

# NEWS TODAY

## INDIA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT (IMD) FORECASTS NORMAL MONSOON FOR 2023

- IMD has predicted that country as a whole is likely to **receive 96% of Long Period Average (LPA)** for southwest monsoon from June to September 2023.
  - LPA of rainfall is the **precipitation recorded over a particular region for a given interval** (like a month or season) average over a long **period like 30 years or 50 years**.
  - In **last four years (2019 to 2022)**, India has **received normal to above normal rainfall**.
- **IMD's forecast considers following three factors that affects Indian monsoon**
  - **El Nino**: Its development is **associated with diminished rainfall in India**.
  - **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)**: IOD refers to the difference in sea-surface temperatures in Eastern and Western parts of Indian Ocean. **Positive IOD** is considered good for Indian monsoon.
  - **Snow Cover**: Winter and spring snow cover extent over **Northern Hemisphere and Eurasia** has a general **inverse relationship with subsequent summer monsoon rainfall**.
- El Nino is **warm phase of El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**, where **unusual warming of surface waters in eastern tropical Pacific Ocean** occurs.
- **La Nina** is **cool phase of ENSO**, and since 2019, India has been under **influence of the La Nina**, getting substantial monsoon rains.

Category	Rainfall Range (% of LPA)
Deficient	< 90
Below Normal	90 - 95
Normal	96 - 104
Above Normal	105 - 110
Excess	> 110

## NATIONAL CREDIT FRAMEWORK (NCRF) RELEASED BY UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC)

- NCRF has been jointly developed by **high level committee** comprising **members** from UGC, AICTE, NCERT, NIOS, CBSE, departments from ministries for education and skill development etc.
  - NCRF is a set of **guidelines to be followed by schools, colleges and universities** in adopting credit system.
  - It brings the entire **school education system under the ambit of credits** for the first time. So far, **only National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) followed a credit system**.
  - Credit is a way of **quantifying learning outcomes**.
- **Key features of NCRF**
  - It is a single **meta framework for creditization of all types of learning and integrating credits** earned from various dimensions such as academics, vocational education, work experience etc.
  - It provides for **Assignment, Accumulation, Storage, Transfer and Redemption of Credits through Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)**.
  - Knowledge in **18 Vidyas**, including **four Vedas, four subsidiary Vedas** (Ayurveda–medicine, Dhanurveda – weaponry, Gandharvaveda-music and Silpa – architecture), **Purana, Nayaya**, etc. can be **considered for creditization**.
  - NCRF has **divided the learning ecosystem into eight levels**, assigning credits based on learning hours from Class 5 to PhD level.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF NCRF

- **Fulfils objectives of National Education Policy, 2020** to ensure that there is **no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular and vocational streams**.
- **Encourage internationalization of education** through credit transfer provisions.
- Enabling provision for lifelong learning through **Multiple Entry and Multiple Exit (ME-ME) options**.
- Establish academic equivalence between general and vocational education by mainstreaming vocational education.

# RESERVE BANK OF INDIA (RBI) ISSUED FRAMEWORK FOR ACCEPTANCE OF 'GREEN DEPOSITS'

- Green deposit means an **interest-bearing deposit**, received by regulated entities (REs) for a fixed period and **proceeds of which are earmarked for being allocated** towards green finance.
- **Purpose of framework**
  - Offer **green deposits to customers**, protect interest of depositors, **aid customers to achieve their sustainability agenda**, address **greenwashing** concerns and help **augment the flow of credit to green activities/project**.
- **Key highlights of framework for acceptance of green deposits**
  - **Applicability:** Scheduled Commercial Banks including **Small Finance Banks (excluding Regional Rural Banks, Local Area Banks and Payments Banks)**, and
    - All **Deposit taking Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)** registered with **RBI** including Housing Finance Companies (HFCs).
  - Green deposits shall be **denominated in Indian Rupees** only.
  - **Sectors/projects included** for allocation of proceeds raised through green deposits includes **Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Clean Transportation, Climate Change Adaptation, Sustainable Water and Waste management, Green Buildings** etc.
  - **Excluded projects include** Projects involving new or existing extraction, production and distribution of fossil fuels; Nuclear power generation; Direct waste incineration; Landfill projects; Hydropower plants larger than 25 MW etc.
  - Funds raised through green deposits shall be subject to an **independent Third-Party Verification/Assurance** on an annual basis.

Greenwashing means the **practice of marketing products/services as green**, when in fact **they do not meet requirements to be defined as green activities/projects**.

## TRIPLE THREAT REPORT BY UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

- Report examines **"triple burden"** of **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) related threats** faced by children.
  - WASH is a collective term to **access safe drinking water, improved sanitation facilities, and maintain basic level of hygiene**.
- **Triple threat/burden is defined as**
  - **Less than 50 percent access to at least basic water** or sanitation services.
  - Within **top 20 countries with highest burden of deaths** attributable to **unsafe WASH among children** under 5.
  - Within **top 25 percent of countries** facing **highest risk of climate and environmental hazards** in UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI). (refer image)
- **Key findings of report**
  - Globally, 600 million children still **lack safely managed drinking water**, 1.1 billion **lack safely managed sanitation** and 689 million **lack basic hygiene service**.
  - **Unsafe WASH** led to **4 lakh children deaths under age of 5** each year.
  - Triple burden is **heavily concentrated in 10 countries in sub-Saharan Africa**.
- **Recommendations**
  - **Scale up current investment** to meet WASH-related SDG targets by 2030.
  - **Strengthen resilience** in WASH sector and communities.
  - **Increase effective and accountable coordination** and capacities to provide water and sanitation services.

