



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER, 2023

Week-2

8-14 Sept., 2023

★★ Useful for ★★

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

8th SEPTEMBER, 2023

UPI QR Code-Central Bank Digital Currency interoperability

- **Context:** Several banks are enabling the interoperability of Unified Payments Interface's (UPI) Quick Response (QR) code with their Central Bank Digital Currency(CBDC) or e application.

Key Highlights:

- Interoperability of UPI with the digital rupee means all UPI QR codes are compatible with CBDC apps.
- Initially, when the pilot for the retail digital rupee was launched, the e-R users had to scan a specific QR code to undertake transactions.
- However, with the interoperability of the two, payments can now be made using a single QR code.
- A QR code consists of black squares arranged in a square grid on a white background, which can be read by an imaging device such as a camera. QR contains information about the item to which it is attached.
- QR code is an alternate contactless channel of payments. It allows merchants or businesses to accept payments from their customers directly into their bank accounts.
- Interoperability is the technical compatibility that enables a payment system to be used in conjunction with other payment systems.
- It allows system providers and participants in different systems to undertake, clear and settle payment transactions across systems without participating in multiple systems.
- The interoperability of UPI and CBDC will ensure seamless transactions between a customer and merchant without having the need to switch between multiple digital platforms.
- It will allow a digital rupee user to make payments for their daily needs, such as groceries and medicines, by scanning any UPI QR codes at any merchant outlet.

- Even merchants are not required to keep a separate QR code to accept the digital rupee payments. They can accept CBDC payments on their existing QR code.
- Currently, UPI is a widely used payment method and the interoperability between it and the CBDC will propel the adoption of the digital rupee.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- **Context:** The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has achieved another milestone of providing tap water connections to 13 Crore rural households.

Key Highlights:

- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has achieved the milestone of providing tap water connections to 130 million rural households.
- The rural tap connection coverage has increased from 32.3 million households at the start of the mission in 2019 to 130 million in just four years.
- Currently, Goa, Telangana, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands have reported 100% coverage.
- Every second, one tap water connection is installed, thus changing the country's rural landscape. Since, January 1,2023 around 87,500 tap connections have been provided every day.
- Tap water supply has been provided to 915,000 (88.73%) schools, and 952,000 (84.69%) anganwadi centers in the country.
- The mission has also successfully resolved the issue of Arsenic and Fluoride contamination in drinking water sources providing safe drinking water in affected habitations.

About the Jal Jeevan Mission:

- The aim is to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.
- The goal is to have 'Har Ghar Jal'- every house in the village is to be provided with a Functional tap connection.

Global Fintech Fest (GFF) 2023

- **Context:** Union Finance Minister has addressed the delegates at the Global Fintech Fest (GFF) 2023 which was held in Mumbai.

Key Highlights:

- Cryptocurrency, drug mafias, tax havens, and cyber threats are significant global financial threats. Collaboration is needed to address these challenges effectively.
- Cryptocurrencies offer opportunities but they also pose threats. Hence, efforts are needed to regulate and address issues related to crypto assets.
- Fintech industry in promoting financial inclusion and influencing India's financial landscape. Fintechs have played a substantial role in lending and reaching out to new customers.
- The Finance Minister urged fintech companies to invest heavily in cybersecurity measures, including advanced encryption, to protect user data and financial transactions. Security is crucial for building trust in the financial ecosystem.
- India's priority, under its G20 presidency, includes enhancing cross-border payment arrangements, especially considering the volume of remittances to the country.
- According to RBI, balances in savings or current accounts which are not operated for ten years, or term deposits not claimed within ten years from the date of maturity are classified as unclaimed deposits.
- Banking system alone is estimated to hold over Rs 35,000 crore in unclaimed deposits.
- To facilitate the recovery of these unclaimed funds, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had recently launched UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access information) central web portal.

9th SEPTEMBER, 2023

India's Digital Public Infrastructure

- **Context:** The G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion document prepared by the World Bank has lauded the transformative impact of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in India over the past decade under the Central Government.

