



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**OCTOBER, 2023**

**Week-2**

**8-14 Oct., 2023**

★★ Useful for ★★

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

8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

## GI tags for Basohli Pashmina, Udhampur's Kalari

- **Context:** Basohli Pashmina and Kalari cuisine from Jammu and Kashmir has got the Geographical Indication(GI) tag.

### Key Highlights:

- Basohli Pashmina is a more than 100-year-old traditional craft from Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district.
- It is a hand-spun product known for extreme softness, fineness and light-weight.
- Granting it a GI tag would not only protect the exceptional craftsmanship of these artisans but also preserve its uniqueness.
- Kalari is a Dogra cuisine. The dish finds its origin in Udhampur district, J&K.
- The dish is made from milk and is a dense cheese. It's cooked in its own fat, salted, and served hot with bun slices.

## UMMEED (Understand, Motivate, Manage, Empathise, Empower, Develop)

- **Context:** The Union Ministry of Education has released draft guidelines to prevent student suicides in schools. These guidelines are titled UMMEED (Understand, Motivate, Manage, Empathise, Empower, Develop).

### Key Highlights:

- The guidelines aim to serve as directions to schools for enhancing sensitivity, understanding, and providing support in case of reported self-harm.
- The guidelines emphasize the belief that "Every Child Matters" and are developed with the goal of preventing student suicides.
- They recognize that students facing personal and social challenges may experience sadness, frustration, mood swings, hopelessness, and, in severe cases, engage in self-harm or suicide.

- It suggests the formation of a School Wellness Team (SwT) led by the school principal. These teams should be trained to handle crisis situations and respond immediately when a student shows signs of self-harm.
- It recommends an orientation a year for teachers and family members, to help build awareness around student suicides. These orientations will be conducted by the schools for the capacity-building of various stakeholders.
- The guidelines outline actions that individuals at the school, or members of the wellness team, should take when they encounter a student displaying warning signs or attempting self-harm.
- It has also asked schools to de-stigmatize mental health concerns such as anxiety, depression, suicide, substance abuse through storytelling, rallies, posters, exhibitions and other activities.
- The guidelines have also proposed some smaller and immediate changes such as locking all empty classrooms and not having any dark corridors or areas in schools.

## India-UAE High Level Joint Task Force on Investments

- **Context:** The Eleventh meeting of the UAE-India High Level Joint Task Force on Investments ('the Joint Task Force') was held in Abu Dhabi.

### Key Highlights:

- The UAE-India High Level Joint Task Force on Investments was established in 2013.
- To promote trade, investment and economic ties between India and the UAE. The Task Force has provided an effective mechanism for discussion on opportunities & prospects for investments in both countries as well as resolution of issues faced by investors of the two countries.
- The two countries reviewed the progress made on the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the UAE and India, which came into force in May 2022.

- The CEPA has helped reduce tariffs on more than 80 percent of product lines, eliminate barriers to trade and create new pathways for investment and joint ventures.
- In the first 12 months of the CEPA, bilateral non-oil trade reached US\$50.5 billion representing a growth of 5.8% compared to the corresponding period a year earlier.
- The two countries are now fast moving towards the target of US\$100 billion non-oil trade by 2030.
- It is a joint initiative between the UAE Ministry of Economy and India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The bridge is expected to act as a one-stop platform that offers training sessions and knowledge-sharing on important topics such as market access, investment funds, venture capital, incubators and the respective business landscape in each country.
- The corridor aims to increase overall trade volumes by developing data exchange systems to facilitate paperless trade between the two countries, improving efficiencies and security.

9<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

## Nobel Prize for Literature 2023

- **Context:** The Nobel Prize for Literature 2023 has been awarded to Norwegian author Jon Olav Fosse for his innovative plays and prose which give voice to the unsayable.

### Key Highlights:

- Jon Fosse was born in 1959 in the Norwegian coastal town of Haugesund. He is considered as one of the most important contemporary European writers.
- He published his first novel, Red, Black in 1983. He has since published numerous novels, stories, books of poetry, essay collections and even children's books.
- His work "A New Name: Septology VI-VII" was a finalist for the International Booker Prize in 2022.

Other notable works by Fosse include I Am the Wind, Melancholy, Boathouse and The Dead Dogs.

- His themes explore the absurdity, the futility and yet the power of the human condition; everyday confusions and irresolutions and the difficulty to form actual connections.

## Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995

- **Context:** The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has notified amendments in the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994.