### MAJOR CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTOR FOR CHILDREN

- WATER SCARCITY
- RIVERINE FLOODS
- COASTAL FLOODS
- TROPICAL CYCLONES
- VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES
- HEATWAVES
- AIR POLLUTION
- SOIL AND WATER POLLUTION

## EMPOWER ELECTED WOMEN TO REMOVE 'SARPANCH PATIS': PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE

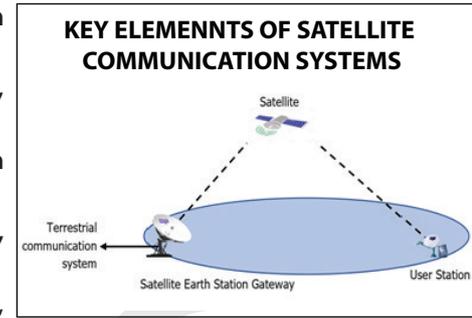
- Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has made following recommendations for **empowering Women Elected Representatives (ERs)** at panchayat level
  - Training and capacity building to **curb prevalent concepts like Sarpanch Pati or Pradhan Pati (husbands trying to act as proxy for elected women)**.
  - **Financially empower women** to facilitate them in taking **independent decisions**.
- **Women reservation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**
  - Provisions under **73rd Constitutional Amendment act of 1992: 1/3rd of seats of PRIs and 1/3rd offices of Chairperson** at all level of PRIs (covered by Part IX) **are reserved for women. (Article 243 D)**
  - Many states like Bihar, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan etc. have made **legal provision for 50% reservation for women among members and Sarpanches**.
  - As per **Women and Men in India 2022 report**, of the over 31.8 lakh ERs, nearly 46% (over 14.5 lakh) were women.
- **Problems faced by Women ERs**
  - **Low financial and digital literacy**.
  - **Lack of adequate information about their rights** and responsibilities.
  - **Inadequate managerial experience**.
  - **Social barriers** placed by traditional orthodox and parochial society etc.

### Measures to empower Women ERs

- Bring **attitudinal change** in both men and women.
- Stakeholders and government need to make **special efforts to facilitate their on-boarding**.

# TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA (TRAI) RELEASED A CONSULTATION PAPER ON “ASSIGNMENT OF SPECTRUM FOR SPACE-BASED COMMUNICATION SERVICES”

- TRAI has put the paper in public domain to **identify the issues related to assignment of spectrum for space-based (Satellite) communication services.**
  - TRAI is a **statutory body** established under **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997**, to regulate telecom services in India.
- Satellite communication (SatCom) refers to **any communication link that involves use of an artificial satellite** in its propagation path.
  - Variety of **popular frequency bands** used for providing SatCom services include **L-band, S-band, C-band, Ku-band, and Ka-band** (arranged in increasing order of frequency).
  - **SatCom has two main components: Ground segment** (consists of fixed or mobile transmission, reception equipment) and **Space segment** (satellite itself).
- For SatCom, **satellite operators** need recognition for frequency and orbital resources **from International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** while Government of **India assigns radio frequency spectrum** for linking to satellite.
  - **Department of Telecommunications** is licensing authority for **telecommunication services**, while **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** for **broadcasting services**.



- ### Benefits of SatCom
- **Provide data connectivity in remote locations** due to its ability for rapid deployment.
  - **Cheaper over long-distance** telephone transmission.
  - Used in **global mobile communication, weather forecasting, radio/TV signal broadcasting** etc.

