



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER, 2024

Week-4

22-30 Sept., 2024

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

22nd SEPTEMBER 2024

2024 Quad Leaders' Summit

- **Context:** Leaders of the Quad group of countries met at their sixth summit-level meeting at Archmere Academy, Delaware, to announce a broad range of outcomes.

Major Initiatives of QUAD 2024

- Quad Cancer Moonshot, a groundbreaking partnership to save lives in the Indo-Pacific region.
 - Under this, India will provide \$7.5 million worth of HPV sampling kits, detection kits and cervical cancer vaccines to countries in the Indo-Pacific.
 - A commitment from the Serum Institute of India, in partnership with Gavi and the Quad, to support orders of up to 40 million HPV vaccine doses for the Indo-Pacific region.
- The First-ever "Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission" in 2025 to improve interoperability and advance maritime safety between our Coast Guards across the Indo-Pacific.
- The Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network pilot project, in order to support civilian response to natural disasters more rapidly and efficiently across the Indo-Pacific region.
- The "Quad Ports of the Future Partnership" will harness the Quad's collective expertise to support sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development across the Indo-Pacific.
- The Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific" (MAITRI) to enable regional partners to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws, and deter unlawful behavior.
 - India will host the first MAITRI workshop in 2025.

About Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD)

- It is an informal multilateral grouping of India, the U.S., Australia, and Japan aimed at cooperation for a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

- The Quad began as a loose partnership after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami when the four countries joined together to provide humanitarian and disaster assistance to the affected region. It was formalized by former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007, but then fell dormant.
- After a decade it was resurrected in 2017, reflecting changing attitudes in the region toward China's growing influence

Chess Olympiad

- **Context:** India has bagged its first ever gold medal in both the men's and the women's team categories at the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest.

About Chess Olympiad

- It is the world's most prestigious team event for chess and India has been participating in the biennial event since 1956 and has played in every Olympiad since 1980.
- Now with this win, India also became the third country to win gold in both men's and women's categories in the same edition of Chess Olympiad after Soviet Union and China.

Origin of Chess

- The history of chess in India can be traced back to 1600 years ago during the Gupta dynasty.
- It was called 'chaturanga' in earlier times.
- Chess, via India, reached many countries of the world and became very popular.
- Today, chess is being used in schools as an education tool for children.

PUSHP

- **Context:** PM Modi gave the 'PUSHP' mantra for making India a developed nation while addressing the Indian diaspora in New York.

About PUSHUP

- P stands for Progressive Bharat, U stands for Unstoppable Bharat, S stands for Spiritual Bharat, H stands for Humanity First Bharat, and P stands for Prosperous Bharat.
 - All five petals of the Pushp (flower) will make viksit bharat (developed India).
- The Prime Minister also announced that two new Indian consulates will be opened in the US to strengthen ties with the Indian diaspora across the United States.

23rd SEPTEMBER 2024

Supreme Court Judgement on Child Pornography

- **Context:** The Supreme Court held that viewing in private, downloading, storing, possessing, distributing or displaying pornographic acts involving children, attract criminal liability under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012 and the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Background

- The Supreme Court verdict was based on an appeal filed by NGO, Just Right for Children Alliance, against a Madras High Court decision.
- The High Court had concluded that watching or downloading pornographic acts involving children in private domains was not a crime under the POCSO Act.

Verdict of the Supreme Court

- The Supreme Court urged the Parliament to amend the POCSO Act to substitute the term “child pornography” with “Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material” or CSEAM.
 - The term child pornography can lead to a trivialisation of the crime, as pornography is often seen as a consensual act between adults.

- The court said that Section 67B of the Information Technology (IT) Act had penalized the use, transmission and publication of obscene materials, including child pornography.
 - It has also made browsing, creation, collection, online facilitation or enticement of children into any sexual act or conduct an offence.
- Section 15 of the POCSO Act penalizes storage of child pornography with an intention to share or transmit it.
- The court evolved the principle of ‘constructive possession’, which means a person was accountable if at any point of time he had an invariable degree of power and knowledge to control, manipulate, alter, modify or destroy the material.

