

## Current Affairs - 29 September 2024

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### DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT

#### Why in News?

NITI Aayog, the top think tank of the government, had opposed some of the provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023. The Aayog particularly raised concerns regarding the changes proposed to the Right to Information (RTI) Act 2005.

#### What is the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) 2023?

- It is a comprehensive privacy and data protection law that provides guidelines on processing, storing and securing personal data.
- It recognises the right of individuals, referred to as data principals, to protect their personal data during the processing of that data for lawful purposes.
- The law culminates a seven-year journey that began when the Supreme Court of India (SC), in the **K.S. Puttaswamy case**, ruled the right to privacy was protected under the Constitution of India in 2017.
- The DPDPA includes provisions regarding consent, legitimate uses, breaches, data fiduciary and processor responsibilities, and individuals' rights over their data.
- The law doesn't apply to paper data unless it's digitised or data collected for personal, artistic and journalistic use.
- Fines for non-compliance range from Rs 10,000 for individuals to Rs 2.5 billion for organisations.
- The law is yet to be operationalised, with necessary rules for its implementation still pending.

#### Concerns Regarding DPDPA Raised by the NITI Aayog:

- The DPDP Bill proposed an amendment to a section [Section 8(1)(j)] in the RTI Act with such effect that disclosure of personal information about public officials would not be allowed even when these are justified in larger public interest.



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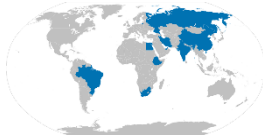


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- The NITI Aayog (then in the inter-ministerial consultations) suggested the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) **to not pass the proposed law in its current form as it could weaken the RTI Act.**
- The provision to amend the RTI Act was also criticised by the Opposition parties and civil society activists during the consultation period and when the Bill came up for discussion in Parliament.
- However, the MeitY **kept the proposed changes to the RTI Act unchanged** despite the reservations of NITI Aayog.
- The government was of the view that **the right to privacy is a fundamental right** under the Constitution of India, and should be made available to officers in government institutions as well.

### WHAT IS 'BRICS' GROUPING?



The Union Ministry of External Affairs recently met with his BRICS counterparts to affirm its role in a multipolar world.

- BRICS is an acronym for **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, a bloc of countries that formed a partnership following the creation of the term in 2001 by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill (but it didn't include South Africa at the time).
- South Africa joined in 2010, making it "BRICS".
- The group was designed to bring together the world's most **important developing countries** to challenge the political and economic power of the wealthier nations of North America and Western Europe.
- The BRICS countries operate as an organization that seeks to further economic cooperation among member nations and increase their economic and political standing in the world.
- **Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt** joined BRICS in 2024.



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- The expanded group has a combined population of about 3.5 billion, or **45% of the world's inhabitants**.
- Combined, members' economies are worth more than \$28.5tn - about **28% of the global economy**.
- With Iran, Saudi Arabia and UAE as members, Brics countries produce about **44% of the world's crude oil**.

### NANJANGUD RASABALE BANANA



The famed Nanjangud rasabale banana variety, which had become scarce because of a fungal disease, has begun to thrive again.

- It is a variety of banana grown in and around the **Mysore district and Chamarajanagar** district of Karnataka.
- It was awarded the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2006** for its thick pulp and distinct taste and aroma.
- The taste and pulp of this banana cannot be found in any other variety and anywhere else.
- **Soil required:** Black clay alluvial saline soil has given a unique aroma to this banana.
- Fruits possess medicinal properties and are believed to cure neurological ailments.
- **Threats:** The **Panama Wilt disease, a fungal infection** caused by the Fuserium Wilt pathogen has been the bane of rasabale farmers.

### What is the Geographical Indication (GI) tag?

- It is a sign used on products that have a **specific geographical origin** and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- Geographical Indications are **part of the intellectual property rights** that comes under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.
- In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**.



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- Geographical indications are typically used for agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial products.