Key Highlights:

- World Bank document discusses the significant achievements and impact of India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in various areas
- India's DPI particularly the JAM (short for Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) Trinity, has greatly improved financial inclusion, increasing the adult inclusion rate from 25% to over 80% in just six years. This progress would have taken decades without DPI.
- India's digital G2P system, built on DPI, has facilitated the transfer of \$361 billion directly to beneficiaries through various government schemes, resulting in significant savings.
- UPI transactions in May 2023 alone exceeded 9.41 billion. For the fiscal year 2022–23, the total value of UPI transactions was nearly 50 percent of India's nominal GDP.
- DPI has increased efficiency for private organizations by reducing complexity, costs, and processing times. This has had positive effects on sectors such as SME lending, depreciation costs and fraud detection.
- The India Stack has digitized and simplified KYC procedures, reducing banks' compliance costs from \$0.12 to \$0.06 and making it more profitable to serve lower-income clients.
- The UPI-PayNow interlinking between India and Singapore, operationalized in February 2023, promotes faster, cheaper, and more transparent cross-border payments.
- India's AA Framework, regulated by RBI, enables individuals and enterprises to share data securely and with consent. There are 1.13 billion cumulative accounts enabled for data sharing.
- DEPA empowers individuals to control their data and share it across providers, fostering innovation and competition without heavy investments in client relationships.

About Digital Public Infrastructure:

- Digital Public Infrastructure is a necessary support to the development and functioning of digital systems and services that benefit society as a whole.

- It provides necessary technical and organizational frameworks to ensure that digital services are secure, reliable, and accessible to everyone. For example, an essential element of Digital Public Infrastructure is the internet, which enables people to access information and services from anywhere in the world. Another example is digital identity systems that allow individuals to securely and conveniently access online services such as banking, healthcare, and government services.

Incremental Cash Reserve Ratio (I-CRR)

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that it would discontinue the incremental cash reserve ratio (I-CRR) in a phased manner.

Key Highlights:

- I-CRR is an additional cash balance which the RBI can ask banks to maintain over and above the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR).
- Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) is the minimum amount of the total deposits which banks have to maintain as cash reserves with the Reserve Bank of India. It is an essential tool to maintain the health of the banking system. Banks cannot use this amount for lending or for any investment purposes.
- The I-CRR was introduced on August 10, 2023 by RBI.
- I-CRR was announced as a temporary measure to absorb excess liquidity from the banking system.
- The level of surplus liquidity in the system surged because of the return of Rs 2,000 banknotes to the banking system.
- RBI's surplus transfer to the government also led to increase in government spending and capital inflows.
- Last time, RBI imposed the I-CRR was in November 2016 to absorb a part of the surplus liquidity in the system following the demonetization of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 banknotes on November 8, 2016. It was later discontinued from the fortnight beginning December 10, 2016.

Thali Economics

- **Context:** According to a rating firm Crisil, the increase in food prices is affecting both vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals, with a significant 24.26% rise in vegetarian thali meal costs and a 12.54% increase in non-vegetarian thali meal costs.

Key Highlights:

- Thali is an Indian-style meal made up of a selection of various dishes – vegetarian and non-vegetarian – which are served on a platter.
- A veg thali comprises roti, vegetables (onion, tomato, and potato), rice, dal, curd, and salad. For non-veg thali, the constituents remain the same but for dal, which is replaced by chicken.
- According to Crisil, the average cost of preparing a thali at home is calculated based on input prices prevailing in north, south, east and west India.
- The monthly change reflects the impact on the common man's expenditure. The data also reveals the ingredients (cereals, pulses, broilers, vegetables, spices, edible oil, cooking gas) driving changes in the cost of a thali.
- The rise in thali prices was primarily driven by the significant increase in the price of tomatoes.
- For instance, of the 24.26% increase in the cost of a vegetarian thali, 21% can be attributed solely to the 176% rise in tomato prices over the past year, going from Rs 37/kg to Rs 102/kg.
- Additionally, the prices of onions increased by 8%, chillies by 20%, and cumin by 158% from August 2022, contributing to a one percent increase in the cost of a vegetarian thali.
- In the case of non-vegetarian thali, the cost increase was less pronounced because the price of broilers, which make up over 50% of the cost, rose only moderately by 1-3% during the year.

