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1. EPFO adds 1.39 crore members during financial year 2022-23 (May 22, 2023)

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

The **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** has **added 1.39 crore members** during the **financial year 2022-23**.

An overview of the news

- Provisional payroll data of EPFO highlights that it **added over 13 lakh members in March 2023**.
- According to the **Ministry of Labor and Employment**, out of the 13.40 lakh members added during March, over **seven lakh new members** have come under the EPFO ambit for the first time.
- Among newly joined members, the **highest enrollment is in the age group of 18 to 21 years with 2.35 lakh members**, followed by about **two lakh members in the age group of 22 to 25 years**.
- The data also highlights that **more than 10 lakh members** rejoined the EPFO. These members changed their jobs and rejoined the establishments covered under EPFO.

About EPFO

- **Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** is a **statutory organisation** set up under the **Union ministry of Labour and Employment** was **set up in 1951** by an Ordinance issued by the President.
- Later Parliament passed the **Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, act 1952**.
- It is the **country's largest social security organisation**.
- EPFO assists the **Central Board of Trustees** in the administration of a provident fund scheme, pension scheme and an insurance scheme for the registered establishments in India.

2. Meri LiFE, Mera Swachh Shahar' mega campaign launched by Union Minister Hardeep S Puri (May 22, 2023)

Meri-LiFE, -Mera-Swachh-Shahar

Union Minister **Hardeep S Puri** launched the campaign '**Meri LiFE, Mera Swachh Shahar**' in **New Delhi**.

An Overview of the News

- The campaign promotes the **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (RRR) concept of waste management**.

- This campaign will strengthen the resolve of the citizens under **SBM-U 2.0 and also promote the purpose of Mission Life.**
- RRR centres or one-stop collection centres were set up across the country on May 20.
 - The centres will accept unused or used **plastic items, clothing, shoes, books and toys.**
 - Citizens can donate used **clothes, shoes, books, toys and plastic at RRR centres.**
 - The collected items will be recycled for reuse or turned into new products.
 - The campaign will culminate with the resolution of LiFE on 5 June.

Mission LiFE:

- The mission was launched by the Prime Minister on **October 20, 2022 at Kevadia, Gujarat.**
- It aims to bring about **behaviour change in individuals through simple, actionable steps.**
- It aims to discourage mindless and wasteful consumption patterns and promote conscious and planned usage.
- The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal ministry** responsible for national level coordination and implementation of Mission LiFE.

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0)

- It was **launched on 1 October 2021** to achieve the vision of '**Garbage Free Cities**'.
- It aims **to achieve safe sanitation in urban areas.**
- **SBM-U 2.0** focuses on making all cities '**garbage free**' and ensuring proper grey and black water management.
- The mission emphasises source segregation of solid waste, **3R principles (reduce, reuse, recycle)**, scientific processing of municipal solid waste, and remediation of heritage dumpsites.

3. PM Modi conferred with highest civilian honours by Fiji, Papua New Guinea (May 22, 2023)

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was conferred with the **highest honor by Fiji and Papua New Guinea** on 21 May.

An overview of the news

- PM Modi was honored with the island nation's highest civilian award during his visit to Papua New Guinea to attend the **3rd India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) summit**.
- PM Modi was awarded "**The Companion of the Order of Fiji**" by his Fijian counterpart **Sitweni Rabuka** for his global leadership, a rare honor for a non-Fijian.
- Papua New Guinea conferred its highest civilian honour, **Grand Companion of the Order of Loghu (GCL)** on PM Modi for his efforts towards unity of the Pacific island nation.

Republic of Fiji

- It is an archipelago consisting of around **300 islands in the South Pacific Ocean**.
- Capital: **Suva**
- Currency: **Fijian Dollar**
- Prime Minister: **Sitiveni Rabuka**

Papua New Guinea

- Prime Minister: **James Marape**
- Capital: **Port Moresby**
- Currency: **kina (K)**

4. Supreme Court appointed Sapre Committee submits report on Adani-Hindenburg issue (May 22, 2023)

Sapre Committee

The **Supreme Court** on May 19 made public the report of the court-appointed expert panel in the **Hindenburg-Adani row case**.

An overview of the news

- American short-selling firm **Hindenburg issued** a report on January 24, 2023, calling Adani Group companies overvalued and alleging **manipulation of accounts**.
- However, Hindenburg's allegations were rejected by the Adani Group.
- But the opposition created a ruckus about this issue and when the matter reached the Supreme Court, the **Supreme Court had constituted a special committee to investigate**.

