



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**JANUARY, 2023**

**Week-1**

**1-7 Jan, 2023**

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,  
SSC and Banking Exams**

1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY, 2023

## Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic (AVGC)

- **Context:** An AVGC Promotion Task Force report, constituted by the government, has proposed a national AVGC-Extended Reality Mission with a budget outlay to be created for integrated promotion and growth of the sector.

### Key Highlights

The main recommendations of the Task Force for promotion of Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) industry categorized broadly under 4 categories are as under:

- **Domestic Industry Development for Global Access**
  - A National AVGC-XR Mission with a budget outlay to be created for integrated promotion & growth of the AVGC sector.
  - Launch of a 'Create in India' campaign with exclusive focus on content creation, In India, For India & For World.
  - Institute an International AVGC Platform, along with a Gaming Expo) with focus on FDI, Co-production treaties and Innovation.
  - Establish a National Centre of Excellence (COE) for the AVGC sector
- **Developing Talent ecosystem to realize Demographic Dividends**
  - Dedicated AVGC course content at school levels
  - Launch AVGC focused UG/ PG courses and globally recognized degrees. Standardize admission tests for AVGC related courses.
  - Enhance Industry participation to ensure employment opportunities and absorption for students.
  - Establish AVGC Accelerators and Innovation hubs in academic institutions, on lines of Atal Tinkering Labs.

- **Enhancing Technology & Financial Viability for Indian AVGC Industry**
  - Democratize AVGC technologies by promoting subscription-based pricing models
  - Made in India for AVGC technologies through incentive schemes for R&D and IP creation. Evaluate PLI scheme to incentivize AVGC hardware manufacturers.
  - Enhanced Ease of Doing Business in AVGC sector i.e tax benefits, import duties, curbing piracy, etc.
  - Leverage Start-Up India to provide technical, financial and market access assistance
- **Raising India's soft power through an Inclusive growth**
  - Establish a dedicated Production Fund for domestic content creation from across India to promote Indian culture & heritage globally.
  - Promote local Children's channels for raising awareness on rich culture and history of India among children and youth
  - Establish a framework to ensure Child Rights Protection in the digital world.

## Dexa Bone Density Test

- **Context:** Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has instructed that Yo-Yo and Dexa Tests will now be an important part of the team selection criteria.

### Key Highlights

- The Yo-Yo Test and Dexa scans will now be part of selection criteria and implemented in the customized roadmaps of the central pool of players.
- Dexa test or DXA test is Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry.
- The test measures the bone density using low dose X-rays to see how dense, that is strong, the bones are.
- It is also used to establish body fat percentage, along with lean muscle mass, water content and bone density.

- These scans “use a much lower level of radiation than standard X-ray” and hence are very safe.
- The Yo Yo test was developed by Danish football physiologist Jens Bangsbo.
- In the test, two cones are placed 20 meters apart, and the athlete has to run between them when the beep goes off.
- The beeps become more frequent after one minute, and if the athlete fails to reach the line within that time, he is expected to catch up within two more beeps.
- The test is stopped if the player fails to catch up before the beeps run out.
- The test has a beginner and an advanced level, and players are given scores. The minimum score set by the Board of Control for Cricket in India to pass the test is 16.1.

## Europe witnessed winter heat wave

- **Context:** Several parts of Europe witnessed an unprecedented winter heat wave on new year.

### Key Highlights

- The temperatures increased 10 to 20 degrees Celsius above normal.
- According to the report, at least seven countries recorded their hottest January weather ever.
- These included Poland, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia.
- The continent is experiencing an extreme warm spell because of the formation of a heat dome over the region.

### What is a heat dome?

- A heat dome occurs when an area of high-pressure traps warm air over a region, just like a lid on a pot, for an extended period of time. The longer that air remains trapped, the more the sun works to heat the air, producing warmer conditions with every passing

day. Heat domes generally stay for a few days but sometimes they can extend up to weeks, which might cause deadly heat waves.

