



23 March, 2024

Govt's Fact Check Unit

Context: The Supreme Court paused the Centre's Fact Check Unit (FCU) notification under the Press Information Bureau (PIB) pending the Bombay High Court's final decision on the challenge to the amended Information Technology (IT) Rules.

➤ Background: Amendment to IT Rules 2021

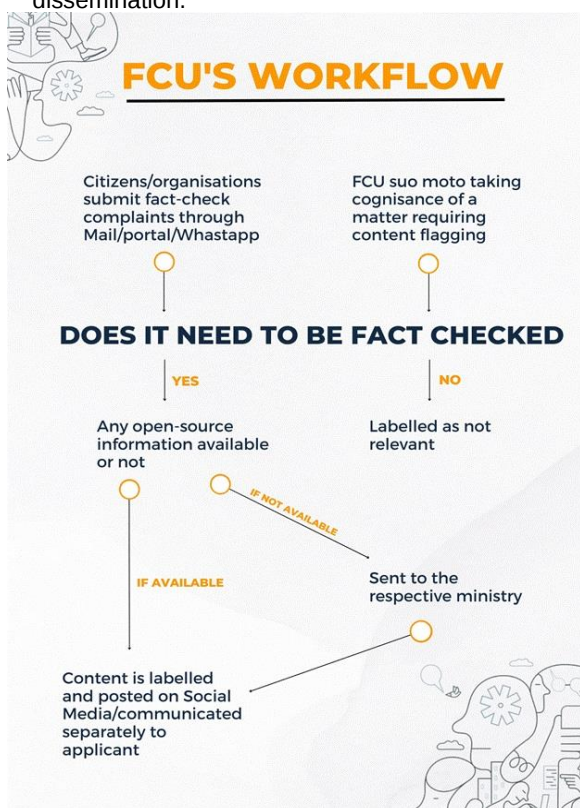
- The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules 2023 were notified in April 2023.
- The amendment introduced a legal mechanism for the government to fact-check online content related to the Central Government's business.

➤ Notification of FCU under PIB

- The Fact Check Unit (FCU) was notified on March 20, a day before a Supreme Court hearing regarding a plea for an interim stay on the amended Rules.
- This notification gave the FCU legal status and imposed obligations on online platforms to remove content flagged as "fake."

➤ Key Components

- **Social Media Cell:** Tasked with disseminating news regarding the government's welfare schemes and initiatives across various social media platforms.
- **Central Task Force (CTF):** Located in Chennai, it functions as the official fact-checking unit for the State, ensuring accuracy in information dissemination.



➤ Existence of PIB's Fact-Checking Unit

- The Press Information Bureau (PIB) has had an official fact-checking unit for over four years.

- The FCU, under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, operates as the media and publicity arm of the Government of India.

➤ Activities of PIB's Fact-Checking Unit

- Since its establishment in November 2019, the unit has fact-checked thousands of WhatsApp forwards, YouTube videos, and media articles.
- Between November 2020 and June 2023, the FCU addressed 28,380 instances of "fake news" on digital platforms.

➤ Functioning of the FCU

- The FCU identifies and labels misleading content, then publicizes its findings through social media channels.
- It responds to complaints and evaluates them against authoritative government sources.
- The FCU employs a two-step process: researching complaints and cross-referencing with relevant ministries before creating and disseminating content.

➤ Legal Ramifications and Future Implications

- If the Supreme Court vacates the stay on the March 20 notification, online platforms will be legally required to remove flagged content or face consequences.
- These powers to combat misinformation can significantly impact online discourse, especially with upcoming elections.

Occupational heat and Miscarriages

Context: A study in six Tamil Nadu districts observed pregnant women working strenuously in the informal sector, mainly in agriculture, brick kilns, salt pans, and construction.

➤ Impact of Heatwaves on Pregnant Women:

- Heatwaves occurring in tropical regions like India can have detrimental effects on the health of pregnant women, particularly due to occupational heat exposure.
- This exposure poses a significant risk to both mothers and their unborn babies, doubling the likelihood of miscarriages or stillbirths.

➤ Study Overview:

- The study was conducted across six districts in Tamil Nadu, focusing on pregnant women engaged in heavy manual labor within the informal sector, including agriculture, brick kilns, salt pans, and construction sites.
- These women typically worked long hours from 6 am to 5 pm in extreme heat conditions, often without access to adequate facilities such as toilets and shade, necessitating them to carry water bottles due to limited access to safe drinking water.
- Researchers recruited a total of 800 women between eight to 14 weeks into their pregnancy, with half of

Face to Face Centres





23 March, 2024

them employed in the formal sector for comparison purposes.

