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**16 - 31 August, 2019**

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## 1 FOUR NEW PRODUCTS GET GI TAG

### CONTEXT

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has added four new products to the list of registered GIs.

### ABOUT

- Four new products added to GI list are:
  - **PalaniPanchamirtham from Palani Town in Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu State,**
  - **Tawlhlohpuan and MizoPuanchei** from the state of **Mizoram**
  - **Tirur Betel leaf** from **Kerala**
- **PalaniPanchamirtham** is a combination of banana, jaggery sugar, cow ghee, honey and cardamom in a definite proportion. It is prepared in a natural method without addition of any preservatives or artificial ingredients and is well known for its religious fervour and gaiety. **This is the first time a temple 'prasadam' from Tamil Nadu has been bestowed with the GI tag.**
- **Tawlhlohpuania a good quality fabric** from Mizoram known for warp yarns, warping, weaving & intricate designs that are made by hand. Tawlhloh, in Mizo language, means 'to stand firm or not to move backward'.
- **MizoPuanchei is a colourful Mizo shawl/textile, from Mizoram.** It is considered as the **most colourful among the Mizo textiles.** It is an essential possession for every Mizo lady and an important marriage outfit in the state. It is also the most commonly used costume in Mizo festive dances and official ceremonies.
- Tirur betel vine from Kerala is valued both for its mild stimulant action and medicinal properties. It is generally used for **making pan-masala.**

#### Background:

- ▶ **GI (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.**
- ▶ **Attributes for GI:** 1). Sign must identify a **product as originating in a given place.** 2). **Reputation or quality of product** should be essentially due to the place of origin
- ▶ Geographical indications are typically used for **agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial products.**

#### Benefits

- ▶ A geographical indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication **to prevent its use by a third party** whose product does not conform to the applicable standards.
- ▶ **GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas,** by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers and craftsmen.

#### How GI products are protected?

- ▶ There are three main ways to protect a geographical indication:
  - sui generis systems (i.e. special regimes of protection);
  - using collective or certification marks
  - methods focusing on business practices, including administrative product approval schemes.

2

## GOVERNMENT REMOVES DEBENTURE REDEMPTION RESERVE (DRR) REQUIREMENT FOR LISTED COMPANIES, NBFCs AND HFCs

### CONTEXT:

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has amended the Companies (Share Capital & Debentures) Rules by removing **Debenture Redemption Reserve requirement** for Listed Companies, NCFs and HFCs.

### ABOUT:

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs relaxed the DRR requirement. It said that listed companies, NBFCs registered with the Reserve Bank of India and HFCs registered with the National Housing Bank would no longer be required to maintain a DRR if they issue non-convertible debentures (NCDs). The DRR requirement for unlisted companies (excluding unlisted NBFCs and HFCs) is still on, but at a lower rate of 10 per cent (against the earlier 25 per cent).

#### Debenture:

- ▶ Debenture is a medium to long-term debt instrument used by large companies to borrow money at a fixed rate of interest. Debenture are of two types:
  - Fully Convertible debentures are those in which whole value of debentures into equity shares of the company.
  - In Partly Convertible debentures, only some part of debentures will be eligible for conversion into equity shares of the company.

### Objectives:

- removing the requirement for creation of a DRR of 25% of the value of outstanding debentures in respect of listed companies, NBFCs registered with RBI and for Housing Finance Companies registered with National Housing Bank (NHB) both for public issue as well as private placements;
- Reduction in DRR for unlisted companies from the present level of 25% to 10% of
- the outstanding debentures.

NBFCs and HFCs have been the most frequent issuers of NCDs in the market. With the DRR rule gone, the government expects more of these firms to come up with NCD issues that could ease their funding constraints. The extra money that the companies will now be left with due to no provisioning for the DRR is expected to flow into the economy by way of credit too.

### Background

- ▶ Non-convertible debentures (NCDs) are debt instruments that companies issue to investors to raise money for their capital requirements. NCDs regularly pay interest at a fixed rate for a fixed tenure till maturity. However, there have been incidents where companies raising funds through NCDs at high rates of interest have failed to pay their dues.
- ▶ In order to protect the interests of retail investors in such cases, the Companies Act mandated that companies must maintain a redemption reserve. As per the Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules 2014, all listed companies, NBFCs, HFCs and unlisted companies were to create a DRR with 25 per cent of the value of outstanding debentures from their profits. For example, if a company's outstanding value of debentures was Rs.1 crore, it was to create a DRR of Rs.25 lakh.
- ▶ In addition, companies/NBFCs/HFCs also had to deposit 15 per cent of the amount due on debentures in the next fiscal with scheduled banks or invest it in specified government securities, on or before April 30 of each year. The amount invested could only be used to repay outstanding debentures.

