

## Prelims 2024- Economy Current Affairs October to March 2024 (Part-1)

### Government of India notifies establishment of National Turmeric Board (04-10-2023)

In order to harness the untapped potential of turmeric and turmeric products, the Central Government constituted the "National Turmeric Board".

- The **Chairperson** shall be appointed by the Central Government.
- The term of office of the Chairperson and Members of the Board other than official members shall be a maximum of three years from the date of appointment.
- Secretary shall be an officer appointed by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Department of Commerce shall provide secretarial assistance to the National Turmeric Board.
- National Turmeric Board shall have at least two meetings in a financial year.
- National Turmeric Board shall function under the overall authority, supervision and control of the Central Government.

#### **National Turmeric Board shall have the following objectives, namely,-**

- Promote new product development and value addition in turmeric;
  - Promote awareness and consumption of turmeric and turmeric products in international markets;
  - Facilitate market research in potential international markets for development of value-added turmeric products;
  - Facilitate creation and improvement of infrastructure and logistics for exports of turmeric and turmeric products;
  - Encourage building of resilient and sustainable supply chains for turmeric and turmeric products by strengthening forward and backward linkages;
  - Promote compliance with quality and safety standards across the supply chain of turmeric;
  - Promote capacity building and skill development of turmeric growers for value addition activities;
  - Strengthen documentation of traditional knowledge related to use of turmeric and its applications;
  - Encourage studies, clinical trials and research on medicinal, health and wellness enhancing properties of turmeric;
- and
- Any other objective as may be determined by Central Government for promotion and development of the turmeric sector.

#### **Background**

India is the **largest producer, consumer and exporter** of turmeric in the world. In the year 2022-23, an area of 3.24 lakh ha was under turmeric cultivation in India with a production of 11.61 lakh tonnes (over **75% of global** turmeric production).

More than 30 varieties of Turmeric are grown in India and it is grown in over 20 states in the country. The **largest producing states of Turmeric** are Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

India has more than 62% share of world trade in turmeric. The **leading export markets** for Indian Turmeric are Bangladesh, UAE, USA and Malaysia.

### NIIFL launches ~USD 600 million bi-lateral India-Japan Fund (04-10-2023)

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited ("NIIFL"), announced the establishment of **its first bilateral fund**, the India-Japan Fund ("The Fund") in partnership with Japan Bank for International Cooperation ("JBIC"), a policy based financial institution wholly owned by the Government of Japan.

The Fund will have a target corpus of INR 49 billion (~USD 600 million), with the Government of India ("GoI") contributing 49% and the remaining 51% contributed by JBIC.

The India-Japan Fund will actively invest in India's environmental preservation sector, including renewable energy, e-mobility businesses, and circular economy sectors such as waste management, and water.

### About National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited

NIIFL is a collaborative investment platform for international and Indian investors, anchored by the Government of India, which manages funds with investments in different asset classes and diversified sectors that generate attractive risk-adjusted returns.

The NIIF is India's first sovereign wealth fund.

The NIIF was created, after a decision by the Union Cabinet on 29.7.2015

The proposed corpus of NIIF is Rs. 40,000 Crores (around USD 6 Billion). GOI's contribution to the NIIF shall be 49% of the total commitment at any given point of time.

NIIFL manages over USD 4.9 billion of equity capital commitments across its **four funds** – Master Fund, Fund of Funds, Strategic Opportunities Fund, and the India-Japan Fund, each with a distinct investment strategy committed to supporting the country's growth needs.

Governing Council of NIIF is chaired by the Finance Minister of India.

### Sagar Parikrama Phase-IX launched on 7th October 2023

Sagar Parikrama is an outreach program intended to reach out fishermen community across the entire coastal belt of the country. The initiative has been launched to understand the issues, experiences and aspirations of fishermen and also to create awareness of various schemes and programs of the Government available to fishermen in coastal areas.

### Indian Railways' PSUs, RITES Ltd and IRCON granted Navratna status (13-10-2023)

Ircon International Limited (IRCON) and RITES Ltd (RITES) both Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Railways, have been announced as 15th and 16<sup>th</sup> Navratna respectively among CPSEs. The Ministry of Finance conferred 'Navratna' status on RITES and IRCON.

