

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday raised the policy repo rate by 35 basis points (bps) to 6.25%, downshifting gears from consecutive increases of 50 bps, and scaled down GDP growth hopes for the year to 6.8% from 7%, even as Governor Shaktikanta Das exuded confidence about the economy being resilient and asserted that “the worst of inflation” was behind us. A 100 basis points equal one percentage point. The central bank retained its inflation projection for 2022-23 at 6.7%, noting that inflation will ease but stay well above the 6% upper tolerance limit set for the RBI.

56 number of legislators against whom cases were filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) during the last five years, with charge sheets being filed in 22 cases, the Lok Sabha was informed by the Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Jitendra Singh. Andhra Pradesh recorded 10 cases against its legislators, the highest for a State.

In August 2014, Parliament passed the Constitution (99th Amendment) Act, along with the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, which together provided for the creation of an independent commission to appoint judges to the Supreme Court (SC) and High Courts (HC). This commission was to replace the collegium system. In early 2015, the Supreme Court Advocates -on -Record Association (SCAORA) filed a plea challenging the provisions which had by then become laws. The SCAORA contended in its petition that both the Acts were “unconstitutional” and “invalid”. At that time, Solicitor-General Ranjit Kumar had argued that the collegium was a “failure” and worked on a system of “intra-dependence”, where there was “no transparency”.

38.84 million tonnes (MT), the import of coal by the power sector in the financial year of 2022-2-023 in the April-October period, the Parliament was informed. This is a significant increase against a total import of 27MT last fiscal, Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said. Much of the imports have gone to domestic coal based plants.

13.2 million, the increase in the number of people suffering from hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2019 and 2021, according to a report by three United Nations agencies. The rise in food inflation and extreme poverty are reasons behind food insecurity and hunger. About 56 million suffer from hunger in the region.

25 number of people detained across Germany as part of a series of raids against suspected far right extremists across the country. A German news agency cited federal prosecutors as saying officers conducted searches in 11

GLOBAL STATUS OF BLACK SOIL: REPORT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION

- As per report, Black soils are mineral soils which have a black surface horizon, enriched with organic carbon that is at least 25 cm deep. Black colour is a result of accumulation of organic matter originating from numerous dying roots of gramineous vegetation in a process known as melanisation.
- Status of Black soil** - Black soils occupy 725 million hectares of the land surface and constitute 5.6 percent of global soils but contain 8.2 percent of the world's soil organic carbon (SOC) stocks. In India it is spread mostly across interior Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh on the Deccan lava plateau and the Malwa Plateau.
- Threats to Black soil Loss of organic matter through both conversion of natural landscapes to agriculture and by continuing mismanagement of cultivated black soils. Wind erosion is a particular issue in black soils of former grasslands as the drier climates in these soils are naturally susceptible to high rates of wind erosion.
- Solutions Suggested**- Preservation of the natural vegetation cover on black soils under grassland, forest, and wetland vegetation. Adoption of sustainable soil management approaches on cropped black soils.

CONNECTIVITY WITH CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES REMAINS INDIA'S 'KEY PRIORITY': NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER AT FIRST INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA NSA MEET

- The meeting coincides with the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and the Central Asian region (CAR) countries. India's relations with the region have gained slowly since CARs gained independence in the 1990s. Earlier in January this year, Prime Minister hosted the first India-Central Asia Summit in a virtual format.
- Importance of CAR Security:** Religious extremism, fundamentalism, drug trafficking pose challenges to these societies and to regional stability. Economic: All the countries are rich in minerals like Uranium, gold, gas, etc. and well-endowed with hydroelectric resources. Cultural: India shares historic linkages through the Silk Route from 3rd century BC to 15th century AD through which Buddhism spread in the region.
- Initiatives to enhance the cooperation**-India's Connect Central Asia (CAA) policy of 2012 is a broad-based framework involving political, economic, security and cultural connections. India is developing the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and has become a member of the Ashgabat Agreement. Announced “Joint Working Groups” (JWGs) on Afghanistan and the Chabahar port project at the first India-Central Asia Summit in January 2022. India is part of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.

IT'S A WOMAN'S CHOICE TO GIVE BIRTH: DELHI HIGH COURT ALLOWS WOMAN TO TERMINATE HER 33-WEEK PREGNANCY

- The HC, while turning down the advice of the medical board, permitted the termination on the grounds of cerebral abnormalities in the foetus. Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 permits termination of pregnancy up to 24 weeks beyond which termination is permitted only in case “substantial foetal abnormalities”.
- Recently, the Supreme Court had extended the right to safe and legal abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy to all women in the country, regardless of marital status. Medical Board is constituted by the State/Union Territories to decide if a pregnancy may be terminated after 24 weeks. Termination of pregnancy has been a matter of debate due to ethical and moral perspective. Indian law recognizes the right of a woman to choose to terminate her pregnancy even at an advanced stage.
- Pro-Choice Movement (Focus on Mother)**-A woman alone has the right over her body. Birth defects may be lethal or lead to lifelong suffering that takes a heavy toll on parents. State cannot overlook the age (minor) and mental health of women and no child should be brought unwanted.
- Pro-Life Movement (Focus on Child)**-Foetus rights of personhood should be upheld. Birth defects may be cured in future with the advancement of technology. Against humanity and State has an obligation to protect all life including foetus.

of Germany's 16 states against members of the so-called Reich Citizens movement.

