



16 March, 2024

Government approves E- Vehicle policy

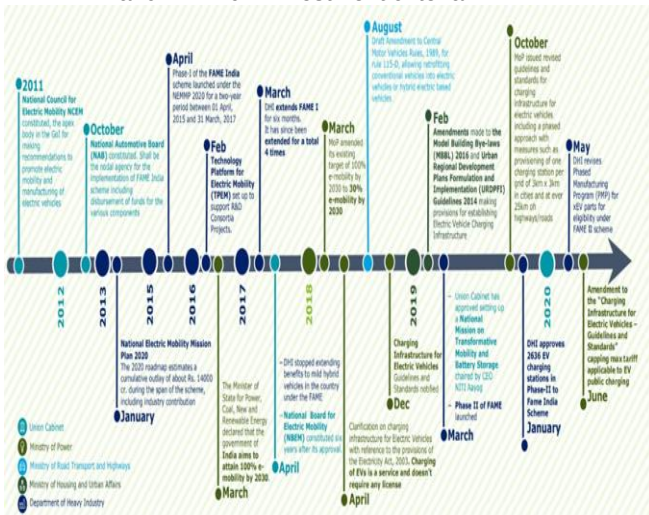
Context: The Union Government has greenlit a scheme to promote India as a manufacturing hub for cutting-edge electric vehicles (EVs).

Objective:

- Encourage investments in the electric vehicle (EV) sector by renowned global manufacturers.
- Provide Indian consumers access to cutting-edge technology.
- Strengthen the Make in India initiative.
- Foster healthy competition among EV manufacturers to enhance production volumes and lower production costs.
- Reduce reliance on crude oil imports.
- Mitigate air pollution, especially in urban areas, for improved public health and environmental sustainability.

Policy Details:

- **Minimum investment required:** Rs 4150 crore (approximately USD 500 million).
- No maximum limit on investment.
- **Manufacturing timeline:** Establish manufacturing facilities within 3 years, commence commercial production of EVs, and achieve 50% domestic value addition (DVA) within 5 years.
- **Domestic value addition (DVA) targets:** Achieve 25% localization by the 3rd year and 50% by the 5th year of manufacturing.
- **Customs duty:** Applicable at 15% for vehicles with a minimum CIF value of USD 35,000 or more, for a period of 5 years, contingent upon setting up manufacturing facilities within 3 years.
- **Duty foregone limit:** Capped at the investment made or ₹6484 crore (equal to incentive under PLI scheme), whichever is lower. Maximum import of 40,000 EVs at a rate not exceeding 8,000 per year if the investment exceeds USD 800 million.
- **Bank guarantee:** Required to back the investment commitment, invoked in case of non-achievement of DVA and minimum investment criteria.



Initiatives to Promote E-Vehicles in India:

- **FAME I & II:** Provides incentives for EV purchases and charging infrastructure installation.
- **NEMMP:** Aims for 30% electric vehicles on Indian roads by 2030.
- **Tax Benefits:** Proposed additional income tax deduction of INR 1.5 Lakh on interest paid for EV loans.
- **PLI Scheme:** Intended to boost domestic manufacturing and attract global investment.
- **NTTM:** National Technical Textiles Mission to promote technical textiles, including in EV industry.
- **Battery Manufacturing Units:** Establishment to bolster EV usage.
- **Promotion in Public Transport:** Financial assistance to states for electric bus procurement (e.g., E-buses in Delhi).
- **Last-Mile Connectivity:** Fleet deployment for last-mile mobility (e.g., Chennai's fleet of over 5,000 vehicles).
- **E-Vehicles in Government:** Replacement of government vehicles with EVs.
- **Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP):** Encourages indigenous EV manufacturing and components assembly.
- **National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Storage:** Drives strategies for transformative mobility and EV components manufacturing.

Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024

Context: The government has notified the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024, aiming to enhance the film certification process significantly.

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, has introduced the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024, superseding the 1983 rules, to modernize the film certification process.

Background:

- The Indian film industry is among the largest globally, producing over 3,000 films annually in over 40 languages.
- The Honorable Prime Minister envisions India as a content hub, leveraging its rich cultural diversity.
- The Minister for Information and Broadcasting recognizes Indian cinema's role in promoting Indian culture globally.

Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024:

- The rules aim to modernize the film certification process for the digital age, ensuring transparency and efficiency.
- Extensive consultations with stakeholders were conducted to ensure inclusivity and alignment with Prime Minister's vision.

Key Improvements:

Adoption of Online Certification Processes:

- The rules embrace online certification processes to enhance transparency, efficiency, and ease of doing business for the film industry.
- This shift towards online processes aligns with modern technological advancements and facilitates a smoother certification experience for filmmakers.

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➤ Reduction of Processing Timelines:

- A significant improvement involves reducing the timelines for processing film certification.
- By streamlining procedures and adopting complete digital processes, unnecessary delays in the certification process are eliminated, ensuring a quicker turnaround for filmmakers.

➤ Introduction of Age-Based Certification Categories:

- The rules introduce age-based categories of certification to ensure age-appropriate content consumption.
- Instead of the existing UA category, films will now be categorized based on age groups, including seven years (UA 7+), thirteen years (UA 13+), and sixteen years (UA 16+).
- These age markers are intended as recommendations for parents or guardians to assess the suitability of films for children, promoting responsible viewing habits.

➤ Greater Representation of Women in CBFC:

- The new rules prioritize gender diversity by mandating a greater representation of women in the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and its advisory panels.
- Specifically, one-third of the board's members are stipulated to be women, with a preference for half of the members being women.
- This measure aims to ensure diverse perspectives in the certification process and promote gender equality in decision-making roles.

➤ System for Priority Screening of Films:

- To address urgent needs of filmmakers, a system for priority screening of films has been established.
- This provision allows for expediting the certification process in cases where filmmakers have prior commitments for releasing their films, facilitating smoother business operations.

➤ Perpetual Validity of Certificates:

- The rules remove the restriction on the validity of certificates issued by the CBFC, ensuring perpetual validity.
- This change provides filmmakers with greater flexibility and eliminates the need for recurrent certification, contributing to a more efficient and sustainable process.

➤ Recertification of Edited Films for Television Broadcast:

- Films edited for television broadcast will undergo recertification to ensure compliance with broadcasting standards.
- Only films categorized as Unrestricted Public Exhibition will be eligible for television broadcast, ensuring content appropriateness for television audiences.

➤ Acknowledgment of Advancements:

- The new rules acknowledge advancements in film technology, audience demographics, and content distribution methods over the past 40 years.
- The overhaul aims to better cater to the evolving needs of the film industry.

Atmospheric Research Testbed

Context: The inaugural phase of India's Atmospheric Research Testbed in Central India (ART-CI) commenced at Silkheda in Sehore district, situated approximately 50 km northwest of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.

➤ Introduction to ART-CI:

- Funded by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), ART-CI houses 25 high-end meteorological instruments.
- Its primary focus is studying vital cloud processes associated with the monsoons over central India's Monsoon Core Zone (MCZ).

➤ Purpose of ART:

- ART serves as an open-field research program aimed at conducting ground-based observations of weather parameters and synoptic systems during the southwest monsoon season.
- It generates high volumes of data over time to improve existing weather models and enhance rainfall predictions.

➤ Setup and Operations:

- Spread across 100 acres, ART is developed at a cost of Rs 125 crore and operated by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune.
- The first phase involves remote sensing-based and in-situ measurements using 25 meteorological instruments.

➤ Importance of ART:

- India's agriculture sector heavily relies on monsoon rainfall, especially in the Monsoon Core Zone (MCZ).
- The ART's location in central India facilitates direct monitoring of rain-bearing synoptic systems, crucial for understanding and predicting monsoon behaviour.

➤ Significance of Central India Studies:

- Studies have correlated all-India rainfall performance to rainfall received over central India, emphasizing its importance.
- Limited understanding of synoptic systems and their role in enhancing monsoon rainfall necessitates focused research in this region.

➤ Impact of Climate Change:

- Climate change-induced variations in rainfall patterns underscore the need for accurate forecasting to mitigate risks.
- ART enables long-term observations on cloud microphysics, precipitation, and land-surface properties to enhance forecast accuracy.

