

### LATEST GDP DATA: THE BIG PICTURE IS BRIGHT

#### Context

- According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's GDP recorded a higher-than-expected growth rate of 6.1% in January-March 2023 pushing up the **growth estimate for full year 2022-23 to 7.2%**.
- This is higher than NSO's advance estimates of 7% for 2022-23.

#### GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

- GDP is the **total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services** produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.
- As a broad measure of overall domestic production, it **functions as a comprehensive scorecard of a given country's economic health**.

#### Latest GDP Figures

- Contrary to market perception, GDP growth came in higher at **7.2 per cent in 2022-23**.
- The largest revisions happened in the **fourth quarter estimates**, with growth recorded at **6.1 per cent**, and **gross value added (GVA) at 6.5 per cent**.

#### Factors Contributing to High Growth Rate

- **The Agriculture Sector:** It grew at a robust 5.5 per cent in the fourth quarter, with growth for the full year estimated at 4 per cent.
- **Manufacturing**
  - During the last financial year, manufacturing exhibited muted growth of 1.3 per cent. It has picked up pace in the fourth quarter, growing at **4.5 per cent**.
  - Analysts have attributed this pick up to an improvement in **both volumes and corporate margins**.
- **Construction**
  - Another **labour-intensive sector**, has also registered a healthy performance, with growth for the full year being estimated at **10 per cent**.

- The healthy order book position of the sector (around Rs 7 trillion for 9 construction players) reflects the **medium-term revenue visibility and improvement in rural employment**.
- In 2022-23, basic chemicals, roadways and real estate accounted for 53 per cent of new investment announcements.
- **Within services**, hotels, transport, and communications sector has maintained its growth momentum.
- **The financial, and professional services** sector has seen a sustained pickup over the year.
- **Credit growth of scheduled commercial banks** remained strong at 15.5 per cent.
- The sector-wise credit data for April indicates that credit is 2.8 times higher than in April last year.
- The credit-to-GDP gap has narrowed, **reflecting improved credit demand in the economy** in the face of rising capacity utilisation.

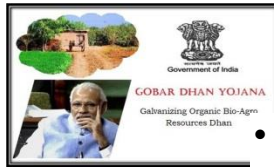
## Why the Big Picture Seems Bright

- **The Strength of Indian Economy is Intact:** The latest robust growth numbers are indicative of the Indian economy's resilience despite global uncertainties, and provide a positive outlook.
- **The rebalancing of demand from private consumption** to investments will spur growth once consumption picks up.
- **Private investment activity looks robust** and domestic monetary conditions remain supportive of growth in 2023-24.
- **Some additional factors**
  - The number of GST registrations is about 1.4 crore, whereas the current MSME units registered under Udyam have reached 1.87 crore.
  - The gap between the two indicates the extent of further **formalisation**. As these enterprises are brought into the formal system, this could lead to a credit boom for these smaller firms.
  - This indicates that growth is **likely to overshoot RBI's estimate of 6.5 per cent**.

---

## GOBARDHAN SCHEME

Recently, Union Minister for Jal Shakti has launched the Unified Registration Portal for GOBARDhan.



### About Unified Registration Portal:

- This portal will serve as a **centralized repository** for assessing investment and participation in the Biogas/CBG (Compressed Biogas) sector at a pan India level.
- **Primary objective:** To streamline the process of setting up CBG/Biogas plants in the country.
- The Unified Registration Portal allows any government, cooperative or private entity operating or intending to set up a Biogas/CBG/Bio-CNG plant in India to obtain a registration number by enrolling in the portal.
- This registration number will enable them to avail a multitude of benefits and support from the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India.

### GOBARDhan Scheme:

- **Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan**, is a crucial **umbrella initiative** of the Government of India.
- The government launched the Gobardhan scheme in **2018** as a national priority project **under the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen-Phase II** program.
- **Aim:**
  - To generate wealth and energy by **converting cattle dung, agricultural residue**, and other organic waste **into Biogas, CBG and bio-fertilizers**.
  - It adopts a whole-of-government approach and aims to convert **waste into wealth**, thereby promoting a circular economy.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The Department of **Drinking Water and Sanitation**, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

---

## [OFFICIAL VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL TO INDIA](#)

### Why in news?

- Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Prime Minister of Nepal is on an official visit to India from 31 May 2023 to 03 June 2023.

- This is the first bilateral visit abroad by the PM of Nepal after assuming office in December 2022.