### Key Highlights:

- These amendments operationalize the implementation of the decriminalized provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
- Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 is an act to regulate the operation of cable television networks in the country and for matters connected
- Section 16 of the Act dealt with the punishment for contraventions under any of its provisions.
- This section had provision for imprisonment which might extend up to 2 years, in case of first instance, and 5 years for every subsequent offence.
- Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 has now been decriminalized through the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provision) Act, 2023.
- The imprisonment provisions have been now replaced with monetary penalty and other non-monetary measures like Advisory, Warning and Censure.
- These measures will be enforced through the "designated officer". Moreover, Section 16 now introduces an appeal mechanism against the order made by designated officers.

## Project Veer Gatha

- **Context:** Over 1.36 crore school students from across the country participate in Veer Gatha Project 3.0

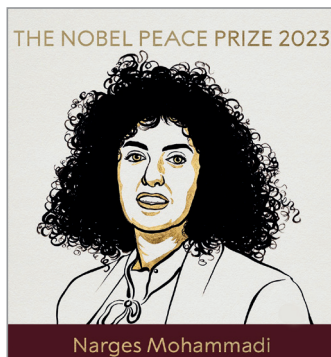
## Key Highlights:

- Project Veer Gatha was initiated under the Gallantry Awards Portal (GAP) in 2021.
- To disseminate the details of acts of bravery of the Gallantry Awardees and the life stories of these brave hearts among the students so as to raise the spirit of patriotism and instill amongst them values of civic consciousness.
- The project deepened this noble aim by providing a platform to the school students to do creative projects/activities based on gallantry award winners.
- As part of this, the students framed different projects through various media like art, poems, essays and multimedia on these gallantry award winners and best projects were awarded at national level by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Education.
- Two editions of the Veer Gatha Project (i.e. Edition-I and Edition-II) have been conducted in 2021 and 2022 respectively.
- The third edition of Project Veer Gatha is now being organized by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE).

10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

## Nobel Prize for Peace, 2023

- **Context:** The Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded Iranian activist Narges Mohammadi the 2023 Nobel Prize for Peace. She has been awarded for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran and her fight to promote human rights and freedom for all.



## Key Highlights:

- Narges Mohammadi is an Iranian human rights activist and scientist.

- She is the vice president of the Defenders of Human Rights Center (DHRC), headed by fellow Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi.
- In 2011, she was arrested for the first time and sentenced to many years of imprisonment for her efforts to assist incarcerated activists and their families.
- After securing a bail in 2013, she campaigned against the use of the death penalty. She was again arrested in 2015 and was sentenced to additional years.
- Over the years she has written many articles arguing for social reforms in Iran and published an essay collection, 'The Reforms, the Strategy, and the Tactics'.
- Her book 'White Torture: Interviews with Iranian Women Prisoners' also won an award for reportage at the International Film Festival and Human Rights' Forum.
- She has received various awards over the years — from the Alexander Langer Award in 2009 to the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize and the Olof Palme Prize earlier in 2023.
- In 2022, she was featured in the BBC's list of 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world.
- She is the 19th woman to ever win the Nobel Peace Prize and the second Iranian woman to win the award – after human rights activist Shirin Ebadi in 2003.
- It is also the fifth time in the 122-year history of the awards that the peace prize has been given to someone who is in prison or under house arrest.

## Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-III)

- **Context:** Government of India has initiated work on the third phase of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-III). It is planning to incorporate vehicles powered by alternative sources such as hydrogen and biofuels in the FAME-III.

### Key Highlights:

- The FAME India Scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- The main objective of the scheme is to encourage Faster adoption of Electric and hybrid vehicles by way of offering upfront Incentive on purchase of Electric vehicles and also by way of establishing a necessary charging Infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- Currently, the government provides subsidies under the FAME scheme for battery electric vehicles(BEVs) and strong hybrids.
- The initial two phases of the FAME scheme played a significant role in promoting the growth of electric vehicles (EVs) within the country, helping to achieve a 6 per cent market share for EVs.
- Till date, the scheme has provided support to more than 1 million vehicles.
- The Government of India is planning to incorporate vehicles powered by alternative sources such as hydrogen and biofuels in the third phase of FAME.
- The objective behind this is to shift away from conventional polluting vehicles and the incentive for alternative fuels aims to encourage the transition from internal combustion engine (ICE) to cleaner technology.
- Moreover, similar to the current phase, incentives will be extended to vehicles sold in all categories including two-wheelers, three- wheelers, four-wheelers, and buses.The proposal also includes adding trucks to the list of vehicles.

### Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

- **Context:** India has been re-elected as the President of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a Third Successive Term.

### Key Highlights:

- AIBD was established in 1977 under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(UNESCO).

- It is a unique regional intergovernmental organization servicing countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific(UN-ESCAP) in the field of electronic media development.
- To achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and resource development.
- It currently has 92 member organizations from across 44 countries.This includes 26 Government Members (countries) represented by 48 broadcasting authorities and broadcasters and 44 Affiliates (organizations) represented by 28 countries.
- Its Secretariat at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- India is one of the founding members of AIBD.Prasar Bharati, India's public service broadcaster is the representative body of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting at AIBD.

11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

### Udangudi 'Panangkarupatti'

- **Context:** Udangudi 'Panangkarupatti' from Tamil Nadu has received a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.

### Key Highlights:

- Udangudi Panangkarupatti is also referred to as palm jaggery.
- It is prepared using the palm sap collected from the inflorescence of palmyra trees that grow on the red sand dunes in and around the Tiruchendur region in Tamil Nadu.
- Uniqueness of Udangudi Panangkarupatti is that the palm jaggery preparation procedure in this area is traditional till date without inclusion of any additional modern strategies. Triple super phosphate and phosphoric acid are used in many other areas, but no such chemical additives are used in Udangudi Panangkarupatti.
- The jaggery prepared from the palm sap from the region is unique due to the presence of red sand dune soil found in the region.



- This soil holds less groundwater. The moisture content in the atmosphere is less because of the dry climatic condition which leads to high sucrose content, in turn adding taste.

## 52nd GST Council Meeting

- **Context:** The 52nd GST Council met under the Chairpersonship of the Union Minister for Finance.

### Key Highlights:

- The council recommended that Extra Neutral Alcohol (ENA), used for manufacture of alcoholic liquor for consumption be kept outside the GST ambit.
- It clarified that the GST rate for corporate guarantees provided by a parent company to its subsidiaries will be levied at 18 per cent.
- Millet flour in powder form, containing at least 70% millet by weight will not attract any GST if sold loose, but will face 5% levy if sold in pre-packaged, labeled form.
- States also raised the issue of how the cess will continue under GST once it comes to an end in March 2026. Currently, cess is being used to pay off the borrowed amount meant to compensate states during the initial five-year period of GST which ended June 2022.

### About GST Council:

- Goods and Services Tax regime came into force after the Constitutional (122nd Amendment) Bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament in 2016.
- The GST Council is a joint forum of the Centre and the states. It was set up by the President as per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution.
- The council is meant to make recommendations to the Union and the states on important issues related to GST, like the goods and services that may be subjected or exempted from GST, model GST Laws. It also decides on various rate slabs of GST.
- The members of the Council include the Union Finance Minister (chairperson), the Union Minister of State (Finance) from the Centre. Each state can nominate a minister in-charge of finance or taxation or any other minister as a member.

- The council is devised in such a way that the Union Government has 1/3rd voting power and the States have 2/3rd. The decisions are taken by the 3/4th majority.

12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

## Travel for LiFE Initiative

- **Context:** Pacific Asia Travel Association(PATA) will work with India to expand the Travel for LiFE initiative across the Asia Pacific region.

### Key Highlights:

- The Ministry of Tourism will set up a PATA desk to strengthen engagement with PATA on Travel for LiFE and other areas of cooperation in the tourism sector. This is the first major international partnership for the Travel for Life program.
- Travel for LiFE' is a sectoral program under Mission LiFE targeted towards the tourism sector.
- It was Launched on September 27, 2023 on World Tourism Day.
- Launched by Ministry of Tourism in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), and the United Nations Environment Programme(UNEP).
- The initiative embodies the ethos of "Pro Planet People" and operates on the fundamental principles of living "Lifestyle of the planet, for the planet, and by the planet".
- To bring about significant behavioral changes in both tourists and tourism businesses, with a strong emphasis on environmental protection and socio-cultural sustainability.
- The program covers eight core themes including energy conservation, water preservation, reducing single-use plastic, waste reduction, supporting local businesses and communities, respecting local culture and heritage, consuming local foods, and preserving nature.