➤ Choice of Madhya Pradesh:

- Silkheda's strategic location aligns with major rain-bearing synoptic system paths, facilitating direct monitoring and tracking.
- The pristine environment free of pollutants makes it an ideal site for deploying sensitive meteorological instruments.

➤ ART Equipment:

- Equipped with over two dozen high-end instruments including aethalometers, cloud condensation nuclei counters, and radars.

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- Notably, ART houses India's tallest meteorological tower at 72 meters, facilitating continuous observations of atmospheric parameters.

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Kochrab Ashram



Recently, the Prime Minister of India inaugurated the redeveloped Kochrab Ashram and launched the Master plan of the Gandhi Ashram Memorial at Mahatma Gandhi Ashram in Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

About Kochrab Ashram:

- The Kochrab Ashram is a **colonial-style building** with a white-washed facade located in Kochrab village, **Gujarat**.
- Initially named **Satyagraha Ashram**, reflecting Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent resistance in the struggle for Indian independence.
- It was the **first Ashram established by Mahatma Gandhi upon his return to India from South Africa in 1915**.
- This Ashram served as a hub for various constructive programs and experiments in **self-reliance** and community living.
- Jivanlal Desai**, a fellow lawyer and colleague, assisted Gandhiji in setting up the Kochrab Ashram
- It stands as a symbol of **Gandhi's principles of truth, non-violence and simplicity**, which continue to inspire people globally.

Private Placement



Recently, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has taken a significant decision to repeal certain circulars related to the allotment of securities through a private placement route.

About Private Placement:

- Private Placement refers to the **issuance of securities** by a company to a select group of investors without making a public offer.
- Placement is governed by regulations set forth by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) under the **Companies Act, 2013**.
- Under the **Companies Act, 1956**, the limit for private placement was issuance of securities to **49 people**.
- This was increased to up to 200 investors under the Companies Act, 2013.
- It is commonly used by companies to raise capital for various purposes, such as **expansion, debt repayment or working capital needs**.
- Companies engaging in Private Placement must comply with disclosure requirements specified by SEBI to ensure transparency and protection of investors' interests.
- Non-compliance with the regulations governing Private Placement may result in penalties imposed by SEBI or other regulatory authorities.
- In certain cases, SEBI may provide relaxation for companies issuing securities to more than the specified limit of investors, subject to meeting specific conditions such as providing investors with options for refund or higher returns.

Neurological Disorder



Recently, a study published in the Lancet Neurology revealed that in 2021, 3.40 billion individuals (43.1% of the global population) lived with a neurological condition, leading to 11.1 million deaths attributed to nervous system conditions.

About Neurological Disorder:

- A neurological disorder affects a significant portion of the **global population**, with billions of individuals worldwide living with this condition.
- A neurological disorder contributes to a **substantial number of deaths globally**.
- This disorder is a leading cause of disability worldwide, affecting an individual's ability to lead a productive and fulfilling life.
- Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)** are commonly used to measure the burden of a neurological disorder, reflecting the years of healthy life lost due to illness, disability, or premature death.
- It encompasses a wide range of conditions, including **stroke, Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, migraine, neuropathy, meningitis** and nervous system cancers.
- A neurological disorder ranks among the top causes of DALYs globally, underscoring its significant impact on population health.
- While the prevalence of a neurological disorder may remain relatively stable over time, improvements in medical care and interventions have led to reductions in mortality rates and DALYs in some cases.
- Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)** often bear a disproportionate burden of a neurological disorder due to limited access to specialized healthcare services and resources.
- Some neurological disorders exhibit gender disparities, with variations in prevalence and impact across different age groups.

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Personality in News

Laxminarayan Ramdas



Laxminarayan Ramdas (5 September 1933-15 March 2024)

Former Navy Chief Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas was born in Matunga, Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Contributions:

- As the **13th Chief of Naval Staff**, Admiral Ramdas initiated the historic induction of women into the Indian Navy.
- He served as the commander of **INS Beas**, a vessel that played a crucial role in the blockade of East Pakistan.
- He also served as the **Indian Naval Attaché in Bonn**, West Germany, from 1973 to 1976.