Vivad se Vishwas 2.0

- **Context:** Vivad Se Vishwas 2.0 tax payment rates will rise by 10% from January 1, 2025.

About Vivad se Vishwas 2.0

- The Direct Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme, 2024 (DTVSV, 2024) was announced in the Union Budget 2024-25 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
- The scheme will come into force on October 1, 2024.
- **Legislation:** The DTVSV Scheme was enacted through the Finance (No. 2) Act, 2024.
- The scheme offers lower settlement amounts for “new appellants” compared to “old appellants” and for those who file declarations by December 31, 2024

24th SEPTEMBER 2024

National Credit Framework (NCrF)

- **Context:** The National Credit Framework (NCrF) aims to modernize India’s higher education by promoting flexibility, skill-based learning, and multidisciplinary courses.

About National Credit Framework (NCrF)

- The National Credit Framework (NCrF) is a transformative reform that is derived from the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- It has been jointly developed by different institutions including CBSE, NCERT, Ministry of Education, DGT, and Ministry of Skill Development to achieve this vision and intent of NEP.
- NCrF is a comprehensive framework encompassing elementary, school, higher, and vocational education & training, integrating learning on all dimensions.

Significance of NCrF

- **Flexibility in Learning:** Students can choose from various courses and activities to earn credits, allowing them to tailor their education to their interests and career goals.
- **Skill Development:** The NCrF emphasizes practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge, preparing students for real-world challenges and increasing their employability.
- **Credit Transferability:** It helps students in higher education by allowing them to collect and transfer credits easily, even when they study different subjects, including skills training.
- **Multidisciplinary Approach:** NCrF provides for broad based, multi-disciplinary, holistic education, allowing imaginative and need based curricular structures.

SPICED Scheme

- **Context:** The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry has approved the SPICED scheme (Sustainability in Spice Sector through Progressive, Innovative, and Collaborative Interventions for Export Development) to be implemented until 2025-26.

Key Facts

- The scheme focuses on increasing the area and productivity of small and large cardamom,

enhancing the quality of spices for export through post-harvest improvements, and promoting value-added spice exports.

Key objectives:

- Expanding cardamom cultivation and increasing productivity for export.
- Enhancing post-harvest quality, meeting export standards, and improving compliance with safety and quality regulations.
- Though, India is the world's largest spice producer. It is also the largest consumer and exporter of spices.

Indian Army inducts Robotic Mules

- **Context:** The Indian Army has inducted 100 robotic mules (Multi-Utility Legged Equipment) in forward areas.

Key Highlights

- The four-legged robotic mules have a sleek design and are equipped with thermal cameras and other sensors, which enable them to carry out surveillance.
- They can climb stairs, steep hills and other hurdles and can operate in extreme temperatures, ranging from -40 to +55 degrees Celsius and carry a payload of 15kg.
- They can also be integrated with small arms, and can engage with an enemy without putting a human life at risk, if needed.

25th SEPTEMBER 2024

Make in India

- **Context:** On September 25, 2014, the "Make in India" initiative completed 10 years as a pivotal step in India's nation-building efforts.

Pillars of 'Make in India'

- **New Processes:** The "Make in India" initiative identified 'ease of doing business' as a crucial factor for promoting entrepreneurship.

- **New Infrastructure:** The government focused on developing industrial corridors and smart cities, integrating state-of-the-art technology and high-speed communication to create world-class infrastructure.
- **New Sectors:** Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was significantly opened up in various sectors including Defence Production, Insurance, Medical Devices, Construction, and Railway infrastructure.
- **New Mindset:** The government embraced a role as a facilitator rather than a regulator, to foster a collaborative environment that supported industrial growth and innovation.