10th SEPTEMBER, 2023

India and US President bilateral meeting

- **Context:** The Prime Minister of India and US President held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of G20.

Key Highlights:

- Both countries reassured the significance of the Quad in supporting a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific region. They looked forward to the next Quad Leaders' Summit, to be hosted by India in 2024.
- US President reaffirmed his support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member. India's candidature for the UNSC non-permanent seat in 2028-29 was also welcomed by the US.
- Both leaders acknowledged the role of technology in their partnership and commended the India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET).
- ISRO and NASA have started discussions for a joint effort to the International Space Station in 2024.
- India and the United States also intend to increase coordination on planetary defense to protect planet Earth and space assets from the impact of asteroids and near-Earth objects.
- They recognized the importance of resilient semiconductor supply chains and welcomed investments from U.S. companies in India.
- An MoU was signed between Bharat 6G Alliance and Next G Alliance to deepen cooperation in telecommunications. They also discussed digital inclusion.
- The leaders pledged to enhance cooperation in defence, including space and AI. Negotiations for manufacturing GE F-414 jet engines in India are underway.
- The leaders also commended the India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) team for establishing a robust collaboration agenda to harness the innovative work of the U.S. and Indian defense sectors to address shared security challenges.
- The United States reiterated its commitment to working together with India in the quantum domain both bilaterally and through the Quantum Entanglement Exchange (a platform to facilitate international quantum exchange opportunities).
- The two leaders welcomed the signing of an MoU between Indian universities represented by the Council of Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT Council) and the Association of American Universities (AAU) to establish the India-U.S. Global Challenges Institute.
- This institute will bring together leading research and higher-education institutions from across our two nations, including beyond AAU and IIT membership, to advance new frontiers in science and technology.
- The leaders lauded the settlement of the seventh and last outstanding World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute between India and the United States. This follows the unprecedented settlement of six outstanding bilateral trade disputes in the WTO in June 2023.
- The two leaders welcomed the development of an ambitious "Innovation Handshake" agenda within the India-US Commercial Dialogue.
- This initiative will encompass two anchor events—one in India and the other in the United States—where startups, private equity and venture capital firms, corporate investment departments, and government officials from both countries will collaborate to strengthen connections within their respective innovation ecosystems.

RBI has proposed setting-up a Self-Regulatory Organisation

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India(RBI) Governor has called upon fintech entities to establish Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs).

Key Highlights:

- SRO is a non-governmental organization that sets and enforces rules and standards relating to the conduct of entities in the industry (members) with the aim of protecting the customer and promoting ethics, equality and professionalism.
- SROs typically collaborate with all stakeholders in framing rules and regulations.

- Their self-regulatory processes are administered through impartial mechanisms such that members operate in a disciplined environment and accept penal actions by the SRO. Regulations by SRO supplement but do not replace applicable laws or regulations.
- SROs could play a pivotal role in the fintech industry by promoting responsible practices and maintaining ethical standards.
- There have been many instances where a few fintech players were involved in unethical practices such as charging exorbitant higher interest rates and harassment of borrowers for recovering loans.
- By proactively addressing issues like market integrity, conduct, data privacy, cybersecurity, and risk management, SROs can help build trust among consumers, investors and regulators.

11th SEPTEMBER, 2023

Bharat: Mother of Democracy

- **Context:** On the eve of the G20 leadership summit, the Ministry of Culture has launched a 'Bharat: The Mother of Democracy' Portal.

Key Highlights:

- **Bharat:** The Mother of Democracy portal offers content that delves into India's democratic legacy spanning an astonishing 7,000 years.
- The portal is divided into five sections and 22 sub-sections starting from Sindhu-Saraswati Civilisation (6000- 2000 BCE), Mahajanapada and Gantantra (7-8 Century BCE), Vijaynagara Empire (14-16 century) and Mughal emperor Akbar reign (1556-1605) to Constitution of India (1947) and Elections in Modern India (1952 onwards).
- The content on the portal is available in 16 languages including German, French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Italian, Turkish, and Russian besides English and Hindi.
- The content for the portal has been curated by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), which is a center for research, academic pursuit and dissemination in the field of the arts under the Ministry of Culture.