## **India Nepal bilateral relations**

- As close neighbours, India and Nepal share a unique relationship of friendship and cooperation characterized by open borders and deep-rooted people-to-people contacts of kinship and culture.
- The India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 forms the bedrock of the special relations that exist between India and Nepal.
  - Under this Treaty, the Nepalese citizens enjoy unparalleled advantages in India, availing facilities and opportunities at par with Indian citizens.
  - Nearly 6 million Nepali citizens live and work in India.

## **Different aspects of Bilateral Relations**

### **Economic**

- India is the largest trading partner of Nepal. Nepal is also India's 11th largest export destination, up from 28th position in 2014.
- Total bilateral trade in 2021-22 reached US\$ 11,005.10 million.
  - In 2021-22, while Nepal's exports to India stood at US\$ 1,371.04mn, India's exports to Nepal were US\$ 9,634.06mn.

### **Indian Investment in Nepal**

- India is the largest source of investment into Nepal, accounting for more than 32% of the total FDI stock of Nepal, which is worth nearly USD 520 million, as per NRB data until mid-2020.

### **Connectivity and Development Partnership**

- India's development assistance to Nepal is a broad-based programme focusing on creation of infrastructure at the grass-roots level.
- Various projects have been implemented in the areas of infrastructure, health, water resources, education and rural & community development.
- The total economic assistance earmarked under 'Aid to Nepal' budget in FY 2022-23 was Rs 6.8 billion.

### **Cooperation in the power sector& energy**

- Nepal exports more than 450 MW of electricity to India.

- India has built several hydroelectric projects, like Pokhara (1 MW), Trisuli (21 MW), Western Gandak (15 MW), and Devighat (14.1 MW) etc.
- The first high-capacity 400 kV Muzaffarpur (India) - Dhalkebar (Nepal) cross-border power transmission line was completed in 2016 with Indian funding.
- Two additional 132 kV cross-border transmission lines between Kataiya (India) - Kusaha (Nepal) and Raxaul (India) - Parwanipur (Nepal), built with GoI grant assistance, were completed in 2017.
- South Asia's first cross-border petroleum products pipeline, constructed and funded by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., connecting Motihari in India to Amlekhgunj in Nepal was inaugurated in September 2019.

### **Defence Cooperation**

- A number of defence personnel from Nepal Army attend training courses in various Indian Army training institutions.
- The Joint Military Exercise SURYA KIRAN is conducted alternately in India and in Nepal.
- Since 1950, India and Nepal have been awarding each other's Army Chief with the honorary rank of General in recognition of the mutual harmonious relationship between the two armies.
- The Gorkha regiments of the Indian Army are raised partly by recruitment from hill districts of Nepal.

### **Earthquake 2015**

- A devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on 25 April 2015.
- India was the first country to respond by dispatching National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams and special aircrafts with rescue and relief materials to Nepal.
- The total Indian relief assistance to Nepal amounted to over US\$ 67 million. Later, India announced a post-earthquake reconstruction package of US\$ 1 bn.

---

## **JUDICIAL PANEL TO PROBE VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR**

### **Why in news?**

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah is on a visit to violence-hit Manipur to resolve the ongoing ethnic crisis.

- During his visit, he announced a series of measures aimed at restoring peace in Manipur.

## **Violence in Manipur**

- Violence between Manipur's Kuki tribe and the majority Meitei community continued to rage in several parts of Manipur for many days.

## **Reasons behind the violence in Manipur**

- **Manipur was boiling since February 2023**

- Manipur has been restive since February when the state government launched an eviction drive seen as targeting a specific tribal group.
- The drive led to protests but not on the scale of the one seen recently.

- **High Court's order as a tigger point**

- The recent protests were triggered by the Manipur High Court's direction to the State to pursue a 10-year-old recommendation to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the non-tribal Meitei community.
- The Court's order has brought the historical tensions between the valley-dwelling Meitei community and the state's hill tribes to a boil.

- **Violence started**

- A 'tribal solidarity march' was organised by the All-Tribal Students' Union of Manipur (ATSUM) against the order of the High Court.
- Violent clashes broke out at various places in Manipur during the course of this march.

## **Major communities residing in Manipur**

- The State is like a football stadium with the **Imphal Valley** representing the playfield at the centre and the **surrounding hills** the galleries.
- The valley, which comprises about 10% of Manipur's landmass, is dominated by the non-tribal Meitei who account for more than 64% of the population of the State.
  - This area yields 40 of the State's 60 MLAs.
- The hills comprising 90% of the geographical area are inhabited by more than 35% recognised tribes.
  - This area sends only 20 MLAs to the Assembly.

