

Inviting the world to make use of the 'India Stack' (India's set of open APIs and digital public goods) and announcing that India would soon also similarly open its telecom stack, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw on Wednesday launched the 'Stay Safe Online' campaign and the Digital Innovation Alliance (DIA) programme. These were lauded by G-20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant as among the first ever programmes to be launched worldwide as a G-20 initiative.

The Jan Vishwas Bill, 2022, (Bill) was tabled in the Parliament with the objective of "decriminalising" 183 offences across 42 legislations and enhancing the ease of living and doing business in India. However, the Bill either omits penal provisions or replaces them with fines in legislations such as the Air Act, Environment Protection Act, Forest Act, Drugs and Cosmetics Acts, Cinematograph Act, Patents Act among others. An examination of the provisions of the Bill reveals that stress has been on the replacement of imprisonment clauses with fines. This can hardly be termed as 'decriminalisation'.

According to The Lancet, about 7 million annual deaths can be expected by 2030 from low and middle-income countries due to smoking. Single sticks, being more economical, can appeal to youngsters who may have limited money in hand. Single sticks are also preferred by people who are yet to pick up the habit but want to try it out. A ban on single-stick sales would compel a potential consumer to buy the entire pack which may not be particularly economical, thus curbing potential experimentation and the scope for regular intake.

Delegated legislation, including rules and regulations formed by the State and Central authorities, should not supplant but supplement the parliamentary statute from which it draws power, the Supreme Court held in a judgment. "If a rule goes beyond the rule-making power conferred by the statute, the same must be declared invalid. If a rule supplants any provision for which power has not been conferred, it becomes invalid," a Bench of Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and J.B. Pardiwala observed.

53.8 lakh, the number of public grievances redressed during the recently concluded good governance week, the Union government informed. The government celebrated the second 'Sushasan Saptah' between December 19 and 25. It witnessed a nationwide campaign for the redressal of grievances and improving service delivery.

8516.6 crore rupees, the worth of claims settled by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation in the financial year 2021-22, the Reserve Bank of India said. The total settlement amount includes claims settled with

### MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND IT (MEITY) BECOMES NODAL MINISTRY FOR ONLINE GAMING

1. Appointment of MeitY as central regulatory authority will provide clarity and certainty to investors, industry, and consumers. In absence of a nodal ministry, online gaming intersects with multiple ministries including MeitY, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and Ministry of Sports.
2. The decision is in line with government's initiative to push for growth of animation, visual effects, gaming, and comics (AVGC) sector and making India a global hub for online gaming. Online games refer to games that are played over some form of computer network, most often the Internet. As per All India Gaming Federation, India's online gaming industry is expected to be worth ₹15,500 crore by 2023.
3. **Types of online gaming-Game of skill:** When player invests his/her time in learning, practising, and honing a skill. They are outside purview of gambling and allowed in most parts of country. Games of chance: Considered gambling as it depends on factors like luck and unpredictability.
4. **Reasons behind increasing online gamers:** Better accessibility to smartphones and cheap data prices; Prolonged closure of schools due to pandemic etc. Issues with online gaming: Causes physical, social, and emotional damages, impairing sleep, appetites, careers etc.

### SIXTH COMMON REVIEW MISSION (CRM) PANEL PROPOSES MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) TWEAKS

1. **Key issues highlighted-**Delay in payment of both material and wage component. Revolving fund of Rs. 200 for material component is insufficient. Admissible administrative expenditures (6%) are insufficient to meet manpower requirement for scheme. National Mobile Monitoring Software which permits Real-time attendance of workers at site along-with geotagged photograph has not been implemented.
2. **Key Recommendations-**Examine scope of reverse convergence implemented by line departments. Enhance size of revolving fund for timely and regular flow of funds for material component. A Standard Operative Procedure (SOP) for streamlining payment for material cost. Institutionalise Social Audit in letter and Spirit. MGNREGS under MGNREGA, 2005 guarantees 100 (extendable up to 150 days) of wage employment in a Financial Year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
3. Permissible works include land development and soil conservation, water harvesting, etc. on both community and private lands. Wage and material costs is mandated to be in proportion of 60:40. Centre owes ₹4,700 crore of wages to 18 states and ₹5,450 crore worth material costs to 19 States.

### PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC) REPORT ON TRANSPORT, TOURISM AND CULTURE PRESENTED TO RAJYA SABHA

1. **Key Observations-**Only eight states (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand) have accorded industry status to hospitality projects. Conferring Industry status will help tourism sector by Lowering electricity and water tariff, lower property tax, rationalization of license fees and simplified approval process for hotel projects and operations.
2. **Merely drafting National Tourism Policy (NTP)** is not enough for development of tourism sector. In several projects sanctioned before 2017-18, progress rates achieved have been less than expected.
3. **Recommendations-**Ministry of Tourism should work out a strategy for inclusion of Hospitality Sector in State and Central industrial policy so that this sector is conferred Industry Status by all States. Fast-track creation of National Tourism Council to make recommendations on various issues.
4. Inclusion of tourism in concurrent list to simplify issues of pandemic-hit Indian tourism sector. NTP 2022 aims to transform tourist destinations to provide world class visitor experience making India one of the topmost destinations for sustainable and responsible tourism.
5. **Tourism sector in India-**As per World travel and tourism council, India has been ranked 6th in terms of travel and tourism's contribution towards GDP. It supported 8.1% of total employment.

