

NEWS TODAY

CENTRE APPROVES RS. 56,415 CRORE TO 16 STATES FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT UNDER 'SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT 2023-24' SCHEME

- **Under the scheme** (announced in 2023-24 budget), **State Governments will get special assistance** in the form of **50-year interest free loan** up to an **overall sum of Rs. 1.3 lakh crore** during the financial year 2023-24.
 - Capital expenditure refers to **outlay of government funds in the form of investments or development spending towards creation of assets for the long term.**
 - **Importance of Capital expenditure:** generates revenue, generate demand in the economy, attract private investments, enhances labour participation, enhances productive capacity of the economy etc.
- Scheme for financial assistance to States for capital investment/expenditure **was first instituted by Ministry of Finance in 2020-21** in the wake of **COVID-19 Pandemic.**
 - Scheme **was also executed** in the **last financial year.**
- **Scheme has following parts**

Part	About
I	Rs. 1 lakh crore has been allocated amongst States in proportion to their share of central taxes & duties as per the award of the 15 th Finance Commission.
II	Incentive for scrapping Old vehicles
III	Urban Planning Reforms
IV	Financing reforms in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to make them creditworthy for Municipal Bonds and for issue of Municipal Bonds.
V	Housing for Police personnel above or as part of police stations in urban areas.
VI	Construction of Unity malls
VII	Children and adolescents libraries with digital infrastructure at Panchayat and Ward level.
VIII	Incentive for Just-in-time release of Centrally Sponsored Schemes funds by state governments

NEW GLOBAL NORMS ASK FIRMS TO DISCLOSE MATERIAL EMISSIONS, CLIMATE FINANCE TO MITIGATE GREENWASHING

- Norms, **by International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB)**, will set **uniform sustainability and climate standards** for companies to follow worldwide **from 2024.**
 - **Individual countries would decide** whether to apply the standards to the listed companies.
 - **ISSB was created by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation**, a non-profit organisation governing international accounting rules.
- **New standards are:**
 - **IFRS S1:** sets out disclosure requirements designed to enable companies to communicate to investors about the sustainability-related risks and opportunities they face.
 - **IFRS S2:** sets out specific climate-related disclosures and is designed to be used with IFRS S1.
- ISSB norms **build on voluntary ones from G20's Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).**
 - **Financial Stability Board (FSB) created TCFD** to improve reporting of climate-related financial information.
 - **FSB is an international body (India a member) that monitors** and makes recommendations **about global financial system.**
- **New standards would help** to crack down **on greenwashing-** a practice of making false, misleading, unsubstantiated claims about the sustainability of a product, service, or business operation.
 - **Currently , poor quality of data and lack of common standards allows companies to overstate** their climate credentials.

NOBEL LAUREATE AND CO-INVENTOR OF LITHIUM-ION (LI-ION) BATTERIES, JOHN BANNISTER GOODENOUGH, PASSES AWAY

● **Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2019** was awarded jointly to Goodenough, M. Stanley Whittingham and Akira Yoshino for the development of Li-ion batteries.

● A Li-ion battery is a family of rechargeable battery types in which lithium ions move from the negative electrode to positive electrode during discharge and back when charging.

➤ **Materials used as electrodes include:** lithium cobalt oxide (cathode), most commonly found in portable electronic devices; lithium manganese oxide (used in electric automobiles), and lithium iron phosphate.

■ **Goodenough developed** a lithium battery with a cathode of cobalt oxide. This cathode gave a higher voltage than earlier batteries.

➤ Li-ion batteries typically use ether (a class of organic compounds) as an electrolyte.

● **Advantages of Li-ion battery:** light weight and has high energy density, have 5000 cycles or more compared to just 400- 500 cycles in lead acid batteries, comparatively low maintenance, low self-discharge rate, no memory effect etc.

➤ Memory effect is a process where repeated partial discharge/charge cycles can cause a battery to 'remember' a lower capacity.

● **Disadvantages of Li-ion battery:** High-price, tendency to overheat, can lead to thermal runaway and combustion, require safety mechanisms to limit voltage and internal pressures etc.

SEBI RELEASES COMPLIANCE RULES FOR REITs, InvITs

● **SEBI announced disclosure formats for compliance reports on governance** and annual secretarial for infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) and real estate infrastructure trusts (REITs).

● **About REITs and InvITs**

➤ **REITs are listed entities** which own, operate and manage buildings/properties for generating income.

➤ **InvITs are investment scheme like mutual funds that allow investment** from individuals and institutional investors in infrastructure projects to earn a portion of income as return.

➤ **Both InvITs and REITs provide different types of returns – Dividend Income and Capital Gains-** with each type of income having a different tax treatment.