- Scientists suggest that any region of high pressure, whether a heat dome or not, forces air to sink and once it reaches the ground, it gets compressed and becomes even warmer. Moreover, when air sinks, it gets drier and further raises the temperature of the area.
- The heat dome’s formation is related to the behaviour of the jet stream — an area of fast-moving air high in the atmosphere.
- The jet stream is believed to have a wave-like pattern that keeps moving from north to south and then north again.
- When these waves get bigger and elongated, they move slowly and sometimes can become stationary. This is when a high-pressure system gets stuck and leads to the occurrence of a heat dome.
- Although heat domes are likely to have always existed, researchers say that climate change may be making them more intense and longer. They suggest with the rising temperatures, it is expected that the jet stream will become wavier and will have larger deviations, causing more frequent extreme heat events.

2<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY, 2023

## Utkarsh 2.0

- **Context:** Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das launched central bank’s medium-term strategy framework titled ‘Utkarsh 2.0’.

### Key Highlights

- The Reserve Bank of India’s Medium-term Strategy Framework for the period 2023-2025 – ‘Utkarsh 2.0’ – was launched by Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI.

- The first strategy framework (Utkarsh 2022) covering the period 2019-2022 was launched in July 2019.
- It became a medium-term strategy document guiding the Bank's progress towards realisation of the identified milestones.
- Utkarsh 2.0 would allow the central bank to both react and act proactively to confront socio-economic challenges.
- The RBI plans to leverage India's Group of 20 presidency to showcase the country's strength in digital payments, and broad-base the acceptance of the rupee in bilateral and multilateral trade as part of its strategy till 2025.
- The central bank would also integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning-driven tools to enhance the reliability of its data analysis and information creation.
- In April 2018, Millets were rebranded as "Nutri Cereals", followed by the year 2018 being declared as the National Year of Millets, aiming at larger promotion and demand generation.
- The global millets market is projected to register a CAGR of 4.5% during the forecast period between 2021-2026.
- 'Millets' were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several evidence of its consumption during the Indus valley civilization.
- In India, millets are primarily a kharif crop, requiring less water and agricultural inputs than other similar staples.
- Millets are important by the virtue of its mammoth potential to generate livelihoods, increase farmers' income and ensure food & nutritional security all over the world.

## International Year of Millets (IYM), 2023

- **Context:** International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 kick starts with focused activities being undertaken by Central Ministries, State Governments and Indian Embassies.

### Key Highlights

- The Government of India sponsored the proposal for International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 which was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
- The declaration has been instrumental for the Government of India to be at the forefront in celebrating the IYM.
- PM Narendra Modi has also shared his vision to make IYM 2023 a 'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.
- Recognising the enormous potential of Millets, which also aligns with several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of India (GoI) has prioritized Millets.

## India-Austria's agreement on migration and mobility

- **Context:** India and Austria have signed a migration and mobility agreement.

### Key Highlights:

- India signed a "Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement" (MMPA) with Austria.
- It has similar mobility agreements with France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Finland.
- India has been keen to finalise these agreements with European countries as a stepping stone to resolving issues over the long-pending India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement and facilitating Indian professionals working in these countries, the European countries also see them as a way to curb illegal immigration from India.
- This is a much-needed agreement, especially in view of the sharp increase in illegal migration Austria was confronted with last year, including over 15,000 illegal migrants from India with practically no chance of asylum.

- The agreement is now a useful tool to combat illegal migration together, as it enables the swift return of illegal migrants.
- It will regulate multiple entry visas for professionals and student exchange programmes, and will be reviewed regularly by a Joint Working Group (JWG).

3<sup>rd</sup> JANUARY, 2023

## 'Prahari' App

- **Context:** Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah launched the Mobile App 'Prahari' and Manual of Border Security Force (BSF).

### Key Highlights

- The BSF 'Prahari' app is a great example of Proactive Governance.
- Now jawans can get personal information and information related to accommodation, Ayushman-CAPF and leaves on their mobiles.
- Jawans can get all this information through the app including Data or grievance redressal on "Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System" (CP-GRAMS) or information on various welfare schemes.
- The app will also connect them with the portal of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Update Manual of the Border Security Force was launched which will increase the understanding of operations, administration and training and speed up the work.
- This will facilitate the work of all ranks of BSF Jawans and officers and will bring ease and convenience in the work of BSF.