**Why is it important?**

- ▶ A DRR ensures that a company sets aside a portion of its profits toward repayment of long-term NCDs out of its current profits. When a company that has issued NCDs goes bankrupt or faces a liquidity crunch, it usually defaults on its repayments to lenders. In such cases, the existence of the DRR reduces the investment risk for the buyer of the debentures. Though a few companies issue secured debentures (with the assets of the company as security), a DRR can help them as well, as recovery of dues by liquidating assets can take a considerable amount of time.

**Benefits**

- **Ease of doing business:** It is in accordance with the Government policy to improve the ease of doing nosiness. The reduction in DRR will leave enough room for companies to extend the spending.
- **Boost Bond Market:**The measure has been taken by the Government with a view to **reducing the cost of the capital raised** by companies through issue of debentures and is expected to significantly **deepen the Bond Market**.
- **Safeguarding the interest of Investors:**The rules, while retaining DRR requirement for Unlisted Companies, provide for reduction from a DRR of 25% to a DRR of 10% for such companies, so as to **safeguard interests of investors**.

**Challenges**

With no backing of DRR for the debenture issues from companies (except unlisted ones)/NBFCs or HFCs, your investment in NCDs are set to become riskier. However, the rule requiring NCD issuers to deposit 15 per cent of their maturing amounts for the next fiscal has not been changed and remains a protection for buyers.

**Way-out**

The RBI and the Centre plan to monitor closely the liquidity positions of NBFCs/HFCs so that they have early warning of possible defaults. However, the lack of a DRR does make NCDs, particularly unsecured ones, more risky. Therefore, the move may have a negative impact on debt investors in the medium- to long-term.

**3****SARAL – ‘STATE ROOFTOP SOLAR ATTRACTIVENESS INDEX’****CONTEXT**

Ministry for Power and New & Renewable Energy launches SARAL – ‘State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index’.

**ABOUT**

- Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, launched the State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index–SARAL.
- **The State of Karnataka gets first rank in the Index.**Telangana, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have got 2nd, 3rd and 4th rank respectively.
- The Index evaluates Indian states based on their attractiveness for rooftop development.
- SARAL has been designed collaboratively by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Ernst & Young (EY).

- SARAL currently captures five key aspects –
  - robustness of policy framework
  - implementation environment
  - investment climate
  - consumer experience
  - business ecosystem
- It encourages each state to assess the initiatives taken so far, and what it can do to improve its solar rooftop ecosystem. This will help states to channelize investments that can eventually help the sector grow.
- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has set a target of 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022, of which 100 GW solar power is to be operational by March 2022, of which 40 GW is expected to come from grid connected solar rooftops.

### Significance

To achieve our rooftop solar targets, it is important to develop an ecosystem that ensures information symmetry, access to financing and clear market signals. Thus, the MNRE has developed the State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index–SARAL that evaluates Indian states based on their attractiveness for rooftop development. SARAL is the first of its kind index to provide a comprehensive overview of state-level measures adopted to facilitate rooftop solar deployment.

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## SABKA VISHWAS -LEGACY DISPUTE RESOLUTION SCHEME

### CONTEXT

**Sabka Vishwas - Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme is notified by the government to be operationalized from 1st September 2019.**

### ABOUT:

- In the Union Budget 2019-20, the Hon'ble Finance Minister announced the SabkaVishwas-Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019. The Scheme has now been notified and will be operationalized from 1st September 2019. The Scheme would continue till 31st December 2019.
- Government expects the Scheme to be availed by large number of taxpayers for closing their pending disputes relating to legacy Service Tax and Central Excise cases that are now subsumed under GST so they can focus on GST.
- The **two main components of the Scheme are dispute resolution and amnesty**. The dispute resolution component is aimed at liquidating the legacy cases of Central Excise and Service Tax that are subsumed in GST and are pending in litigation at various forums. The amnesty component of the Scheme offers an opportunity to the taxpayers to pay the outstanding tax and be free of any other consequence under the law.
- For all the cases pending in adjudication or appeal – in any forum - this Scheme offers a relief of 70% from the duty demand if it is Rs.50 lakhs or less and 50% if it is more than Rs. 50 lakhs.
- The same relief is available for cases under investigation and audit where the duty involved is quantified and communicated to the party or admitted by him in a statement on or before 30th June, 2019. Further, in cases of confirmed duty demand, where there is no appeal pending, the

relief offered is 60% of the confirmed duty amount if the same is Rs. 50 lakhs or less and it is 40%, if the confirmed duty amount is more than Rs. 50 lakhs. Finally, in cases of voluntary disclosure, the person availing the Scheme will have to pay only the full amount of disclosed duty.