■ **Any dividend or interest income is completely taxable** as per Income Tax Slab rate.

➤ **InvITs and REITs now recognised as borrowers** under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest (SARFAESI) Act.

● **Benefits of REITs and InvITs**

➤ **Enable developers to monetise their** revenue-generating real estate/infrastructure assets and release capital for funding new projects.

➤ **Allow investors to invest** in these assets without owning them.

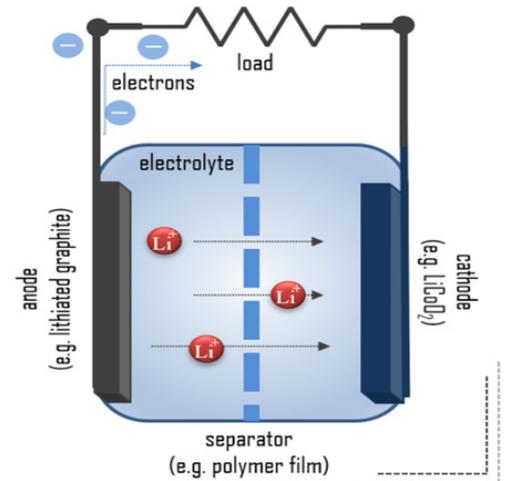
➤ **Professional management** ensures smooth operations.

● **Limitations of REITs and InvITs:** limited number of funds limits choice of investors, taxable dividend and income, low liquidity as market participants still low etc.

RELATED NEWS

● **SEBI approved a framework for Application Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA)** like facility being made available to investors for secondary market trading, like the process for IPO.

➤ In ASBA investor funds remain blocked in their own bank accounts instead of being passed on to broker until execution of purchase order.



DIGITAL PUBLISHER CONTENT GRIEVANCES COUNCIL (DPCGC) TELLS OTT PLATFORM TO TAKE DOWN CONTENT

● Acting on a complaint against obscene nature of the content being streamed, DPCGC has recommended punitive action on the platform invoking IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules (IT Rules), 2021.

➤ DPCGC is an independent self-regulatory body for online curated content providers.

➤ It has been set up under the aegis of Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

➤ DPCGC is registered by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting as a Level-II Self-Regulatory Body, under IT rules 2021.

● Government in 2021, replaced decade-old regulations on social media intermediaries (SMIs) with the IT Rules, 2021 with an aim to place obligations on SMIs to ensure an open, safe and trusted internet.

➤ IT rules, 2021 were later amended in 2022 to further protect rights of citizens, strengthen the grievance redressal framework etc.

● **IT Rules, 2021 proposes a three-tier structure** for ensuring observance and adherence to the Code of Ethics:

➤ **Level I** - Self-regulation by the publishers.

➤ **Level II** - Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the publishers.

➤ **Level III** - Oversight mechanism by the Central Government

ALPHABET BETS ON LASERS TO DELIVER INTERNET IN REMOTE AREAS

- **Alphabet**, parent company of **Google**, under **Project Taara** is currently deploying their **light beam internet technology** in India, Africa, and other locations around the world.
- **Project Taara** utilises **Free Space Optical Communication (FSOC)** technology where **free space acts as a communication channel** between transceivers that are in line-of-sight.
 - It **uses beams of light to deliver high-speed, high-capacity connectivity over long distances.**
 - It **can transmit data at high speeds of up to 20 Gbps bidirectional** through up to **20 km distances.**
- **FSOC refers to outdoor optical wireless communication (OWC)**, whereas **short distance (largely indoors) OWC is called light Fidelity (LiFi).**
 - **LiFi uses light** within Visible Light Spectrum to Invisible light spectrum **to transmit data.**
- **Advantages of FSOC technology:** cost-effective and quickly deployable, can transmit data at high speeds, effective in areas that are difficult to connect using fiber cables etc.
- **Challenges faced:** signal reliability is compromised by conditions like fog and haze, or interruptions like birds flying in front of the signal; requires better mirror controls and motion detection capabilities etc.
- **Earlier Alphabet tried** to deliver internet **through Project Loon**, which aimed at utilising **stratospheric balloons for internet connectivity.**