In any democracy, parliamentary sovereignty is inviolable, Vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar said in his maiden speech as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha on the first day of the Winter Session of Parliament on Wednesday. He chided the two Houses for not taking cognisance, over the past seven years, of the Supreme Court judgment setting aside the Constitution Amendment to constitute the National Judicial Appointment Commission (NJAC) in 2015.

The State of Punjab has furthered the cause of right to life and personal liberty of prisoners by allowing conjugal visits for inmates. In the context of prisons, conjugal visits refer to the concept of allowing a prisoner to spend some time in privacy with his spouse within the precincts of a jail. The State guidelines clarify that conjugal visits are a matter of privilege rather than a right. It has been notified that the average time for conjugal visits shall be two hours, allowed once every two months.

There is no proposal to conduct recruitment exams held by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) only in Hindi, the government told Parliament on Wednesday.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it would examine the question whether the court should wait for the report of the Justice K.G. Balakrishnan Commission or go ahead and hear a series of petitions seeking Scheduled Castes quota benefits for Dalit converts to other religions, primarily Christianity.

A Bill to amend the Multistate Cooperative Societies Act, aimed at bringing in transparency in the sector, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. Many Opposition MPs asked for the Bill to be referred to a Standing Committee for review arguing that it encroached on the rights of States.

The University Grants Commission on Wednesday held a meeting with international publishers to discuss bringing out textbooks for undergraduate courses in Indian languages, and has set a timeline of six to 12 months for the same.

OVER 50% OF 1,080 LEGACY LANDFILL SITES IN 5 STATES, REMEDIAL PLANS YET TO BE PROPOSED UNDER SBM 2.0

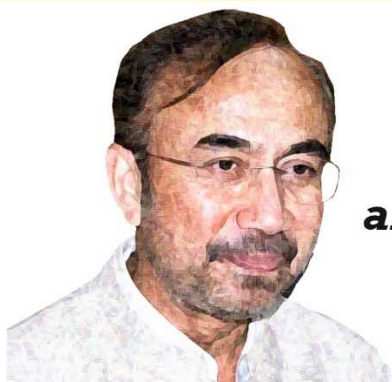
1. **Of 1,080 legacy sites for which remediation was yet to be proposed, 591 were in five states:** Karnataka, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana. Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U 2.0) aims to create "garbage-free cities" and 100% remediation of all legacy landfills by 2026. The mission mandates municipalities to submit action plans for bio-remediation of legacy landfills and firm up plans for alternative use of the land after their clearance. Bioremediation is microbe-mediated degradation of organic waste carried out by adding biological inoculum to the dumpsite.
2. **About Legacy waste-**old waste at landfill sites that has remained dumped for more than three months is considered "legacy" dump sites. More than 3,000 dumpsites in India need to be reclaimed or closed permanently. Unscientifically constructed landfills generate leachates, emit greenhouse gases like methane, pollute groundwater, etc.
3. **Approaches to treat legacy waste-**Scientific capping: Applied to landfills constructed scientifically (engineered landfills / sanitary landfills). Landfill mining / biomining: Extraction of recyclables and other revenue-generating fractions from waste materials. It is typically aided by bioremediation.

REVISED DRAFTS OF STANDARDS FOR FIRMS TO SELF-REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

1. The draft has been published for public comment by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), the independent standard-setting body of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Biodiversity Standard. GRI is a global entity that helps businesses take responsibility for their impacts on biodiversity.
2. GRI Standards are designed to be used by organisations to report on their impacts on the economy, the environment and society. GRI disclosures on biodiversity were last revised in 2006. These standards will play a major role as the 'post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework' (adopted by United Nations Convention Biological Diversity) will define collective commitments to reverse the loss of biodiversity for all relevant stakeholders.
3. **Key Proposals include** Reflect reporting throughout the supply chain. Help organisations prioritise attention on their most significant impacts. Add new disclosures to connect with the drivers of biodiversity loss. Introduce requirements for biodiversity related human rights impacts. Emphasise location-specific data to ensure businesses are transparent about the sites.
4. **Biodiversity** is the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems. Biodiversity, therefore, includes three components of diversity: genes, species, and ecosystems.

eSANJEEVANI(NATIONAL TELEMEDICINE SERVICE)

1. eSanjeevani, has crossed 8 crore teleconsultations. It is a national telemedicine service providing an alternative to the conventional physical consultations via digital platform. It is an e-health initiative of Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare This initiative is the world's largest government owned telemedicine platform.
2. eSanjeevani is a part Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission It comprises two Verticals eSanjeevani Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centers' (HWCs): bridge rural-urban digital health divide by providing assisted teleconsultations to beneficiaries of Ayushman Bharat Scheme. eSanjeevani OPD: caters to citizens in both rural and urban alike.



***"Aim for only 50%
of your output. You will
always be surprised and motivated,"***

DR. KHAN
(KSG)