- As the objective of the Scheme is to free as large a segment of the taxpayers from the legacy taxes as possible, the relief given thereunder is substantial. The Scheme is especially tailored to free the large number of small taxpayers of their pending disputes with the tax administration. Government urges the taxpayers and all concerned to avail the SabkaVishwas - Legacy Dispute Resolution Scheme, 2019 and make a new beginning.

## 5

**COMPOSITE WATER MANAGEMENT INDEX 2.0****CONTEXT**

NITI Aayog releases report on the Composite Water Management Index 2.0.

**ABOUT**

- To supplement the efforts of Jal Shakti Ministry, NITI Aayog has prepared the second round of Composite Water Management Index (CWMI 2.0).
- Scientific management of water is increasingly recognized as being vital to India's growth and ecosystem sustainability. Government is being proactive about water management and has created the Ministry of Jal Shakti to consolidate interrelated functions pertaining to water management.

- ▶ **Jal Shakti Abhiyan** - a campaign for water conservation and water security.
- ▶ Launched by Jal Shakti Ministry.

- **Gujarat hold on to its rank one** in the reference year (2017-18), followed by Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- The overall ranking for reference year 2017-18 and change in the rankings from the base year 2016-17 of different States in the Report is given in Charts-1 and Chart 2.

**Background**

- ▶ NITI Aayog first launched and conceptualized the Composite Water Management Index in 2018 as a tool to instill the sense of cooperative and competitive federalism among the states.
- ▶ This was a first ever attempt at creating a pan-India set of metrics that measured different dimensions of water management and use across the lifecycle of water.
- ▶ The report was widely acknowledged and provided actionable guidance to States on where they were doing well absolutely and relatively and what they needed to focus on to secure their water future.
- ▶ The CWMI is an important tool to assess and improve the performance of States/ Union Territories in efficient management of water resources.
- ▶ This has been done through a first of its kind water data collection exercise in partnership with Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Rural Development and all the States/ Union Territories. The index would provide useful information for the States and also for the concerned Central Ministries/Departments enabling them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources.



## 6 JANAUSHADHI SUGAM

### CONTEXT

Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers launched Mobile application-“JanaushadhiSugam” for locating outlets and searching Generic medicines.

### ABOUT

- Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda launched a mobile application “JanaushadhiSugam” and had announced that “Jan AushadhiSuvidha Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin” will now be available at only One Rupee per pad.
- “Jan AushadhiSuvidha Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin” will now be available at only One Rupee per pad. Earlier it costs Rs 2.50.
- Jan AushadhiSuvidha comes with a special additive, which makes it biodegradable when it comes in contact with oxygen after being discarded.
- This is an important step in ensuring the health security for the section of Indian women who still use unhygienic aids during menstrual period due to non-affordability of sanitary pads available in the market.
- This will ensure ‘Swachhta, Swasthya and Suvidha’ for the underprivileged women of the country.
- This step taken by the Department of Pharmaceuticals will ensure the achievement of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s vision of “Affordable and Quality Healthcare” for all. It will also help in fulfilling the Prime Minister’s dream of “Clean India & Green India” as these pads are oxo-biodegradable and environment friendly.
- Jan AushadhiSuvidha is being made available for sale in more than 5500 PMBJP Kendras across the country.
- “JanaushadhiSugam” mobile application would have user-friendly options like- to locate nearby Janaushadhikendra, direction guidance for location of the Janaushadhikendra through Google Map, search Janaushadhi generic medicines, analyse product comparison of Generic vs Branded medicine in form of MRP & overall Savings, etc. The mobile application is available on both Android & iOS platforms. It can be downloaded free of cost by the user from Google Play Store and Apple Store.

## 7 INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

### CONTEXT

The union Cabinet approves establishment of an International Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

### ABOUT

- The CDRI is proposed to be launched at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York, USA on 23rd September 2019.

