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1. More than 90% of funds allocated under Smart Cities Mission utilised (May 25, 2023)

Smart Cities Mission

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister **Hardeep Singh Puri** has announced that **more than 90%** of the funds allocated under the **Smart Cities Mission** are being **utilized and 73%** of the projects have already been completed.

An overview of the news

- The smart city project was to be completed within five years of the selection of the city.
- However, in 2021, the ministry changed the **deadline to June 2023** for all cities.

About Smart Cities Mission

- Smart Cities Mission is an initiative of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs which was launched in 2015.
- It aims to transform urban areas into **sustainable, citizen-friendly and technologically advanced cities**.
- The mission's primary objective is to enhance the quality of life for citizens by providing them with improved infrastructure, better governance, and increased economic opportunities.
- Between **January 2016 and June 2018** (when the last city, Shillong, was selected), the ministry selected 100 cities for the mission in five rounds.

Selection Process

- The mission follows a competitive approach where cities submit proposals based on specific criteria, including the adoption of smart solutions, citizen engagement, and sustainable development.
- The selected cities undergo redevelopment in a phased manner.

Core components

- **Infrastructure development:** Emphasis is placed on developing physical infrastructure such as transportation systems, water supply, sanitation, and affordable housing to meet the needs of the urban population.
- **Technology integration:** The mission integrates technology to improve service delivery, including data analytics and smart grids devices for efficient resource management and real-time monitoring.
- **Citizen engagement:** The mission focuses on citizen participation and engagement through mobile applications and feedback mechanisms, empowering them to contribute to decision-making processes and hold authorities accountable.

- **Sustainable practices:** The mission promotes sustainable development by encouraging the use of renewable energy sources, green building practices, waste management systems, and efficient urban planning.

Funds Utilisation

- Till 1 May 2023, a total of **Rs 38,400 crore** was released for the Smart Cities Mission.
- Out of this amount, **₹35,261 crore** has already been utilized for various projects.

Project Completion

- The Smart Cities Mission includes around **7,800 projects worth Rs 1.8 lakh crore**.
- Of these projects, more than **5,700 projects worth Rs 1.1 lakh crore** have been completed.
- The remaining projects are expected to be completed by **June 30, 2024**.
- Currently, only **22 out of 100 designated cities** have **successfully completed all the projects** under the mission.

2. Maharashtra becomes the first state in the country to approve Good Governance Regulations (May 22, 2023)

Maharashtra-becomes-the-first-state-in-the-country-to-approve-Good-Governance-Regulations
Maharashtra Chief Minister **Eknath Shinde** approved the **first Good Governance Regulations in the country**.

An Overview of the News

- The purpose of the rules is to enhance **accountability, accessibility, dynamism and transparency** in state administration.
- A separate cell will be set up to address the **effects of climate change**.
- The rules also include expanding the scope of '**Aaple Sarkar Seva Kendra**' for end-to-end online services to citizens within the prescribed time limit.
- Citizens' complaints will be redressed at a speedy pace.
- The chief minister's direction to develop the rules was given in **September last year**.
- The rules were drawn up in consultation with ministerial officials, experts and NGOs.
- **161 department-wise indices** have been prepared to evaluate the performance of good governance.

About Maharashtra

It is a state located in the **western part of India** and covers a significant part of the **Deccan Plateau**.

Chief Minister - **Eknath Shinde**

Governor - **Ramesh Bais**

Official Animal - **Indian giant squirrel**

Official Bird - **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**

Official Dance - **Lavani**

3. Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav inaugurated CoE-SLM at ICFRE in Dehradun (May 22, 2023)

Union-Minister-Bhupendra-Yadav-inaugurated-CoE-SLM-at-ICFRE-in-Dehradun

Union Minister **Bhupendra Yadav** inaugurated the **Center of Excellence on Sustainable Land Management (CoE-SLM)** at the **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) in Dehradun** on 20 May 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The CoE-SLM was announced by the Prime Minister of India during the **14th Conference of Parties (COP-14)** of the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** in September 2019.
- CoE-SLM aims to promote South-South cooperation and address issues of **land degradation through sustainable land management practices**.
- Specific activities of the CoE-SLM include setting LDN targets, developing drought risk and early warning systems, mainstreaming gender considerations, promoting good governance of land rights and entitlements, and addressing the effects of land degradation on greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss. involves assessing.
- Bhupendra Yadav released two publications during the inauguration: "**Technical Paper on the Pathway to Achieving LDN in India**" and "**Compendium of Sustainable Land Management Practices**."

Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)

- It is an **autonomous organisation**.
- It operates under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**, Government of India.
- ICFRE conducts research, training and education in forestry and related disciplines.

