

Deepfakes are digital media video, audio, and images edited and manipulated using Artificial Intelligence. It is basically hyper realistic digital falsification. AI Generated Synthetic media or deepfakes have clear benefits in certain areas, such as accessibility, education, film production, criminal forensics, and artistic expression. Collaborative actions and collective techniques across legislative regulations, platform policies, technology countermeasures, and media literacy approaches are a few of the ways in which deepfake threat can be mitigated.

A bad loan is that which has not been 'serviced' for a certain period. Servicing a loan is paying back the interest and a small part of the principal. The Rajya Sabha was told that loans written off by scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) during the last five financial years totalled ₹10.1 lakh crore. Significantly, only ₹1.32 lakh crore has been recovered. The Finance Minister said that with the government's "strategy of recognition, resolution, recapitalisation and reforms," NPAs had declined to 5.9% by March 2022.

Close on the heels of similar mobility agreements with France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Finland, India will sign a "Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement" (MMPA) with Austria on Monday during External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Vienna. While India has been keen to finalise these agreements with European countries as a stepping stone to resolving issues over the long pending India European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement and facilitating Indian professionals working in these countries, the European countries also see them to curb illegal immigration from India.

India is committed to addressing "all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners" with Pakistan, the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement after New Delhi and Islamabad exchanged lists of prisoners on Sunday. The exchange takes place in accordance with the 2008 Agreement on Consular Access every year on January 1 and July 1. "The Government has called for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, missing Indian defence personnel, and fishermen along with their boats, from Pakistan's custody," a press note released by the Ministry said.

India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues rose to nearly ₹1.5 lakh crore in December, the third highest monthly collection so far and 15% higher than a year ago. December's GST kitty also reflected a 2.5% uptick over November 2022's collections that were the lowest in three months. This is the 10th month in a row that GST collections have crossed the ₹1.4 lakh crore mark, with revenues from import of goods rising 8% and revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) increasing 18% from the revenues yielded by these sources during December 2021.

INDIA IS ALL SET TO GO FOR ITS FIRST WASTE-TO-HYDROGEN PROJECT

1. **Context:** Hydrogen generated at a facility in Pune will be utilized locally to help the city lower its emissions, and manage waste optimally. Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has collaborated with business management consultant The Green Billions (TGBL) to manage its waste and generate it into useable green hydrogen. The new facility will solve two major problems: Inefficient waste management and carbon emissions.
2. Waste management is one of the prime issues in the country, which is blamed for generating the pollution in the surroundings. With this project, Pune city can reduce up to 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, over 3.8 million tonnes of waste would be diverted from the landfill/dumping site and more than 180,000 estimated households will be served directly.
3. How green hydrogen could help in meeting India's Net-zero target? Replacement for fossil fuels. Hydrogen fuel cells: Hydrogen fuel cells (HFCs) produce heat and water as by-products, eliminating the costs associated with handling and storing toxic materials like battery acid or diesel fuel.
4. **Energy Storage-**Stored for a long period: The stored hydrogen can be used to produce electricity using fuel cells. Decarbonization of industries: green hydrogen can easily be converted to green ammonia. It, therefore, assumes vast applications for agriculture, fertilizer-producing industries and refineries, steel, and heavy-duty transportation industry.

REPORT ON TRENDS AND PROGRESS OF BANKING IN INDIA 2021-22

1. **In a report –** Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2021-22 – RBI said that banks must ensure due diligence and robust credit appraisal to limit credit risk. This report is statutory compliance in accordance with the Banking Regulation Act 1949, and presents the performance of banking sectors (including cooperative banks and NBFCs).
2. **Key findings of the report:** Double-digit growth in the balance sheet of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) Impact: This is good news for the banking sector in India. Definition: SCBs are those banks which are included in the second schedule of the RBI Act 1934 and which carry out the normal business of banking such as accepting deposits, giving out loans and other banking services.
3. Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) for SCBs have declined (from 9% (2017-18) to 5.8% (march 2022)) Reasons for decline in GNPA: Banks have given write-offs or upgradation; greater scrutiny and monitoring of loans; greater recovery of loans after the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Act 2016 The financial performance of Urban cooperative banks showed improvement.
4. **Non-banking financial company (NBFC) sector improved in 2021-22.** With strong capital buffers, adequate provisions, and sufficient liquidity, NBFCs are poised for expansion. Definition: NBFC or Non-Banking Financial Institutions are the institutions that have been registered under the Companies Act, 1956. NBFCs offer bank-related services without having banking licenses. Even though NBFCs provide financial services, they differ from banks in many ways.

