

NEWS TODAY

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ADOPTED FIRST DESIGNATION DECISIONS UNDER THE DIGITAL SERVICES ACT (DSA)

• Commission designated several Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and Very Large Online Search Engines (VLOSEs) that will now have to comply with obligations under DSA.

➤ VLOPs include Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Twitter, You Tube etc. and VLOSEs include Bing and Google search.

• DSA is a first-of-a-kind regulatory toolbox globally and sets a benchmark for a regulatory approach to online intermediaries.

➤ In 2020, DSA together with Digital Markets Act proposed a comprehensive framework to ensure a safer, more fair digital space.

• Key Features of DSA

➤ Applies to all digital services that connect consumers to goods, services, or content.

➤ Introduces comprehensive new set of rules for online intermediary services on how they have to design their services and procedures.

➤ Social media companies to add new procedures for faster removal of content deemed illegal or harmful.

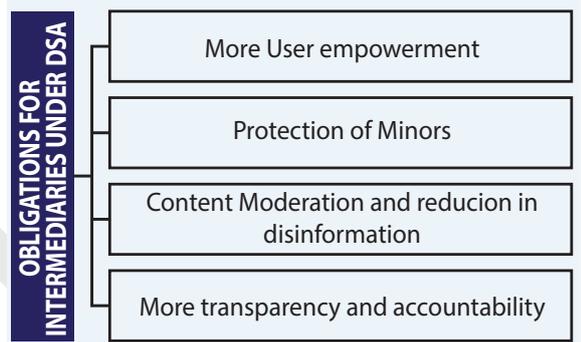
➤ No one-size fits all approach as VLOPs and VLOSEs will have more stringent requirements.

➤ A pan-European supervisory architecture with centrally supervised by European Commission itself.

• After withdrawal of Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, current framework in India includes

➤ Information Technology Rules, 2021 which placed due-diligence requirements on large social media platforms.

➤ Draft Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022.



ARMY TO RAISE COMMAND CYBER OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT WINGS (CCOSW) FOR HANDLING CYBERSPACE CHALLENGES

• CCOSWs will assist its formations in taking up cyberspace security challenges posed by the growing warfare capabilities of adversaries.

➤ CCOSWs will safeguard the networks and increase preparedness levels in this niche domain.

➤ Army will also nominate 'Lead Directorates' and 'Test Bed' formations for absorption of niche technologies and enhancing fighting potential.

• Cybersecurity is linked to national security as

➤ Cyberspace has emerged as an essential competence of military domain both in grey zone warfare (activities that occur between peace and war) and conventional operations.

➤ Many countries have created their own cyber warfare related strategies that can alter outcome in battlefield.

➤ Adversaries can attack critical infrastructure like dams, power & energy, Banking and financial services etc.

➤ Rising number of digitally vulnerable targets because of technology use, government's digital push etc.

• Challenges faced: Import dependency for electronic devices, lack of coordination among agencies, lack of adequate infrastructure and trained staff, widespread digital illiteracy etc.

• Initiatives taken

➤ National Cyber Security policy (2013),

➤ Framework for enhancing Cyber Security,

➤ Setting up of Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) and National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC).

INDIA WANTS NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS INCLUDED IN OECD AUTOMATIC EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION (AEOI) FRAMEWORK

- **At present**, OECD's AEOI framework **provides for sharing of financial account details among signatory countries** with an aim to check tax evasion.
 - **India is now pushing to include non-financial assets** like real estate properties under AEOI among OECD countries.
- AEOI is the **systematic and periodic collection and transmission of "bulk" taxpayer information by the source country** to the country of residence of the taxpayer, without the latter having to make a request for the same.
 - Exchange of information by AEOI is **permitted under provisions of DTAA's and under the Multilateral Convention (MAAC)**.
 - It is to be **carried out under the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) of OECD**.
- **Other global initiatives taken to curb tax evasion**
 - **Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (India a member)**.
 - **Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS)** have introduced a country-by-country reporting filing requirement (**India also agreed**).
 - **Addis Ababa Action Agenda** to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance
 - **Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (Signed by India)**.
 - **OECD's two-pillar solution to address the tax challenges** arising from **digitalisation of economy (India also part)**.

