

## **Testwale Current Affairs PDF**

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### **1. Ashish Chauhan and Sridhar Vembu Appointed to UGC by Ministry of Education ( April 14, 2024 )**

Ashish Kumar Chauhan, MD and CEO of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), and Sridhar Vembu, CEO of Zoho Corporation, have been appointed as members of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

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

- Their tenure spans three years, as per the notification from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education.

#### **Other Appointments**

- Retired Professor Sachidananda Mohanty, former Vice Chancellor of Central University of Odisha, has been appointed to the UGC. Professor Mohanty brings his extensive experience in academia to the commission.
- Professor Shashikala Gulabrao Wanjari, Vice Chancellor of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in New Delhi, Delhi, has been appointed as a member of the UGC. Her tenure, like others', is set for three years or until further orders.

#### **About UGC**

- The UGC was proposed by the Sargent Report of 1944 to establish a national system of education in India.
- Established by an Act of Parliament in 1956, the UGC plays a pivotal role in higher education governance.
- The current Chairman of UGC is Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar, and its headquarters are located in New Delhi, Delhi.
- With these appointments, the total number of members in the UGC has increased from 4 to 8, enriching its expertise and diversity.

### **2. Adani begins Operation of the Copper Unit at Mundra ( April 1, 2024 )**

The first phase of the world's largest copper manufacturing plant in Mundra, Gujarat was launched by the Adani-led group. The company plans to invest \$1.2 billion in this phase.

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

##### **Kutch Copper Operations:**

- Kutch Copper, a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited, commenced operations of its greenfield copper refinery, marking the shipment of the inaugural batch of cathode.
- Production Capacity and Expansion Plans:

- The plant is estimated to produce 0.5 million tonnes of refined copper annually in its initial phase, with plans to expand to a capacity of 1 million tonnes by March 2029.
- Upon completion of its second phase, Kutch Copper aims to become the world's largest single-location custom smelter with an annual production target of 1 million tonnes.

**ESG Commitment:**

- The company pledges to maintain high ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) performance standards by leveraging advanced technology and digitalization.

**Role in India's clean energy transition:**

- Increased copper production supports India's transition to clean energy, facilitating the development of technologies for electric vehicles, solar power, wind power and batteries.

**Job Creation and Domestic Demand:**

- The expansion of copper production is expected to create 2,000 direct and 5,000 indirect employment opportunities and meet India's target of doubling copper demand by 2030.

**Diversification and Industry Demand:**

- Catering to the growing demand for copper in various industries, Kutch Copper has expanded its offering to include copper tubes for air conditioning and refrigeration.

**Reduction in Import Dependence:**

- Domestic copper production aims to reduce India's dependence on imported copper, which has increased steadily in recent years.

**Stability Practice:**

- Kutch Copper prioritizes sustainability by using technology with minimal carbon footprint, allocating green space within the plant area and implementing eco-friendly water management practices.

**Industry Scenario:**

- Vedanta Ltd is looking to reopen a plant in Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, while Hindalco Industries Ltd currently operates the largest copper smelter in India with a capacity of 0.5 million tonnes.

**Global Production Dynamics:**

- Globally, copper production is concentrated, with Chile and Peru being the top producers, collectively accounting for 38% of global production.

**3. MV Rao takes over as chairman of the Indian Banks Association ( March 22, 2024 )**

Central Bank of India MD and CEO MV Rao was elected as the new chairman of the Indian Banks Association (IBA) during the managing committee meeting held on 21 March.

**An Overview of the News****Vice President Selection:**

- The committee also appointed three vice presidents:
- Dinesh Kumar Khara, Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI)
- S L Jain, MD and CEO of Indian Bank
- N Kamakody, MD and CEO of City Union Bank

**Appointment of Honorary Secretary:**

- Madhav Nair, Country Head and CEO of the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait was appointed as Honorary Secretary of the IBA.

**Contribution of Madhav Nair:**

- Serving as the first Vice President, Madhav Nair has been actively involved in policy advocacy related to areas such as technology, risk management, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors since 2016.