Highlights of the report

- The report states that the **Adani group has disclosed all beneficial owners.**
- There is no allegation that SEBI is rejecting the declaration of beneficial owners of Adani.
- Adani's retail stake has increased after the Hindenburg report.
- The report clearly states that prima facie **no violation of existing rules or laws has been found.**

About Sapre Committee

- **Constituted** - By Supreme court on 2nd March 2023
- **Chairman** - Former Supreme Court judge Justice Abhay Manohar Sapre (Retd).
- **Members of the Committee** - O P Bhatt, Justice J P Devadhar (Retd), Nandan Nilekani, K V Kamath and Somasekhar Sundaresan
- **Purpose of the Committee** - To investigate any violations of securities law by the Adani Group in the wake of the Hindenburg report.
- **Supreme Court made public the report** - On 19 May

5. G20 Mega Beach Clean Up campaign (May 21, 2023)

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and Labour and Employment **Bhupender Yadav** participated in **G20 Mega Beach Clean Up campaign** at **Juhu Beach in Mumbai** on 21st May.

An overview of the news

- Juhu Beach is a **popular tourist destination and an important coastal area** facing the challenge of pollution caused by garbage and litter.
- Bhupender Yadav, known for his commitment to environmental causes, takes an active role in the G20 Mega Beach Clean Up campaign.
- His participation demonstrates his dedication to raising awareness about **environmental issues and promoting sustainable practices.**
- The event highlighted the importance of individual efforts and community participation in mitigating this environmental challenge.
- Internationally, the event saw an enthusiastic participation of 20 countries.
- The Mega Beach Clean Up event kicked off the **third meeting of the Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group meeting** which is taking place in Mumbai from 21st to 23rd of May, 2023.

About G20 Mega Beach Clean Up campaign

- The G20 Mega Beach Clean Up Campaign is a global initiative that aims to **address the issue of marine pollution and promote the cleanliness and sustainability of beaches.**
- The aim of the event was to raise awareness of the impact of marine litter on the environment and encourage people to take action to stop it.
- The campaign stresses the importance of collective action and international cooperation in tackling environmental challenges.

6. Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships awarded to 300 students in Sri Lanka (May 21, 2023)

Recently **three hundred school students** from all **25 districts of Sri Lanka** have received the prestigious **Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship.**

An overview of the news

- Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka **Gopal Baglay**, Sri Lankan Education Minister **Dr. Sushil Premjayantha** and Minister of State for Education **A.K. Arvind Kumar** provided scholarships to the students.
- The scholarship provides **2500 Sri Lankan Rupees per student per month** to the top six students from each district based on merit.
- This year, two batches of scholarships were awarded simultaneously to compensate for the disruptions caused by **COVID-19** during the period 2021-2022.
- During the ceremony, the High Commissioner emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation in the education sector for the bright future of the youth in Sri Lanka and India.
- Drawing parallels between the philosophies of **Mahatma Gandhi and Buddha**, he said Gandhi's ideals remain relevant even in a rapidly changing world.

Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship

- Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship plays a vital role in **promoting educational opportunities for students in Sri Lanka.**
- By providing financial support, these scholarships enable students to pursue their **academic aspirations and fulfill their potential.**
- In addition to the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship, the Government of India offers about **210 scholarships annually to Sri Lankan students** in fields such as **engineering, technology, arts, science and indigenous medicine.**
- The **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Scheme** offers over **400 scholarships** to Sri Lankan government officials to enhance their domain knowledge.
- Furthermore, there are thousands of seats available for Sri Lankan students in India under the Study in India program.

7. Panel discussion on 'Role of G20 in creating global economic stability' (May 21, 2023)

A recent panel discussion held in **Dubai** highlighted the **important role of the G20 in creating global economic stability**.

An overview of the news

- A panel discussion held in Dubai shed light on the vital role of the G20 in creating global economic stability.
- The event took place on the sidelines of the International Conference jointly organized by the Indian Institute of Management Rohtak, Academy for Global Business Advancement, and Council for Strategic Affairs.

Importance of the G20

- The panelists highlighted the significance of the G20 in the current international order.
- The group plays a multifaceted role in creating global economic stability, fostering inclusive growth, ensuring financial stability, promoting balanced and sustainable growth, and effectively managing and preventing crises.

Panelists and insights

- The panel consisted of Manjeev Singh Puri, former ambassador of India to Nepal, Prof Tatiana Karabchuk from UAE University, and Prof Mayssa Banat from Rafik Hariri University in Lebanon.
- They provided valuable insights into the G20's role and its impact on global economic stability.
- The discussion was moderated by Prof. Dheeraj Sharma, the Director of IIM Rohtak.

G20 as a platform for decision-making

- Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri highlighted the G20's ability to bring together leaders from the world's largest economies and facilitate effective decision-making and implementation through national and multinational systems.
- Despite lacking de jure power, the G20 possesses significant de facto power, making it influential in driving positive change globally.

Specific areas of impact

- The panelists delved into specific areas where the G20 can make a significant impact.
- Prof Tatiana Karabchuk emphasized the importance of public opinion polls for informed decision-making and suggested the G20's role in implementing necessary changes in online education.

