

WHAT ARE ELECTORAL BONDS?

The government recently announced the 26th tranche of electoral bond sales to be undertaken over a ten-day window at all authorized branches of the State Bank of India.



About Electoral Bonds:

The electoral bond scheme was **launched** by the Union government in 2018.

- **What is it?** It is a **bearer instrument**, like a promissory note that **can be bought by any Indian citizen or company incorporated in India**.
- The citizen or corporate can **then donate the same to any eligible political party** of his/her choice.
- The bonds are **similar to bank notes that are payable to the bearer on demand** and are **free of interest**.
- An individual or party is **allowed to purchase these bonds digitally or through cheque**.
- **Working:**
 - EBs are **issued/purchased** for any value, in **multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1,00,000, Rs 10,00,000 and Rs 1,00,00,000**.
 - The electoral bonds **are available for purchase for 10 days at the beginning of every quarter**.
 - **SBI is the only bank** authorized to sell these bonds.
 - Anonymous **cash donations were capped at Rs 2,000**.
 - EBs have a **life of only 15 days** during which it can be used for making donations to political parties.
 - **Eligibility:** Only political parties registered under **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** and which secured **not less than 1% of votes polled** in the last general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, are eligible to receive electoral bonds.
 - The bond can be **encashed by an eligible political party only through a designated bank account** with the authorized bank.

- The **political parties** have to disclose the amount to the Election Commission.
 - The electoral bonds **will not bear the name of the donor.**
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SLINEX - 2023

The 10th edition of the maritime Exercise SLINEX - 2023 recently began in Colombo.

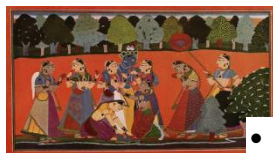


About Exercise SLINEX - 2023:

- Exercise SLINEX is an **annual bilateral maritime exercise** between **Indian Navy and Sri Lanka Navy.**
 - **SLINEX - 2023 is the 10th edition of the annual exercise.**
 - SLINEX-2023 will aim to **enhance interoperability, improve mutual understanding** and **exchange best practices** and procedures in multi-faceted Maritime operations between both Navies.
 - The exercise is being **conducted in two phases**, the **Harbour Phase** followed by the **Sea Phase.**
 - The **Indian Navy will be represented by INS Kiltan** (Advanced Anti Submarine Warfare Corvette) and **INS Savitri** (Offshore Patrol Vessel), while the Sri Lanka Navy will have **SLNS Gajabahu** (Advance Offshore Patrol Vessel) and **SLNS Sagara** (OPV) in the exercise.
 - SLINEX is in consonance with **India's policy of 'Neighbourhood First'** and **Prime Ministers' vision of 'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)'**.
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BASHOLI PAINTINGS

Recently, the world-famous Basohli Painting which is popular for its miniature art style from Kathua district of Jammu has obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.



About Basholi paintings:

- Basholi paintings originated in the Basholi region of **Jammu and Kashmir.**

- It is a reputed school of **miniature paintings** known for its vivid, evocative colours, bold lines, and deep-set facial patterns.
- It is considered the first school of **Pahari paintings**
- **Patronage:** The Basholi painting style flourished during the 17th and 18th centuries under the patronage of local rulers and wealthy merchants.
- **Features of the Basholi painting**
 - It has peculiar characteristics, they have perfect geometrical patterns, bright colours and glossy enamel.
 - **Colours used: Ochre yellow, brown, and green grounds predominating.**
 - The figures in the paintings are shown clad in rich costumes, stylised faces and large bulging eyes lent unique individuality to these paintings.
 - **Themes:** The portraits of **local rulers, Radha-Krishna, and Madhava-Malati love themes** and themes from the Bhagavata Purana.
 - These are painted **on paper, cloth, or wood** using natural pigments and dyes.

What is a Geographical Indication Tag?

- A Geographical Indication 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 typically used for **agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts and industrial products.**
- The **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- This GI tag is valid for a period of **10 years** following which it can be renewed.

CHINA ANNOUNCES RENAMING OF 11 PLACES IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

- In an attempt to lay claim to areas inside the Indian territory, the Chinese government announced it would standardise the names of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh.