## **Meitei community want ST status**

- There has been an organised push in support of this demand for at least since 2012, led by the Scheduled Tribes Demand Committee of Manipur (STDCM).
- **Recognised as tribe before merger with India**
  - In their plea before the High Court, it was argued that the Meitei community was recognised as a tribe before the merger of the princely state of Manipur with the Union of India in 1949.
  - It lost its identity as a tribe after the merger.
- **Need to preserve tradition and culture**
  - The demand for ST status arose from the need to preserve the community, and save the ancestral land, tradition, culture and language of the Meiteis.
  - As per the arguments forwarded by the community in the court:
    - The community has been victimised without any constitutional safeguards to date.
    - The Meitein/Meetei have been gradually marginalised in their ancestral land.
    - Their population which was 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951 has now been reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data.

### **Why Tribal groups are opposing ST status for Meiteis?**

- The tribal groups say the Meiteis have a demographic and political advantage besides being more advanced than them academically and in other aspects.
  - The Meiteis are a dominant group controlling the state and its apparatuses.
  - Hence, the claim that Meiteis need ST status to protect their culture and identity is self-defeating.
- They feel the ST status to the Meiteis would lead to loss of job opportunities and allow them to acquire land in the hills and push the tribals out.
- The Manipuri language of the Meiteis is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- Sections of the Meitei community — which is predominantly Hindu — are already classified under Scheduled Castes (SC) or Other Backward Classes (OBC).

---

### **WHAT IS JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)?**

**The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) recently issued a declaration of solidarity with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) communities around the globe.**



## About Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS):

UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations family established in 1996, which brings together the efforts and resources of 11 UN system organizations to unite the world against AIDS.

- UNAIDS' global mission is to lead, strengthen and support an ample response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in order to:
  - Prevent the advance of HIV.
  - Offer treatment and assistance to people infected and affected by the disease.
  - Reduce individuals and communities vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.
  - Mitigate the epidemic's socio-economic and human impacts.
- The participating organizations that form UNAIDS, also called the UNAIDS Cosponsors, are:
  - UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
  - UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)
  - World Bank
  - UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
  - UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)
  - UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
  - UNFPA (United Nations Populations Fund)
  - WHO (World Health Organisation)
  - World Food Programme
  - UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)
  - ILO (International Labour Organisation)
- The Joint Programme is coordinated by the UNAIDS Secretariat, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

---

## WHO WAS CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ?

Celebrations marking the 350th anniversary of the coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj recently began at the Raigad fort in Maharashtra.





## About Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj:

- He was the **founder of the Maratha Empire in western India.**
- He was **born on February 19, 1630 to Shahaji Bhosle and Jijabai in the fort of Shivneri, near the city of Junnar of the Pune district.**
- With his valor and great administrative skills, **Shivaji carved out an enclave from the declining Adilshahi sultanate of Bijapur.** It eventually became the genesis of the Maratha Empire.
- He was **known as the Father of Indian Navy**, Shivaji was the **first to realise the importance of having a naval force**, and therefore he strategically **established a navy and forts at the coastline** to defend the Konkan side of Maharashtra.
- He was a **secular ruler** who was very accommodating of all religions. He **had numerous Muslim soldiers** in his army.
- Shivaji was a **dependable supporter of women and their honour.** Anyone under his rule caught **violating woman's rights** was severely punished.
- He **had a council of ministers (Asht Pradhan)** to advise him on the matters of the state **but he was not bound by it.**
- He was **called as the 'Mountain Rat'** and was widely known for his **guerrilla warfare tactics.** He was called so because of his awareness in geography of his land, and guerrilla tactics like raiding, ambushing and surprise attacks on his enemies.

## Key facts about Raigad fort:

- **Location:**
  - It is a **hill fort** situated in **Raigad district, Maharashtra.**
  - It is situated in the **Sahyadri mountain ranges** or the western ghats.
- It is **one of the strongest-ever fortresses of the Deccan Plateau** and is known as the **'Gibraltar of the East'** across the world.
- It was seized by **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in 1656 from Chandraraoji More, the King of Jawali.**



# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- Several structures and other constructions in Raigad were developed by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.
  - He made this his capital in 1674, after being crowned as the king of the entire Maratha Kingdom and later on, the Maratha Empire.
  - The fort was the location for an armed campaign executed by the British East India Company in 1765. On May 9, 1818, the fort was looted and subsequently destroyed by British forces.
  - The fort also overlooks an artificial lake known as the 'Ganga Sagar Lake'.
- 

