

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. Ghaziabad-Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay section becomes the longest fully automatic block signalling section of Indian Railways ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

Ghaziabad-Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay section becomes the longest fully automatic block signalling section of Indian Railways

**Ghaziabad-Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay section (762 KM)** becomes the longest **fully automatic block signalling section** of Indian Railways.

#### **An overview of the news**

- After commissioning of automatic signalling system in **Satanraini-Rasulabad-Faizullapur** section of Prayagraj division, 762 kilometre long **Ghaziabad-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay** section has become fully automated.
- With this it has also become the **longest Automatic Block Signalling section of Indian Railways.**
- Indian Railways is introducing Automatic Block Signalling on a mission mode.
- ABS has been commissioned on **268 RKM during 2022-23.**
- ABS has been provided on **3706 route kms** of Indian Railways till 31st December 2022.
- With the implementation of automatic signalling, there will be an increase in capacity resulting in the introduction of more train services.
- Electronic interlocking is being adopted on a large scale to take advantage of digital technologies in train operations and to enhance safety.

#### **What is Automatic Block Signalling (ABS)?**

- It is automatic and works in conjunction with track circuiting or other means to detect the presence of a train in a block section.
- To increase line capacity to run more trains on existing high density routes of Indian Railways, Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) is a **cost effective solution.**
- Electronic interlocking systems have been introduced at **347 stations** during 2022-23.
- Electronic interlocking has been provided to **2888 stations** covering 45.5% IR by 31st December 2022.

### **2. India & France hold 36th Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

**India and France** held the **36th Strategic Dialogue** in New Delhi on 5 January. The two sides discussed a wide range of bilateral and global issues.

### **An overview of the news**

- National Security Advisor **Ajit Doval** led the Indian delegation while the French delegation was led by **Emmanuel Bonne**, Diplomatic Advisor to the French President.
- The last edition of the Strategic Dialogue was to be held in **Paris in November 2021.**

### **India, France bilateral relations**

- France is the first country with which India started a strategic dialogue after its **1998 nuclear tests.**
- Bilateral trade with France has reached **US\$ 10.75 billion** in the last decade and is showing a steady increase.
- Both sides recognized the importance of discussing the **India-EU Trade and Investment Agreement.**
- There are around **1,000 French companies** present in India while over a hundred Indian businesses have established a presence in France.
- **In 2005**, an agreement was signed to build **six Scorpene submarines** in India with the help of France.
- There has been an agreement between the Government of France and India for **36 Rafale aircraft.**

### **About France**

- President: **Emmanuel Macron**
- Prime minister: **Élisabeth Borne**
- Capital: **Paris**
- Currency : **euro**

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## **4. Dharmendra Pradhan chairs the 3rd meeting of the steering committee of National Skill Development Mission ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

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**Dharmendra Pradhan**, Minister of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, chaired the third meeting of the **Steering Committee of the National Skill Development Mission** in New Delhi on 4 January.

## **An overview of the news**

- The progress made in the skill development efforts and the **road map ahead** were discussed in the meeting.
- The minister also discussed **various issues** such as convergence of skill development schemes, skill gap analysis and skill mapping, connecting Indian youth to global opportunities, developing a curriculum to reflect emerging trends, etc.
- He also called for greater convergence between skill development schemes of all ministries and spending on skill development by all stakeholders.

## **National Skill Development Mission**

- It was **launched in 2015** to provide a strong institutional framework to implement skill development efforts across the country and **provide training to one crore youth** every year.
- It has been developed to create convergence across regions and states in terms of skill training activities.
- **Objective** - To provide a strong institutional framework at the Center and in all States for the implementation of skilling activities in the country.
- **Ministry** : Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

## **5. Health Minister chairs a high level meeting to eliminate Kala-azar from the country by 2023 ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

Health and Family Welfare Minister **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** on 4 January **chaired a high-level meeting** with four states of **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal governments** to review the elimination of **Kala-Azar** from the country by the year 2023.

### **An overview of the news**

- Health ministers of **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand** and senior officials of West Bengal were present during the meeting.
- India is committed to eliminate Kala-azar from the country **by 2023**.
- **632 endemic blocks** have already achieved elimination status with less than one case of Kala-azar **per ten thousand population**.
- Only one block (**Littipara**) in **Pakur district of Jharkhand** is in the endemic category with 1.23 cases per 10,000 population.
- The Central Government is working holistically with the State Government and other stakeholders for the eradication of Kala-azar in Jharkhand.
- **Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal** have achieved the Kala-azar elimination targets at the block level.

### **Global status of Kala-Azar**

- About **90 percent of global cases** of kala-azar in the year 2021 were found in eight countries - **Brazil, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan**.
- India accounts for **11.5 per cent** of the total cases reported globally.
- **Bihar and Jharkhand** currently account for more than **90 percent** of Kala-azar cases.

## **What is Kala-azar?**

- It is also known as **Visceral leishmaniasis (VL)**, black fever and Dumdum fever.
- The disease is the **second largest parasite killer** in the world after Malaria.
- It is a **Neglected Tropical Disease** affecting about 100 countries including India.

## **Symptoms**

- Fever, weight loss, fatigue, anaemia, and swelling of the liver and spleen.
- **Transmission**
- It is caused by protozoan parasites of the Leishmania genus.
- It migrates to the internal organs such as the liver, spleen and bone marrow.
- The study warns that kala-azar patients can infect others even after treatment.