India-Middle East-Europe Mega Economic Corridor

- **Context:** The Prime Minister has announced the launch of the India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor.

Key Highlights:

- India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor aim is to reshape the trade route between the Gulf, Europe and South Asia, connecting them by rail and sea links.
- The corridor will consist of two separate corridors — the Eastern Corridor, connecting India to West Asia/Middle East, and the Northern Corridor, connecting West Asia/Middle East to Europe.
- It will involve transit by ship between India and Saudi Arabia, followed by a rail link to the UAE and likely to Jordan from where the shipment will move by sea to Turkey and further by rail.
- Along with the railway track, the members want to lay a cable for energy and digital connectivity, as well as a pipe for clean hydrogen export.
- Countries involved: India, US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, European Union (EU), Italy, France and Germany.
- The corridor is part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII) — a collaborative effort by G7 nations to fund infrastructure projects in developing nations. PGII is considered to be the bloc's counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- The corridor will safeguard regional supply chains, boost trade accessibility, and enable a greater emphasis on environmental, social, and governance consequences.
- It will be designed to increase efficiencies, save costs, promote economic cohesion, create jobs, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, leading to a radical integration of Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

- The project will allow the countries involved to play a key role in the global connective tissue of commerce, of digital communications and of energy.

G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration

- **Context:** The leaders at India's G20 Summit 2023 arrived at a joint communique called the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration.

Key Highlights:

- The declaration has been able to include the mention of the Russia-Ukraine war.
- It said that today's era must not be of war. The leaders also underscored that all states must act in a manner consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter in its entirety.
- The leaders also acknowledged the impact of the war on global food and energy security, supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation and growth.
- The declaration acknowledges the challenges faced by MSMEs. It welcomes the Jaipur call for action to help in integration of MSMEs in international trade.
- The leaders have also committed to strengthen multilateral development banks, which was a key agenda for the Indian presidency.
- The declaration reaffirms that gender equality is of fundamental importance, and that investing in the empowerment of all women and girls, has a multiplier effect in implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- The leaders condemned all forms of terrorism and committed to meet the needs of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and FATF Style Regional Bodies.
- It stresses the need to implement clean, sustainable, just, affordable, and inclusive energy transitions.
- One important element is the mention of the need to build reliable, diverse, responsible, and sustainable value chains of critical minerals, semiconductors and related technologies.
- One of the most important elements is that reform of the UN Security Council was agreed to for the first time in the G20 and there was a strong push towards reforms for better, bigger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).

- They also called for managing debt vulnerabilities of low and middle-income countries and the start of exchange of tax-relevant information on crypto assets by 2027.
- Technological Transformation & Digital Public Infrastructure contains elements of building digital public infrastructure, crypto-assets, and harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsibly.
- On AI, they agreed to pursue a pro-innovation regulatory/governance approach that maximizes the benefits and takes into account the risks associated with the use of AI.
- The G20 leaders also agreed on a G20 framework for digital public infrastructure and Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository (GDPIR). The framework calls for building interoperable solutions and formulating laws that can ensure that DPIs are safe, secure, trusted, and governed transparently.
- It also talks about a comprehensive toolkit which is aimed at improving cyber education and cyber awareness for the protection and empowerment of children and youth.
- Another key win for India's G20 presidency was to gather consensus around creating a global regulatory framework for crypto-assets.

12th SEPTEMBER, 2023

Global Biofuel Alliance

- **Context:** The Indian Prime Minister has launched the Global Biofuel Alliance during the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

Key Highlights:

- Global Biofuel Alliance is an India-led initiative to develop an alliance of Governments, International organizations and Industry to facilitate adoption of biofuels.
- To position biofuels as a key to energy transition and contribute to jobs and economic growth.