48 COMMONLY USED DRUGS FAIL LATEST QUALITY TEST: CDSCO

- Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has flagged **commonly used medicines including anti-diabetic, antibiotics, calcium and cardiac drugs as they failed the latest drug safety alert**.
- **Drug regulation in India**
 - **Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940** and rules 1945 have **entrusted various responsibilities** to central & state regulators for regulation of drugs & cosmetics.
 - **Under the act, CDSCO is responsible for:**
 - **Approval of Drugs,**
 - **Conduct of Clinical Trials,**
 - **Laying down standards for Drugs,**
 - **Control over quality of imported Drugs and**
 - **Coordination of the activities of State DCOs by providing expert advice.**
- **CDSCO along with state regulators**, is jointly responsible **for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs** such as blood and blood products, Vaccine etc.

INDIA-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS

- In a sign of **deepening cooperation in energy**, India and Central American countries like Panama will **establish joint working groups** to enhance the energy partnership.
 - Similar groups on **tourism, pharmaceuticals and women's empowerment** are also to be set up following India's external affairs minister's visit to the region.
- Latin America is **generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America** in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of Caribbean.
- **Areas of existing Cooperation:**
 - **Economic:** Bilateral trade touched almost \$ 50 Bn in 2021-22 with **Pharma, Automobiles, Synthetic yarn, software** forming main exports from India.
 - **Energy:** Region supply of crude oil **contributes to India's energy security by reducing over dependence on Middle East**.
 - **Trade agreements:** Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) with **MERCOSUR** (a South American grouping consisting of **Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay**).
 - **Emergency Assistance:** India actively provided assistance to the Latin American countries (LAC) during emergencies like hurricanes and COVID pandemic.
- **Challenges:** Insufficient diplomatic relations, Lack of connectivity, Lack of institutional presence, Language barrier etc.
- **Ministry of Commerce launched Focus LAC programme in 1997** with a focus on Institutional Mechanism, Improved Market Access and Economic Infrastructure Facilities.



Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)



Delhi



About: It is the **Central Drug Authority** for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act**.



Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.



Headed by: Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).



Major Functions

- **Regulatory control** over the import of drugs.
- **Approval of new drugs** and clinical trials.
- **Meetings of Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC)** and **Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB)**.

CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECT TAXES (CBDT) TO BROADEN THE TAX BASE

- CBDT is **targeting to add 10% new tax filers in FY24** and raise the **tax base to 86 million**.
 - **Though 6.8 crore Income Tax returns were filed** in 2020-21, **only 1.69 crore Indians paid Income Tax**, which is around 1.2% of the population.
- A **central action plan** is currently in works to **scrutinise specified high-value transactions** and to **collect data from various agencies** to check on tax deducted at source.
- **Reasons for low tax base:** Complex filing process, Exclusion of agriculture from Income tax, large informal sector, Overburdened tax administration machinery, Lack of awareness and tax literacy, High litigation etc.
- **Steps taken by Government**
 - Cross-seeding of **PAN with Bank accounts**.
 - **Usage of Computer aided technology** like Computer Assisted Scrutiny Selection (CASS), Non-filers monitoring system (NMS), Income tax business application (ITBA).
 - **Rationalisation of tax slabs** and tax rate.
 - **ITR form simplification**.

ALSO IN NEWS



Peace Pact signed

- **Assam-based insurgent group** Dimasa National Liberation Army (DNLA)/Dimasa People's Supreme Council (DPSC) **signed peace agreement with State Government and Centre**.
 - Agreement will bring an **end to insurgency in Dima Hasao district**.
 - Earlier **Bodo Accord** (in 2020) and **Karbi Anglong Agreement** (2021) were also **signed to bring peace** in the region.
- **Key highlights of pact**
 - **Dimasa Welfare Council** will be set up for focused development.
 - A **Commission under Sixth Schedule** of Constitution to **examine demand for inclusion** of additional villages contiguous to **North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council** with the Council.



NET Zero Innovation Virtual Centre

- **India and United Kingdom will create** India-UK NET Zero Innovation Virtual Centre.
 - It was announced during the India-UK Science & Innovation Council meeting
- It will provide a platform to **bring stakeholders from both countries** together to **work in** some of the focus **areas including Decarbonization of manufacturing process & transport systems and Green Hydrogen** as renewable source.



