

# Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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## 1. Aditya Birla Health Insurance partners with UCO Bank ( April 1, 2023 )

Aditya Birla Health Insurance partners with UCO Bank

**Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Limited (ABHICL)** has entered into a partnership with UCO Bank to distribute **health insurance products** through the bank's branches across India.

### An Overview of the News

- **UCO Bank's network of 3164 branches** and over **40 million customers** will allow **ABHICL to expand its national footprint.**
- Through the partnership, UCO Bank's customers and employees will have access to ABHICL's health-first insurance solutions, including incentive wellness benefits and chronic management programs.
- ABHICL now has 17 Bancassurance Partners with over 80,000 Direct Selling Agents across India.
- CEO of UCO Bank - **Soma Shankar Prasad**
- CEO of Aditya Birla Health Insurance - **Mayank Bathwal**

### About Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Limited (ABHICL)

- It is an **Indian health insurance company** that offers a range of health insurance products to individuals, families and corporations.
- It is a subsidiary of **Aditya Birla Capital Limited**, one of the largest conglomerates in India.
- ABHICL has tie-ups with over **5,500 network hospitals across India**, providing customers easy access to cashless medical treatment.
- Additionally, ABHICL offers wellness programs to help customers maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## 2. IMF approves 15.6 billion dollar support package for Ukraine ( April 1, 2023 )

The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has approved a **\$15.6 billion support package to aid the economic recovery of conflict-torn country Ukraine.**

### An overview of the news

- The Russian invasion has devastated Ukraine's economy, causing **economic activity to shrink** by about **30 percent** last year, according to the IMF.

- War has destroyed capital stock and promoted poverty.
- The **48-month Extended Fund Facility program** approved by the **Fund's Board amounts to approximately \$15.6 billion.**
- It is part of the **IMF's \$115 billion** total support package, which includes debt relief, grants, and loans by multilateral and bilateral institutions.
- If the current conflict were to **continue into 2025**, it would raise Ukraine's financial needs from **\$115 billion to around \$140 billion**, said the IMF.

### **About Ukraine**

- Ukraine, a country located in **Eastern Europe**, is the **second largest country in the continent after Russia.**
- Its capital is **Kiev, located on the Dnieper River in north-central Ukraine.**
- Prime Minister: **Denys Shmyhal**
- President: **Volodymyr Zelensky**
- Capital: **Kyiv**
- Official Language : **Ukrainian**
- Currency : **Rryvnya (UAH)**

### **About International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

- It is an **international organization** that promotes global economic growth and financial stability, encourages international trade, and reduces poverty.
- It was **established in 1944** in the aftermath of the **Great Depression of the 1930s.**
- It is an organization of **190 member countries.**
- It is governed by and accountable to 190 countries.
- **India became its member in December 1945.**
- The IMF's resources come mainly from money that countries pay in as their capital subscriptions (quotas) when they become members.
- The International Monetary Fund's executive board comprises **24 members.**
- Managing Director - **Kristalina Georgieva (Bulgaria)**
- Headquarter (HQ) - **Washington, D.C., US**

### **3. India's first quantum computing based telecom network link activated ( March 31, 2023 )**

India's first quantum computing based telecom network link activated

The **first quantum computing-based telecom network link** has been **activated in India** and is located between **Sanchar Bhawan and National Informatics Center (NIC) office at CGO Complex in New Delhi.**

### **An Overview of the News**

- Telecom Network Link provides **quantum secure communications, making it highly resistant to hacking attempts and cyber threats.**
- Telecom Minister **Ashwini Vaishnav** inaugurated a small exhibition of quantum computing firms, inviting them to run pilot projects for communication networks and the Indian Railways.
- Using quantum computing, the telecommunications sector will benefit from faster and more secure communications, which can lead to improved network reliability and better user experiences.

### **About Quantum Computing**

- It uses qubits instead of classical bits to perform calculations, enabling it to perform calculations much faster than classical computers.
- Quantum computers use quantum-mechanical phenomena such as superposition and complexity to perform calculations.
- Potential applications of quantum computing include such revolutionary fields as cryptography, chemistry and materials science.
- Challenges facing quantum computing include the issue of qubit decoherence and the high cost of building and maintaining quantum computers.