- This is Beijing's third such list on Arunachal Pradesh, attempting to rename places by giving them what it calls standardised geographical names.
- In 2017, the Chinese Ministry of Civilian Affairs put out a similar list of six places.
- Again, in December 2021, released a list of 15 places that it sought to rename.

Border Dispute in Eastern Sector of LAC



What is McMahon Line?

- The disputed boundary in the Eastern Sector of the India-China border is over the McMahon Line.
- Representatives of China, India and Tibet in 1913-14 met in Shimla to settle the boundary between Tibet and India, and Tibet and China.
- During the Shimla conference, Sir Henry McMahon, the then foreign secretary of British India, drew up the 550-mile (890 km) McMahon Line as the border between British India and Tibet.
- This line was drawn from the eastern border of Bhutan to the Isu Razi pass on the China-Myanmar border.

The dispute between India and China is eastern sector

- The McMahon line moved British control substantially northwards. This agreement ceded Tawang and other Tibetan areas to the imperial British Empire.
- Though the Chinese representatives at the meeting initialled the agreement, they subsequently refused to accept it.
- Subsequently, the Chinese government stated that it does not recognize the "illegal" McMahon Line.
- China accuses India of occupying areas in Arunachal, which it calls part of Southern Tibet.
- China claims territory to the south of the McMahon Line, lying in Arunachal Pradesh.
- China also bases its claims on the historical ties that have existed between the monasteries in Tawang and Lhasa.

Indo-China 1962 war and Arunachal Pradesh

- The Arunachal Pradesh border, that China claims to be its own territory, is the largest disputed area, covering around 90000 sq. km.

- During the 1962 war, the People's Liberation Army occupied it but they announced a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew respecting the McMahon Line.
 - However, it has continued to assert its claim over the territory. Nowadays, almost the whole of Arunachal is claimed by China.
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WHAT ARE PERFORMER'S RIGHTS?

Recently, a noted actress challenged the sales tax levied against her income from advertisements and performances in award shows.



About Performer's rights:

- **What is it?** Performers' rights refer to the **legal rights** granted to actors, singers, musicians, dancers, and other performers for their creative works.
- The first significant development in the protection of performers' rights came with the adoption of **the Rome Convention in 1961**.
- Performers' rights are protected under various international treaties such as the **Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty**.
- In 1996, WIPO Performance and phonogram Treaty (WPPT) came into existence.
- In this treaty, **the moral rights of the performers were recognized** for the first time in any international treaty.
- In **India**, performer rights were recognised under **the Copyright Act of 1957** in the year 1994.
- The copyright Act is also in conformity with 2 WIPO internet treaties concluded in 1996 namely, the **WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT)** and **WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT)**.
- The duration of the protection of the **performer's rights is 50 years** from the end of the year in which the performance was fixed or it took place.

What are copyrights?

- A **legal right** granted to an intellectual property owner is copyright.

- It helps protect the creator of the original material so that no one can duplicate or use it without authorization.

Key facts about the World Intellectual Property Organisation

- It is an organisation based in Geneva and it works with the vision of encouraging creative activity and promoting the protection of Intellectual Property throughout the world.
- WIPO is one of the 15 **specialised agencies** of the **United Nations**.
- Currently, there are 193 members of the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

POVERTY ESTIMATION IN INDIA: AFTER PANDEMIC, POVERTY KEPT FALLING EVERY QUARTER FROM JULY-SEPT 2020

Why in News?

- According to a new paper authored by former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman (Arvind Panagariya), **rural poverty as a percentage of total rural population declined** continuously every quarter beginning July-September 2020.
- Based on household expenditures reported in the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS 2020-21), **this estimate contradicts widespread claims showing a large rise in poverty** in both rural and urban India post the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Poverty Estimation in India:

- **Meaning of poverty:** Poverty can be defined as a condition in which an individual or household lacks the financial resources to afford a basic minimum standard of living.
- **Need for poverty estimation:**
 - **Poverty elimination** has remained a major challenge and lies at the core of India's national development agenda to create a **just and equitable society**.
 - **Reliable estimation of poverty** is the first step towards eradication of poverty as a basic input for design, implementation and monitoring of anti-poverty programmes.
- **Approaches of poverty estimation:**

- The conventional approach is to specify a minimum expenditure/income (**poverty line**) required to purchase a basket of goods and services necessary to satisfy basic human needs.
 - **Estimation of poverty in India has been based on two critical components:**
 - Information on the consumption expenditures and its distribution across households is provided by the NSS consumption expenditure surveys;
 - These expenditures by households are evaluated with reference to a given poverty line.
 - In India, the official poverty definition and numbers are estimated based on the **Consumption Expenditure Survey (CES)** conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO).
 - The last published data of CES is available for **2011-12**, while the government had junked the CES conducted in 2017-18.
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CBI'S DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Why in news?