- The initiative also goes beyond raising awareness. It encourages tourism businesses to adopt sustainable practices and earn certification at bronze, silver, and gold levels within the program.
- Travel for LiFE Program will position India as leader in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism and using tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

## National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)

- **Context:** The Union Minister of Cooperation addressed the 89th General Council meeting of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

### Key Highlights:

- The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) is a statutory Corporation set up under an Act of Indian Parliament in 1963.
- To plan, promote and finance programmes for production, processing, marketing, storage, export and import of agricultural produce, food stuffs, certain other notified commodities.
- To assist different types of cooperatives and to expand its financial base.
- To finance projects in the rural industrial cooperative sectors and for certain notified services in rural areas like water conservation, irrigation and micro irrigation, agri-insurance, agro-credit, rural sanitation, animal health, etc.
- To give loans and grants to State Governments for financing primary and secondary level cooperative societies and direct to the national level and other societies having objects extending beyond one State.
- To go in for direct funding of projects under its various schemes of assistance on fulfillment of stipulated conditions.

## Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report 2022-2023

- **Context:** The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) has released the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report 2022-23.

### Key Highlights:

- Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) increased significantly over the last six years, from 36.9 per cent in 2017-18 to 57.9 percent in 2022-23.
- In rural areas, LFPR increased from 50.7% in 2017-18 to 60.8% in 2022-23 while for urban areas it increased from 47.6% to 50.4%.
- LFPR for male in India increased from 75.8% in 2017-18 to 78.5% in 2022-23 and corresponding increase in LFPR for females was from 23.3% to 37.0%.
- In rural areas, WPR increased from 48.1% in 2017-18 to 59.4% in 2022-23 while for urban areas it increased from 43.9% to 47.7%.
- WPR for male in India increased from 71.2% in 2017-18 to 76.0% in 2022-23 and the corresponding increase in WPR for females was from 22.0% to 35.9%.
- India's unemployment rate dropped to a six-year low in the financial year July-June 2022-23 to 3.2 per cent.
- In rural areas, UR decreased from 5.3% in 2017-18 to 2.4% in 2022-23 while for urban areas it decreased from 7.7% to 5.4%.
- UR for male in India decreased from 6.1% in 2017-18 to 3.3% in 2022-23 and corresponding decrease in UR for females was from 5.6% to 2.9%.

13<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2023

## Nobel Prize for Economics, 2023

- **Context:** The Nobel Prize for economics has been awarded to Harvard University professor Claudia Goldin for her research that has advanced the understanding of the gender gap in the labour market.



**Key Highlights:**

- Claudia Goldin was born in 1946. She currently holds the position of Henry Lee Professor of Economics at Harvard University.
- Claudia Goldin's extensive research on gender disparities in the labor market spanning over 200 years reveals several key insights.
- Female participation in the labor market doesn't show a consistent upward trend over time. Instead, it follows a U-shaped curve. Initially, it declined as society shifted from agrarian to industrial in the early 19th century. It later increased with the growth of the service sector in the early 20th century. This pattern is influenced by changes in economic structure and evolving societal norms about women's roles.
- Women's education levels have steadily risen throughout the 20th century and often surpass those of men in high-income countries. Access to contraception, notably the contraceptive pill, played a vital role in enabling women to plan their careers more effectively.
- Despite modernization, economic growth and increased female employment, the earnings gap between men and women remained largely unchanged for a long time.
- This is because young women's expectations for their careers are often shaped by the experiences of previous generations such as their mothers who delayed their return to work until their children were older.
- Goldin's research indicates that the bulk of the gender earnings gap now exists between men and women in the same occupation and it primarily emerges after the birth of the first child. This suggests that parenthood significantly influences the gender pay gap in contemporary times.

**Hemochromatosis : The rare genetic disorder**

- **Context:** Health experts have revealed all about Hemochromatosis or 'bronze diabetes'.

**Key Highlights:**

- Hemochromatosis is a disorder associated with deposits of excess iron that causes multiple organ dysfunction.
- The organs affected by hemochromatosis include the liver, pancreas, heart, thyroid, joints, skin, gonads and pituitary.
- Hemochromatosis has been dubbed "bronze diabetes" because of the skin darkening and concomitant pancreatic illness.
- Hereditary hemochromatosis is a genetic disorder driven by a mutation in the HFE gene, resulting in individuals being homozygous for the C282Y variant.
- This genetic anomaly sets the stage for a lifelong struggle with excessive iron absorption within the intestines.
- Secondary hemochromatosis differs from the hereditary form as it is typically caused by external factors like frequent blood transfusions, excessive iron supplementation, or certain medical conditions.
- The iron accumulation in secondary hemochromatosis is often more rapid and can have a similar impact on organ function.
- With the buildup of harmful levels of iron, hemochromatosis can cause symptoms including feeling tired or weak, pain in the joints, pain in the abdomen over the liver and darkening of skin color.
- Treatment options include therapeutic phlebotomy, which involves regular blood removal to reduce iron levels and iron-chelating medications to help manage iron overload. Phlebotomy is usually performed once or twice a week.