## **4. Defense Ministry signs Rs 1700 crore contract with BrahMos Aerospace ( March 31, 2023 )**

Defense Ministry signed a Rs 1,700 crore contract with BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL)

On March 30, 2023 The **Defense Ministry signed a Rs 1,700 crore contract with BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL)** for the procurement of next generation marine **mobile coastal batteries and BrahMos missiles.**

### **An Overview of the News**

- The systems will be armed with **supersonic BrahMos missiles**, which are known for their **speed and accuracy.**
- The deliveries of these batteries are **scheduled to begin in 2027**, indicating that the Ministry of Defense is making long-term plans to strengthen its military capabilities.
- BAPL is a joint venture between India and Russia, highlighting the collaborative efforts of both countries in advancing defence technology.

## **About BrahMos Missile**

- BrahMos missiles are **medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missiles** that can be launched from **submarines, ships, aircrafts or land. These missiles** are capable of travelling at a speed of Mach 2.8 and can carry conventional or nuclear warheads.
- Its **first successful launch took place on June 12, 2001**. The missile has undergone several successful tests and is considered one of the most reliable missiles in the world.
- It is named after **two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia**, symbolising the cooperation between the two countries in developing this technology.
- **In 2016, India became a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)**, which aims to prevent the proliferation of missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction. India's entry into MTCR made it easier for India to **export BrahMos missiles to other countries which are members of MTCR**.

## **5. UK signs deal to join trade pact with 11 Asia and Pacific nations ( March 31, 2023 )**

**Britain** has signed a deal to join a trade deal with **11 Asia and Pacific countries** on 31 March 2023, three years after officially leaving the European Union.

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

- According to the government's own estimates, joining the **bloc would increase the size of the UK economy by only 0.08 per cent**.
- The trade area covers a market of around **500 million people**.
- The UK said it is the **country's biggest post-Brexit trade deal** and is the **first European country** to join the CPTPP since it came into force in **2018**.
- The agreement is expected to be formally signed by the end of this year following approval by **Parliament and 11 member states**.
- The deal would cut tariffs on exports of **food, drink and cars, and provide access to a market of some 500 million people**.
- The UK will be worth 15% of global GDP once it joins the trade bloc.

## **About Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership ( CPTPP )**

- It was **established in 2018**.

- **It includes 11 countries** - Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
- Membership of the CPTPP lowers restrictions on trade between members and also lowers customs duties on goods.

## **6. NGT slaps ₹10 crore penalty on Kerala government for failure to protect Ramsar sites ( March 31, 2023 )**

NGT slaps ₹10 crore penalty on Kerala government for failure to protect Ramsar sites

The Principal Bench of the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** in New Delhi has imposed a **fine of Rs 10 crore on the Kerala government** for failing to protect the **Vembanad and Ashtamudi lakes, listed as Ramsar sites.**

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

- A principal bench headed by **Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel** said that as per the '**polluter pays principle**', the fines imposed should be deposited in the ring-fenced account.
- The tribunal said that the amount to be utilized under the authority of the chief secretary should be employed for conservation or restoration measures.
- These wetlands have become polluted due to the **accumulation of pharmaceutical waste, plastic waste, domestic waste** and slaughterhouse waste.
- **Vembanad, the largest wetland ecosystem in Kerala** was designated as a **Ramsar site in the year 2002.**
- According to a study by the **Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies**, the water holding capacity and ecology of **Vembanad Lake** has decreased by **85% in the last 120 years** due to encroachment and destruction.
- **Ashtamudi Lake** is home to many plant and bird species, which was included in the Ramsar list in August 2002.
- Presently there is a **problem of waste accumulation at this site.**

### **What are Wetlands?**

- Wetlands are vital not only for the **ecosystems but our climate**, providing essential services such as **water regulation, flood control, and water purification.**
- Wetlands are also **capable of absorbing carbon dioxide.**
- Wetlands are called "**Kidneys of the Earth**".

### **What are Ramsar sites?**

- A Ramsar site is a **wetland site** specifically designated for **international importance as a waterfowl habitat under the Ramsar Convention.**

- Ramsar Convention is an **intergovernmental environment treaty established in 1975 by UNESCO.**
- Ramsar refers to wetlands of international importance in terms of **site ecology, botany, zoology or hydrology.**

### **National Green Tribunal**

- It deals with cases relating to the **environment protection and conservation of forest.**
- It was set up in **2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010.**
- The Tribunal is not bound by the procedure laid down under the **Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, but is guided by principles of natural justice.
- New Delhi is the Principal Place of Sitting** of the Tribunal and **Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai** are other four places of sitting of the Tribunal.\
- Chairperson : **Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel**

### **7. Unified rate approved for natural gas pipeline, new rate applicable from April 1 ( March 31, 2023 )**

Unified rate approved for natural gas pipeline, new rate applicable from April 1

With the ambitious objective of **One Nation, One Grid and One Tariff**, the **Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)** has decided to **change the Unified Tariff** which will be applicable from **1st April 2023.**

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

- PNGRB has notified a **levelized Unified tariff of 73.93 rupees per MBTU (Metric Million British Thermal Unit).**
- The rates will be implemented as **per three tariff zones** in the entire gas network of the country.
- This decision will give a boost to the **economic development** of all regions of the country.
- This will facilitate the government's vision for the development of gas markets and increase the utilization of gas in the country.