The approval is for the following initiatives:

- Establishment of the International ‘C.D.R.I.’ along with its supporting Secretariat office in New Delhi;
- Establishment of the Secretariat of the CDRI as a Society under The Societies Registration Act, 1860 in New Delhi as ‘CDRI Society’ or similar name as per availability. The memorandum of association and

- by-laws of the 'CDRI Society' will be prepared and finalized by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in due course;
- In-principle approval for Government of India support of Rs. 480 crore (approx. USD 70 million) to CDRI for a corpus required to fund technical assistance and research projects on an on-going basis, setting up the Secretariat office and covering recurring expenditures over a period of 5 years from 2019-20 to 2023-24; and
  - The endorsed version of the Charter document that will act as the founding document of the CDRI. The charter will be finalized after taking inputs from potential member countries by the NDMA in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs.

### Major Impact:

The CDRI will serve as a platform where knowledge is generated and exchanged on different aspects of disaster and climate resilience of infrastructure. It will bring together technical expertise from a multitude of stakeholders. In doing so, it will create a mechanism to assist countries to upgrade their capacities and practices, with regard to infrastructure development in accordance with their risk context and economic needs.

### Innovation:

- There are many initiatives on different aspects of disaster risk reduction and many initiatives on infrastructure development in different in a range of countries with different disaster risk and development contexts.
- A global coalition for disaster resilient infrastructure would address concerns that are common to developing and developed countries, small and large economies, countries at early and advanced stages of infrastructure development, and countries that have moderate or high disaster risk. Few concrete initiatives work at the intersection of Sendai Framework, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Climate Change Adaptation with a focus on infrastructure. Focus on disaster resilient infrastructure would simultaneously address the loss reduction targets under the Sendai Framework, address a number of SDGs and also contribute to climate change adaptation. Hence, there is a clear niche for a Global Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

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## SHAGUN - INTEGRATED ONLINE JUNCTION FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION

### CONTEXT

Union HRD Minister launches Integrated Online junction for School Education 'Shagun'.

### ABOUT

- Union Human Resource Development Minister launched one of world's largest Integrated Online Junction for – School Education, 'Shagun' in New Delhi in August 2019.
- School Education Shagun (URL: <http://shagun.govt.in/>) is an over-arching initiative to improve school education system by creating a junction for all online portals and websites relating to various activities of the Department of School Education and Literacy in the Government of India and all States and Union Territories.
- The word Shagun is coined from two different words- 'Shala' meaning Schools and 'Gunvatta' meaning Quality and this online junction of different websites and portals into a single platform will enhance the accessibility of information relating to schools and will ensure a holistic approach to transform education sector.

- Websites of 1200 KendriyaVidyalayas, 600 NavodayaVidyalayas, 18000 other CBSE affiliated schools, 30 SCERTs, 19000 organisations affiliated with NTCE among others are integrated with Shagun.
- Report cards of 15 lakh schools all over the country will be available on the newly created junction.
- The portal seeks to connect approximately 92 lakh teachers and 26 crore students. He added that the website provides a very robust feedback mechanism. Common people can directly give their feedback about schools which will further increase the public participation and will ensure accountability and transparency.
- The single source of information will immensely benefit all the stakeholders, viz. the parents and the general public, the heads of the schools, the teachers, the students, the policy makers, the officials and the researchers.
- It provides vital information relating to availability of nearby schools, navigable distance vis-a-vis aerial distance between schools thereby helping the policy makers in taking informed decisions.
- The setting up of the Integrated National School Education Treasury (INSET) which envisages a fully integrated, instantly accessible and seamless information network for all parameters relating to the students, teachers, and schools in the country.

The main focus will be on the following areas:

- Reinforcing and cleaning the data of the Integrated Online Junction through feedback from Stakeholders
- Ensuring full inter-operability among the websites, portals and applications which are already hosted in the junction
- Creating high quality e-contents, including quizzes and puzzles to enhance learning and also for teachers in aiding classroom transactions
- Using artificial intelligence and deep machine learning in a variety of ways to enhance the quality of school education including for designing evidence based inventions..

## 9 AADI MAHOTSAV

### CONTEXT:

9-Day National Tribal Festival AadiMahotsav Started at Leh-Ladakh on 17th August, 2019.