### Maharatna PSU in India

1. Coal India Limited (CIL) (2010)
2. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) (2010)
3. NTPC Limited (2010)
4. Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) (2010)
5. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) (2010)
6. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) (2013)
7. GAIL (India) Limited (2013)
8. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) (2017)
9. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) (2019)
10. Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) (2019)
11. Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC) (2021)
12. Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC) (2022)
13. Oil India Limited (**August,2023**)

'Maharatna' status gives enhanced powers to the company's Board while taking financial decisions.

### Navratna CPSEs

1. Bharat Electronics Limited
2. Container Corporation of India Limited
3. Engineers India Limited
4. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
5. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited
6. National Aluminium Company Limited
7. National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited
8. Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited
9. NMDC Limited

10. Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited
11. Shipping Corporation of India Limited
12. Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) (**May, 2023**)
13. ONGC Videsh Ltd (**August,2023**)
14. Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited (**August,2023**)
15. IRCON International Limited (**October, 2023**)
16. RITES Limited (**October, 2023**)

Further, There are 57 Miniratna I CPSEs and 11 Miniratna II CPSEs

#### RBI launches उद्गम - UDGM - Centralised Web Portal for searching Unclaimed Deposits (17-08-2023)

Reserve Bank of India launched a Centralised Web Portal उद्गम UDGM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access inforMation). This portal has been developed by RBI for use by members of public to facilitate and make it easier for them to search their unclaimed deposits across multiple banks at one place.

The launch of the web portal will aid users to identify their unclaimed deposits/ accounts and enable them to either claim the deposit amount or make their deposit accounts operative at their respective banks.

#### Reserve Bank of India to Launch the Pilot Project for Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit (14-08-2023)

RBI has announced the development of a Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit. The Platform is being developed by Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), a wholly owned subsidiary of RBI.

With rapid progress in digitalization, India has embraced the concept of digital public infrastructure which encourages banks, NBFCs, FinTech companies and start-ups to create and provide innovative solutions in payments, credit, and other financial activities. For digital credit delivery, the data required for credit appraisal are available with different entities like Central and State governments, account aggregators, banks, credit information companies, digital identity authorities, etc. However, **they are in separate systems, creating hindrance in frictionless** and timely delivery of rule-based lending.

The Public Tech Platform would enable delivery of **frictionless credit by facilitating** seamless flow of required digital information to lenders. The end-to-end digital platform will have an open architecture, open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and standards, to which all financial sector players can connect seamlessly in a 'plug and play' model.

The Platform is intended to be rolled out as a pilot project in a calibrated fashion, both in terms of access to information providers and use cases. It shall bring about efficiency in the lending process in terms of reduction of costs, quicker disbursement, and scalability.

During the pilot, the platform shall **focus on products such as Kisan Credit Card** loans up to ₹1.6 lakh per borrower, Dairy Loans, MSME loans (without collateral), Personal loans and Home loans through participating banks. The platform shall enable linkage with services such as Aadhaar e-KYC, land records from onboarded State Governments (Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra), Satellite data, PAN Validation, Transliteration, Aadhaar e-signing, account aggregation by Account Aggregators (AAs), milk pouring data from select dairy co-operatives, house/property search data etc.

Based on the learnings, the scope and coverage would be expanded to include more products, information providers and lenders during the pilot.

#### RBI releases 2023 list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) (28-12-2023)

SBI, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs).

**Central Consumer Protection Authority issues 'Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023' for prevention and regulation of dark patterns listing 13 specified dark patterns (30-11-2023)**

Dark patterns involve using design and choice architecture to deceive, coerce, or influence consumers into making choices that are not in their best interest. Dark patterns encompass a wide range of manipulative practices such as drip pricing, disguised advertisement, bait and switch, false urgency etc.

Such practices fall under the category of "unfair trade practices" as defined under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. Conditions for dark patterns. - Any person, including any platform, shall be considered to be engaging in a dark pattern practice if it engages in any practice specified in Annexure 1 of the guidelines.

Prohibitions against engaging in dark patterns. - No person, including any platform, shall engage in any dark pattern practice.