**Indian Banks Association (IBA)**

- IBA represents a diverse range of Indian banks including public sector, private sector, foreign, co-operative and regional rural banks.
- Role and Functions: It plays an important role in shaping banking policies and promoting the adoption of best practices within the Indian banking industry.
- Expectations of new leadership: The election of a new leadership team is expected to infuse new energy and focus IBA's efforts to address the various challenges and leverage opportunities in the Indian banking sector.

**4. Jaipur hosts a two-day regional conference on good governance ( Oct. 4, 2023 )**

A two-day regional conference on "Good Governance" began in Jaipur on October 4, 2023.

**An Overview of the News**

- The conference also saw the presentation of 2022 award winners under the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration.

- The program was presided over by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh.
- The conference featured 13 award winners from various categories, including the PM Award and National e-Governance Award winners from Rajasthan.

**Highlights of the Conference:**

- The conference included plenary sessions on "Administrative Reforms and Effective Redressal of Public Grievances" and "Technology in Governance".
- These sessions will feature presentations, short films and discussions on the journey of the Prime Minister's Awards Scheme and the role of technology in governance.

**Objectives of the Conference:**

- The primary objective of the conference is to facilitate the exchange of experiences and innovative ideas in public administration both at the national and state levels.
- It aims to promote good governance, e-governance, and digital governance by bringing together representatives from all the states and union territories of India to share their initiatives and practices.

**About Rajasthan**

- It is a state in northern India and is the largest Indian state by area and the seventh largest state by population.
- It is bordered by five other Indian states: Punjab to the north; Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the northeast; Madhya Pradesh in the southeast; and Gujarat in the southwest.
- Rajasthan is also home to three national tiger reserves, Ranthambore National Park in Sawai Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar and Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve in Kota.

Formation - 30 March 1949

Capital - Jaipur

Districts - 33 (7 divisions)

Governor - Kalraj Mishra

Chief Minister - Ashok Gehlot (INC)

Assembly - Rajasthan Legislative Assembly (200 seats)

Rajya Sabha - 10 seats

Lok Sabha - 25 seats

**5. PM Narendra Modi launches Sankalp Saptaah ( Sept. 30, 2023 )**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a week-long program called "Sankalp Saptah" for aspirational blocks in New Delhi on 30 September 2023.

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

- The objective of the Sankalp Saptah is **to effectively implement the Aspirational Block Programme, which aims to improve governance at the block level and enhance the quality of life of the citizens.**
- About three thousand panchayat and block level representatives and officials from across the country will participate in this program to be held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital.
- Additionally, around two lakh people including block and panchayat level officials and farmers will join the program virtually.
- Sankalp Saptah will be celebrated in all 500 aspirational blocks of 329 districts of the country from 3rd to 9th October.
- During this week each day will focus on a specific development theme on which all the Aspirational Blocks will work.

### **The topics for the first six days are as follows:**

1. Sampoorna Swasthya (Comprehensive Health)
2. Suposhit Pariwaar (Well-nourished Family)
3. Swachhta (Cleanliness)
4. Krishi (Agriculture)
5. Shiksha (Education)
6. Samridhi Diwas (Prosperity Day)

The final day of the week will be dedicated to celebrating the work done throughout the week, known as Sankalp Saptah - Samavesh Samaroh".

### **6. 'India Smart Cities Conclave 2023' organized in Madhya Pradesh ( Sept. 26, 2023 )**

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India organized the 'India Smart Cities Conclave 2023' in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on September 26, 2023.

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

- The event brought together all 100 smart cities that are leading urban innovation and changing the city development process.
- The conclave aims to showcase the excellent work done under the Smart Cities Mission and shape the future of urban transformation in India.

- President Draupadi Murmu on September 27, 2023, honored the winners of the India Smart Cities Awards Competition (ISAC) 2022, which has been organized by the ministry since 2018.