### PARYATAN MITRA AND PARYATAN DIDI INITIATIVE



- The primary aim of this initiative is to elevate the overall experience for tourists in destinations, by having them meet ‘**tourist-friendly**’ people who are proud Ambassadors and Storytellers for their destination.
- The vision of this initiative is to welcome one and all to **experience Incredible India** through Incredible Indians, thereby creating a more welcoming, hospitable, and memorable experience for tourists when in India.
- Paryatan Mitra and Paryatan Didi were **piloted in six tourist destinations** across India: Orchha (Madhya Pradesh), Gandikota (Andhra Pradesh), Bodh Gaya (Bihar), Aizawl (Mizoram), Jodhpur (Rajasthan), and Sri Vijaya Puram (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).
- **Features**
  - Under this special emphasis is being placed on the **training of women and youth** to enable them to develop new tourism products & experiences like heritage walks, food tours, craft tours, nature treks, homestay experiences, and other innovative tourism products based on the potential of the destination.
  - This training is driven by the ‘**Athithi Devo Bhava**’ **philosophy** treating tourists as honored guests.
  - It is also envisioned that locals leverage these skills to obtain gainful employment going forward as homestay owners, food & cuisine experience providers, cultural guides, natural guides, adventure guides, and other roles in tourism.
  - Tourism-specific training is being followed by **general training in digital literacy** and digital tools to ensure that the experiences they create are discoverable and visible to tourists, nationally and globally.



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### SCHIZOPHRENIA

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved Bristol Myers Squibb's new oral medicine, Cobenfy, for the treatment of schizophrenia in adults.



- It is a **chronic, severe mental disorder** that affects the way a person thinks, acts, expresses emotions, perceives reality, and relates to others.
- It mostly **affects young adults** in the productive age group.
- One in every 100 people experiences schizophrenia and men are twice as likely to develop this condition as compared to women.

#### Symptoms of Schizophrenia:

- It can differ from person to person, but they generally fall into three main categories: **psychotic, negative, and cognitive**.
  - **Psychotic symptoms** include Hallucinations, Delusions, thought disorder, Movement disorder.
  - **Negative symptoms** include loss of motivation, loss of interest or enjoyment in daily activities, withdrawal from social life, difficulty showing emotions, and difficulty functioning normally.
  - **Cognitive symptoms** include problems in attention, concentration, and memory.
  - **Treatment:**
    - Though there is **no cure for schizophrenia**, a variety of antipsychotic medications are effective in reducing the psychotic symptoms present in the acute phase of the illness.
    - Psychological treatments such as **cognitive behavioral therapy** or supportive psychotherapy may reduce symptoms and enhance function.
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### BHARAT 6G ALLIANCE



Recently, the union telecom minister has initiated a meeting with the seven working groups of the Bharat 6G Alliance, signaling the future arrival of 6G in India.

- It is a **collaborative platform** which aims to achieve universal and affordable connectivity, promote indigenous technology, and establish India as a global leader in the telecom sector.
  - This platform **consist of public and private companies**, academia, research institutions, and standards development organizations, aims to lead the development and deployment of 6G technology in India.
  - It will forge coalitions and synergies with other 6G Global Alliances, fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange.
  - The Alliance will enable India to become a leading global supplier of IP, products and solutions of affordable 5G and 6G and other future telecom solutions,
  - **Aim:** To bring together Indian **startups, companies, and the manufacturing ecosystem** to establish consortia that drive the design, development and deployment of 6G technologies in India.
  - One of the key goals of B6GA is to facilitate market access for Indian telecom technology products and services, enabling the country to emerge as a global leader in 6G technology.
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### RATAPANI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



The Ratapani Sanctuary is stretching its arms to get the status of a tiger reserve, and the government is serious in this regard.