**ANNEXURE 1  
SPECIFIED DARK PATTERNS**

1. "False Urgency" means falsely stating or implying the sense of urgency or scarcity so as to mislead a user into making an immediate purchase or taking an immediate action, which may lead to a purchase.
2. "Basket sneaking" means inclusion of additional items such as products, services, payments to charity or donation at the time of checkout from a platform, without the consent of the user, such that the total amount payable by the user is more than the amount payable for the product or service chosen by the user:
3. "Confirm shaming" means using a phrase, video, audio or any other means to create a sense of fear or shame or ridicule or guilt in the mind of the user so as to nudge the user to act in a certain way that results in the user purchasing a product or service from the platform or continuing a subscription of a service,
4. "Forced action" mean forcing a user into taking an action that would require the user to buy any additional goods or subscribe or sign up for an unrelated service or share personal information in order to buy or subscribe to the product or service originally intended by the user
5. "Subscription trap" means the process of- (i) making cancellation of a paid subscription impossible or a complex and lengthy process; or (ii) hiding the cancellation option for a subscription; or (iii) forcing a user to provide payment details or authorization for auto debits for availing a free subscription; or (iv) making the instructions related to cancellation of subscription ambiguous, latent, confusing, cumbersome.
6. "Interface interference" means a design element that manipulates the user interface in ways that (a) highlights certain specific information; and (b) obscures other relevant information relative to the other information; to misdirect a user from taking an action as desired.
7. "Bait and switch" means the practice of advertising a particular outcome based on the user's action but deceptively serving an alternate outcome. **Illustrations:** (a) a seller offers a quality product at a cheap price but when the consumer is about to pay or buy, the seller states that the product is no longer available and instead offers a similar looking product but more expensive; (b) a product is unavailable but is falsely shown as available to lure the consumer to move it to the shopping cart. Once the consumer moves it to the shopping cart, it is revealed that the product is 'out of stock' and instead, a higher-priced product is now available.
8. "Drip pricing" means a practice whereby- (i) elements of prices are not revealed upfront or are revealed surreptitiously within the user experience; or (ii) revealing the price post-confirmation of purchase, i.e. charging an amount higher than the amount disclosed at the time of checkout; or (iii) a product or service is advertised as free without appropriate disclosure of the fact that the continuation of use requires in-app purchase; or (iv) a user is prevented from availing a service which is already paid for unless something additional is purchased.
9. "Disguised advertisement" means a practice of posing, masking advertisements as other types of content such as user generated content or new articles or false advertisements, which are designed to blend in with the rest of an interface in order to trick customers into clicking on them
10. "Nagging" means a dark pattern practice due to which a user is disrupted and annoyed by repeated and persistent interactions, in the form of requests, information, options, or interruptions, to effectuate a transaction and make some commercial gains, unless specifically permitted by the user.
11. "Trick Question" means the deliberate use of confusing or vague language like confusing wording, double negatives, or other similar tricks, in order to misguide or misdirect a user from taking desired action or leading consumer to take a specific response or action

12. "Saas billing" refers to the process of generating and collecting payments from consumers on a recurring basis in a software as a service (SaaS) business model by exploiting positive acquisition loops in recurring subscriptions to get money from users as surreptitiously as possible. **Illustrations:** (a) no notification is given to the user when free trial is converted to paid; (b) silent recurring transactions whereby the user's account is debited without being notified or simply stated auto-renewing monthly subscriptions without telling users; (c) charging customers for features and services they don't use; (d) using shady credit card authorization practices to deceive consumers.

13. "Rogue Malwares" means using a ransomware or scareware to mislead or trick user into believing there is a virus on their computer and aims to convince them to pay for a fake malware removal tool that actually installs malware on their computer.

#### **REC Limited issues inaugural Yen Denominated Green Bonds aggregating to 61.1 Billion Japanese Yen (16-01-2024)**

REC Limited, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power, has successfully issued its inaugural Japanese Yen (JPY) 61.1 billion 5-year, 5.25-year and 10-year Green bonds, issued under its US\$ 10 billion Global Medium Term Notes Programme.

Proceeds from the issue of the Bonds will be applied to finance the Eligible Green Projects in accordance with the Company's Green Finance Framework, RBI's External Commercial Borrowings Guidelines and the approvals granted by it from time to time.

This is the First Yen Green Bonds issuance by any Indian PSU; Largest Yen-denominated issuance from India.