Major Achievements under Make in India

- FDI inflows have steadily risen, starting from \$45.14 billion in 2014-15 to a record \$84.83 billion in 2021-22.
- India made remarkable progress in improving its business environment, climbing from 142nd in 2014 to 63rd in the World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR) published in October 2019 before its discontinuation.
- India recorded merchandise exports worth \$437.06 billion in FY 2023-24, reflecting the country's growing role in global trade.
- The textile industry has created a staggering 14.5 crore jobs across the country, significantly contributing to India's employment landscape.
- Vande Bharat Trains, India's first indigenous semi-high-speed trains, are a shining example of the success of the 'Make in India' initiative.
- India became a major exporter of life-saving vaccines to many developing and underdeveloped countries across the world.
- India's electronics sector has experienced rapid growth, reaching USD 155 billion in FY23.

Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN)

- **Context:** India has joined the US-led Minerals Security Finance Network, an initiative aimed at strengthening global cooperation in securing critical mineral supply chains.

About Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN)

- It is a new initiative emerging from the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), a framework established by the US in 2022.
- The network aims to bring together institutions from the Indo-Pacific region and Europe, promoting cooperation, information exchange, and co-financing.

About Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)

- It is a US-led collaboration that would focus on the supply chains of minerals such as Cobalt, Nickel, Lithium, and also the 17 'rare earth' minerals.
- **Members:** Australia, Canada, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Norway, Sweden, the UK, U.S., and the EU. India was inducted to the MSP in 2023.
- **Mandate:** To catalyze public and private investment in critical mineral supply chains globally.

26th SEPTEMBER 2024

Pact for the Future

- **Context:** The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has adopted the Pact for the Future.

About Pact for the Future

- The Pact along with its annexes, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, was adopted by consensus
- **UN Member States pledged to:**
 - Turbocharge the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on climate change, two landmark 2015 agreements that have seen halting progress and missed milestones;
 - Listen to young people and include them in decision-making, at the national and global levels;
 - Build stronger partnerships with civil society, the private sector, local and regional authorities and more;

- Redouble efforts to build and sustain peaceful, inclusive and just societies and address the root causes of conflicts;
- Protect all civilians in armed conflict;
- Accelerate the implementation of commitments on women, peace and security.

Asia Power Index, 2024

- **Context:** India has become the third most powerful nation in Asia, surpassing Japan in the Asia Power Index. USA and China have been ranked at 1st and 2nd place, respectively

About Asia Power Index

- **Launched by:** Lowy Institute in 2018.
- **Scope:** It is an annual measure that examines power dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Coverage:** The Index evaluates 27 countries across the region, analyzing their ability to shape and respond to their external environment.
- **Objectives:** A country's overall power score is derived from a weighted average of 8 measures, which are divided into resource-based and influence-based determinants, encompassing 131 individual indicators. The Asia Power Index provides valuable insights into the geopolitical landscape of the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting the growing influence of countries like India.

PARAM Rudra Supercomputers

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated three PARAM Rudra Supercomputers worth ₹130 crore under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).

Key Facts

- These indigenously developed supercomputers, deployed in Pune, Delhi, and Kolkata, will drive advanced research in physics, cosmology, earth sciences, and other scientific fields. The Giant Metre Radio Telescope (GMRT) in Pune, Inter-University

Accelerator Centre (IUAC) in Delhi, and S.N. Bose Centre in Kolkata will utilize these systems for cutting-edge research, enhancing India's scientific capabilities.

- Additionally, the Prime Minister launched a High-Performance Computing (HPC) system focused on weather and climate research. They are located at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) in Pune and the National Center for Medium Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF) in Noida.
- These systems, named 'Arka' and 'Arunika', are tailored to provide more accurate predictions for tropical cyclones, thunderstorms, heat waves, and other critical weather phenomena.

About National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)

- It is an important initiative by the Government of India to boost indigenous efforts to be in the forefront of supercomputing capability for socio-economic development of the nation.
- The mission was jointly steered by the Ministry of Electronics and IT and Department of Science & Technology.

27th SEPTEMBER 2024

World Tourism Day

- **Context:** World Tourism Day is celebrated on 27th of September every year.

Key Facts

- The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) established World Tourism Day in 1980, marking the adoption of the UNWTO Statutes on September 27, 1970.
- The day is celebrated with the aim of using tourism as a major means for sustainable development and poverty alleviation
- **Theme for 2024:** 'Tourism and Peace.'