Establishment - **1986**

Parent Organization - **Ministry of Environment and Forests (India)**

4. Libyan parliament suspends its prime minister Fathi Bashagha (May 17, 2023)

Fathi-Bashagha

Recently, the **Libyan Parliament** has decided to suspend the **Libyan Prime Minister Fathi Bashagha** from his post.

An overview of the news

- The suspension reflects the internal conflicts and challenges facing the government in the country.
- Fathi Bashagha has served as Prime Minister of Libya, leading the **Government of National Accord (GNA)**.
- He has been an influential figure in Libyan politics, contributing to stabilization efforts during a challenging period.

Reasons of suspension

- The Libyan parliament's decision to suspend **Fathi Bashagha** stemmed from various factors and internal disputes.
- These include allegations of **mismanagement, corruption, or policy disagreements**.

Impact on Libyan governance

- The suspension of Prime Minister Fathi Bashagha has significant implications for Libya's governance and stability.
- This highlights the internal power struggle and the need for political consensus among various factions within the country.
- This event may lead to a reshuffle in government positions and possible changes in the political landscape.

Political disorder and fragmentation

- Libya has been experiencing political disorder and fragmentation since the overthrow of **Muammar Gaddafi's** regime in 2011.
- The suspension of the prime minister underscores the challenges faced by the Libyan government in achieving stability, consolidating power and meeting the needs of its people.

About Libya

- Libya is a country located in **North Africa**. Most of the country lies in the **Sahara desert**.
- Capital - **Tripoli**
- Currency - **Libyan dinar**
- Chairman of the Presidential Council - **Mohamed al-Menfi**

5. Bank of Baroda launches Electronic Bank Guarantee (May 16, 2023)**Bank-of-Baroda**

Bank of Baroda partnered with **National e-Governance Services Limited (NESL)** to launch the **Electronic Bank Guarantee (BG) system** on digital platforms.

An Overview of the News

- It aims to **significantly reduce the turnaround time for issuance of electronic bank guarantees** as compared to the traditional paper-based process.
- The electronic bank guarantee system is accessible through **Baroda INSTA**, the **digital platform of Bank of Baroda**.
- The digital approach enhances **convenience, security and efficiency** in the issuance of inland bank guarantees.
- The system reduces manual paperwork, streamlines processes and promotes digital transformation in the banking sector.

About Bank of Baroda (BoB)

- It is an **Indian public sector bank** headquartered in **Vadodara, Gujarat**.
- It is the **second largest public sector bank in India** after **State Bank of India** and has a global presence with over 100 overseas offices.
- The bank was **established on 20 July 1908** by **Sayajirao Gaekwad III**, the **Maharaja of Baroda**.
- On 19 July 1969, the Government of India nationalised Bank of Baroda along with 13 other major commercial banks.
- After nationalisation, the bank became a **profit making Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)**.

6. Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways ranked 2nd on Data Governance Quality Index (May 13, 2023)

The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)** has been **ranked second among 66 ministries in the Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI)** assessment for the **December quarter (Q3) of FY23**.

An overview of the news

- The **ministry scored 4.7 out of 5**, indicating its commitment to excellence in data governance.
- Conducted by the **Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog**, the DGQI survey aims to measure the maturity level of administrative data

systems and their use in decision making of various ministries and departments on the implementation of central sector schemes.

- MoPSW's success in DGQI assessment was aided by the concerted efforts of the National **Technology Center for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC)** at IIT Madras, which was tasked to improve MoPSW's Management Information System (MIS) in compliance with DGQI standards I went.

Six key indicators

- The DGQI assessment covers six key themes including data generation, data quality, use of technology, data analysis, access and dissemination, data security and human resource capability, and case studies.

Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI)

- The Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI) survey is conducted by NITI Aayog's Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office.
- The survey aims to evaluate the performance of different Ministries /Departments in implementing Central Sector Schemes (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).

7. 1st Ministerial meeting of India-EU Trade and Technology Council (May 13, 2023)

The first ministerial meeting of the **India and the European Union Trade and Technology Council (TTC)** will be held in **Brussels** on 16 May.

An overview of the news

- The meeting will be co-chaired by the **Ministers of External Affairs**, Commerce and Industry and Communications, Electronics and Information Technology from the Indian side.
- **India is only the second country after the US with which the European Union (EU) has a TTC**, and the two sides agreed to launch the strategic mechanism during the visit of European Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** to India in April 2022.
- The TTC aims to deepen trade and investment ties between India and the European Union, as well as foster greater cooperation on technology and innovation.

About India-EU Trade and Technology Council

- The trade and technology council was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during Ms Leyen's visit to India in April 2022.