### ABOUT

- AadiMahotsav (National Tribal Festival) is a joint initiative of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)
- The theme of the festival was: "A celebration of the spirit of Tribal Craft, Culture and Commerce".
- Ladakhi folk dances like Jabro Dance and Spawo dance were performed in the event.
- The tribes constitute over 8% of the country's population and this festival is featuring the products made by tribals
- This festival is presenting the Adivasi way of life which is guided by primal truths, eternal values and a natural simplicity.
- At the AadiMahotsav, an effort is also being made to take tribal commerce to the next level of digital and electronic transactions. The Mahotsav apart from exotic handicrafts has also showcased the electronic and digital skills of the tribals as a special attraction.

**TRIFED**

- ▶ The Government has formed the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) for achieving the objective of increasing the livelihood for tribals. TRIFED is doing significant work in this direction and have now embraced e-commerce and digital platforms to take the business forward.
- ▶ Estd. In 1987.

**10****INS TARKASH****CONTEXT**

INS Tarkash, a frontline warship of the Indian Navy, made a port call at Karlskrona, Sweden.

**ABOUT**

- INS Tarkash is a state-of-the-art stealth frigate of the Indian Navy.
- It is equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors capable of addressing threats in all three dimensions.
- The ship is a part of the Indian Navy's Western Fleet and is under the operational Command of Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.
- This marks the first visit of an Indian Naval Ship to Swedish shores after a gap of more than 15 years.
- India and Sweden have had a number of high level bilateral visits and interactions resulting in a rapid growth in relations across a broad spectrum. The two navies have also been regular contributors to the global operations against piracy.
- Indian Navy's mission of building 'Bridges of Friendship' and strengthening international cooperation with friendly countries
- India and Sweden are working to meet the growing challenges of the maritime environment.

**11****NISHTHA****CONTEXT**

Union HRD Minister launched the National Mission to improve Learning Outcomes at the Elementary level, NISHTHA.

**ABOUT**

- National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement, NISHTHA is the world's largest teachers' training programme of its kind in the world.
- NISHTHA Website, Training Modules, Primer Booklet and a Mobile App were also launched.
- **Objective:** to motivate and equip teachers to encourage and foster critical thinking in students.
- Teachers will get awareness and develop their skills on various aspects related to Learning Outcomes, Competency Based Learning and Testing, Learner-centered Pedagogy, School Safety and Security, Personal-social qualities, Inclusive Education, ICT in teaching-learning including Artificial Intelligence, Health and well-being including yoga, Initiatives in School Education including library, eco club, youth club, kitchen garden, School Leadership qualities, Environmental Concerns, Pre-school, Pre-vocational Education and School Based Assessment in a joyful learning manner.

- This integrated programme aims to build the capacities of around 42 lakh participants covering all teachers and Heads of Schools at the elementary level in all Government schools, faculty members of State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) as well as Block Resource Coordinators and Cluster Resource Coordinators in all States and UTs.
- training will be conducted directly by 33120 Key Resource Persons (KRPs) and State Resource Persons (SRP) identified by the State and UTs, who will in turn be trained by 120 National Resource Persons identified from National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Non-Government Organisations.
- The prominent features of this integrated programme are activity based modules including educational games and quizzes, Social-emotional learning, motivational interactions, team building, preparation for school based assessment, in-built continuous feedback mechanism, online monitoring and support system, training need and impact analysis (Pre and Post training).

## 12 SAN-SADHAN' HACKATHON

### CONTEXT:

The government calls for applications under the Swachh Bharat Mission for the 'San-Sadhan' Hackathon, an initiative to ease lives of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) by making toilets smarter, more accessible, and easier to use.

### ABOUT

- The government is looking for smart, scalable and innovative solutions for economical toilets for individual and community use in rural and urban contexts.
- The initiative is being organized jointly by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and 91springboard.
- The Hackathon invites researchers, start-ups, student innovators, technology enthusiasts, and industry experts to participate.
- The shortlisted applicants will work to develop their prototype during the two-day Hackathon scheduled to be held in the month of September in New Delhi. The applicants will be showcasing their innovations on the final day of the hackathon and the winners shall be felicitated during the valedictory function which is slated to be held in mid-September.

### About the Ministries involved:

- **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti:**
  - The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation manages the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) and is the coordinating department for the overall SBM. Since the launch of the SBM, India's rural sanitation coverage has increased from 39% in 2014 to over 99% as of August 2019, and the Mission is on track to achieve its goal of an ODF India by 2019.
  - The Department also manages rural drinking water supply, and is responsible for the JalJeevan Mission, aiming at providing piped water supply to all rural households.