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### About Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary:

- **Location:** Situated in Raisen and Sehore districts of **Madhya Pradesh**, it spreads over 825.90 sq km.
  - This rocky forest with aquatic environment is spread on the **Vindhya Hills**.
  - It runs parallel on the northern side of the **Narmada River**. The **Kolar River** forms the western boundary of the Sanctuary.
  - The sanctuary has **Bhimbetka**, a group of rock shelters and rock paintings, which is one of the " **World Heritage Site** " declared by UNESCO.
  - It also encompasses many other historical and religious destinations like **Ginnourgarh Fort**, POW camp, **Keri Mahadeo**, **Ratapani dam**, **Jholiyapur dam**, etc.
  - **Landscape:** It is rugged with hills, valleys, plateaus, and plains.
  - **Flora:**
    - The forest of this Sanctuary is of **dry deciduous and moist deciduous**
    - About **55%** of the area is **covered by teak**. The remaining mixed forests consist of various dry deciduous species.
  - **Fauna:**
    - The regal striped cat is the apex predator, and estimates suggest that 40 tigers roam these forests.
    - **Chinkara**, an endangered species, is also found in the Sanctuary.
    - It is also home to animals like **the Panther, Hyena, Jackal, Indian Fox, Wild Dog, Jungle Cat, Small Indian Civet, Blue Bull, Chinkara, Black Buck, Chausingha, Spotted Deer, Barking Deer**, etc.
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### [HEZBOLLAH CHIEF NASRALLAH KILLED IN ISRAELI STRIKES](#)

#### Why in news?

The Israel Defense Forces killed Hasan Nasrallah, the longtime leader of Hezbollah — the Iran-backed armed group and political party that controls much of southern Lebanon.

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Nasrallah remained in charge of Hezbollah for more than 32 years. He played a key role in building the group into the potent force and was one of the most influential and best-known figures in the Middle East.

### Hezbollah

- Hezbollah was formed in 1982 as a Shia resistance group with support from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) following Israel's invasion of Lebanon.
  - Israel aimed to expel the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) from Lebanon and succeeded in relocating the PLO to Tunisia and establishing a buffer zone in southern Lebanon.
  - However, the invasion spurred the rise of Hezbollah, which became a long-term security threat to Israel.
- Historically marginalized in Lebanon, the Shia community reorganized under Hezbollah, which now operates as a powerful political, military, and social force.
- The group has a political party with parliamentarians, provides social services to poorer sections, and commands a strong military unit backed by Iran, with fighters and a range of missiles.

### Why are Israel and Hezbollah fighting?

- Hezbollah's core purpose is resistance against Israel, with the destruction of Israel stated in its manifesto.
- Regarded as a terrorist organization by Israel and the U.S., Hezbollah is credited for forcing Israel to end its occupation of southern Lebanon in 2000.
- The last full-scale war between Israel and Hezbollah occurred in 2006 after a Hezbollah cross-border raid led to an Israeli invasion of Lebanon.
- The latest conflict flared after Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.
  - In response to Israel's retaliation on Gaza, Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel in solidarity with the Palestinians, prompting Israeli airstrikes on Lebanon.





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- This ongoing border conflict has displaced 70,000 Israelis, with tensions escalating after Israel killed Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukr in a Beirut airstrike, leading to intensified rocket attacks from Hezbollah.
- **Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Iran to have a key role in coming days**
  - It remains uncertain whether Nasrallah's killing will escalate the West Asian crisis or lead to a de-escalation.
  - Countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar are closely monitoring developments, particularly Iran's potential response—whether it will retaliate and prolong the conflict or allow tensions to ease.
  - Another key issue is the stalled hostage deal, with 101 hostages still held by Hamas, some feared dead. Their release could signal a possible end to the conflict.

### **India wants early return of peace in the region**

- New Delhi, like Saudi Arabia and the UAE, seeks stability in West Asia to resume connectivity projects such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor and focus on regional prosperity.
  - India's primary concerns are the safety of around 9 million Indians living in the West Asian and Gulf regions, as well as energy security, with two-thirds of its crude oil and natural gas coming from this area.
  - A broader conflict would threaten both.
  - New Delhi is closely monitoring Israel and Iran's next moves and has issued security advisories for Lebanon amid the ongoing tensions.
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