**Main activities during the Event:**

- The event was scheduled for two days on September 26 and 27, 2023.
- On the first day of the conclave, an exhibition of the award-winning projects of ISAC 2022 was inaugurated.
- Attendees had the opportunity to interact with Smart City Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and participate in site visits of notable projects implemented under the Smart City Mission in Indore and Ujjain.
- ISAC 2022 awards were distributed on the second day of the conclave. The awards will recognize 5 States/Union Territories (UTs), 31 distinguished cities and 7 partner organizations for their outstanding contributions.
- In total, there have been 66 recipients of ISAC awards.
- Additionally, several reports will be released during the conclave, including:
  - ISAC 2022 Awards Collection
  - UN Habitat report: "Smart Cities Mission – Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals"
  - A collection of Smart City Mission newsletters
  - ISAC 2023 Awards Booklet.

**Smart City Mission:**

- The Smart Cities Mission was launched on 25 June 2015 as a centrally sponsored scheme with the goal of transforming 100 cities using "smart solutions".
- The mission aims to provide essential infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment and a high quality of life to the citizens through smart solutions.

**Mission Achievements:**

- More than 6000 projects costing more than Rs 1.1 lakh crore have been completed as part of the Mission, with the remaining projects targeted to be completed by June 30, 2024.
- One of the notable achievements was the establishment of Integrated Command and Control Centers (ICCC) in all 100 smart cities, functioning as the city's operational center for urban management.
- ICCC has significantly improved various urban services including crime tracking, civil defense, transport management, solid waste management, water supply and disaster management.

- Smart cities have launched projects in areas such as mobility, energy, water, sanitation, solid waste management, public space, social infrastructure and smart governance.

## **7. International Democracy Day - 15 September ( Sept. 15, 2023 )**

International Democracy Day is celebrated every year on 15 September.

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

- International Democracy Day emphasizes the importance of democracy, considering it not only a fundamental human right but also a vital element in promoting good governance and peace.
- The day reminds us of the important role of democracy in shaping societies globally.
- In **2023, the theme** of International Democracy Day focuses on "**Empowering the Next Generation**", highlighting the important contribution of young individuals in promoting democracy.
- Acknowledging and promoting youth participation in democratic processes is a fundamental element for safeguarding the future of democracy.

### **History of International Democracy Day:-**

- It has its origins in the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which was adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on September 15, 1997.
- The IPU is an international organization consisting of national parliaments around the world.
- Qatar took a leading role in advocating the establishment of International Democracy Day following the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Democracy.
- On November 8, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) took an important step by unanimously adopting a resolution entitled "Support by the United Nations System of Governments' Efforts to Promote and Consolidate New or Restored Democracies". This resolution formalized the International Day of Democracy.

### **About Democracy**

- It is a term that originates from the Greek words 'demos', which refers to a citizen of a city-state, and 'kratos', which refers to the concept of power or government.
- Democracy is considered a fundamental value within the United Nations. It is built on key principles, including:
  - **Respect for human rights:** Democracy involves a commitment to upholding the rights of individuals.
  - **Fundamental Freedom:** It involves the protection of basic freedoms.
  - **Periodic and genuine elections:** Democracy involves the practice of holding honest and legitimate elections on a regular basis.

◦ **Universal suffrage:** Ensures that all eligible citizens have the right to vote.

- Democracy is a system that gives citizens the right to choose their leaders.
- It encourages active participation of citizens in the processes that determine decisions affecting their lives.

## **8. Law Minister launches Tele-Law 2.0 ( Sept. 2, 2023 )**

Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal launches Tele-Law 2.0 for legal advice.

