

### WHAT IS HOLISTIC PROGRESS CARD (HPC)?

The National Council for Educational and Research Training (NCERT) is introducing a new 'holistic progress card' (HPC).



#### About Holistic Progress Card (HPC):

- HPC, developed by Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (**PARAKH**), a standard-setting body under the NCERT, for the foundational stage (Classes 1 and 2), preparatory stage (Classes 3 to 5), and middle stage (Classes 6 to 8), as per suggestions by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, marks a paradigm shift in assessing students' overall progress.
- HPC incorporates feedback from parents, classmates, and even self-evaluation by students.
- The approach aims to provide a **comprehensive view** of students' **academic performance**, cognitive abilities, socio-emotional skills and creativity during class activities.
- HPC aligns with the **National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE)** to prioritise a learner-centric evaluation.
- **Features:**
  - HPC, will **no longer depend on marks** or grades to evaluate a student's academic performance. Instead, it will **rely on a 360-degree evaluation**.
  - Under the HPC model, the **students will be regularly assessed through class activities** where they are not just passive learners but active agents.
    - The activities will prompt students to apply diverse skills and competencies that will demonstrate whether they have been able to grasp concepts.
  - **Teachers, thus, will be able to register the strengths of a student**, such as their ability to “collaborate”, “follow instructions”, show “creativity” or “empathy”, etc.

- Similarly, weaknesses like “lack of attention”, “peer pressure”, “lack of preparation” will **help teachers identify areas where students need help.**
  - A key feature of the HPC is that **students will have a say too**, evaluating their own as well as their classmates’ performance.
    - It encourages students to **reflect on their progress through statements** such as "I learned something new" or "I expressed my creativity."
  - The HPC seeks to **involve parents in the learning process**, integrating their insights on homework, classroom engagement, and balancing screen time with extracurricular activities.
  - **Peer evaluation** is also a key element, with students assessing their classmates' contributions to activities.
  - **Benefits:**
    - The HPC goes **beyond numerical grades, focusing on descriptive and analytical evaluations** that encompass academic achievements as well as the development of critical skills in a child.
    - It promotes a shift from summative to formative assessment, fostering **competency-based evaluation** and holistic growth.
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## WHAT IS TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE?



**A total solar eclipse will make the Sun disappear in April 8, 2024, as the world will witness a rare celestial event graze through the skies.**

- A total solar eclipse is a condition **when the Moon passes between the Sun and the Earth** and completely blocks the Sun's disk, casting a huge shadow on the surface.
- People viewing the eclipse from locations where the Moon’s shadow completely covers the Sun—known as the **path of totality**—will experience a total solar eclipse. During this timeframe, **the sky will darken**, resembling the onset of dawn or dusk.

- Weather permitting, **individuals along the path of totality** will have the opportunity to **observe the Sun's corona**, its outer atmosphere typically obscured by the Sun's bright face.
  - The **Sun's corona**, the outermost layer of its atmosphere extending millions of kilometers into space, **is exclusively visible during a solar eclipse**. Appearing as a faint, pearly-white halo encircling the darkened disk of the Sun, it becomes observable only during this celestial event.
- This solar eclipse will be **characterised by a phenomenon known as totality** - a condition when viewers may be able to see the chromosphere (a region of the solar atmosphere, appearing as the thin circle of pink around the Moon) along with the corona.
  - The **totality** will offer a rare view where you can **momentarily see the stars** during the time as the surroundings go completely dark.
- It will also be **marked by a dip in air temperatures**.

## WHAT IS E-KISAN UPAJ NIDHI PLATFORM?

Recently, the Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Commerce and Industry and Textiles launched 'e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi' (Digital Gateway).



**e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi platform** is a digital gateway of Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA).

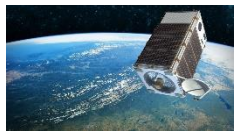
- It is the initiative with its simplified digital process can ease the procedure of farmers' storage at any registered WDRA warehouse for a **period of 6 months at 7% interest per annum**.
- This digital intervention is poised to mitigate distress sales by providing farmers with viable post-harvest storage options.

## **Key facts about Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)**

- It was established under the **Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007** and it consists of one Chairperson and two full time Members.

- **Mission of WDRA:**
    - It is to **establish a negotiable warehouse receipt system** in the country.
    - It will make warehouse receipts a prime tool of trade and facilitate finance against it, enable banks to improve the quality of their lending portfolio
    - This will help foster scientific warehousing of goods, increase liquidity in rural areas, improve supply chains, enhance grading and quality of goods and there by ensure higher returns to depositors.
  - The negotiable warehouse receipts issued by the WDRA will **help the farmers to seek loans from banks against the National Warehouse Receipts (NWRs)**. It will also avoid distress sales of agricultural produce during the peak marketing season and to avoid the post harvest storage loss.
  - **136 agricultural commodities** including cereals, pulses, oil seeds, spices, rubber, tobacco, coffee etc for issuing negotiable warehouse receipts and also **24 horticultural commodities** for cold storage and 9 non agricultural commodities have been notified.
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## METHANESAT - A SATELLITE WHICH WILL 'NAME AND SHAME' METHANE EMITTERS



MethaneSAT — a satellite which will track and measure methane emissions at a global scale — was launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket from California.

- It is crucial to cut methane emissions. And the main culprit: fossil fuel operations, which account for about 40 per cent of all human-caused methane emissions.
- The objective of MethaneSAT is to help achieve this goal.

### **Need to track and measure methane emissions**

- **Greenhouse effect**
  - Methane is an invisible but strong greenhouse gas, and the second largest contributor to global warming after carbon dioxide.

