

NEWS TODAY

FIRST FOREIGN UNIVERSITY RECEIVED APPROVAL TO SET UP ITS INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUS (IBC) IN INDIA

• Deakin University (Australia) has become the 1st foreign university to receive approval of International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) to set up an IBC in GIFT-IFSC, Gujarat.

➤ Approval is based on the **recommendation of Committee of Experts set up by GIFT City** and will allow Deakin to offer same degree courses it offers in Australia to both Indian and foreign students.

➤ At present, **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) IFSC** is the maiden IFSC in India.

• **Union Budget 2022-23** announced that **Foreign Universities will be allowed in GIFT City** to offer courses **free from domestic regulations**, except those by IFSCA.

➤ Later, **IFSCA notified IFSCA** (Setting up and Operation of International Branch Campus and Offshore Education Centres) **Regulations, 2022**.

➤ Recently, **University Grants Commission (UGC)** released **draft regulations** for establishment of foreign universities in India.

• **Significance of foreign universities in India**

➤ **Promote deep collaboration** between academia and industry.

➤ **Increased access** to quality education.

➤ **Reduction in foreign exchange outflow**.

➤ **Check on brain drain** due to research opportunities.

• **Concerns:** Commodification of higher education, High cost of learning leading to exclusion of vulnerable sections, Language barrier etc.

WORLD BANK (WB) SIGNS A \$1 BILLION PROGRAM TO SUPPORT INDIA'S HEALTH SECTOR

• Government of India and WB **signed two complementary loans of \$500 million each** for following WB supported program for India:

➤ **Public Health Systems for Pandemic Preparedness Program (PHSPP)**

➤ **Enhanced Health Service Delivery Program (EHSDP)**

| PHSPP will help to | EHSDP will help to |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare India's surveillance system to detect and report epidemics of potential international concern. • Enhance India's capacity to detect pathogens, including zoonotic diseases. • Build institutional capacity of core public health institutions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen service delivery through a redesigned primary health care model • Improve quality of care by supporting the National Quality Assurance Standards certification across Health and Wellness Centers. • Transform health sector governance and accountability. |

• Through this combined financing of \$1 billion, **WB will support Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)**.

➤ PM-ABHIM (2021-22 to 2025-26) is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** with some Central Sector Components, **for implementation of Atmanirbhar Bharat Package** for health sector.

➤ Objective is **to fill critical gaps in health infrastructure, surveillance and health research** – spanning both urban and rural areas.

• WB support **will also prioritize health service delivery in seven states** including Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

MINISTRY OF TEXTILES INVITED PROPOSALS FOR EMPANELMENT OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS FOR SAMARTH SCHEME

● **Samarth** (Scheme for Capacity Building in Textiles Sector) is a **demand driven and placement-oriented skilling** programme to address skill gap in textile sector and to provide **employment to youth**.

➤ It was formulated **under broad skilling policy framework adopted by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**.

➤ **Implementation period:** Up to March 2024.

● **Scheme aims to train 10 lakh persons** (9 lakhs in organised & 1 lakh in traditional sector).

➤ **Around 1.5 lakh persons** (86% are women) **have been trained** so far.

➤ **More than 70% placement** has taken place **in organised sector**.

● **Strategy adopted for scheme** include Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS), Training of Trainers, CCTV recording of training programme, Web based Management Information System (MIS) etc.

● **Indian textile and apparel industry** is expected to grow at 10% CAGR from 2019-20 to reach **US\$ 190 billion by 2025-26**.

➤ India has a **4% share of global trade** in textiles and apparel.

➤ India's textiles industry **has around 4.5 crore employed workers**.

INITIATIVES TAKEN FOR TEXTILE SECTOR

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Textiles

Setting up of 7 PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks

National Technical Textile Mission

Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme

WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW 2023 REPORT RELEASED BY WORLD BANK

● Report **measures laws that affect women's economic opportunity** in 190 economies **using several indicators** such as Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Entrepreneurship etc.