Potential of Tourism in India

- India is geographically diverse and offers a variety of cultures that come with its own experiences, making it one of the leading countries in terms of international tourism expenditure.
- By 2028, India's tourism and hospitality industry is projected to generate revenue of over \$59 Bn. Additionally, Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) are anticipated to reach 30.5 Mn by 2028.
- According to the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 report published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), India is ranked 39th among 119 countries.
- In the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC's) Economic Impact 2023 report, India's Travel and Tourism GDP contribution grew by 5.9%.

ABHED

- **Context:** The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with researchers from IIT Delhi, has developed the ABHED bulletproof jacket.

About ABHED

- These are the lightweight bulletproof jackets.
- The jacket uses a combination of polymers and boron carbide ceramic materials, known for their high strength-to-weight ratios.
- It is capable of withstanding high-velocity projectiles, enhancing soldier safety during combat.
- ABHED's indigenous development strengthens India's defence capabilities and positions the country as a potential competitor in the global defence market.

28th SEPTEMBER 2024

General Consent to CBI

- **Context:** The Karnataka government has withdrawn general consent for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate cases in the state, citing misuse of power and lack of communication.

Key Highlights

- With this, Karnataka has joined the list of states (such as Punjab, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya) in withdrawing general consent for the CBI in recent years.
- Traditionally, almost all states have given CBI general consent. However, since 2015, several states have begun to act differently.
 - In 2015, Mizoram became the first state to withdraw the general consent. Although the state restored it in 2023.
- At the time of withdrawing consent, all states alleged that the Union government was using the CBI to unfairly target the opposition.

About General Consent to the CBI

- General Consent is an approval given by a state government to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), allowing it to operate freely within the state without the need to seek permission every time the agency takes up a case or enters the state for investigation.
- The General Consent is important because law and order are state subjects, and the CBI, being a central agency, needs state permission to exercise its jurisdiction within a state.

About Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- CBI, functioning under the Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances, Government of India, is the premier investigating police agency in India.
- It was established by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, in 1963.
- The Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption recommended the establishment of the CBI.
- It is also the nodal police agency in India that coordinates investigations on behalf of Interpol member countries.

GlobE Steering Committee

- **Context:** India has been elected to the GlobE Network's steering committee in Beijing, gaining a pivotal role in shaping global anti-corruption efforts.

Key Facts

- The Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GloBE Network) was an initiative of G-20.
 - It was officially launched on June 3, 2021, during a special event at the UN General Assembly Special Session against Corruption.
- It now has 121 member countries and 219 member authorities.
- The GloBE Network is a platform where agencies from across the world share criminal intelligence, develop strategies, and support in the common cause of combating corruption.
- The Network has one chair, one vice-chair and 13 members in the Steering Committee for providing leadership to the organization.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs is the central authority for GloBE Network, while the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate are its member authorities from India.
- During India's G-20 Presidency in 2023, two high-level principles for combating corruption were adopted which detailed leveraging of the GloBE Network.

Bharat 6G Alliance

- **Context:** The Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA) presented detailed action plans for 6G technology development during a high-level meeting in Bengaluru.

About Bharat 6G Alliance

- The Bharat 6G Alliance is a collaborative platform bringing together academia, industry, and government to build a comprehensive 6G ecosystem in India.
- The Alliance focuses on research, development, and standardization of 6G technology, with the goal

of making India a global leader in the emerging 6G landscape.

About Bharat 6G Vision

- In 2023, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi unveiled India's "Bharat 6G Vision," aiming for the country to take a leading role in the design, development, and implementation of 6G technology by 2030.
- **The Bharat 6G Vision is built on three core principles:** affordability, sustainability, and ubiquity.
- It seeks to position India as a global leader in delivering innovative and cost-effective telecom solutions that benefit society.

29th SEPTEMBER 2024

Global Innovation Index 2024

- **Context:** India has risen to 39th position among 133 global economies in the Global Innovation Index 2024.