**RBI : Card-on-file tokenization (CoFT) facility**

- **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor has recently proposed the introduction of card-on-file tokenization (CoFT) facility at the issuer-bank level.

**Key Highlights:**

- RBI has introduced Card-on-File Tokenization (CoFT) in 2021 and began implementation from 2022.



- Until now, the cardholders had to create different tokens through each merchant's application or webpage. This would require time and effort from the users.
- Going forward, tokens will be created at the issuer bank level and linked to their existing accounts with various e-commerce applications.
- This will eliminate the duplication of the tokenization process at each app or website along with increased transaction security resulting in reduced card-data-related frauds.
- Tokenisation replaces a debit or credit card's 16-digit number with a unique token that is specific to the user's card and specific for one merchant at a time.
- The token hides the true details of your card, so that in case a data leak happens from the merchant website, the hackers cannot misuse the card. This token contains no personal information and keeps changing.
- Tokens can be used for online transactions, mobile point-of-sale transactions, or in-app transactions. A customer can choose whether or not to let his, her card tokenized.
- Additionally, there's a crew escape system that can safely return the astronauts to the sea if there are any issues during the launch.
- The success of this test will set the stage for the first unmanned "Gaganyaan" mission and ultimately manned mission to outer space in low earth orbit.

### About Gaganyaan Mission:

- Gaganyaan mission envisages demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching a human crew to an orbit of 400 km and bringing them back safely to earth, by landing in Indian sea waters.
- The prerequisites for Gaganyaan mission include development of many critical technologies including 1) human rated launch vehicle for carrying crew safely to space 2) Life Support System to provide an earth like environment to crew in space and 3) crew emergency escape provision and evolving crew management aspects for training, recovery and rehabilitation of crew.
- The mission is expected to be executed in the second half of 2024.

### Bharat NCX 2023

- **Context:** The second edition of the National Cyber Security Exercise 'Bharat NCX 2023' is being conducted over a period of 12 days.

### Key Highlights:

- Conducted by National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) in strategic partnership with Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) conducted the exercise
- To train senior management and technical personnel of Government/Critical Sector organizations and Public and Private agencies on contemporary cyber threats and handling cyber incidents and response.
- The participants will be trained on various key cyber security areas such as Intrusion Detection Techniques, Malware Information Sharing Platform (MISP), Vulnerability Handling & Penetration Testing, Network Protocols & Data Flows, Digital Forensics etc.

14TH OCTOBER, 2023

## Gaganyaan: Test Vehicle Development flight (TV-D1)

- **Context:** The Union Minister has announced that the "Gaganyaan" Test Vehicle Development flight (TV-D1) will be launched from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

### Key Highlights:

- Test Vehicle Development Flight (TV-D1) is intended to test the 'crew module' or the part of the Gaganyaan vehicle where the Indian astronauts will be housed.
- The test involves launching the crew module to outer space and bringing it back to earth and recovering it after touchdown in the Bay of Bengal.

- Bharat NCX India will help strategic leaders to better understand cyber threats, assess readiness, and develop skills for cyber crisis management and cooperation.
- This will also help develop and test cybersecurity skills, teamwork, planning, communication, critical thinking and decision-making.

## Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)

- **Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of an autonomous body Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat).

### Key Highlights:

- Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) will be an autonomous body.
- To support youth development and youth-led development with the help of technology.
- To create a platform that encompasses the entire government's efforts for youth development.
- Mera Yuva Bharat will benefit the youth in the age-group of 15-29 years, in line with the definition of 'Youth' in the National Youth Policy.
- In case of programme components specifically meant for adolescents, the beneficiaries will be in the age-group of 10-19 years.
- The body will allow youth to get access to resources & connection to opportunities, This will help them become community change agents and nation builders. This will also allow them to act as the Yuva Setu between the Government and the citizens.
- **The establishment of MY Bharat will lead to achieve several key outcomes:**
  1. Enhancing youth leadership skills.
  2. Cultivating them as social innovators and community leaders.
  3. Empowering them to become active drivers of development.
  4. Aligning their aspirations with community needs.
  5. Providing a unified platform for both young individuals and ministries.
  6. Facilitating two-way communication to connect youth with government initiatives.