Patent filling in India

- **A report by Nasscom stated that:**
 - **India's patent filings soar 13.6%** in FY22.
 - **5,84,000 Patents have been filed** in India **between FY11 to FY22**.
 - **Challenges faced:** Uncertainty on timelines for granting patents, Lack of expertise at patent office, Cost overruns, Cumbersome patent filing process etc.
- A patent is an **exclusive right granted for an invention**.
 - **Term of every patent in India is twenty years** from the date of filing the patent application
 - **The Patents Act, 1970 governs patents** in India.



Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)

- A recent RTI reply highlighted that **only half of PMJDY insurance claims settled** in last two year.
- **PMJDY is a National Mission on Financial Inclusion** to ensure **access to financial services**, namely, Banking/ Savings & Deposit Accounts, Remittance, Credit, Insurance, Pension in an affordable manner.
- **Key Features**
 - **Opening of basic savings bank deposit account with minimal paperwork**, relaxed KYC, zero balance etc.
 - **Issuance of Indigenous Debit cards** (Rupay) for cash withdrawals.
 - **Free accident insurance coverage** of Rs. **2 lakh** (earlier was Rs.1 lakh).
 - **Overdraft facility** of Rs 10,000.

 <p>Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Automobile and Auto Component Industry (PLI Auto Scheme)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ministry of Heavy Industries released standard operating procedure under PLI Auto scheme to testing agencies.● About PLI Auto Scheme:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Scheme was notified in 2021.➢ It proposes financial incentives to boost domestic manufacturing of advanced automotive technology products and attract investments in the automotive manufacturing value chain.➢ Applicants must achieve a Domestic Value Addition of 50% to claim incentives under the scheme.
 <p>StateWide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology (SWAGAT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● SWAGAT initiative of Gujarat government successfully completed 20 years.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ It was started by PM in 2003 when he was the CM of Gujarat.● SWAGAT acts as a bridge between citizens and government by using technology to solve their day-to-day grievances in a time-bound manner.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ CM himself attends public hearings during State SWAGAT.
 <p>Weakening of monsoon linked to air pollution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Researchers from Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune found that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other human activities can alter pattern of monsoon flow.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Aerosol emissions (minute suspended pollutant particles) in northern hemisphere have contributed to a decline in monsoon rain over India.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ High levels of aerosol can deflect sun's heat back into space leading to a decrease in temperatures on earth and thereby reducing rainfall.➢ Higher GHG emissions lead to an increase in tropical cyclones over the west pacific which can cause weakening of monsoon.
 <p>Pulicat lake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● After a six-year absence, lesser flamingos found their way back to Pulicat Lake.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Lesser flamingo (IUCN: Near Threatened) is a rare migratory bird from the sub-Saharan region in Africa.● Pulikat lake (a Ramsar site) is second largest brackish water lake or lagoon in India after Chilka lake.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ It is located on Andhra Pradesh–Tamil Nadu Border.➢ Three major rivers feed the lagoon: Arani, Kalangi and Swarnamukhi River.➢ Barrier island of Sriharikota separates the lake from Bay of Bengal.
 <p>Sanchi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sanchi (Madhya Pradesh) is all set to become the country's first solar city.● Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi is a UNESCO world heritage site.● Place is related to Buddhism but not directly to life of Buddha. It is more related to Ashoka than to Buddha.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ It comprises various Buddhist monuments dating back to 1st and 2nd C.E, famous one being the Sanchi Stupa.➢ Sanchi stupa houses 4 gateways that showcase Buddha's life through intricate carvings.➢ It is also home to Gupta temple, one of the earliest example of temple architecture.
 <p>Places in news</p>	<p>Nagorno-Karabakh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Azerbaijan had established a checkpoint at Lachin corridor, the only land route linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh.● Nagorno-Karabakh, known as Artsakh by Armenians, is a landlocked mountainous area in South Caucasus.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ It was claimed by both Azerbaijan and Armenia after the fall of Russian Empire in 1917 and has remained a point of tension ever since.➢ Territory is internationally recognised as part of oil-rich Azerbaijan, but its inhabitants are predominantly ethnic Armenians. 

Errata: In News Today document dated 27th April, 2023, due to a typographical error **Exercise "Ajeya Warrior"** was incorrectly written as **Ajay Warrior**.