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1. Government initiates work on consumer spending survey (July 28, 2022)

The Centre has started the process of conducting the five-year Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) this month.

Important facts

- The questionnaire for the survey has been modified to capture data on items received free of cost from welfare programs of the government.
- Field work for the survey, which for the first time will involve three visits in a year to assess spending patterns in selected households, will begin soon.
- The survey was last conducted in 2017-18, but its findings were not published, citing data quality concerns.
- Therefore, the last official publicly available estimates on consumer spending are from the 2011-12 survey.

What is the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES)?

- CES is traditionally a quinquennial survey conducted by the government's National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).
- It is designed to collect information about consumption expenditure patterns of urban and rural households across the country.
- The data collected in this survey reveals the average expenditure on goods (food and non-food) and services and helps in estimating the household Monthly per Capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE).
- The survey is conducted between July and June and this year's exercise is expected to be completed by June 2023.

Need of CES

- There is no official estimate of India's per capita household expenditure.
- It provides separate data sets for rural and urban areas, and different spending patterns for each state and union territory, as well as for different socio-economic groups.
- It also helps to calculate the demand dynamics of the economy.

2. Rs 1.64 lakh crore revival package for BSNL gets Cabinet nod (July 28, 2022)

In a bid to revive state-owned telecom company Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), the Union Cabinet on July 27 approved a ₹1.64 lakh crore package for its revival.

Important facts

- The package has a cash component of ₹43,964 crore and a non-cash component of ₹1.2 lakh crore for over four years.
- The package will include administrative allotment of 4G spectrum worth ₹44,993 crore.
- Bharat Broadband Network Ltd (BBNL), was set up to implement the ambitious BharatNet project, which will be merged with BSNL.
- The revival package will enable BSNL to improve services and generate net profit in 3-4 years.
- BSNL 5G services launch will happen in the next 1.5-2 years.
- Its 4G telecom services will reach the people in 1-1.5 years.

Other key components of the package

- Capex support of ₹22,471 crore
- Viability gap funding of ₹13,789 crore for rural wireline operations
- Debt structuring by raising of bonds with sovereign guarantee worth ₹40,399 crore
- Financial support for Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) dues worth ₹33,404 crore.

Capex support

- The Cabinet had approved the allocation of 900/1800 MHz band spectrum worth ₹ 44,993 crore to support 4G services of BSNL.
- This will allow BSNL to compete in the market and provide high speed data.
- The government will make a capital expenditure of ₹22,471 crore over the next four years to "promote development and deployment of self-reliant 4G stacks".

About BSNL

- BSNL was incorporated on 15th september 2000.
- It is a 100% Govt of India owned Public Sector Undertaking.
- It is a technology-oriented integrated telecom service providing company.
- It provides Wire line Services, GSM Mobile Services including 2G, 3G, 4G & Value added Services (VAS), Internet and Broadband services, Wi-Fi services, Data Centre services etc.

3. Establishment of cooperative bank run by women for the first time in Rajasthan (July 27, 2022)

A MoU was signed between Rajasthan Rural Livelihood Development Council (Rajivika) and Streenidhi Telangana for technical assistance in the establishment of the first and country's third "Women Financial Institute" in Rajasthan.

Important facts

- The MoU has been signed by Rajivika on behalf of Rajivika by State Mission Director Manju Rajpal and Telangana Managing Director of Women Fund G. Vidyasagar Reddy.
- The Rajasthan Women Fund in the state is being set up successfully on the lines of the women's fund model operated in Telangana.
- After the establishment of the Women's Fund, the economic empowerment of women of Rajivika's self -help groups will be strengthened and they will be able to receive loans for their enterprise.
- This fund will be operated by women of SHG only for women of SHG.
- The Rajasthan Women's Fund will serve as a supplementary financial institution with formal banks.
- For the establishment of Rajasthan Women's Fund, a total grant of Rs 50 crore (25 crore rupees in the first year) will be given by the state government in two years and proposals have been sent to the Central Government for a grant of Rs 110 crore.
- In the budget of 2022-23 by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, it was announced regarding the establishment of banks run by women.
- It will be set up on the lines of the Stree Nidhi model of Telangana.

4. IMF cuts global growth forecasts, warns high inflation threatens recession (July 27, 2022)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut global growth forecasts again on July 26.