#### **Three different Tariff Zones**

- The rate will be different for a **distance of 300 km** from the gas source.
- The rate will be different for the **distance of 300-1200 km** from the gas source.
- The area of **more than 1200 km distance** will come in the third zone.

## **National Gas Grid**

- It covers Indian Oil Corporation, ONGC, Gail India, Pipeline Infrastructure Limited, Gujarat State Petronet, Gujarat Gas Limited, Reliance Gas Pipeline, GSPL India Gasnet Limited and GSPL India Trans Limited.

## **8. Spouses of H-1B visa holders allowed to work in US ( March 31, 2023 )**

Spouses of H-1B visa holders allowed to work in US

In a major relief to foreign workers in the US technology sector, a court there has ruled that the **spouses of H-1B visa holders can now work in the United States.**

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

- The petition by '**Save Jobs USA**' sought to quash the **employment authorization cards** given to the **spouses of H-1B visa holders.**
- **Save Jobs USA** is an organisation of IT workers who claim they lost their jobs because of H-1B workers.
- Tech companies like **Amazon, Apple, Google and Microsoft** opposed this petition.
- **US District Judge Tanya Chutkan** rejected the plea.
- The US has so far issued work rights to the spouses of **nearly 100,000 H-1B workers**, a sizable number of whom are Indians.

### **About H-1B Visa**

- The H-1B visa is a **non-immigrant visa** that allows **US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations.**
- It is designed to allow **skilled foreign workers to come to the United States and work for American companies.**
- This requires **theoretical or technical expertise.**

### **Other Visa Categories**

- **L-1B** - for specialised workers
- **L-1A** - for managers and executives
- **E-2** - Treaty Investor visa
- **E-1** - Treaty Trader visa
- **E-3** - for Australians etc.

## **9. Defence Ministry signs contract for 11 next generation OPVs ( March 31, 2023 )**

Defence Ministry signs contract for 11 next generation OPVs

The **Defense Ministry** on 30 March **signed contracts** with **Indian shipyards worth Rs 19,600 crore for the acquisition of 11 next-generation offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) and six next-generation missile vessels.**

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

- The contract for the acquisition of **11 OPVs under the Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category** was signed with **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) of Kolkata** for a total of **Rs 9,781 crore.**
- Out of 11 next generation offshore patrol vessels, 7 vessels will be built by **GSL and 4 vessels by GRSE.**
- These ships will be **indigenously designed, developed and manufactured.** Delivery of the vessels will begin in **September 2026.**
- The acquisition of these ships will enable the Indian Navy to maintain its combat capability and meet various operational requirements.
- Indian Navy's **anti-piracy, counter-infiltration, anti-poaching, anti-trafficking, non-combatant evacuation operations, search and rescue (SAR), security of offshore assets** etc. will be strengthened.
- A contract was signed with **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)** for the acquisition of **six Next Generation Missile Ships (NGMVs)** at a cost of **Rs 9,805 crore.** The deliveries of these ships will commence from **March 2027.**

## **10. Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan appointed as Vice-President of UAE ( March 30, 2023 )**

Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan appointed as Vice-President of UAE

The President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), **Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**, has appointed **Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan**, his brother, as the **Vice President of the country.**

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

- The appointment is approved by the **UAE Federal Supreme Council.**
- The incumbent Vice president **Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum**, will also continue in the same role.



- Sheikh Mansour has been active in UAE politics since 2004, when he was appointed as
- **Minister of Presidential Affairs.**
  - He has overseen the **Presidential Court** and the **Ministry of Presidential Affairs**, as well as presiding over several government institutions, including the **Ministerial Development Council and the Emirates Investment Authority.**
  - He is also the chairman of the **Abu Dhabi Fund for Development** and a **member of the Abu Dhabi Supreme Petroleum Council.**
  - He has served on the boards of several investment institutions, including the **National Archives, the Abu Dhabi Development Fund, the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority Board, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department.**

### **About UAE**

- Official Language : **Arabic**
- Capital of UAE : **Abu Dhabi**
- Currency : **Emirati Dirham**
- President of UAE : **Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Mohammed ibn Rashid Al Maktoum**