● Key Findings

➤ Globally **women enjoy only 77% of the legal rights** that men do.

➤ At the current pace, it **would take at least 50 years to approach legal gender equality** everywhere.

➤ **Presented an Index** on life cycle of a working women (**India scored 74.4** out of a possible 100).

➤ **Reforms needed in India:** Laws affecting women's pay, laws affecting women's work after having children, constraints on women starting and running a business, gender differences in property and inheritance etc.

➤ **Recommendations for India:** Improve legal equality for women, Mandating equal remuneration for work of equal value, Allowing women to work at night and in an industrial job in the same way as men etc.

● Steps taken in India for improving working opportunities for Women

➤ **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace** (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) **Act, 2013**.

➤ **Maternity Benefit** (Amendment) **Bill, 2016**.

➤ **Several State Governments** including Karnataka, UP has **allowed factories to employ women on night shifts**.

CHALLENGES FOR WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

Problem at Workplace

Gender Bias
Insufficient Maternity Leave
Mental/Physical harassment
Unequal Pay



Problem at Family

Family Duties
Time Balance
Mother Responsibility
Business Tours/Training

MEETING OF THE QUADRILATERAL SECURITY DIALOGUE (QUAD) FOREIGN MINISTERS HELD

● Quad is an **informal strategic forum of India, United States, Australia, and Japan** with an objective **to secure a rules-based global order**, freedom of navigation and a liberal trading system.

● Key outcomes of the meeting:

➤ **Creation of Quad Working Group on Counter-Terrorism** to tackle new and emerging forms of terror.

➤ **Quad Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Partnership for the Indo-Pacific** is finalising standard operating procedures to facilitate effective and coordinated response.

➤ India joined other Quad members in calling for a **"just and lasting peace in Ukraine"**, and respect for a **rules-based order in the South and East China Seas**.

● Significance of Quad for India

➤ **Balancing China's influence:** Quad serves India a strategic purpose of countering China's aggressive economic and military rise.

➤ **With rising significance of Indo-Pacific**, QUAD provides India with a powerful platform to advance East Asia's interests and further strengthen its Act East policy.

➤ **Evolving Foreign policy strategy** by aligning with like-minded countries.

➤ **Supplementing India's defense** capabilities especially in maritime domain.

SUPREME COURT (SC) EASES NORM FOR SELECTION OF CONSUMER COURT PRESIDENTS, MEMBERS

- SC eased norms, using powers under Article 142, with an aim **to attract younger talent to preside over consumer courts:**
 - **Reduced mandatory professional experience** for appointment as President (presently 20 years) and member (presently 15 years) of state consumer commission and district forums to 10 years.
 - **Introduced written exams and viva voce** to check candidates' performance.
- With an objective **to provide better protection** of the interests of the Consumers, **especially in the digital era, Consumer Protection Act (CPA), 2019 was enacted.**
 - It replaced **Consumer Protection Act, 1986.**
- **Key Feature of CPA, 2019**
 - **Promulgates a three-tier quasi-judicial mechanism** for redressal of consumer disputes (refer table).
 - **Central Consumer Protection Authority** to protect rights of consumers.
 - **Penalties for misleading advertisement.**

| | Composition | Pecuniary Jurisdiction |
|----------------------|--|--|
| District commissions | A President , who is or has been or is qualified to be a District Judge and not less than two members. | Up to Rs 50 lakh |
| State commissions | A President , who is or has been a Judge of a High Court and at least four other members. | More than Rs 50 lakh up to Rs 2 crore |
| National commission | A President who is or has been a Judge of SC and not less than four other members. | Above Rs 2 crore |