ALSO IN NEWS

 <p>Chennai-Vladivostok maritime route</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India and Russia are keen to make the Chennai-Vladivostok maritime route operational. • During the 2019 visit, PM signed a Memorandum of Intent on Development of Maritime Communications between Port of Vladivostok and Port of Chennai • Route passes through Sea of Japan, South China Sea, and Malacca Strait. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It will bring down transport time to 12 days, almost a third of what is taken under the existing St. Petersburg to Mumbai route. • Also, costs are expected to come down by about 30%. 	
 <p>Income Tax (I-T) Rules amendment for Charitable institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has made several amendments (applicable from 1 October 2023) under which Charitable institutions have to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mention whether the activities undertaken are charitable, religious, or both to claim tax benefits. ➤ Furnish details of donations received over Rs 2 lakh in a single day. • Under I-T law, income of charitable institutions and religious trusts, and medical and educational institutions are exempt from tax. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ However, these institutions are required to seek registration from I-T department. • Earlier, Union Budget 2023-24 announced several changes in tax treatment of charitable trusts. 	
 <p>NANDI(NOC Approval for New Drug and Inoculation System) Portal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) has introduced the portal to expedite regulatory process for approval of animal drugs and vaccines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DAHD has developed the portal through C-DAC in coordination with Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO). • It is intended to increase the awareness about livestock diseases and also to increase the usage of veterinary drugs. • It is to be streamlined with CDSCOs SUGAM portal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sugam builds a comprehensive database of the various permissions and licenses issued by State FDAs. 	
 <p>Flash floods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flash flood refers to a flood caused by heavy or excessive rainfall in a short period of time, generally less than 6 hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They can also occur even if no rain has fallen, for instance after a levee or dam has failed. • In India, flash floods are often associated with cloudbursts – sudden, intense rainfall in a short period of time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As per IMD, if 10 cm rainfall is received at a station in one hour, rain event is termed as cloud burst. 	

 <p>UTPRERAK (Unnat Takniki Pradarshan Kendra)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministry of Power established UTPRERAK, a Centre of Excellence to Accelerate Adoption of Energy Efficient Technologies in Indian Industry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It has been set up by the Bureau of Energy efficiency (BEE). ● Centre would implement and support projects in areas such as training/capacity building, showcase for energy efficient technologies, information centre and knowledge repository etc. ● Centre is mandated to become the key reference and resource institution on industrial energy-efficient technologies.
 <p>Hyperspectral remote sensing (HRS) technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministry of Agriculture has signed an MoU with a private firm for usage of HRS data for crop mapping, crop stage discrimination, crop health monitoring. ● HRS, also known as imaging spectroscopy, involves extracting information from objects or scenes that lie on Earth's surface due to radiance obtained by airborne or spaceborne sensors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ While traditional remote sensing captures data in a few discrete spectral bands. ➤ HRS collects data in many narrow and contiguous bands, allowing for detailed spectral information to be obtained for location in the scene.
 <p>Terms in News</p>	<p>Organic intellectual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Term "organic intellectual" was coined by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. ● Gramsci defined Organic intellectuals are those specific intellectuals who could help build awareness among the masses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are intellectuals who rose to the professional standing from a social class that usually does not produce intellectuals and yet remained associated with that class, unlike traditional intellectuals.
 <p>Kharchi Puja</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kharchi Puja, also called the Festival of 14 Gods, is celebrated in Tripura. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Kharchi is derived from two Tripuri words—'khar' or kharta meaning sin and 'chi' or si meaning cleaning. ● Festival is centred around worship of Chaturdasa Devata, ancestral deity of the Tripuri people. ● It is also believed that Kharchi Puja is observed to ritualistically clean the Earth after her menstruation is over.
 <p>Rani Durgavati</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rani Durgavati Gaurav Yatra was launched in Madhya Pradesh. ● She belonged to Mahoba's Chandela dynasty and was married to Dalpat Shah, from Gond Kingdom of Garha-Katanga. ● After death of her husband, She herself took on the reins of government. ● She constructed several reservoirs such as Ranital, Cherital and Adhartal. ● She allowed Acharya Bitthalnath to establish a seat of Pushtimarg Cult at Garha. ● Durgavati repulsed Baz Bahadur, ruler of Malwa, between 1555 and 1560. ● She was defeated by Mughal governor of Allahabad, Asaf Khan. ● Ethical values: Patriotism, courage, Valour etc.
 <p>Harry Markowitz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harry Markowitz, father of modern portfolio theory (MPT), passed away. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He shared the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences (1990) with Merton H. Miller and William F. Sharpe for his ideas on finance. ● MPT is a practical method for selecting investments in order to maximize their overall returns within an acceptable level of risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Markowitz focused on combinations of assets, rather than individual securities ● Markowitz also did ground-breaking work in mathematical programming and computer simulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He developed Simscript, a language used to write simulation software.

Errata: In News Today dated 16th June 2023, under National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) of Also in News, the information "NaBFID is to be run by a board of directors, Whose Chairman is selected by the Bank Board Bureau (BBB)" is incorrect.

Correct information is "NaBFID is to be run by a board of directors, Whose Chairman is selected by the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB)." FSIB has replaced BBB in 2022.