- **Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment:**
  - In order to give focused attention to Policy issues and meaningful thrust to the activities aimed at welfare and empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities, a separate Department of Disability Affairs was carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on May 12, 2012.
  - The mission of this department is to empower Persons with Disabilities, through its various Acts/ Institutions/Organizations and Schemes for rehabilitation and to create an enabling environment that provides such persons with equal opportunities, protection of their rights and enables them to participate as independent and productive members of society.
- **Atal Innovation Mission:**
  - Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a flagship initiative of Government to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

**13****BIOMETRIC SEAFARER IDENTITY DOCUMENT****CONTEXT**

India has become the first country in the world to issue Biometric Seafarer Identity Document (BSID), capturing the facial bio-metric data of seafarers.

**ABOUT**

- The concept of a universal Identification system for the seafarers was mooted in 1950s. Accordingly, International labour Organization (ILO) brought forward the ILO Convention C-108 on seafarers Identity Document. India has ratified this convention in 2015 and issuing a Continuous Discharge Certificate cum Seafarers Identity Document to its seafarers in the form of a booklet.
- The world maritime community had felt the need for a more uniform and robust Identification system for the seafarers consequent to the discussions
- The new facial biometric technology is a marked improvement over the two fingers or iris based bio-metric data, with modern security features.
- It will make the identification of the SID holder more reliable and efficient, while protecting their dignity and privacy.
- This is leading to generation of employment in the sector, which is evident in the growing number of Indian seafarers in the international shipping industry.
- The new document will give a foolproof identification to our seafarers which will facilitate their movement, provide ease of getting jobs and help in identifying them from any location in the world.
- The BSID introduces modern security features. It will have a biometric chip embedded in it. The security of the BSID card is ensured at various levels and through different methods. At the time of data capturing the live face is cross matched through passport photo using a face matching software. The card has two optical security features- Micro prints/micro texts and Unique Guilloche pattern. Software has been developed for capturing the facial biometrics and its authentication through the public key infrastructure.
- A record of each SID issued will be maintained in a national database and its related information will be internationally accessible.
- In India the BSID project has been taken up in collaboration with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Mumbai. The Government notified the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers



Bio-metric Identification Document) Rules in 2016. The issuance of SID involves the collection of biometric and demographic details of the seafarers, their verification and then issuance of the card to them.

- Nine data collection centers have been setup at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Noida, Goa, New Mangalore, Kochi, Vizag&Kandla for issue of BSID.

## 14 FIT INDIA MOVEMENT

### CONTEXT

Prime Minister launched the Fit India Movement in 2019.

### ABOUT

- With technological advancements, fast-moving lifestyles and the advent of mobile phones, indigenous forms of fitness are fast losing their popularity, but they can be a great way to remain fit.
- To give up sedentary lifestyles and be active in daily life.
- Fit India Movement aims to motivate every Indian to incorporate simple, easy ways of staying fit in their everyday life.
- It is also a component of Poshan Abhiyaan.

## 15 WORLD SKILLS KAZAN 2019

### CONTEXT

45th WorldSkills Competition is being held at the KAZAN EXPO International Exhibition Centre in Kazan, Russia. The 48-member Indian Team representing the country at World Skills Kazan 2019.

### ABOUT

- It is a flagship event of the World Skills International, organised every two years.
- It is the biggest vocational education and skills excellence event in the world that truly reflects global industry.
- The aims of the competition include demonstrating the advantages of learning a vocational skill, and encouraging 'parity of esteem' between vocational and academic qualifications.
- World skills currently has 79 Member countries and regions, most of which organise national skills competitions that help to prepare the workforce and talent of today for the jobs of the future.
- WorldSkills International was formerly known as the International Vocation Training Organisation (IVTO).
- It was founded in the 1940s and emerged from a desire to create new employment opportunities for young people in some of the economies that were devastated by the Second World War.

### World Skills India

WorldSkills India is an initiative of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. NSDC, through its WorldSkills India initiative, has been leading the country's participation at WorldSkills International competitions since 2011.

**Objectives of WorldSkills India are to:**

- Promulgate skills in the society and motivate the youth to pursue vocational education.
- Champion skills and learning for work through local, regional, national and international skills competition and contribute to the society.
- Invite sponsorships to organize the local, regional, national and international skills competitions and also host international competitions.
- Establish links and a long-term association with the WSI secretariat along with development of cooperation with the Government of India, state Governments, registered vocational skills training and awarding bodies.

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