## ALSO IN NEWS

 <p><b>Good Friday Agreement (GFA)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● US President is visiting Northern Ireland to mark <b>25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Good Friday Agreement.</b></li> <li>● GFA was signed in <b>1998</b>, between <b>factions of Northern Ireland, and governments of Britain and Ireland</b>, to end <b>30 years of violence</b> known as <b>'The Troubles'</b>.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Northern Ireland, created in 1921 by partitioning Ireland, remained with United Kingdom after Ireland's independence from UK.</li> <li>➢ This resulted in violence between those who wished to remain with UK and those who wanted to join Ireland.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● NSE Indices Ltd, subsidiary of National Stock Exchange (NSE), has launched India's first ever <b>REITs and InvITs Index</b> to <b>track performance of REITs and InvITs</b> that are publicly listed and traded on NSE.</li> <li>● <b>REITs are listed entities which own, operate and manage buildings/properties</b> for generating income.</li> <li>● <b>InvITs are investment scheme like mutual funds that allow investment from individuals and institutional investors in infrastructure projects</b></li> <li>● <b>Benefits of REITs and InvITs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <b>Enable developers to monetise</b> their revenue-generating real estate/infrastructure assets and release capital for funding new projects.</li> <li>➢ Allow <b>investors to invest in these assets without owning them.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Quality Control Orders (QCO)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of textiles has announced two QCOs for 31 items, comprising 19 geo textiles and 12 protective textiles.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <b>Geo-textiles</b> are used for <b>infrastructure projects</b> and <b>environmental applications</b> while <b>protective textiles</b> are used to <b>protect human life from hazardous and adverse working conditions.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>● QCO aims to <b>control the import of sub-quality and cheaper items</b> and to ensure that customers get quality products.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ <b>Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)</b> is the certifying authority for QCOs.</li> <li>➢ <b>QCOs are applicable for International and domestic products.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Cost Inflation Index (CII)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Income Tax Department</b> has notified CCI for current fiscal beginning April 2023.</li> <li>● CCI is notified <b>under Income-Tax Act, 1961</b> every year.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ It is popularly used to <b>calculate "indexed cost of acquisition"</b> while <b>calculating capital gains</b> at time of sale of any capital asset.</li> <li>➢ Normally, an asset is required to be <b>retained for more than 36 months (24 months for immovable property and unlisted shares)</b> to qualify as <b>Long-Term Capital Gains (LTCG).</b></li> <li>➢ CII is used to arrive at <b>inflation adjusted purchasing price</b> of assets so as to compute taxable LTCG.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



 <p><b>Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV and FR)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Kerala Agricultural University</b> has been <b>notified as a centre of PPV and FR authority</b> under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare to <b>protect rights of Kerala farming communities over traditional plant varieties</b>.</li> <li>● <b>PPV and FR Act, 2001</b> provides for the establishment of PPV and FR authority.</li> <li>● Authority shall consist of a <b>Chairperson and fifteen members</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Members of Authority</b> are <b>appointed by Central Government</b>.</li> <li>➤ It promotes, by such measures as it thinks fit, the <b>encouragement for development of new varieties of plants and to protect the rights of farmers and breeders</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unified Portal of CBN was launched to facilitate a <b>balance between narcotics substance availability</b> for medical/scientific/industrial use and law compliance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It'll <b>instil efficiency and transparency and reduce time taken by pharma industry to get a trade licence</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● CBN is a <b>subordinate office under Department of Revenue</b> of Ministry of Finance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It deals with <b>international trade of narcotic drugs</b>, under ambit of various United Nations Conventions and provisions of Narcotics Drugs &amp; Psychotropic Substances (<b>NDPS) Act, 1985</b>.</li> <li>➤ <b>Composition:</b> Narcotics Commissioner is assisted by three Deputy Narcotics Commissioners.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Shared Socio-economic Pathway (SSP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SSPs look at <b>five different ways</b> in which <b>world might evolve in absence of climate policy</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>SSP1: Sustainability</b> – Taking Green Road (Low challenges to mitigation and adaptation).</li> <li>➤ <b>SSP2: Middle of Road</b> – where <b>trends broadly follow historical patterns</b> (Medium challenges to mitigation and adaptation).</li> <li>➤ <b>SSP3: Regional Rivalry</b> (Resurgent nationalism) – Rocky Road (High challenges to mitigation and adaptation).</li> <li>➤ <b>SSP4: Inequality</b> – Road Divided (<b>Low challenges to mitigation, high challenges to adaptation</b>).</li> <li>➤ <b>SSP5: Fossil-fuelled Development</b> – Taking Highway (High challenges to mitigation, low challenges to adaptation).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>SSP1 and SSP5</b> envision <b>optimistic</b> trends for human development, while <b>SSP3 and SSP4</b> are more <b>pessimistic</b>.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Zero Click Spyware</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● According to research by Microsoft and Citizen Lab, <b>spyware</b> developed by Israeli company has been used against journalists, <b>opposition figures and advocacy organizations</b> across at least 10 countries.</li> <li>● Spyware developed by QuaDream is a <b>no-interaction-needed</b> hacking tool, known as <b>"Zero-Click"</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Zero-Click tools can remotely compromise devices <b>without an owner needing to open a malicious link or download a tainted attachment</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Zero-click attacks often <b>rely on zero-days</b>, which are <b>vulnerabilities</b> that are <b>unknown to the software maker</b> and for which no fix is presently available.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Places in news</b></p>	<p><b>Vietnam (Capital: Hanoi)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recently <b>India and Vietnam</b> reiterated commitment to deepen <b>strategic partnership</b>.</li> <li>● <b>Political Boundaries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Located on <b>eastern portion of mainland Southeast Asia</b>.</li> <li>➤ Bordered by <b>China</b> (North), <b>Laos and Cambodia</b> (West) and <b>South China Sea</b> (East and South).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Geographical Features</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Climate:</b> Largely a tropical monsoon country.</li> <li>➤ <b>Major Rivers:</b> Mekong and Red river.</li> <li>➤ <b>Highest Point:</b> Fansipan</li> <li>➤ <b>Mountains of Annam Cordillera</b> rise over most of the western side of Vietnam, while <b>coastline dominates the east</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> 