- The alliance will support worldwide development and deployment of sustainable biofuels by offering capacity-building exercises across the value chain, technical support for national programs and promoting policy lessons-sharing.
- It will also facilitate mobilizing a virtual marketplace to assist industries, countries, ecosystem players and key stakeholders in mapping demand and supply, as well as connecting technology providers to end users.
- Countries and organizations which have already joined GBA: 19 countries and 12 international organizations have already agreed to join GBA:
- G20 countries supporting GBA: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, Italy, South Africa and USA
- G20 Invitee Countries supporting GBA: Bangladesh, Singapore, Mauritius and UAE
- Non G20 supporting GBA: Iceland, Kenya, Guyana, Paraguay, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Finland
- International organizations: World Bank, Asian Development Bank, World Economic Forum, World LPG Organization, UN Energy for All, UNIDO, Biofutures Platform, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Energy Agency, International Energy Forum, International Renewable Energy Agency, World Biogas Association.
- India, which is the world's third-largest consumer of crude oil and depends on imports to meet over 85 percent of its requirement of the commodity, increasing the use of biofuels is a key tool towards two ends that is reducing dependency on energy imports and limiting the carbon footprint of the country's rapidly growing energy use.
- The alliance will help accelerate India's existing biofuels programs such as PM-JIVAN Yojna, SATAT and GOBARdhan scheme thereby contributing to increased farmers' income, creating jobs and overall development of the Indian ecosystem.

Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights'(GSFR)

- **Context:** The President of India will inaugurate the first 'Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights' (GSFR) at the ICAR Convention Centre, National Agricultural Science Centre Complex in New Delhi.

Key Highlights:

- Organized by Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (International Treaty) of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Rome.
- Hosted by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in collaboration with Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPVFR) Authority, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) among others.
- To contribute to the understanding of the challenges and opportunities of implementing farmers' rights by the signatory countries and other stakeholders.
- India is hosting its first 'Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights'.
- India has been the first country in the world to include Farmers' Rights in the context of Plant Variety Registration through its Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPVFR) Act, 2001.

India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue

- **Context:** The 12th Round of Ministerial India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue was held in New Delhi.

Key Highlights:

- India and the UK have launched the UK-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge Initiative.
- The initiative is co-led by NITI Aayog and the City of London Corporation.
- The bridge aims to harness collective expertise in planning and implementing major infrastructure projects in India.

- The United Kingdom has received the first confirmation from India that it would explore the London Stock Exchange (LSE) for overseas direct listing of Indian companies.
- Under the current regulations, Indian firms are not allowed to list directly on overseas exchanges. They can only list on foreign exchanges through instruments, such as depository receipts.

13th SEPTEMBER, 2023

Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM)

- **Context:** Indian Coast Guard participated in the 19th Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) at Istanbul, Türkiye.

Key Highlights:

- HACGAM is an annual event hosted by one of its member nations on a rotational basis.
- It is an offshoot of the Japanese initiative to promote cooperation amongst regional Coast Guards, after the capture of the pirated vessel MV Alondra Rainbow by the Indian Coast Guard in Nov 1999.
- It focuses on fostering cooperation between the Coast Guards of the member Asian states to ensure and promote safe, secure, and clean seas in the region.
- The forum comprises four Working Groups to enable a focused and goal-oriented approach towards coordinated response and synergy towards common maritime issues.
- The Indian Coast Guard chairs the search and rescue (SAR) working group.
- Member countries are Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, Philippines, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Maldives, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Türkiye and Vietnam.

- Further, Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia- Information Sharing Center (ReCAAP-ISC) participates in the forum as an associate member.
- In 2022, the 18th edition of the meeting was hosted by the ICG in New Delhi

Hallmarking Scheme

- **Context:** The third phase of the mandatory hallmarking vide Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery and Gold Artefacts (Third Amendment) Order, 2023 comes into force from September 2023. The third phase will cover an additional 55 new districts under the mandatory hallmarking system.

Key Highlights:

- Hallmarking is the accurate determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles.
- Hallmarks are thus official marks used in many countries as a guarantee of purity or fineness of precious metal articles.
- The principle objectives of the Hallmarking Scheme are to protect the public against adulteration and to obligate manufacturers to maintain legal standards of fineness.
- In India, at present two precious metals namely gold and silver have been brought under the purview of Hallmarking.
- Under the Hallmarking scheme of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Jewellers are registered for selling hallmarked jewellery and recognised testing and hallmarking centers.
- Its aim is to protect consumers against victimization due to irregular gold or silver quality, develop India as a leading gold market center in the World and develop export competitiveness.
- Mandatory Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery has come into force from June,2021.