## Draft Solar Policy 2022

- **Context:** The Delhi government approved the draft of its ambitious Solar Policy 2022 which revises the installed capacity to 6,000 MW from 2,000 MW by 2025, a three-fold jump in as many years.

### Key Highlights

- **Increase the share of solar energy:** Delhi's new solar policy targets 6,000 MW of installed solar capacity by 2025 to increase the share of solar energy in Delhi's annual electricity demand from 9 per cent to 25 per cent in three years, the highest in India.
- **Single-window state portal:** The policy aims to create a unified single-window state portal managed by the Delhi Solar Cell that will provide information on the benefits of solar PV systems, process-related guidelines, and timeline.
- **Generation-based incentives (GBI):** To motivate consumers to use solar energy, the government will provide various incentives such as generation-based incentives (GBI) and capital subsidies.
- **Exemption from taxes:** Taxes and duties will not be levied on generation from RTS (rooftop solar) panels whether for self-consumption or supplied to the grid.
- **New deployment models:** To increase the uptake of RTS panels, the policy also encourages new deployment models such as Hybrid RESCO. This model enables consumers to access the net metering benefits of solar without making any upfront capital investment by entering into an agreement with their power discom.
- **Community Solar:** 'Community Solar' will be set in place. It will enable consumers who do not have a suitable roof for installing a solar system to be owners of a part of a larger solar energy system set up by a developer within an available land parcel in Delhi.
- **Peer-to-Peer Trading:** 'Peer-to-Peer Trading' of solar energy will also be set in place. It will enable owners of solar energy systems to sell their excess generated electricity in real-time via a P2P energy trading platform.
- **RE-RTC (Renewable Energy-Round the Clock):** The policy also encourages discoms to increase the share of solar energy procured from outside Delhi through innovative models such as RE-RTC (Renewable Energy-Round the Clock).

## Vibrant Village Programme

- **Context:** Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah urged the Border Security Forces (BSF) to make efforts towards increasing tourism in villages through the Vibrant Village Programme, making villages self-sufficient and equipped with all facilities.

### Key Highlights

- Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) has been announced in the Finance Minister's Budget Speech 2022.
- VVP is aiming at enhancing infrastructure in villages along India's border with China, in states like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Activities under the VVP include building infrastructure such as housing, tourist centers, road connectivity, providing decentralized renewable energy, direct-to-home access for Doordarshan and educational channels, and support for livelihood generation.
- The programme envisages coverage of border villages on the Northern border having sparse population, limited connectivity and infrastructure, which often get left out from the development gains. Convergence of existing schemes is proposed under VVP.
- The villages on the Northern border to be covered under VVP are being finalized.

4<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2023

## Croatia joined Eurozone

- **Context:** Croatia adopted the European Union's common currency, the euro, and joined the Schengen Area, Europe's visa-free travel area.

### Key Highlights

- The country committed to joining the eurozone when it became the EU's newest member in 2013.
- It has become the twenty-seventh country in the Schengen area, which allows free movement across the countries.

- As of January 2023, the eurozone consists of 20 countries in the European Union (EU): Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

## Schengen Area

- Schengen Area signifies a zone where 27 European countries abolished their internal borders, for the free and unrestricted movement of people.
- Croatia became the 27th nation in the passport free Schengen zone.
- Members of this area include: 23 of the 27 EU member states and all members of the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland).

## Eurozone

- Member States have taken a step further by replacing their national currencies with the single currency – the euro.
- These Member States form the euro area, also known as eurozone.

## National Single Window System (NSWS)

- **Context:** The NSWS has so far received 4,20,000 unique visitors from 157 countries since its inception.

### Key Highlights

- More than 1,50,000 investors have used KYA (Know Your Approvals) Module of NSWS to know the list of approvals they require for their specific business cases.
- The NSWS has so far received 4,20,000 unique visitors from 157 countries since its inception. More than 1,50,000 investors have used KYA (Know Your Approvals) Module of NSWS to know the list of approvals they require for their specific business cases.

- A total of 75,599 approvals have been granted out of over 1,23,000 applications received.
- Out of these, 57,850 approvals have been approved by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

### About National Single Window System (NSWS)

- NSWS provides a single interface to apply for all G2B clearances from various ministries/departments as well as eliminating duplication of work by auto-populating form fields across different approvals based on single investor profile.
- The Know Your Approvals (KYA) module includes guidance for 32 Central Departments and 31 States.
- The portal hosts applications for approvals from 26 Central Departments and 19 State Governments. These approvals can be applied through NSWS.