#### **India Signs Agreement for Lithium Exploration & Mining Project in Argentina (15-01-2024)**

Khanij Bidesh India Limited to start Exploration & Development of Five Lithium Blocks.

Agreement gives further fillip to India's Efforts for Sourcing Lithium.

Argentina is the part of "Lithium Triangle" along with Chile and Bolivia with more than half of world's total lithium resources and having the distinction of having 2nd largest lithium resources, 3rd largest lithium reserves and 4th largest production in world.

Chile holds the world's largest lithium reserves. Australia has the second-largest lithium reserves in the world.

#### **PM inaugurates Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sewri-Nhava Sheva Atal Setu in Navi Mumbai (12-01-2024)**

Atal Setu has been constructed at a total cost of more than Rs 17,840 crore. It is about a 21.8 km long 6-lane bridge having about 16.5 km length over the sea and about 5.5 km on the land. It is the longest bridge in India and also the longest sea bridge in India.

#### **RBI-Digital Payments Index for September 2023 (31-01-2024)**

RBI has been publishing a composite Reserve Bank of India – Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) since January 1, 2021 with March 2018 as base to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

The index for September 2023 stands at 418.77 as against 395.57 for March 2023

## Second Advance estimates of National Income, 2023-24 (29-02-2024)

Real GDP or GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in the year 2023-24 is estimated at ₹172.90 lakh crore, against the First Revised Estimates (FRE) of GDP for the year 2022-23 of ₹160.71 lakh crore. The growth in real GDP during 2023-24 is estimated at 7.6 per cent as compared to 7.0 per cent in 2022-23.

**Statement 1A: Second Advance Estimates of National Income and Expenditure Components of GDP, 2023-24**  
(at 2011- 12 Prices)

		(₹ Crore)			Percentage Change Over Previous Year	
Sl.No.	Item	2021-22 (2 <sup>nd</sup> RE)	2022-23 (1 <sup>st</sup> RE)	2023-24 (SAE)	2022-23	2023-24
<b>Domestic Product</b>						
1	GVA at Basic Prices	1,38,76,840	1,48,04,901	1,58,27,708	6.7	6.9
2	Net Taxes on Products	11,45,006	12,66,528	14,62,573	10.6	15.5
3	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) <sup>®</sup>	1,50,21,846	1,60,71,429	1,72,90,281	7.0	7.6
4	Net Domestic Product (NDP)	1,30,66,058	1,39,86,798	1,50,61,632	7.0	7.7
<b>Expenditure Components <sup>®</sup></b>						
5	Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE)	87,32,573	93,23,825	96,05,526		
6	Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE)	14,80,394	16,13,726	16,62,078		
7	Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF)	50,14,263	53,46,423	58,93,155		
8	Changes in Stocks (CIS)	1,60,203	1,83,464	1,92,587		
9	Valuables	2,83,099	2,29,167	2,60,747		
10	Exports	33,93,107	38,47,742	39,06,346		
11	Imports	35,43,745	39,19,021	43,46,728		
12	Discrepancies	-4,98,048	-5,53,897	1,16,571		
13	GDP	1,50,21,846	1,60,71,429	1,72,90,281		
<b>Share in GDP(%)</b>						
14	Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE)	58.1	58.0	55.6		
15	Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE)	9.9	10.0	9.6		
16	Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF)	33.4	33.3	34.1		
17	Changes in Stocks (CIS)	1.1	1.1	1.1		
18	Valuables	1.9	1.4	1.5		
19	Exports	22.6	23.9	22.6		
20	Imports	23.6	24.4	25.1		
21	Discrepancies	-3.3	-3.4	0.7		
22	GDP	100.0	100.0	100.0		
<b>National Product</b>						
23	Gross National Income (GNI)	1,48,27,920	1,58,31,133	1,70,34,386	6.8	7.6
24	Net National Income (NNI)	1,28,72,132	1,37,46,502	1,48,05,736	6.8	7.7
<b>Per Capita Income, Product and Final Consumption</b>						
25	Population* (in million)	1369	1383	1395		
26	Per Capita GDP (₹)	1,09,762	1,16,216	1,23,945	5.9	6.7
27	Per Capita GNI (₹)	1,08,345	1,14,478	1,22,110	5.7	6.7
28	Per Capita NNI (₹)	94,054	99,404	1,06,134	5.7	6.8
29	Per Capita PFCE (₹)	63,807	67,423	68,857	5.7	2.1