RAPIDLY WARMING ARCTIC LINKED TO EXTREME COLD WEATHER IN THE US

1. In a report published in The Washington Post, scientists have once again started to discuss if the rising temperatures of the Arctic are responsible for extremely cold conditions in the US and other areas of the Northern Hemisphere.
2. **Background:** A deadly blizzard (bomb cyclone) has gripped the US, leading to the death of more than 60 people as of now and the complete disruption of normal life. A similar chain of events took place back in 2021 when Texas witnessed a deadly cold storm that killed 246 people.
3. **The findings of the study:** The study largely focused on the polar vortex, which is a mass of cold, low-pressure air that consistently spins over the Arctic region counter-clockwise, just like a hurricane does. Usually, the polar vortex remains strong and compact, meaning the mass of frigid air stays at the North Pole. But sometimes it weakens (like a wobbling top) and expands to influence the jet stream – an area of fast-moving air high in the atmosphere that surrounds the polar vortex.
4. Once the jet stream is impacted, the cold polar air finds its way towards the mid-latitude regions. The polar vortex has been expanding more than twice as frequently in recent years, owing to the steadily warming Arctic. The melting sea ice in the Barents and Kara seas north of Russia

The 205th anniversary of the Bhima Koregaon battle passed without incident as lakhs of Ambedkarites from across Maharashtra and the country congregated near the Ranstambh (victory pillar) at Perne village in Pune on Sunday under heavy security cover. Crowds have been steadily milling in Bhima Koregaon since Saturday evening to pay floral tributes to the bravery of the Mahar soldiers who fought against the Peshwa forces in the 1818 battle.

3 percentage, the ratio of corporate tax collection to GDP, a feat that was achieved after a gap of two years in 2021-22, reflecting the overall improvement in profitability of India Inc propelled by an increase in demand for goods and services. However, the corporate tax collection is yet to surpass its five-year high of 3.51% of GDP recorded in 2018-19.

20 percentage by which electric two-wheeler sales could miss the target of 10 lakh units in fiscal 2022-23, mainly due to the withholding of around ₹1,100 crore subsidy by the government, according to industry body Society of Manufacturers Of Electric Vehicles (SMEV). In 2022, sales of electric two-wheelers stood at around 6 lakh units.

1,040 number of lives lost in road accidents due to the use of mobile phones by drivers while driving in 2021, according to a Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) report. The report titled 'Road accidents in India —2021', said 555 road accidents took place due to jumping of red light which claimed 222 lives in 2021.

11 percentage by which electricity demand jumped between April November, indicating a buoyancy in the economy while the power deficit in the country rose slightly to 0.6%. Experts say that India is a power surplus state but sometimes discoms do not have funds to afford a round the clock supply of electricity.

India's unemployment rate rose to 8.3% in December, the highest in 16 months, from 8% in the previous month, data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) showed on Sunday. The urban unemployment rate rose to 10.09% in December from 8.96% in the previous month, while the rural unemployment rate slipped to 7.44% from 7.55%, the data showed.

and Scandinavia and increasing Siberian snowfall create larger and more energetic atmospheric waves that ultimately stretch the polar vortex This has resulted in extreme winter weather in the US and other places.

5. **Conclusion:** Despite some evidence, the scientific community still has conflicting opinions about its claim. Hence, more data is required to determine whether and where warming is weakening the jet stream.

MAHARASHTRA PASSES LOKAYUKTA BILL THAT BRINGS CM UNDER THE AMBIT OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION BODY

1. This bill will replace the 1971 Lokayukta bill Important provisions of the Maharashtra Bill: Will need assembly approval: Lokayukta will need to seek the approval of two-thirds of the total strength of the Assembly before starting any inquiry against a minister and the motion to do so has to be placed before the House. Analysis: Such Two-third strength may not be possible in most the cases.
2. **Transparency and privacy provisions:** Any such inquiry shall be held in-camera and if the Lokayukta concludes that the complaint deserves to be dismissed, the records of the inquiry shall not be published or made available to anyone. Analysis: It is a good provision to ensure that public figures are not victimized. Exceptions added: Lokayukta will not investigate cases involving allegations of corruption against the chief minister on matters related to internal security or public order.
3. **Selection of members of the Lokayukta:** They will be selected by a panel of the chief minister, deputy chief minister, Assembly Speaker, Legislative Council chairperson, Leaders of the Opposition in the Assembly and the Council and a judge appointed by the chief justice of India or the chief justice of the Bombay High Court. Analysis: There is a heavy bias towards government nominees in the selection panel.
4. **Chairperson:** The chairperson of the anti-corruption body will be led by a person who is the present or former chief justice of a High Court. The body will also have judges of the Supreme Court or the Bombay High Court as its member. The number of members: The Lokayukta will have a maximum of four members, of whom two will be from the judiciary.

THE CASTE CENSUS DEBATE TO CRAFT REASONED AND INCLUSIVE POLICIES

1. **Context:** The judiciary has repeatedly established that caste population surveys conducted by the states are insufficient to provide for political reservation in local body elections.
2. **Background:** The Allahabad HC recently dismissed the UP-government's caste census to count the Other Backward Class (OBC) population across the state, ruling that "counting of heads" is insufficient. The UP government had ordered (in 2017) a "rapid survey" to count the population of OBCs ward-wise in each municipal corporation, municipal council, and panchayat area.
3. The HC, while directing that local body elections be held in UP without any reservation for the OBC, added that the State had not followed the "triple test formula" as suggested by the Supreme Court. This comes as the call for a caste census intensifies in India, with several states considering introducing reservations for the Backward Classes in urban local body elections.
4. **What is the Triple Test Formula to provide OBC reservation in urban local body (ULB) elections?** It requires a state government to – Set up a dedicated commission for a rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of backwardness specifically with respect to local bodies; Specify the proportion of reservations required for political representation based on the commission's recommendation; Ensure total reservations for SC/ST/ OBC groups do not exceed 50% of the total seats.



“Your journey to the top never gets easier. You only start feeling better as you pursue.”

DR. KHAN
(KSG)