- In the first phase, mandatory hallmarking was implemented in 256 districts of the country with effect from 23 June 2021 and in the second phase additional 32 districts were covered.

14th SEPTEMBER, 2023

One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) Initiative

- **Context:** The conference on “Transnational Grid Interconnections for One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG)” was held in New Delhi.

Key Highlights:

- The conference was organized by Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a ‘Maharatna’ company under the Ministry of Power.
- The idea for the One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG) initiative was put forth by the Prime Minister of India at the First Assembly of the ISA in 2018.
- It was jointly launched by the Prime Minister of India and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during the ‘Accelerating Innovation and Clean Technology Deployment’ event at the World Leaders Summit held on 2 November 2021 during COP26.
- The vision behind the OSOWOG initiative is the mantra that “the sun never sets”.
- Its aim is to aid in developing a worldwide grid through which clean energy can be transmitted anywhere, anytime (use power at night in one part of the world from solar energy generated on the other side of the world where it is day time).
- All participants in the initiative will focus on attracting effective investments in renewable energy sources by utilizing technology, finance and skill. When all stakeholders coordinate, it is expected to bring down project cost, lead to higher efficiencies and increased asset utilization for all involved.

- The initiative may also have a spillover effect as the cost effective source of energy production could be used in other areas such as poverty alleviation, provision of drinking water, sanitation facilities and food security.

Malaviya Mission

- **Context:** The Union Minister for Education has launched the Malaviya Mission.

Key Highlights:

- Malaviya Mission is a Teachers Training Programme by the University Grants Commission.
- To provide tailored training programmes for teachers and to improve the capacity building of faculty members in higher educational institutions.
- To improve the quality of teachers’ training, build leadership skills in teachers and help realize the goals of National Education Policy (NEP).
- The mission will ensure continuous professional development and help in building capacities of 15 lakh teachers of HEIs through 111 Malaviya Mission centers (formerly known as Human Resource Development Centers (HRDCs))
- The capacity building under the Mission will be mapped to the credit framework to ensure career progression pathways for educators.
- **The themes identified for course curriculum for Capacity building of Faculty Members in HEIs include:** Multidisciplinary Education, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Academic Leadership, Research and Development, Skill Development, Student Diversity among others.
- **The three main themes that were discussed during India’s G20 Presidency:** deployment of technology in the use of education, achieving sustainable development goals and women-led development are also to be incorporated in the Teachers Training Programmes.

Nipah Virus

- **Context:** Cases of Nipah Virus have been found in Kerala again after two people were confirmed to have died of the viral disease in Kozhikode district, Kerala.

Key Highlights:

- Nipah is a zoonotic disease, which means it is transmitted to humans through infected animals or contaminated food.
- It can also be transmitted directly from person to person through close contact with an infected person.
- The first outbreaks of the Nipah virus among humans was reported from Malaysia (1998) and Singapore (1999).
- The virus takes its name from the village in Malaysia where the person in whom the virus was first isolated died of the disease.
- The animal host reservoir for this virus is known to be the fruit bat, commonly known as flying fox.
- Fruit bats are known to transmit this virus to other animals like pigs, and also dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep.
- Humans get infected mainly through direct contact with these animals, or through consumption of food contaminated by saliva or urine of these infected animals. Human-to-human transmission is also considered possible.
- Symptoms are Fever, headache, cough, sore throat, difficulty in breathing, and vomiting. In severe cases, disorientation, drowsiness, seizures, encephalitis (swelling of the brain) can occur, progressing to coma and death.
- There is no treatment or vaccine available for either people or animals. The primary treatment for humans is supportive care.
- The Nipah virus is known to spread far more slowly than Covid-19. However, it is its ability to kill that is the biggest concern.
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the overall global case fatality rate of Nipah is estimated at 40% to 75%.