RE: Revised Estimates; SAE: Second Advance Estimates

<sup>®</sup> GDP (Production/Income Approach) = GVA at Basic Price + Net Taxes on Products

<sup>®</sup> Following Expenditure Approach, GDP = PFCE + GFCE + GFCF + CIS + Valuable + Export - Import. Discrepancy refers to gap between GDP (Production/Income Approach) and GDP (Expenditure Approach)

\*Relates to mid-financial year

**Statement 3A: Second Advance Estimates of GVA at Basic Prices by Economic Activity (at 2011- 12 Prices)**

		(₹ Crore)			Percentage Change Over Previous Year	
Industry	2021-22 (2 <sup>nd</sup> RE)	2022-23 (1 <sup>st</sup> RE)	2023-24 (SAE)	2022-23	2023-24	
				1. Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishing	21,70,106	22,72,250
2. Mining & Quarrying	3,09,276	3,15,256	3,40,821	1.9	8.1	
3. Manufacturing	25,61,033	25,04,663	27,17,235	-2.2	8.5	
4. Electricity, Gas, Water Supply & Other Utility Services	3,17,966	3,47,973	3,74,125	9.4	7.5	
5. Construction	11,93,532	13,06,256	14,45,603	9.4	10.7	
6. Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication & Services related to Broadcasting	24,80,380	27,77,723	29,57,058	12.0	6.5	
7. Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services	31,22,847	34,05,474	36,84,959	9.1	8.2	
8. Public Administration, Defence & Other Services*	17,21,699	18,75,304	20,20,579	8.9	7.7	
<b>GVA at Basic Prices</b>	<b>1,38,76,840</b>	<b>1,48,04,901</b>	<b>1,58,27,708</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.9</b>	

### Prime Minister inaugurated the pilot project of 'World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector' in 11 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACs) in 11 states. (24-02-2024)

'World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector' will result in thousands of warehouses and godowns in every corner of the country.

In his address, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah said that in India, storage capacity with regards to food grain production is only 47%, whereas in USA it is 161%, Brazil 149%, Canada 130% and China 107%.

He said that all over the world, the storage capacity is more than the production, and due to this, when the prices go down, the farmer can use the storage capacity to store his produce and easily get good price for the same. He said that earlier this facility was not available in India and Food Corporation of India had to shoulder this whole burden. Shri Shah said now thousands of PACs will increase storage capacity through which we will achieve 100% storage capacity before 2027 and this will be done through cooperative sector.

#### Background

India holds 11% (16 Crore Hectare) of World's total Cultivable Area (138 Crore Hectare) and 18% (140 Crore) of Total World Population (790 Crore). This means that to meet the food requirement of the 18% of World Population, India only has 11% of Cultivable Land.

Based on the FAO Statistical Data 2021, total Food Grain Production in India is 311 MMT and total Storage Capacity in India is only 145 MMT, i.e, there is a shortage of 166 MMT of Storage.

India houses over 100,000 PACs, boasting a substantial membership exceeding 130 million farmers. Recognizing their pivotal role in shaping the agrarian and rural landscape of the Indian economy, and capitalizing on their extensive outreach to the grassroots, this initiative seeks to establish decentralized storage facilities at the PACs level, alongside other agricultural infrastructure.

This decentralized storage will reduce food grain wastage, enhancing national food security. Farmers will have options to avoid distress sales, leading to better prices. This approach minimizes transportation costs between procurement centres, warehouses, and FPS. Employing a 'whole-of-Government' strategy, the plan strengthens PACs by diversifying their activities and increasing farmers' incomes.

### Government of India constitutes Sixteenth Finance Commission (31-12-2023)

The Government of India, with the approval of the President of India, has constituted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, in pursuance to Article 280(1) of the Constitution.

**Dr Arvind Panagariya**, former Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, and Professor, Columbia University will be the Chairman.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission shall make recommendations as to the following matters, namely: —

(i) The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds;

(ii) The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under article 275 of the Constitution for the purposes other than those specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article; and

(iii) The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005), and make appropriate recommendations thereon.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission has been requested to make its **report available by 31st day of October, 2025** covering a period of five years commencing on the 1st day of April, 2026.