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

- Screening of the "Tele-Law" documentary, chronicling the journey of **Tele-Law from 2017 to 2022**.
- Launch of "Tele-Law-2.0", which integrates Tele-Law and Nyay Bandhu apps, along with the release of an informative e-tutorial.
- Unveiling the fourth edition of the **Voice of Beneficiaries booklet**, featuring real-life stories of individuals whose lives were positively impacted by Tele-Law.
- The presentation of the **"Achievers Catalogue"**, highlights the top-performing paralegal volunteers, village-level entrepreneurs, panel lawyers and state coordinators categorized by sectors for the year 2022-2023 and April to June 2023-2024.
- Tele-Law operates within the framework of the Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA) scheme, which has already facilitated over 50 lakh legal consultations.
- The **Disha scheme, launched in 2021**, has a duration of five years (2021-2026) and aims **to promote and increase access to justice for all in India**.

### **Tele-Law 2.0:**

- The Department of Justice (DoJ) is conducting a program called Tele-Law 2.0 as part of its commitment to **Article 39A**, which **aims to provide "justice for all"**.
- The primary goal of the Tele-Law program is to positively impact the lives of one crore (ten million) beneficiaries by achieving this milestone well before the year 2026.

### **Tele-Law Programs:**

- In 2017, the Tele-Law program was launched.
- The Department of Justice (DOJ) collaborated with the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and CSC e-Governance Service India Limited to facilitate the delivery of legal aid to the underprivileged population.
- The primary objective of this partnership was **to ensure that marginalized communities have access to legal aid by leveraging Common Service Centers (CSCs)**.



**Nyay Bandhu App:**

- This app is part of Tele-Law 2.0, which combines Tele-Law services and the Nyaya Bandhu Android application.
- Its primary goal is **to provide free legal guidance and representation to citizens.**
- Nyay Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) was **started in 2017.**
- The objective of this initiative is to establish a nationwide framework to provide free legal aid.
- "Pro bono legal services" means providing legal assistance voluntarily and without charge.
- The Latin phrase "**pro bono**" translates to "**for free**" in English.

**9. India to host the first edition of the 'Global IndiaAI 2023' conference in October ( Aug. 31, 2023 )**

The inaugural edition of 'Global IndiaAI 2023' will be hosted by India in October.

**An Overview of the News**

- The responsibility for organizing this program will be of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The conference will attract leading figures in the field of AI, such as key players, researchers, startups, and investors from India and around the world.
- A variety of topics will be covered during the program, ranging from next-generation learning and foundational AI models to applications of AI in healthcare, governance and the advancement of electric vehicles.
- The conference will also discuss future trends in AI research, AI computing systems, investment prospects and strategies to promote AI talent.
- The proceedings of the conference are being monitored by Rajiv Chandrashekhar, Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Electronics and IT.

**10. SVAMITVA Yojana of Ministry of Panchayati Raj gets National Award for e-Governance 2023 ( Aug. 28, 2023 )**

In the 26th National Conference on e-Governance 2023, the National Award was given to the SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

**An Overview of the News**

- The objective of the SVAMITVA scheme is to survey the population of villages, map rural areas with advanced technology, and provide ownership rights of property to individuals living in rural areas.

- State-of-the-art technologies such as drones and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are used for this initiative.
- Property cards have been created, which enable rural property owners to leverage their property for financial benefits.

**Significance of the Award:**

- The National Award for e-Governance was given in the category "Application of emerging technology for providing citizen-centric services".
- It recognizes the innovative use of technology in the scheme to provide services that directly benefit citizens.

**National Conference on e-Governance (NCeG):**

- The 26th NCeG was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, and jointly organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- The theme was "Developing India, Empowering Citizens" with a focus on advanced technologies and effective e-governance strategies.
- The objective of the conference is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and promote collaboration among stakeholders.

**National e-Governance Awards Categories:**

- The National e-Governance Awards were presented in five categories, including government process re-engineering, emerging technology applications, district-level e-governance initiatives, research on citizen-centric services, and emerging technology applications by start-ups.

**Effect of SVAMITVA Scheme:**

- SVAMITVA Scheme is implemented in collaboration with the Survey of India, State Revenue and Panchayati Raj Departments, and NIC-GIS.
- Property cards empower rural property owners to access bank loans and resolve land disputes with accurate maps.

Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department - **Giriraj Singh**