Important facts

- The IMF warned that high inflation and Ukraine's war could lead to a downward spiral in economic growth and the world economy could be on the verge of recession if left unchecked.
- The IMF said that global real GDP growth will slow to 3.2% in 2022 from a forecast of 3.6% issued in April.
- The report said the world's GDP actually shrank in the second quarter due to slowdowns in China and Russia.
- The IMF cut its 2023 growth forecast to 2.9% from the April estimate of 3.6%, citing the impact of tighter monetary policy.
- Global growth has fallen below 2% only five times since 1970.
- In 1973, 1981 and 1982, 2009 and 2020, global growth fell below 2% due to the COVID-19 pandemic and caused a recession.

- India's growth forecast for the financial year 2023-24 has also been lowered by 0.8 percentage points to 6.1% due to rising economic risks.

India's growth forecast by other institutions

- Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) estimation of India's growth in 2022-23 - 7.2%
- Asian Development Bank's India's Growth Forecast for 2022-23 - 7.2%

About International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF), a United Nations (UN) specialised agency, was established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference to secure international monetary policies.
- The International Monetary Fund is an organisation with 189 member countries.
- First Deputy Managing Director- Geeta Gopinath
- Headquarters- Washington, D.C., U.S.
- Managing Director- Kristalina Georgieva
- Chief Economist - Pierre Olivier Gourinchas

5. PM to lay foundation of India's maiden International Financial Services Centre (July 26, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of the International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) headquarters building in Gujarat on July 29, 2022.

Important facts

- This authority is the unified regulator for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in International Financial Services Centres in India.
- The Headquarters building of this Authority is envisaged as an iconic structure, reflecting the growing reputation and structure of Gujarat International Finance Tech as a premier international financial hub.
- The Prime Minister will also launch India's first International Bullion Exchange i.e. Bharat International Bullion at Gujarat International Finance Tech- International Financial Services Centre.

About International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)

- IFSCA was established in April 2020 under the International Financial Services Centre Authority Bill, 2019.
- An IFSC provides essential services to customers outside the jurisdiction of the domestic economy.

- Its headquarter is located in GIFT City of Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
- It has been established to promote 'Ease of Doing Business' in IFSC and to provide a world class regulatory environment.
- Recently the International Financial Services Centre Authority has become an associate member of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO).

6. Cochin Shipyard, IIM-Kozhikode Sign Agreement To Boost Start-Ups In Maritime Sector (July 25, 2022)

Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) has signed an agreement with IIM, Kozhikode (IIM-K), business incubator of the Laboratory for Innovation Ventures and Entrepreneurship (LIVE) to support start-ups in the maritime sector.

Important facts

- The idea of such a framework is to develop an ecosystem in India for start-ups in the maritime sector from a technical, regulatory, financial and marketing perspective.
- IIM-K Executive Director Rajesh Upadhyay and CSL General Manager Dipu Surendran signed the agreement in the presence of IIM-K Director Debashish Chatterjee and CSL Chairman and Managing Director Madhu S Nair.
- Under this initiative, start-ups can get Rs 50 lakh as initial grant, Rs 1 crore as prototype grant and equity funding for start-ups at scale up stage.
- IIM-K will act as the implementation partner of the initiative and provide incubation, mentorship and training to the start-ups selected under the programme.

Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode

- Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIM Kozhikode or IIMK) is an autonomous public business school located in Calicut (Kozhikode), Kerala.
- It was established in 1996 by the Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Kerala State.
- It was the fifth IIM to be established in India.
- Director - Debashish Chatterjee

7. Reserve Bank of India imposes restrictions on four cooperative banks (July 23, 2022)

In view of the deteriorating financial condition of the four co-operative banks, the Reserve Bank of India has imposed some other restrictions including withdrawal.

Bank names on which sanctions have been imposed

1. Saibaba Janata Sahakari Bank in Maharashtra

2. The Suri Friends' Union Co-operative Bank Ltd at Suri in West Bengal
3. United India Co-operative Bank Limited, Uttar Pradesh
4. National Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh

What are the restrictions imposed by the RBI?

