conferred under this category.
 - **Panchayat Kshamta Nirmaan Sarvottam Sansthan Puraskar** is for 3 Institutions across the country who have provided institutional support to GPs in achieving LSDGs.

PRADHAN MANTRI POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN SCHEME



Recently, the central government has revised the prices of food items provided to children under the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Yojana.

- In 2021, Mid-Day Meal Scheme was renamed as Pradhan Mantri POSHAN Scheme.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme, which aims at **providing nutritional support** and enhancing **school participation** of students.
- Under the scheme, **one hot cooked meal** is served to students studying in Balvatika (pre-primary education program) and classes I to VIII, in **Government and Government-aided schools** on all school-days.
- The **objectives of the Scheme** are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by:
 - Improving the **nutritional status of eligible children** in Government and Government aided schools.
 - Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, **to attend school more regularly** and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
 - Providing **nutritional support to children of elementary stage** in drought-affected and disaster affected areas during summer vacation.
- The Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour provides data on inflation for the items under the PM POSHAN basket on the basis of **Consumer Price Index – Rural Labourers (CPI-RL)**.
 - The CPI-RL is constructed by Labour Bureau on the basis of collecting continuous monthly prices from the sample of 600 villages spread over 20 States of the country.
- Recently, on the basis of CPI-RL, the Government of India has enhanced the 'Material Cost' of the items under the PM POSHAN basket by 13.70 %.

UGC'S NEW GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced a new set of guidelines titled "**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education**" aimed at making education more accessible and promoting the concept of lifelong learning.
- This initiative addresses the needs of India's large informal workforce and helps bridge the gap between real-world experience and formal education.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

- RPL is a formal system designed to evaluate and recognize the skills, knowledge, and experience individuals have gained through informal, non-formal, or experiential learning.
- It allows individuals to gain formal recognition and qualifications, improving their career prospects and employability.

Alignment with NEP 2020

- UGC Chairman highlighted that RPL aligns with the goals of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which emphasizes inclusivity and skill-based education.
- RPL is also supported by the **National Credit Framework (NCrF)**, enabling individuals to convert their skills into qualifications by crediting all forms of learning, whether academic, vocational, or experiential.

Key Objectives of the Guidelines:

- **Enhancing Accessibility:**
 - Enable individuals with competencies acquired through informal learning to access higher education programs.
 - Provide flexible pathways for learners with diverse educational and professional backgrounds.
- **Promoting Lifelong Learning:**
 - Equip individuals with updated skills to adapt to evolving career demands and changing labor markets.
 - Foster continuous learning for a more skilled and adaptable workforce.
- **Encouraging Social Inclusion:**
 - Recognize experiential learning to help marginalized and disadvantaged groups improve their socio-economic status by obtaining recognized qualifications.

Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

Benefits of RPL:

- **Economic Growth:** By creating a more skilled workforce, RPL contributes to the nation's economic development.
- **Career Progression:** Individuals can access higher education, earn formal qualifications, and improve employability.
- **Bridging Gaps:** It connects real-world experiences with formal education, helping individuals integrate more effectively into the professional world.

Implementation Focus:

- The guidelines emphasize:
 - **Robust Governance:** Collaboration among policymakers, educational institutions, employers, and assessment bodies to ensure fairness and consistency.
 - **Quality Assurance:** Establishing reliable systems to uphold the integrity of RPL.
 - **Inclusion:** Providing opportunities for marginalized groups and disadvantaged communities.

Impact:

- The initiative aims to create a competent workforce capable of meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing job market.
- By valuing prior knowledge and experience, RPL paves the way for lifelong learning, career mobility, and social equity.

Conclusion:

- The UGC's new RPL guidelines represent a progressive step toward an inclusive and skill-oriented education system in India.
 - By valuing diverse learning experiences and promoting lifelong education, the initiative addresses both societal and economic challenges, fostering a more equitable and capable workforce.
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Current Affairs - 10 December 2024

THE FRICTION BETWEEN RBI GOVERNORS AND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

As Shaktikanta Das concludes his tenure as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on December 10, his leadership witnessed a familiar tension between the central bank and the government.

- Despite government pressure to cut key policy rates to address GDP slowdown, the RBI maintained the repo rate at 6.50% to control inflation.
- **This decision, opposed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, highlighted the central bank's prioritisation of inflation management over growth stimulation.**

Recurring Themes in RBI-Government Conflicts:

- **Autonomy of the central bank:** Governments often push for accommodative monetary policies, while RBI Governors prioritise inflation control and fiscal discipline.
- **Interest rate policies:** Disagreements frequently arise over interest rate cuts, as governments aim to spur growth, while the RBI remains cautious about inflationary risks.
- **Regulatory jurisdiction:** Conflicts over the RBI's regulatory authority, including disputes on financial market reforms and surplus reserves, underscore tensions in governance.
- **Diverging priorities:** While governments focus on immediate economic growth and political considerations, the RBI emphasises long-term economic stability.

Conclusion:

- The tension between the RBI and the government **reflects the delicate balance of ensuring monetary policy autonomy while addressing fiscal and economic imperatives.**
- As Shaktikanta Das' tenure ends, this enduring dynamic underscore the **critical role of the RBI in safeguarding financial stability against political pressures.**