5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2023

### UGC announced draft norms for facilitating foreign universities

- **Context:** The University Grants Commission (UGC) has announced draft norms for facilitating foreign universities and educational institutions to set up campuses in India which allow them autonomy in decision making.

#### Key Highlights

- The draft regulations of the UGC on Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India 2023 pave the way for the entry of foreign universities into the groves of higher education in the country.
- **Criteria for Universities:** The UGC draft regulations-2023 allow “top 500 foreign universities” and universities with reputed institutions in its home jurisdiction, to set up campuses in India.

- **Fee structure:** The draft regulations allow foreign higher educational institutions autonomy to decide a fee structure that is “transparent and reasonable”.
- **Autonomy for staff selection:** Foreign higher educational institutions now have the freedom to decide “qualifications, salary structure, and other conditions of service for appointing faculty and staff”.
- **Waive off equivalence requirement:** All Indian students with foreign degrees are required to get an equivalence certificate from the Association of Indian Universities. The draft regulations-2023 waive off equivalence requirement for the degrees granted by the foreign branch campuses in India.
- **Right to inspect:** The draft states that the UGC will have the right to inspect the campuses at any time.
- **Anti-ragging law:** Campuses will not be outside the purview of anti-ragging and other criminal laws.
- **FEMA applied:** The draft regulations-2023 allow for smooth repatriation of profits earned by the foreign branch campuses under the rules and regulations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).
- **Audit reports:** The draft regulations also require the foreign universities to submit audit reports and annual reports to the UGC “certifying that [their] operations... in India are in compliance with FEMA 1999” and other relevant government policies.
- **National interest:** Foreign Higher Educational Institutions shall not offer any such programme of study which jeopardizes the national interest of India or the standards of higher education in India. The operation of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions shall not be contrary to the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency, or morality.
- **Penalty:** The UGC shall impose a penalty and/ or suspend/ withdraw its approval at any time if the university’s “activities or academic programmes are against the interest of India.

## Y20 Summit

- **Context:** The first ever Y20 (Youth 20) Summit to be held in India on the sidelines of the G20 Summit, will focus on themes of the future of work; climate change and disaster risk reduction; peacebuilding and reconciliation; and youth in democracy.

### Key Highlights

- Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur launched the themes of the Y20 summit, along with its logo and website in New Delhi.
- Y20 Summit is a unique opportunity to allow the youth to provide constructive policy inputs and to utilise the platform to voice their opinions for the world audience.
- These priority areas of the summit point to the urgency with which the world has to reconcile with the reality of the changing times in our quest to survive and thrive.
- For the next eight months, there will be pre-summits on the Y20 themes along with discussions and seminars at universities, in the run up to the final Youth 20 Summit.
- The G20 Summit in India will bring together, 43 Heads of Delegations - the largest ever in G20 who will be participating in the final Summit in New Delhi in September, 2023.
- The G20 consists of two parallel tracks: the Finance Track and the Sherpa Track.
- The Sherpa Track oversees inputs from 13 Working Groups, 2 Initiatives - Research Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) and G20 Empower, and various Engagement Groups. T
- The Engagement Groups of which Youth 20 or Y20 is a part, bring together civil societies, parliamentarians, think tanks, women, youth, labour, businesses, and researchers of the G20 countries.

## BIND Scheme

- **Context:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regarding the BIND scheme at a cost of 2,539.61 crore up to 2025-26.

### Key Highlights

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regarding Central Sector Scheme "Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development" (BIND) at a cost of 2,539.61 crore for infrastructure development of Prasar Bharati i.e. All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD).
- The "Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development" scheme of the Ministry is the vehicle for providing financial support to Prasar Bharati for expenses related to expansion and upgradation of its broadcasting infrastructure, content development and civil work related to the organization.
- At present, Doordarshan operates 36 TV channels including 28 regional channels and All India Radio operates more than 500 broadcasting centers.
- The Scheme will increase coverage of AIR FM transmitters in the country to 66% by geographical area and 80% by population up from 59% and 68% respectively. The Scheme also envisages

### Objectives

- To undertake a major upgradation of Prasar Bharti facilities with better infrastructure which will widen its reach, including in the LWE, border and strategic areas and provide high quality content to the viewers.
- Development of high-quality content for both domestic and international audience
- Upgrading the capacity of the DTH platform to accommodate more channels.