ALSO IN NEWS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Lokayukta</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lokayukta police in Karnataka recovered unaccounted cash from office of a MLA. • Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013 provides for a Lokpal for Union and Lokayukta for States to inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lokpal consists of one Chairperson and a maximum of 8 members. • Lokayuktas are state equivalents of central Lokpal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regarding lokayuktas, act creates a mere framework, leaving it to states to decide the specifics. |
| <p>Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals Treaty</p> | <div> Genesis: Entry into force in 1978 </div> <div> Objective: It is designed to increase road safety and aid international road traffic by standardising the signing system for road traffic (road signs, traffic lights and road markings) in use internationally. </div> <div> Membership: Signatories: 35 (US, Japan not signatory). India a member. </div> |
| <p>Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delhi High Court asked central government to appoint chairperson and other members of the appellate authority provided under PMLA within eight weeks. • Act was enacted in 2002 in response to India's global commitment (including Vienna Convention) to combat money laundering. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It enables authorities to confiscate the property earned from illegally gained proceeds. • Enforcement Directorate (ED), a financial investigation agency under Department of Revenue, enforces the PMLA. |
| <p>Old Pension Scheme (OPS)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government decided to give a one-time option to select Central government employees to migrate to OPS from new pension scheme (NPS). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Under OPS, Pension to government employees at Centre and states was fixed at 50% of last drawn basic pay and Employees were not required to contribute to their pensions. ➤ Under NPS, now called National Pension System, in addition to government, a matching contribution from employee was made a feature. |



Surety Bonds

- Recently, **New India Assurance** (Largest public sector general insurance company of India) **announced the launch of its surety bond business.**
- A surety bond is a **promise to be liable for debt, default, or failure of another.**
- It is a **three-party contract** by which **one party (surety) guarantees performance or obligations of a second party** (principal) to a third party (obligee).
 - **Surety** can be **insurance/banks, Principal any contractor** and obligee a government.
- A surety is **not a bank guarantee** and is **not an insurance policy.**
- Advantage:** Ensure efficient use of working capital and reduce collateral requirement.



High Powered Committee (HPC)

- Supreme Court (SC) **expanded the scope of a HPC** dealing with the **transfer and transportation of elephants bred in captivity in the North-East.**
- SC gave it a pan-India mandate** to deal with any approval or grievance regarding transfer, import into India, or procurement of wild animals by any rehabilitation centre or zoo in the country.



Forest certification

- Certification offers a **multi-layer audit system to authenticate origin, legality, and sustainability of forest-based products** such as timber, furniture, handicraft, paper and pulp, rubber etc.
- There are two major international standards:**
 - One **developed by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** ;
 - **Other by Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC).**
- Two main types of certification:** Forest management and Chain of Custody.
- Currently, **forests in only one state (Uttar Pradesh) are certified in India.**



Genome

- Recently, **oldest human genome** (23000 year old) **was discovered in Spain.**
- Genome is the **entire set of DNA instructions** found in a cell.
- In humans, **genome consists of 23 pairs of chromosomes located in the cell's nucleus**, as well as **a small chromosome in the cell's mitochondria.**
- A genome **contains all the information** needed for an individual **to develop and function.**



13th-century temple discovered

- Temple ruins were discovered **at Pushpagiri Kshetram in Kadapa district in Andhra Pradesh.**
 - This **area is famous for a chain of temples** dedicated to hindu dieties like Chennakesava, Umamaheswara etc.
 - **River Penna** flows to southwest of the area.
- Architectural features of ruins** reveal a style **contemporary** to a temple at Vallur, **built by the Kayastha rulers.**
 - Kayasthas **were subordinates to** rulers of **Kakatiya dynasty.**
 - They **ruled the region with Vallur as the capital.**



Places in News

Australia (Capital: Canberra)

- India and Australia have signed a Framework Mechanism for Mutual Recognition of Qualifications to ease mobility of students and professionals.
- Island nation, 6th largest nation in world** situated entirely in **Southern Hemisphere - between Indian and Pacific Oceans.**
- Boundaries**
 - Shares its maritime borders with **East Timor, Indonesia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and islands of New Caledonia.**
- Geographical features**
 - **Highest Point:** Mount Kosciuszko.
 - **Major River:** Murray River and Darling River, together forming Murray-Darling River basin.