➤ Findings:

- The cohort exposed to heat exhibited higher rates of adverse pregnancy outcomes, including a miscarriage rate of 5%, stillbirths or preterm births at 6.1%, and low birth weight at 8.4%.
- In contrast, women not exposed to heat in their jobs showed lower rates of adverse outcomes, with miscarriages at 2%, stillbirths or preterm births at 2.6%, and low birth weight at 4.5%.

➤ Heat Exposure Metrics:

- The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) was employed to quantify heat exposure, with a yearly average WBGT of 27.1°C during the study period.
- WBGT levels exceeding the Threshold Limit Value (TLV) during early pregnancy were associated with an increased risk of miscarriage.

➤ Physiological Impact:

- The study recorded a rise in core body temperature in 17.4% of exposed workers, with 29.6% experiencing moderate dehydration.
- High heat exposure was found to restrict foetal growth during the second and third trimesters, elevating the risk of congenital birth defects.

➤ Risk Factors:

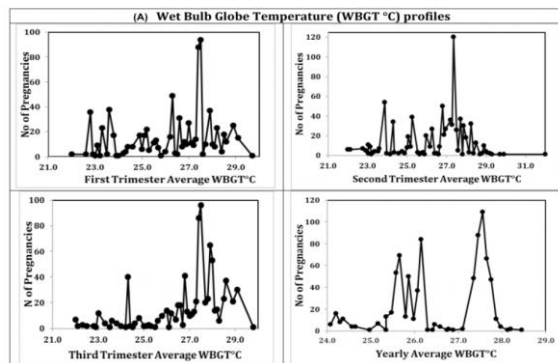
- Exposure to heat above TLV during the first trimester was linked to a 3.1 times higher risk of pregnancy-related complications.
- Similarly, exposure above WBGT TLV in the third trimester doubled the likelihood of adverse birth outcomes.
- Overall, heat exposure was associated with a 2.2 times increased risk of adverse foetal or maternal outcomes across all trimesters.

➤ Physiological Mechanisms and Future Research:

- Despite extensive research, there remains an incomplete understanding of the physiological mechanisms underlying the impact of heat exposure on pregnant women.
- Previous studies have suggested that increased temperatures may hinder the foetus's physiological requirements, highlighting the need for further investigation.

➤ Urgency of Heat Protection:

- A majority of heat-exposed workers reported urogenital symptoms potentially associated with pregnancy complications.
- Given the anticipated global temperature rise, prioritizing heat protection measures for pregnant workers is imperative to mitigate risks.



National Internet Exchange of India

Context: During the Universal Acceptance (UA) Day event, the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) collaborated to launch the BhashaNet portal successfully.

NIXI was established in 2003 as a not-for-profit organization, operating under the statutory provisions of the Companies Act 2013.

➤ Purpose and Function:

- The primary objective of NIXI is to optimize the utilization of Internet Service Protocols (ISPs) within India's digital landscape.
- One of its key functions is to facilitate the routing of domestic internet traffic within the country's borders, thereby improving service quality by reducing latency.
- By promoting local routing of internet traffic, NIXI helps ISPs save on international bandwidth charges, ultimately benefiting consumers with better service quality.
- NIXI plays a pivotal role in fostering the growth of internet penetration and adoption across India by managing and enabling the internet ecosystem for the masses.

➤ Management of .IN Domain:

- NIXI is entrusted with the management of India's Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD), which is .IN.
- The Government of India delegated the operations of INRegistry to NIXI in 2004, giving it the responsibility to oversee and manage India's .IN ccTLD to ensure its smooth functioning.

➤ National Internet Registry (NIR):

- In addition to managing domain names, NIXI also operates the Indian Registry for Internet Names and Numbers (IRINN), serving as the National Internet Registry.
- IRINN is instrumental in the allocation and management of IP addresses and domain names within the Indian cyberspace.

➤ Promotion of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs):

- NIXI actively promotes and supports the establishment of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) across various regions of India.
- IXPs play a crucial role in facilitating the efficient exchange of internet traffic within the country, contributing to the development of a robust and interconnected internet infrastructure nationwide.

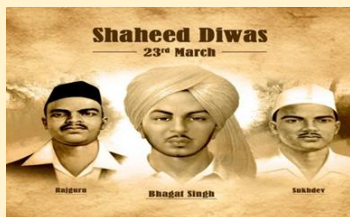
Face to Face Centres



23 March, 2024

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Shaheed Diwas



Today, the nation commemorates the martyrdom day of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev.

About Shaheed Diwas:

- Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev embraced the gallows with courage, on **April 8, 1929**, they threw bombs at the Central Legislative Assembly, shouting slogans of "**Inquilab Zindabad**" (Long Live the Revolution) as they faced execution.
- Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev were hanged at the Central Jail in **Lahore on March 23, 1931**.
- The day is commemorated as 'Shaheed Diwas' to remember their unparalleled sacrifice.
- Bhagat Singh, along with his companions, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar, became an inspiration for the youngsters of the country for their daring adventures.
- Special martyrdom functions are held at Bhagat Singh's native village, Khatkarkalan in Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district, and the National Martyrdom Memorial at **Hussainiwala** in **Firozpur district, Punjab**.