Key Facts

- The Global Innovation Index (GII) is published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a specialized agency of the United Nations.
- It measures innovation based on criteria that include institutions, human capital and research, infrastructure, credit, investment, linkages; the creation, absorption and diffusion of knowledge; and creative outputs.

Key Highlights of Global Innovation Index 2024

- **Top performer:** Switzerland, Sweden, the United States, Singapore and the United Kingdom
- **Fastest 10-year climbers:** China, Turkiye, India, Viet Nam and the Philippines.

India's Performance

- India has been on a rising trajectory, over the past several years in the Global Innovation Index (GII), from a rank of 81 in 2015 to 40 in 2023.

- India's strengths lie in key indicators such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services exports (at 1st place, globally), venture capital received and intangible asset intensity.
- India's unicorn companies also secure the country the 8th rank globally.

Initiatives taken by India

- The Atal Innovation Mission has played a major role in expanding the Innovation ecosystem.
- The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) was established to foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, research institutions, and R&D laboratories.
- Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) established by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is aimed at strengthening and empowering emerging biotechnology enterprises to undertake strategic research and innovation.
- **National Research Foundation (NRF):** Announced as part of the National Education Policy 2020, NRF aims to promote a culture of research and innovation in universities and higher education institutions by funding interdisciplinary research.

Lothal

- **Context:** Researchers from IIT Gandhinagar have discovered new evidence supporting the existence of a dock at Lothal, an important Harappan site in India.

About Lothal

- Lothal, located 80 km southwest of Ahmedabad, was discovered by local villagers long before its official excavation led by archaeologist S. R. Rao. He identified the large structure as a dockyard for maritime trade, capable of sluicing ships 18-20m long. Lothal was believed to be a hub for maritime commerce due to the presence of seals, traded items, and stone anchors.
- Since Lothal's discovery, archaeologists have debated whether the 215m-long and 37m-wide structure was a dockyard. The Archaeological

Survey of India (ASI) has supported this theory, but some scholars suggested it might have been a reservoir.

- The IIT-Gandhinagar study used satellite imagery to reveal old Sabarmati River channels flowing near Lothal, suggesting that boats could have sailed through to other Harappan sites like Dholavira.
- Lothal's name means "the mound of the dead" in Gujarati. The city was a thriving trading port around 3700 BCE, and excavations between 1955 and 1960 by ASI revealed its connection to an ancient river system crucial for trade.
- Lothal has been nominated to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Lothal and Dholavira (in Gujarat) are two major Harappan sites in India. Both share similarities, such as the presence of large reservoirs, but differ in size and urban layout.

30th SEPTEMBER 2024

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

- **Context:** PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has seen over 1.28 crore registrations and 14.84 lakh applications, indicating significant interest.

About PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana

- It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 15, 2024, is a significant initiative aimed at transforming India's energy landscape by providing free electricity to households.
- The initiative offers a substantial subsidy of up to 40% on the cost of installing solar panels on rooftops, encouraging households to adopt solar energy.
- The scheme is designed to benefit 1 crore households across the country.
- It is projected to generate substantial savings for the government, estimated at Rs. 75,000 crores annually in electricity costs.
- This initiative emphasizes the government's commitment to promoting sustainable energy and ensuring energy access for all citizens.

Parivesh 2.0 Portal

- **Context:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) received only 32 applications to register exotic species on the Parivesh 2.0 portal.

About Parivesh

- PARIVESH stands for (Pro-Active Responsive Facilitation by Interactive and Virtuous Environmental Singlewindow Hub).
- Parivesh was originally launched in 2018 to provide a single window for various environmental, forest, wildlife, and coastal regulation zone clearances.
- Parivesh 2.0 is an enhanced version designed to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the approval process.
- It provides a single platform for environmental clearances, forest clearances, wildlife clearances, and coastal regulation zone clearances.
- Parivesh 2.0 introduces a mobile app that allows project proponents to track their clearance applications and compliance submissions.

Significance of Parivesh 2.0

- Improves Ease of Doing Business
- Ensures better environmental governance
- Reduces Delay in Clearances