- A depositor of Saibaba Janata Sahakari Bank cannot withdraw more than Rs 20,000 from the bank, while the withdrawal limit for Suri Friends Union Co-operative Bank has been fixed at Rs 50,000.
- In the case of National Urban Co-operative Bank, the withdrawal limit has been capped at Rs 10,000 per customer.
- RBI has also imposed several restrictions on United India Co-operative Bank Ltd Bijnor, including restrictions on withdrawal of funds by customers.
- The directions issued by RBI to these four co-operative banks under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 will remain in force for six months.

About Reserve Bank of India

- Established on April 1, 1935 as per the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- The central office of the Reserve Bank was initially established in Calcutta but was permanently shifted to Mumbai in 1937.
- In the Central Office the Governor sits and policies are formulated.
- The affairs of the Reserve Bank are handled by a central board of directors.

8. India became World's Largest Recipient of Remittances (July 22, 2022)

India has recently become the largest recipient of remittances across the world. According to the World Bank, it received USD 87 billion in 2021.

Important facts

- India is followed by China and Mexico, each with USD 53 billion in remittances.
- According to the central bank survey, the share of remittances from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) inward remittances in India has declined from over 50% in 2016-17 to 30 per cent in 2020-21.
- Migration from India to the GCC region, strict labour laws, high work permit renewal fees, slowing oil prices and taxes have led to a decline in remittances from Gulf countries to India.
- The share of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka has come down to half in 2020-2021. Previously, these states dominated the GCC region and were major contributors to remittances. These states account for 25% of the total remittances since 2016-17.

• Maharashtra has become the largest recipient state, surpassing Kerala.

9. The India Bio Economy Report 2022 (July 22, 2022)

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) released India's Bioeconomy Report 2022.

Key findings of the Report

- India's bio-economy is expected to exceed USD 150 billion by 2025 and over USD 300 billion by 2030.
- India's bio-economy is expected to exceed USD 80 billion in 2021, showing a growth of 14.1 per cent from USD 70.2 billion in 2020.
- India generated a bio-economy of USD 219 million per day by adding USD 80.12 billion in 2021.
- On average, at least three biotech startups were established every day in 2021 (a total of 1,128 biotech startups were established in 2021).
- Bio-tech industry crossed USD 1 billion in research and development spending.
- India administered nearly 4 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines per day (total 1.45 billion doses given in 2021).
- India conducted 1.3 million Covid-19 tests each day in 2021 (total of 506.7 million tests).
- India has the second largest number of USFDA approved manufacturing plants outside the US.

What is Bioeconomics?

- Bioeconomics is a subject arising out of the synthesis of biology and economics.
- According to the Bio-economy Council the bio-economy is the knowledge-based production and use of biological resources to provide products, processes and services in all economic sectors within the frame of a sustainable economic system.
- Sustainable agriculture, Sustainable Fishing, Forestry and aquaculture, Food and feed manufacturing, Bioplastics, Biodegradable clothing are example of bio-economics.

10. NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index 2021 -Karnataka, Manipur and Chandigarh on Top (July 21, 2022)

NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index (third edition) released on 21 July by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery.

Important facts

- Karnataka has topped the India Innovation Index.

- Telangana and Haryana are second and third in the ranking, respectively.
- Karnataka has again topped the 'Major States' category.
- Manipur tops the category of 'Northeast and Hill States' followed by Uttarakhand and Meghalaya.
- Chandigarh tops the 'Union Territories' category, followed by Delhi.

Why is Karnataka on top in the ranking?

- Karnataka tops the list for attracting FDI and having a large number of venture capital deals.
- Karnataka is also the top 'performer' in terms of information and communication technology exports and Geographical Indication registration.

What is the India Innovation Index?

- The Index is released by NITI Aayog and the Institute for Competitiveness every year.
- It is a comprehensive tool for the evaluation and development of the country's innovation ecosystem.
- The first and second editions were launched in 2019 and 2021 respectively.
- Under this, the states and union territories are ranked on their innovation performance to create healthy competition among them.
- This time 66 indicators have been included as compared to 36 indicators used in the previous edition.

Significance of the Index

- The latest report is based on the framework of the Global Innovation Index (GII), which strengthens the scope of innovation analysis in the country.
- Innovation is at the forefront of India's 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives.
- By emphasizing on innovation, India can increase its manufacturing and develop its export competitiveness.
- It showcases the innovative capabilities of the states, highlights their strengths and weaknesses.