



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-12-2024

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Nupi Lal Numit 2024

Syllabus: GS-1: Freedom Struggle

Context:

- Manipur recently commemorated Nupi Lal Numit 2024, honouring the valiant women who fought for justice and freedom, led by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, at the Nupi Lal Memorial Complex, marking the significance of the event.

Historical Significance

- **Nupi Lal Uprisings (1904 and 1939):**
 - **1904:** Women protested against forced labor imposed by the British colonial administration.
 - **1939:** Women led a movement against the export of rice, which caused a severe food crisis in Manipur.
 - These uprisings demonstrated the courage and leadership of Manipuri women, influencing political and social reforms in the state.

Role of Women in Contemporary Manipur

- **Contribution across fields:**
 - Manipuri women excel in **social work, arts, culture, economics, and sports**.
 - They play a crucial role in driving the state's development.

Government Initiatives for Women

- **Economic Empowerment:**
 - **Ima NongthangleimaYaiphaTengbang Scheme:** Financial aid for unemployed women over 40.
 - Establishment of **Ima Markets** in all districts to support women entrepreneurs.
 - Financial support for **women athletes** to set up training centers and foster talent.
- **Educational Initiatives:**
 - **Chief Minister's Scholarship:** Support for civil service coaching.

- Assistance for **NEET and JEE preparations**, encouraging women's academic excellence.

Addressing Current Challenges

➤ **Collaboration for Crisis Resolution:**

- Chief Minister N. Biren Singh emphasized efforts with the Central Government to address ongoing challenges in Manipur.
- Focus on finding missing individuals and ensuring lasting peace.

Call for Unity and Peace

➤ Minister Th. Biswajit Singh highlighted:

- **Gender equality** and women's role in decision-making.
- The importance of collective efforts for **peace and development**.

Cultural Celebration

➤ The event featured:

- A **Nupi Lal drama** and cultural performances by local artists.
- Participation from ministers, MLAs, officials, students, and women from across the state.

Conclusion

Nupi Lal Numit 2024 celebrated the valor of Manipuri women, blending historical reverence with contemporary progress. It underscored the state's commitment to women's empowerment and societal unity.

e-Courts Mission Mode Project

Syllabus: GS-2: e-Governance.

Context:

- The **eCourts Mission Mode Project** aims to transform the Indian Judiciary through Information and Communication Technology (ICT).
- It is being implemented in **collaboration between the Department of Justice and the eCommittee of the Supreme Court** in multiple phases.

Phase I (2011–2015): Basic Computerization

- **Objective:** Establish foundational ICT infrastructure in the judiciary.
- **Key Activities:**
 - Setup of computer hardware and internet connectivity in courts.
 - Launch of the **e-Courts platform** for case management and information dissemination.
- **Budget:** ₹935 crore (₹639 crore utilized).

Phase II (2015–2023): ICT Enhancement in District and Subordinate Courts

- **Objective:** Enhance ICT adoption and introduce citizen-centric features.
- **Key Developments:**
 - Implementation of **digital infrastructure** in **18,735 courts** nationwide.
 - Launch of initiatives to improve **accessibility and efficiency**, such as online case status tracking.
- **Budget:** ₹1,670 crore (₹1,668 crore utilized).

Phase III (Approved in 2023): Advanced Digital Transformation

- **Objective:** Build on prior achievements and integrate advanced digital solutions.
- **Key Initiatives:**
 - Establishment of **Digital and Paperless Courts**.
 - **Digitisation of court records** to improve archival and retrieval.
 - Expanded use of **video conferencing** for courts, jails, and hospitals.
 - Introduction of **online courts** for a broader array of cases, including traffic violations.
- **Budget:** ₹7,210 crore.

Impact and Vision

- **Transparency:** ICT adoption ensures a more transparent judicial process.
- **Efficiency:** Streamlines case management and improves service delivery.
- **Accessibility:** Enhances citizens' access to justice through digital means.

Each phase builds on the previous one, reflecting a **comprehensive approach to modernizing India's judiciary** for the digital age. The project aligns with India's broader vision of e-Governance and citizen empowerment.

Switzerland Suspends 'Most Favoured Nation Status' to India

Syllabus: GS-3: Bilateral Trade.

Context:

Switzerland has announced the removal of the most-favored-nation (MFN) clause from its tax agreement with India.

Background of the Tax Agreement

- **Initial Agreement:** India and Switzerland signed their first tax agreement in **1994**.
- **Subsequent Updates:** Updates in **2000** and **2010** were made to reflect changing economic scenarios and to ensure smoother bilateral financial relations.

Changes to Dividend Tax Rates

- **Current Rate:** Indian companies currently enjoy a **5% tax rate on dividends** under the existing agreement.
- **New Rate:** Effective **January 1, 2025**, the tax rate will rise to **10%**, increasing the financial burden on Indian firms.