- Purchase of OB vans and digital upgradation of DD and AIR Studios to make them HD.
- Free distribution of over 8 lakh DD Free Dish STBs to people living in remote, tribal, LWE and border areas.

**6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2023**

## National Green Hydrogen Mission

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister of India, has approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

### Key Highlights

- The initial outlay for the Mission will be Rs.19,744 crore, including an outlay of Rs.17,490 crore for the SIGHT programme, Rs.1,466 crore for pilot projects, Rs.400 crore for R&D, and Rs. 388 crore towards other Mission components.
- MNRE will formulate the scheme guidelines for implementation of the respective components.

The Mission objectives to be achieved by 2030 include:

- Development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne) per annum with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW in the country
- Over Rs. Eight lakh crore in total investments
- Creation of over Six lakh jobs
- Cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over Rs. one lakh crore
- Abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gas emissions

### The Mission will have wide ranging benefits:

- Creation of export opportunities for Green Hydrogen and its derivatives
- Decarbonisation of industrial, mobility and energy sectors
- Reduction in dependence on imported fossil fuels and feedstock

- Development of indigenous manufacturing capabilities; creation of employment opportunities
- Development of cutting-edge technologies.

### Under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT):

- Two distinct financial incentive mechanisms – targeting domestic manufacturing of electrolysers and production of Green Hydrogen – will be provided under the Mission.
- The Mission will also support pilot projects in emerging end-use sectors and production pathways.
- Regions capable of supporting large scale production and/or utilization of Hydrogen will be identified and developed as Green Hydrogen Hubs.
- An enabling policy framework will be developed to support establishment of the Green Hydrogen ecosystem.
- A robust Standards and Regulations framework will also be developed.
- Further, a public-private partnership framework for R&D (Strategic Hydrogen Innovation Partnership – SHIP) will be facilitated under the Mission; R&D projects will be goal-oriented, time bound, and suitably scaled up to develop globally competitive technologies.
- A coordinated skill development programme will also be undertaken under the Mission.

## Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project

- **Context:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the investment in Sunni Dam Hydro project.

### Key Highlights

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the investment for 382 MW Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project in Himachal Pradesh by SJVN Limited, for an estimated cost of Rs. 2614.51 crore including Rs. 13.80 crore as budgetary support from Government of India for cost of enabling infrastructure.

- Ex-post facto approval is given for cumulative expenditure incurred amounting to Rs.246 crore till January, 2022.
- Keeping in view the aims and objectives of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, the present proposal for setting up of 382 MW Sunni Dam HEP by SJVN shall provide various benefits to local suppliers/ local enterprises/ MSMEs and shall encourage entrepreneurship opportunities within the country besides promoting employment and socio-economic development of the region.
- The implementation of the project shall generate direct & indirect employment to about 4000 persons during peak construction of the project.

7<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2023

## Delimitation in Assam

- **Context:** The Election Commission of India announced that the government had asked it to redraw constituency boundaries in Assam, where delimitation has not been done since 1976.

### Key Highlights

- Within a week of the announcement, the process of data collection through the office of the Assam Chief Electoral Officer has started.
- The State has 14 Lok Sabha, 126 Assembly and seven Rajya Sabha seats.
- The term of the current Assam Legislative Assembly will end on May 20, 2026.
- The Constitution says boundaries of Assembly constituencies should be updated after every decadal Census, but through amendments in 1976 and 2001, the process of delimitation was put off for 25 years each time.
- So far, delimitation for the whole country has been carried out four times- under Delimitation Acts in 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002 and remains in abeyance till 2026.
- During the last delimitation, which was completed in

2008, the government decided to leave out Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland, as well as Jammu and Kashmir citing security concerns.