### RESERVE BANK OF INDIA (RBI) RELEASED REPORT ON TREND AND PROGRESS OF BANKING IN INDIA 2021-22

1. Report is a statutory publication in compliance with Banking Regulation Act, 1949. It presents performance of banking sector, including co-operative banks and non-banking financial institutions.

respect to 22 urban cooperative banks amounting to ₹3,457 crore.

4483 number of houses damaged in the massive hailstorm that swept through several areas of upper Assam, officials informed. Almost 18,000 people have been affected, and the families hit by the hailstorm were supplied with tarpaulin sheets, according to a report by Assam State Disaster Management Authority.

1.2 lakh crore rupees, the yearly net outflow from the Indian equity markets in 2022 as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) retreated, after three consecutive years of infusing huge funds. The huge outflow, which surpasses the previous record of ₹53,000 crore in 2008, came amid rate hikes by central banks globally.

Pavel Antov, a Russian billionaire businessman found dead on the premises of an Odisha hotel, died from rupture of the left lung, liver and spleen leading to haemorrhage, shock, and death, says the preliminary post-mortem report. Antov, 65, who had spoken out against the Ukraine war and was a detractor of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was killed presumably from a fall from the second floor of Sai International Hotel in Rayagada of Odisha on December 24.

As the clamour for a caste census grows across India, with several States looking to introduce reservation for the Backward Classes in urban local body polls, the judiciary, over the course of 2022, has established time and again that caste population surveys conducted by the States are not enough to provide for political reservation in local body elections.

Fatalities due to road accidents resumed their upward trajectory, after a rare decline in 2020 due to restrictions on movement during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Road accident deaths increased by 1.9% in 2021 from the 2019 figure, show the Road Transport Ministry's annual report released on Wednesday.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda on Wednesday kicked off a two-day training programme for teachers of Eklavya Model Residential Schools for tribal students, which is meant to serve as "a stepping stone in creating awareness about the potential of computer science in students of EMRS", the Ministry said in a statement.

- Key Highlights of report-** Consolidated balance sheet of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) registered double digit growth in 2021-22, after a gap of seven years. Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs has declined from its peak at around 9 percent in 2017-18 to reach 5.8 percent at end-March 2022. Financial performance of urban co-operative banks showed improvement, characterised by augmented capital buffers, decline in GNPA ratio and improved profitability indicators.
- NPA-** Loan or advance for which principal or interest payment remained overdue for a period of 90 days. Three categories of NPA: Substandard Assets: NPA for less than or equal to 12 months. Doubtful Assets: Substandard assets for a period of 12 months. Loss assets: Considered uncollectible.
- Loan Write off-** Bank writes off a loan after borrower has defaulted on loan repayment and there is a very low chance of recovery. Lender then moves defaulted loan/NPA, out of assets side and reports amount as loss. Loan write off saves money from provisioning and reduces tax liability. Loan write-off is different from Loan waive off (a complete cancellation of a loan account).

**ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA (ECI) BEGINS DELIMITATION IN ASSAM WITH 2001 CENSUS**

- ECI has initiated the delimitation process for assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Assam, as per Section 8A of Representation of People Act (RPA), 1950. Last delimitation of constituencies in Assam was done on basis of 1971 census figures. As per Section 8A of RPA 1950, President can order a delimitation exercise to be carried out in four North East States (NES)-Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland. Delimitation exercise has not been carried out for last 51 years in these states.
- Last delimitation exercise (2002-08), kept out these NES due to apprehensions over use of 2001 Census. Issues involved: Violates fundamental rights guaranteed to citizens of India under Article 14 of Constitution, increasing law and order problems etc. Delimitation is the process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a state with a legislative body.
- It provides equal representation for equal population segments, and fair division of geographical areas, so that no political party has an advantage. Delimitation Commission's (DC) orders cannot be questioned before any court. Members of DC: A retired Judge of SC, Chief Election Commissioner of India, State Election Commissioner (of respective state).

**IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY UTTAR PRADESH CIVIC POLLS WITHOUT OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES (OBC): ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT (HC)**

- While setting aside UP government's notification reserving seats for OBCs in upcoming Urban Local Body (ULBs) Elections, HC directed that State government to notify elections immediately without reservation for OBC. This direction is guided by provisions of Article 243-U of Constitution which mandates that election to constitute a municipality shall be completed before expiry of its duration.
- HC held that until "triple test conditions" as mandated by Supreme Court in K. Krishnamurthy v. Union of India (2010) is fulfilled, no reservation for Backward Class shall be provided in ULBs polls.
- Triple test conditions are Setting up a dedicated commission by State government to gather data on backwardness of OBCs in every local body, Specifying the proportion of reservation considering commission's proposals Ensuring that such reservation does not exceed 50% of total seats reserved for SC/ST/OBC together.
- Constitution of India provides for reservation for SCs and STs in local bodies as per their population. State governments are allowed to make decisions on reservation for OBCs.



*"You must do all that is expected till you get to a position where whatever you do is accepted"*

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(KSG)