AUKUS



Recently, Australia and Britain have confirmed their intention to proceed with the AUKUS deal to develop nuclear-powered submarines, despite concerns over costs, capabilities, and the potential return of Donald Trump.

About AUKUS:

- AUKUS stands for **Australia, United Kingdom and United States** Security Agreement, established in September **2021**.
- Its primary objective is to enhance **military cooperation among the three countries** to counter China's rising influence in the Indo-Pacific region.
- AUKUS gained significant attention due to its focus on the development and provision of nuclear-powered submarines to Australia.
- The submarine component of AUKUS aims to equip Australia with nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs), **known as SSN-AUKUS**.
- Australia will receive a total of **eight of these new submarines**, based on a British design but incorporating American technology or combat systems.
- This marks the **first instance of the US sharing nuclear propulsion technology** with an ally other than the UK.

Pushpak Reusable Launch Vehicle



Recently, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the landing experiment of Pushpak Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) at Aeronautical Test Range in Chitradurga district in Karnataka.

About the Pushpak Reusable Launch Vehicle:

- The Pushpak Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) is an **aerospace vehicle** developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- It is designed to **autonomously launch into space**, perform designated missions and return to Earth for reuse.
- It **aims to reduce the cost of access to space** by employing reusable technology, thus making space exploration more affordable and sustainable.
- Pushpak undertook more difficult maneuvers with dispersions, showcasing its ability to handle complex flight scenarios.
- The mission simulated high-speed landing conditions and approaches while returning from space, validating its capabilities under extreme conditions.
- Pushpak RLV **resembles an aircraft, featuring a fuselage, nose cap, double delta wings and twin vertical tails**, reflecting advancements in aerospace engineering.
- ISRO conducted previous tests with RLV-TD, including a maiden flight in **2016**, aiming to develop a space vehicle capable of multiple flights into space, similar to airplanes.

Face to Face Centres

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



dhyeyaias.com



23 March, 2024

Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption



Recently, the Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption (COCPC) has projected the cotton output for the current season, ending in September, to be approximately 323 lakh bales, with exports expected to reach 27 lakh bales.

About the Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption:

- The Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption (COCPC) is a government body that monitors the country's cotton production, consumption, imports and exports.
- It also advises the government on cotton production and consumption matters.
- It is made up of all textile industry stakeholders, including farmers.
- It helps ensure the availability of cotton to the textile industry.

Cotton:

- Cotton, is a **semi-xerophyte and crucial commercial crop** in India, contributing to approximately 25% of global cotton production.
- It is often referred to as "White-Gold" due to its economic importance in the country.
- Around **67%** of India's cotton is cultivated in rain-fed areas, while 33% is grown in irrigated regions.
- India is the only country cultivating all four species of cotton: **Gossypium arboreum**, **G. herbaceum**, **G. barbadense** and **G. hirsutum**.
- Ten major cotton-growing states are categorized into three agro-ecological zones: Northern Zone (**Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan**), Central Zone (**Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh**) and Southern Zone (**Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu**).

Place in News

Finland

Recently, Finland announced its decision to resume funding to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA.

Finland (Capital: Helsinki)

Location: Finland is a Nordic country located in **Northern Europe**.

Boundaries: Finland shares its borders with **Norway** (North), **Russia** (East), **Gulf of Finland** (South), **Gulf of Bothnia** (South-west), **Sweden** (Northwest) and **Baltic Sea** (South and southwest).

Physical Features:

- Northern Finland features fells (rounded, barren mountains) in Lapland, such as the famous Levi and Yllas.
- **Kemijoki** is the longest river in Finland, originates near Sokosti peak.
- **Lake Saimaa** is the largest lake of Finland.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Which organization collaborates with the Sustainable Cycles (SCYCLE) Programme and ITU (International Telecommunication Union) to prepare the Fourth Global E-waste Monitor (GEM) 2024 Report? – **UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research)**
- Which organization has recently released the report titled "Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour"? – **International Labour Organization (ILO)**
- Which organization's scientists have developed a pancreas-mimicking silk-based hydrogel system for responsive insulin delivery in diabetes treatment? – **JNCASR (Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research)**
- Recently, India has initiated an operation to evacuate its nationals from Haiti to the Dominican Republic. What was the name of this operation? – **Operation Indravati**
- Based on the concept of Universal Acceptance (UA), which portal has been launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology recently? – **BhashaNet**

Face to Face Centres