Three Working Groups under the TTC

1. A Working Group on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance and Digital Connectivity

2. A Working Group on Green and Clean Energy Technologies
3. A Working Group on Trade, Investment and Resilient Value Chains

India-EU Trade relation

- **India is the 10th largest trading partner** of the European Union, accounting for **2.1% of the total trade in goods.**
- **The EU is India's third largest trading partner**, accounting for **€88 billion in goods trade in 2021** or a little over 10% of total Indian trade.
- Trade in services between the two sides reached **€30.4 billion in 2020.**

About European Union

- The European Union is a group of **27 European countries.**
- The United Kingdom which was the founding member of the European Union has left the organisation.
- It was **founded on 1 November 1993**
- Headquarters: **Brussels, Belgium**

8. Badminton Asia appoints Umar Rashid as chairman of the Technical Officials Committee (May 10, 2023)

Badminton Asia appoints Umar Rashid as chairman of the Technical Officials Committee

Badminton Asia appointed **Umar Rasheed, joint secretary of the Badminton Association of India (BAI)**, as the chairman of the Technical Officials Committee.

An Overview Of the News

- As chairman of the technical officials' committee, Rasheed will oversee the development and implementation of rules and regulations to elevate officiating standards in badminton tournaments across the country.
- Rashid is committed to strengthening the governance of badminton in India and the region, by upholding the integrity of the game and ensuring high quality officiating in all tournaments.
- Rashid also serves as the **General Secretary of the Assam Badminton Association**, contributing significantly to the development of badminton in Assam and the Northeast region of India.

Badminton Association of India (BAI):

- It serves as the **governing body** for badminton in India.
- BAI is registered as an association under the **Societies Act.**

- **Since 1936**, BAI has been responsible for organizing and hosting national level badminton tournaments in India.

Establishment - **1934**

Headquarters - **New Delhi**

President - **Himanta Biswa Sarma**

Badminton Asia Championship:

- It is an **annual badminton tournament** organized by the governing body **Badminton Asia**.
- The tournament has been held **since 1962** and has been an **annual event since 1991**.
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9. Rajasthan Housing Board got National Award for Real Estate (April 30, 2023)

On April 26, 2023, the **National Real Estate Award** was presented to the **Rajasthan Housing Board** by the **Central Government Agency National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO)**.

An overview of the news

- National Real Estate Development Council National President **Rajan Bandelkar** and RERA Delhi Chairman **Anand Kumar** presented the award to Rajasthan Housing Commissioner **Pawan Arora** at a national level function.
- The Rajasthan Housing Board was honored with the award for registering the **maximum number of housing projects in the country under RERA, selling the maximum number of houses and doing excellent work in the field of real estate**.
- Earlier in the function, Rajasthan Housing Commissioner was specially invited for a panel discussion on the topic '**Real Estate in the Era of RERA**'. He was also honored on this platform.
- Rajasthan Housing Board has become the **biggest organization to register 101 project RERA numbers**.
- Under the leadership of Housing Commissioner Pawan Arora, the board has received **a total of 15 awards in the last four years**.
- These include World Book of Records in house sales, Scotch Award-2021, Award of Excellence, Honor by National Real Estate Development Council, National Housing Award, I.B.C. and prestigious awards like 'Star of Governance-Gold Award'.

10. National Panchayati Raj Day: 24 April (April 24, 2023)

National Panchayati Raj Day: 24 April

Panchayati Raj Day is celebrated every year on **24th April** to commemorate the **enactment of the 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 of the Constitution in the year 1993.**

An Overview of the News

- The day is celebrated to acknowledge **national local self-governance and democratic decentralisation.**
- The theme of National Panchayati Raj Day 2023 is '**Sustainable Panchayat: Building Healthy, Water Sufficient, Clean & Green Villages.**'
- The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj is the nodal ministry** responsible for empowering, enabling and ensuring accountability of Panchayati Raj Institutions for achieving inclusive growth with social justice and efficient service delivery.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** attended the **National Panchayati Raj Day celebrations in Madhya Pradesh** and laid the foundation stone and inaugurated projects **worth over Rs 17,000 crore.**
- He virtually attended the house warming ceremony of **4.11 lakh beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana** and launched the **integrated e-Gram Swaraj and GeM portal for public procurement at the panchayat level.**
- He launched the campaign "**Joint steps towards development**" for inclusive development.
- He laid the foundation stone and inaugurated various railway projects worth about **Rs 2,300 crore** and 5 projects of **Jal Jeevan Mission worth about Rs 7,853 crore.**

About Madhya Pradesh

It is the **second largest state of India by area after Rajasthan.**

Forests occupy 25.14 percent of its area.

Governor - **Mangubhai Patel**

Chief Minister - **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**

Capital - **Bhopal**