Supreme Court Ruling and Its Repercussions

- **The MFN Clause Dispute:** The Indian Supreme Court in **2023** clarified that the **Most-Favored-Nation (MFN)** clause does not apply to countries joining the **OECD** after the signing of a tax treaty.
- **Switzerland's Stance:** Previously, Switzerland interpreted the MFN clause to extend tax benefits unilaterally, but the Supreme Court ruling led Switzerland to recognize its misalignment with India's interpretation.
- **Resulting Decision:** Switzerland has decided to remove the MFN clause from its tax treaty with India.

Impact on Indian Companies

➤ **Higher Tax Liabilities:**

- Indian businesses will face a higher **10% dividend tax**, affecting profitability.
- This will reduce their competitive edge compared to firms from countries enjoying MFN privileges.

➤ **Investment Deterrent:**

- The increased tax rate may discourage **future investments** by Indian companies in Switzerland.
- Companies may seek more tax-efficient jurisdictions, potentially leading to a decline in bilateral investment flows.

➤ **Cost Implications for Indian MNCs:**

- Sectors heavily invested in Switzerland, such as **pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, and IT services**, will bear the brunt of higher tax costs.

Broader Implications

- **Shift in Investment Patterns:** Indian firms might explore alternate markets offering more favorable tax conditions.
- **Policy Considerations:** The decision underscores the importance of clarity and alignment in tax treaties to avoid economic friction.

In summary, the removal of the MFN clause and the corresponding increase in dividend tax rates signal a shift in Swiss-Indian financial relations. While it may temporarily strain Indian investments in Switzerland, it also presents an opportunity for both nations to reassess and modernize their bilateral tax frameworks.

ADB Approves \$500 Million Loan for India's Sustainable Infrastructure

Syllabus: GS-3: Sustainable Infrastructure.

Context:

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has recently approved a substantial loan aimed at boosting India's economic growth through sustainable infrastructure.

Key Highlights of the Loan

- **Amount Sanctioned:** \$500 million.
- **Recipient:** India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL).
- **Objective:**
 - Enhance long-term capital availability for sustainable infrastructure.
 - Improve IIFCL's capacity for incorporating green practices.

Sectors Targeted

- **Transportation:** Development of eco-friendly and resilient transport systems.
- **Energy:** Focus on renewable and sustainable energy solutions.
- **Urban Development:** Infrastructure for smart and sustainable cities.
- **Education and Healthcare:** Investment in social infrastructure.

Key Components of the Initiative

- **Dedicated Sustainability Unit:**
 - To oversee and implement eco-friendly practices within IIFCL's projects.
- **Environmental Framework:**
 - Development of a sustainability-focused framework for project planning.
 - Establishment of a **scoring system** to evaluate environmental performance.
- **Climate-Resilient Infrastructure:**
 - Designing infrastructure that can withstand floods, droughts, and cyclones.

Significance

- **Addressing the Funding Gap:**

- India faces a \$1 trillion gap in climate-related project funding.
- ADB's assistance is crucial to complement limited public sector funds.
- **Tackling Climate Challenges:**
 - Supports India's commitment to combat climate change.
 - Promotes resilience in infrastructure to mitigate climate risks.
- **Sustainability Goals:**
 - Encourages integration of green practices across critical sectors.
 - Supports India's objectives under global frameworks like the Paris Agreement.

This initiative by ADB and IIFCL demonstrates a significant step towards bridging the infrastructure financing gap while promoting sustainable and climate-resilient development in India.

Bharat Antariksha Station

Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Space science.

Context:

- India will have its own Space Station by 2035, which will be known as "Bharatiya Antriksh Station".

Bharat Antariksha Station

- **Objective:** Enhance India's presence in low Earth orbit and support advanced scientific research.
- **Significance:** Strengthens India's global standing in space exploration and encourages international collaboration.
- **Technology:** Development will involve cutting-edge advancements in engineering and technology, solidifying India's position as a leader in space innovation.

Indian Astronauts on the Moon by 2040

- **Objective:** Build upon previous lunar missions to achieve a manned moon landing.

- **Purpose:** Drive scientific and technological progress while inspiring the younger generation to pursue careers in space science.

Recent Achievements in Space

- **Foreign Satellite Launches:** India has successfully launched 432 foreign satellites, with nearly 90% completed in the last decade.
- **Global Recognition:** Establishes India as a preferred global partner for satellite launches, highlighting advancements in cost-effective and reliable space technology.

Government Reforms in the Space Sector

- **Private Sector Participation:**
 - Encourages private investments to foster innovation and competition.
 - Facilitates partnerships between public and private entities to strengthen the space ecosystem.
- **Policy Initiatives:**
 - Focus on biotechnology, geo-spatial technologies, and agriculture to drive integrated solutions for national challenges.
 - Aims to leverage science and technology for development, economic growth, and national security.

Implications

- **Global Influence:** Strengthened role in international space exploration.
- **Economic Growth:** Boosts the economy through the expansion of the space industry.
- **Inspiration:** Promotes a scientific temper among youth and advances technological innovation.