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation was established by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India dated 1st April 1963.

What is Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)?

• About

- It is the premier investigative agency of India.
- The agency was established in 1963 by the Indian government as a result of the recommendation of the Santhanam Committee.
- CBI is **not a statutory body**. It derives its power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.

• Control

- It operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (which in turn operated under PMO).

- However, for investigation of offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act, CBI vests superintendence to the Central Vigilance Commission.

- **Functions**

- Initially, it was set up to investigate corruption in government departments and public sector undertakings.
- However, over the years, its jurisdiction has expanded to cover a wide range of cases, including economic offenses, cyber-crimes, organized crimes, and special crimes.

Criticism of CBI

- **Guided By Pre-independence Act:**

- The CBI is still guided by DPSE Act 1946, whose provisions hamper the accountability and autonomy of the institutions.
- In 2013, the Guwahati HC, in a judgement, had termed CBI as unconstitutional as it has no statutory backing.
 - It was later stayed by the Supreme Court.

- **Politically inclined**

- There have been instances where CBI has been politically biased as it is vulnerable to undue political pressure.
- During the coal block investigation, the CBI was asked to share the findings with the government.
- The carrot of post-retirement benefit makes CBI chief prone to toeing the lines of incumbent government.
- The image of a premier investigating agency suffered a serious setback when the Supreme Court of India termed CBI as caged parrot with many masters.

- **Delays in case solving**

- It shows the inefficiency and inefficacy of this top most investigating agency of India.

- **Corruption and Nepotism**

- Ex-CBI director Joginder singh in his book revealed about the prevalent corruption and nepotism within the agency.

- **Turf war**

- In 2019, the agency was involved in turf war between its director and its special director. Both had accused each other of corruption and money laundering.
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PRADHAN MANTRI STREET VENDOR'S ATMANIRBHAR NIDHI (PM SVANIDHI) SCHEME

Why in News?

- A total of 42.7 lakh loans amounting to approximately **5100 crore** had been disbursed to street vendors under the PM SVANidhi scheme.

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme:

- The PM SVANidhi scheme was launched by the Government of India in **June, 2020**.
- **Objective –**
 - To empower Street Vendors by not only extending loans to them, but also for their holistic development and economic upliftment.
- The scheme intends to facilitate **collateral free working capital loans of up to Rs.10,000/- of one-year tenure, to approximately 50 lakh street vendors.**
- **Nodal Ministry –** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Need for the Scheme:

- The **Covid-19 pandemic** and the nationwide **lockdown** left daily wage workers and street vendors out of work.
- The scheme aims at **aiding the vendors at getting back on their feet financially.**
- In the long term, it aims at establishing a credit score for the vendors as well as creating a digital record of their socio-economic status, so that they can avail the Central government schemes later.
- The scheme also **attempts to formalise the informal sector of the economy and provide them safety nets and a means of availing loans in the future.**

Eligibility:

- The Scheme is available to all street vendors engaged in vending in urban areas.



CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- As per the **Street Vendors Act, 2014**, the Town Vending Committees (which comprises the local authorities and vendors from an area) issue a certificate of vending after a survey has been conducted of all the vendors.
- But since many states and cities have not conducted the survey yet, the urban local bodies – in this case, the municipalities – shall provide a **Letter of Recommendation** for every vendor who wishes to avail the loan.

Benefits:

- The PM SVANidhi scheme offers incentives in the form of –
 - **Interest subsidy at 7% per annum** on regular repayment of loan;
 - **Cashback up to Rs.1200/- per annum** on undertaking prescribed digital transactions;
 - Eligibility for enhanced next tranche of loans.
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