## **National Kala-azar Eradication Program**

- India's **National Health Policy, 2002**, set a target of eliminating Kala-azar by 2010, which was revised in 2015.
- Under Kala-azar eradication in India, a target of 1 case per 10,000 population was set at the sub-district level.
- All the activities related to this program are being implemented through the National Vector Borne Disease Control Program.
- India signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with **Bangladesh and Nepal** to eliminate Kala-azar from the South-East Asia region.

## **6. Health Minister chairs a high level meeting to eliminate Kala-azar from the country by 2023 ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

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## **7. Government approves Rs 28.11 crore to provide relief to tobacco farmers of Andhra affected by Cyclone Mandus ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles Minister **Piyush Goyal** has approved **Rs 28.11 crore** for giving a special interest-free loan of **Rs 10,000** to each member of **Tobacco Board's Grower Welfare Schemes** under southern regions.

### **An overview of the news**

- This will directly benefit over **28,000 tobacco farmers** affected by **Cyclone Mandus** in Andhra Pradesh.
- The **interest-free loan to eligible** FCV tobacco farmers will be administered by the **Tobacco Board**, a statutory body under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- This measure will help FCV tobacco farmers to recover from the damage caused by **Mandus cyclonic rains** and will greatly help the growers to take immediate damage reduction measures.

### **About FCV Tobacco**

- FCV (Flu Cured Virginia) tobacco** is a major commercial crop grown in **10 districts of Andhra Pradesh** with an annual production of 121 million kg (2021-22) in an area of 66,000 hectares.
- It is a major **exportable tobacco** variety of the total unmanufactured tobacco exports from India.
- Of the total unmanufactured tobacco exports (excluding tobacco waste) during FY 2021-22, FCV tobacco exports constituted **53.62% in volume** terms and **68.47% in value** terms.
- Tobacco farmers sell their produce through an e-auction platform developed and operated by the **Tobacco Board** through a transparent process that ensures fair and remunerative prices.

### **Cyclone Mandous**

- Mandus is a **slow moving cyclone**.
- It often absorbs a lot of **moisture, rains** heavily and is powerful with wind speed.
- The name of Mandous has been suggested by the **United Arab Emirates**.
- This cyclone affected a large number of tobacco farmers in Andhra Pradesh in early December 2022.

## **8. PM to chair second National Conference of Chief Secretaries in Delhi ( Jan. 5, 2023 )**

PM to chair second National Conference of Chief Secretaries in Delhi

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will chair the **2nd National Conference of Chief Secretaries** on January 6 and 7, 2023 in **Delhi**.

### **An overview of the news**

- This will be an important step towards further enhancing the partnership between the Central and State Governments.
- The **first conference** of Chief Secretaries was to be held in **Dharamshala in June 2022**.
- The conference will focus on achieving rapid and sustained economic growth in partnership with the states.
- It will see participation from representatives of the Central Government, Chief Secretaries and senior officers from all States/UTs and more than **200 domain experts**.
- The conference will lay the groundwork for achieving a developed India with emphasis on growth and employment generation and inclusive human development.
- The best practices of the States/UTs under each theme will also be presented in the conference so that the States can learn from each other.

### **Six identified themes of the conference**

- Thrust on MSMEs
- Infrastructure and Investments
- Minimising Compliances
- Women's Empowerment
- Health and Nutrition
- Skill Development

### **Three special sessions**

- Viksit Bharat: Reaching the Last Mile
- Five Years of Goods and Services Tax (GST) – Learnings and Experiences
- Global Geopolitical Challenges and India's Response
- Besides, focused deliberations would be held on four topics, viz Vocal for Local, International Year of Millets, G20: Role of States and Emerging Technologies.



**9. NGEL, HPCL sign an agreement to develop green energy projects ( Jan. 4, 2023 )**

NGEL, HPCL sign an agreement to develop green energy projects

**NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL)** has signed an agreement with **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL)** for the development of renewable energy-based power projects for HPCL Refineries and other Business Units.

The agreement was signed on 3 January 2023 in New Delhi by Mr Neeraj Sharma, Head of Finance, NGEL and Shri Shuvendu Gupta, Executive Director- BioFuels & Renewables, HPCL.

Under the agreement NGEL which is a subsidiary of NTPC will supply 400 MW renewable power to the HPCL

This MoU marks the first step for NGEL and HPCL to collaborate and cooperate in the field of development of Renewable Energy projects which shall help HPCL in meeting its Clean Energy Commitments.

**10. Union Cabinet approves naming of Mopa airport in Goa after Manohar Parrikar ( Jan. 4, 2023 )**

Union Cabinet approves naming of Mopa airport in Goa after Manohar Parrikar

The Union cabinet in a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on 4 January 2023 has given ex-post facto approval for naming the Greenfield International Airport at Goa's Mopa as **Manohar International Airport**, after former defence minister and Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi while inaugurating the first phase of the international airport at [Mopa](#) in north Goa on 11 December 2022 had announced that the airport will be named after the late Goa Chief Minister and former Union Defence Minister **Manohar Parrikar**.

Manohar Parrikar was the Chief Minister of Goa from 2000 to 2005, 2012 to 2014 and from 14 March 2017 until his death in March 2019.

Manohar Parrikar was also the Union Defence Minister from October 2014-March 2017.

He was awarded **Padma Bhushan** posthumously in January 2020.

Manohar International Airport is the second **airport** in Goa after Dabolim airport.