- The commission went on with redrawing the boundaries of J&K, giving its final award in May 2022.
- According to Article 170 of the Constitution, the population numbers to be used for drawing boundaries of constituencies would be as per the 2001 Census until the first Census after 2026 is published.
- In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 passed by Parliament had mentioned the population in the 2011 Census as the basis of delimitation.

### Need for Delimitation

- Boundaries of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies are required to be updated from time to time to ensure that the population size in each seat is roughly the same.
- The basic principle is that one vote should have the same value, irrespective of the constituency.
- Apart from population, geographical features, boundaries of administrative units and connectivity are also considered.

### About Representation of the People Act, 1950

- Section 8A of the Representation of the People Act allows for the delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur or Nagaland.
- The section says "if the President is satisfied that the situation and the conditions prevailing" in the states are conducive for conducting delimitation, then he or she may rescind the deferment order.

### About Delimitation Commission

- Article 82 provides the Parliament with the authority to enact a Delimitation Act after every Census.

- Article 170 provides for the States to get divided into territorial constituencies as per the Delimitation Act after every Census.
- Its orders have the force of law, cannot be called in question before any court and no modifications are permissible by House of the People and the State Legislative Assembly concerned
- Its function is to determine the number and boundaries of constituencies in a way that the population of all seats, so far as practicable, is the same and identifying seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes wherever their population is relatively large.
- The Delimitation Commission is appointed by the President of India includes Retired Supreme Court judge, Chief Election Commissioner and respective State Election Commissioners.

## Draft Rules for Online Gaming

The draft rules for online gaming in India, released by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY).

### Key Highlights

- The Ministry has prepared draft amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 made by the Government in exercise of its powers under the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- A self-regulatory body, mandatory know-your-customer norms for verification, and a grievance redressal mechanism are among the key proposals in the draft rules.

### Key proposals

- **Registration:** Online games will have to register with a self-regulatory body, and only games cleared by the body will be allowed to legally operate in India.
- **Betting prohibited:** Online gaming companies will not be allowed to engage in betting on the outcome of games.

- **Self-regulatory body:** The self-regulatory body will have a board of directors with five members from diverse fields, including online gaming, public policy, IT, psychology and medicine.
- **National interest:** It must ensure that the registered games don't have anything "which is not in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states or public order, or incites the commission of any cognizable offence relating to the aforesaid." There could be more than one self-regulatory body and all of them will have to inform the Centre about the games they have registered along with a report detailing the criteria for registering.
- **Content regulation:** The government may also regulate the content of online gaming, and "ensure that the games do not have violent, addictive or sexual content".
- **Know Your Customer (KYC):** Like an intermediary, online gaming firms will be required to undertake additional due diligence, including KYC of users, transparent withdrawal and refund of money, and a fair distribution of winnings. For KYC, they will have to follow norms laid down for entities regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- **Random number generation certificate:** Gaming companies will also have to secure a random number generation certificate, which is typically used by platforms that offer card games to ensure that game outputs are statistically random and unpredictable.
- **No bot certificate:** They will also have to get a "no bot certificate" from a reputed certifying body.
- **Compliance officer:** Similar to social media and e-commerce companies, online gaming platforms will also have to appoint a compliance officer who will ensure that the platform is following norms, a nodal officer who will act as a liaison official with the government and assist law enforcement agencies, and a grievance officer who will resolve user complaints.

## Online Gaming Sector in India

- The revenue of the Indian mobile gaming industry is expected to reach \$5 billion in 2025.
- The industry grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 38 per cent in India between 2017-2020, as opposed to 8 per cent in China and 10 per cent in the US.
- It is expected to grow at a CAGR of 15 per cent to reach Rs 153 billion in revenue by 2024, as per a report by VC firm Sequoia and management consulting company BCG.
- **Game of chance (Gambling):** Games of chance are all those games that are played randomly. These games are based on luck. A person can play these games without prior knowledge or understanding. For instance, dice games, picking a number, etc. Such games are considered illegal in India.
- **Game of skill (Gaming):** Games of skill are all those games that are played based on a person's prior knowledge or experience of the game. A person will require skills such as analytical decision-making, logical thinking, capability, etc. Some games might also require some initial training to win. Such games are considered legal by most of the Indian states.