- Prof Mayssa Banat emphasized the power of language education in overcoming barriers and shaping global economic policies.

G20's contribution to global economic stability

- The panel discussion showcased the diverse aspects of the G20's role in fostering cooperation among major economies and driving sustainable development.
- The group's focus on inclusive growth, financial stability, crisis management, and balancing de jure and de facto power within global institutions is essential for global economic stability.

8. Centre promulgates ordinance to constitute National Capital Civil Services Authority (May 20, 2023)

Centre-promulgates-ordinance-to-constitute-National-Capital-Civil-Services-Authority

Centre on 19th May **promulgated an ordinance to create a National Capital Civil Service Authority** that will have the **power to recommend the transfer and posting of all Group A officers serving in Delhi.**

An overview of the news

- The Ordinance, 2023 is being seen as an attempt to nullify last week's judgment by a **constitution bench of the Supreme Court, which had handed over the reins of "services" to the Delhi government.**
- The court then underlined the importance of the mandate of the people in a democracy expressed through an elected government.
- With a view to constitute this Authority for transfer of '**Group-A' officers of 'DANICS' (Delhi, Andaman-Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Civil) Services) Cadre**, the Central Government has issued this Ordinance.
- The Authority will be **headed by the Chief Minister** of Delhi and will include the **Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary, Home.**
- All matters to be decided by the Authority shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting.
- The **Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)** has alleged that the Centre's ordinance on transfer of bureaucrats in Delhi is "unconstitutional" and a move to usurp the powers given to the Delhi government by the Supreme Court in service matters.
- This, effectively, means two bureaucrats, appointed by the Centre, could **over-rule the elected CM.**

9. Department of Pharmaceuticals to organise International Conference on 'India Pharma and India Medical Devices' (May 20, 2023)

ndia-Medical-Devices

Department of Pharmaceuticals, **International Conference on 'India Pharma and India Medical Devices'** will be organised on 26th May and the **8th edition** of this conference will be inaugurated by **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers.

An Overview of the News

- The Department of Pharmaceuticals is partnering with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** for the event.
- The aim of the conference is to showcase India as a manufacturing hub for high quality medical products in the pharmaceutical and medical devices sector.
- During the conclave, Dr. Mandaviya will launch the **National Medical Devices Policy-2023** and **Export Promotion Council for Medical Devices**.
- A new scheme called '**Medical Device Clusters for Common Facilities (AMD-CF)**' will also be launched, focusing on strengthening or setting up of common infrastructure and testing facilities for medical devices.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI):

- It is a **non-governmental trade association** and advocacy group based in India.
- **Subhrakant**, Managing Director of Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys Limited has been appointed as the President of FICCI for 2022-2023.
- He took over from **Sanjiv Mehta** during the 95th **Annual Convention held in New Delhi**.

Formation - **1927**

Founder - **Ghanshyam Das Birla, Purushottamdas Thakurdas**

Headquarters - **New Delhi**

10. India Achieves 47 % growth in Coal Production during last Nine Years (May 20, 2023)

Coal-Production

During the last nine years, India's total coal production has increased by 47 percent to 893.08 million tonnes (MT) and supply has reached 877.74 million tonnes, registering a growth of 45.37 percent.

An overview of the news

- In FY2023, the country has made a huge jump in the history of **coal production with 893.08 MT**.
- As per the action plan for 2023-24 of the Ministry of Coal, there is a **target of 1012 million tonnes of coal production in the financial year 2023-24** by increasing overall **production, efficiency, stability and adoption of new technologies**.

- During the financial year 2022-23, the Ministry of Coal has signed agreements for a total
- of 23 coal mines with a cumulative peak rated capacity (PRC) of **33.224 MT per annum**.
 - It is expected that 25 coal blocks will be allotted for commercial mining during the **financial year 2023-24**.

Mission 'Coking Coal'

- Mission 'Coking Coal' has been launched by the government in August 2021 with a roadmap that will suggest ways **to increase production and utilization of domestic coking coal in India by 2030**.
- In this mission, mainly recommendations related to new **exploration, increasing production, increasing washing capacity, auction of new coking coal mines** have been made.

Objective of Mission 'Coking Coal'

- To increase coking coal production from 52 million tonnes (MT) in FY2022 to 140 MT in FY2030.
- To increase coking coal washing capacity from 23 MT in FY2022 to 61 MT in FY2023.

Use of Coking Coal

- It is mainly used in the manufacture of steel through the **blast furnace route**.
- Domestic coking coal generates very **high ash content (mostly between 18%-49%)** which is not suitable for direct use in blast furnaces.
- To reduce the ash percentage, the coking coal is washed and Indian prime and medium coking coal (<18% ash) is blended with imported coking coal (<9% ash) before use in the blast furnace.