- It is responsible for 30 per cent of global heating since the Industrial Revolution.
- According to the United Nations Environment Programme, over a period of 20 years, **methane is 80 times more potent at warming than carbon dioxide.**
- **Responsible for pre-mature deaths**
  - The gas also contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone — a colourless and highly irritating gas that forms just above the Earth’s surface.
  - According to a 2022 report, exposure to ground-level ozone could be contributing to one million premature deaths every year.

## MethaneSAT

- MethaneSAT will orbit the Earth 15 times a day, monitoring the oil and gas sector.
- It will create a large amount of data, which will tell how much methane is coming from where, who’s responsible, and are those emissions going up or down over time.
- The data collected by MethaneSAT will be made public for free in near real-time.
- This will allow stakeholders and regulators to take action to reduce methane emissions.

## Features

- **Equipped with a high-resolution sensors**
  - Equipped with a high-resolution infrared sensor and a spectrometer, the satellite will fill critical data gaps.
  - It can track differences in methane concentrations as small as three parts per billion in the atmosphere.
  - This enables it to pick up smaller emissions sources than the previous satellites.
- **Wide-camera view to identify super-emitters**

- MethaneSAT also has a wide-camera view — of about 200 km by 200 km — allowing it to identify larger emitters so-called super emitters.
  - Use of AI
    - The collected data will be analysed using cloud-computing and AI technology developed by Google — the company is a mission partner.
    - The data will be made public through Google’s Earth Engine platform.
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## UDGAM PORTAL

Recently, the Reserve Bank of India said 30 banks are facilitating people to search their unclaimed deposits/accounts through UDGAM portal.



- UDGAM refers to **Unclaimed Deposits-Gateway to Access inforMation**, which is an online portal developed by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
  - It facilitates the registered users to search unclaimed deposits/accounts across **multiple banks at one place in a centralised manner**. The unclaimed deposits can be **claimed only from the respective bank**.
  - There are 30 banks, which are part of UDGAM portal, and they cover around 90% of unclaimed deposits (in value terms) in **Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund of RBI**.
  - This portal provides information related to both individuals and non-individuals category unclaimed deposits.
  - After registration on the portal a person will get **Unclaimed Deposit Reference Number (UDRN)** which is a unique number **generated through Core Banking Solution (CBS)** by banks and assigned to each Unclaimed account/deposit transferred to Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund of RBI.
  - This number is used so that the account holder or the bank branch where account is maintained, cannot be identified by any third party.
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## WHY DID GOOGLE DE-LIST SOME INDIAN APPS FROM PLAY STORE?

### Background:

- On March 1, Google announced that it was pulling the apps of almost a dozen firms out of its marketplace for Android apps.
- However, after the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology intervened, the apps were restored subsequently, but the issue remains unresolved.

### What is the Issue?

- At the heart of the issue is **Google's platform fees**.
- For all in-app purchases that involve a purely digital service — such as an e-book purchase or an OTT streaming subscription — Google collects a fee of anywhere **between 11 to 30% per transaction**.
- This fee, Google argues, helps the company pay for Google Play and develop the Android ecosystem.
- The exact fee paid by each developer varies.
  - For example, if a developer is using Google's own billing product, and is offering a recurring subscription service, or if they make less than \$1 million a year in revenue from in-app payments, the company charges 15%.
  - For app purchases for bigger firms, the amount is 30%. In India and South Korea, where regulatory scrutiny on these fees has been among the most intense, Google collects 11% or 26% in fees if developers choose to use a different payment method.
- However, **Indian developers** — like many global counterparts — see these fees as a **high price to pay**.
- Some, including Bharat Matrimony and Disney+ Hotstar, approached the judiciary at different stages to avoid paying the fee altogether.

### How has the Competition Commission of India Responded?

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) had in 2022 fined Google Rs. 936 crores for its Play Store policies.

- The company is in the process of appealing that fine, as well as orders by the CCI that it give developers comprehensive choices for in-payments.
- An appeal by Google against this fine is pending at the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal**.
- Meanwhile, the Indian apps that went to the Court are back on the platform for now.
- In-app payments are not yet a major part of the digital economy in India, as purely digital services for which Indian consumers have been willing to pay have been limited to content streaming, dating and matrimonial service.

## COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA (CCI):

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a statutory body established in March 2009 under the **Competition Act, 2002**.
- **Objectives:**
  - Eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition
  - Promote and sustain competition
  - Protect the interests of consumers
  - Ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India
- The CCI aims to establish a robust competitive environment through:
  - Proactive engagement with all stakeholders, including consumers, industry, government and international jurisdictions
  - Being a knowledge intensive organization with high competence level
  - Professionalism, transparency, resolve and wisdom in enforcement
- The Commission consists of **one Chairperson and six members who shall be appointed by the Central Government**.

## **Functions of CCI:**

- Ensure consumer interests are protected in the market
- Implement the policies enumerated in the Competition Act, 2002



- Advocate and educate other Government bodies about the Competition Act, 2002. Such as state governments and ministries etc.
- To promote fair and constructive competition practices in the market
- To prevent the realisation of anti-competitive agreements
- To cooperate with other regulatory bodies to work more efficiently in ensuring the continuity of a free and fair market

### Powers of CCI:

- The Competition Commission of India has the power to inquire into a certain agreement as well as the dominant position of enterprises.
  - It has the power to inquire into any acquisition or combination if it determines that such acquisition or combination may adversely affect competition in the Indian market.
  - It has the power to regulate its own procedures.
  - It has the power to **impose monetary penalties** upon violation of the Competition Act, 2002.
  - It has the power to pass an interim order for any act where there has been anti-competition agreements or abuse of position by dominant parties which adversely affects the competition in the market.
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