Awards and Honours:

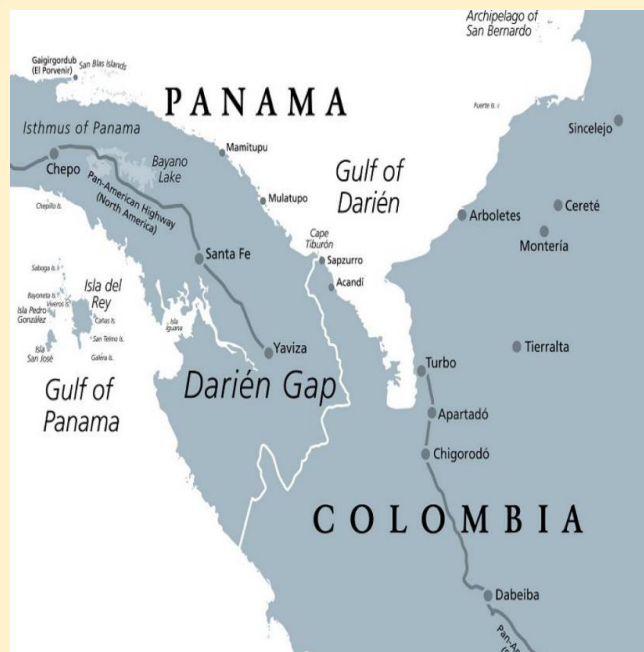
- Ramdas won the **Vir Chakra** (the country's third-highest gallantry award) for his bravery during the **1971 war** as commander of INS Beas.
- He won the **Ramon Magsaysay award in 2004** for advocating peace between the two nuclear armed neighbours.

Ethical Values: Integrity, Courage, Compassion, etc.

Recently, there has been a notable shift in discussions regarding illegal immigration to the US, with increased attention directed towards the Darien Gap in the south.

About the Darien Gap:

- The Darien Gap is located between northern **Colombia** and southern **Panama**.
- The region is characterized by **dense forested jungle, rugged mountains, and fast-flowing rivers**.
- It lacks paved roads and other modern infrastructure.
- It serves as a **natural barrier between Central and South America**.
- Due to its dense vegetation and challenging terrain, navigation through the Darien Gap is extremely difficult.
- It requires **traversing muddy paths, steep rocks and crossing turbulent rivers**.
- Despite its challenges, the Darien Gap has become a **major route for global human migration**, especially for individuals seeking **asylum in the United States**.
- Migrants often rely on paid guides to navigate through the jungle.
- The region is known to be controlled by criminal organizations involved in human trafficking and smuggling.



Place in News

The Darien Gap

POINTS TO PONDER

- Who have been appointed recently as Election Commissioners following the retirement of Anup Chandra Pandey and the resignation of Arun Goel? – **Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu**
- Which state is set to become the first to purchase land in Jammu and Kashmir for constructing a facility catering to tourists and officials visiting the Union Territory? – **Maharashtra**
- Who have been jointly awarded the Chameli Devi Jain Award 2024, recently for Outstanding Woman Media Person of the Year? – **Greeshma Kuthar and Ritika Chopra**
- Who has been appointed as the Prime Minister by Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas, following the resignation of Mohammed Shtayyeh? – **Mohammed Mustafa**
- With which two countries has Japan signed a treaty to co-develop next-generation fighter jets recently? – **Britain and Italy**

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DELHI MUKHERJEE NAGAR: 9205274741, 42 | **LAXMI NAGAR** : 9205212500, 9205962002 | **RAJENDRA NAGAR**: 9205274743 | **UTTAR PRADESH PRAYAGRAJ**: 0532-2260189, 8853467068 | **LUCKNOW** (ALIGANJ): 0522-4025825, 9506256789 | **LUCKNOW** (GOMTI NAGAR): 7234000501, 7234000502 | **GREATER NOIDA**: 9205336037, 38 | **KANPUR**: 7887003962, 7897003962 | **GORAKHPUR**: 7080847474, 9161947474 | **ODISHA BHUBANESWAR**: 9818244644/7656949029



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