

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ➤ Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches digital portal to promote cooperative movement in Maharashtra



Union Home Minister and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah launched the digital portal of the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS) office in Pune, Maharashtra.

### **An Overview of the News**

- Cooperative culture in India originated from Maharashtra, and the cooperative model of Maharashtra is driving the cooperative movement in the country.
- The digital portal will enable all operations of cooperative societies, such as opening new branches, expanding to other states or auditing, to be conducted online.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Sahakar se Samridhi" aims to provide basic amenities to lakhs of poor people of the country
- The Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2022 aims to increase transparency, accountability and eliminate nepotism in cooperatives, allowing young talent to join the movement.
- The portal will benefit 1555 multi-state cooperatives, of which 42% are located in Maharashtra, highlighting the strength of the cooperative movement in the state.
- The government is planning to computerise the offices of registrar of cooperatives in states to ease communication with 8 lakh cooperatives in the country.
- The Modi government aims to make Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) viable and plans to form 3 lakh new PACS across the country in the next 5 years.
- The government is building a cooperative university and a national cooperative database to enhance technical education in the cooperative sector.
- Three new multi-state cooperatives have been set up to assist in marketing of organic produce and seed production, which will benefit over 10 crore farmers in the country.

- The government's vision is to contribute towards making India a \$5 trillion economy and the world's third largest economy with a significant contribution from the cooperative sector.

#### **About Maharashtra**

- It is a state located in the western part of India and covers a significant part of the Deccan Plateau.
- Chief Minister - Eknath Shinde
- Governor - Ramesh Bais
- Official Animal - Indian giant squirrel
- Official Bird - Yellow-footed Green Pigeon
- Official Dance - Lavani

### ➤ **Bihar constitutes 'Rhino Task Force' to revive rhino conservation in Valmiki Tiger Reserve**



The Bihar government will set up a 'Rhino Task Force' to propose measures to restart the rhino conservation plan in 'Valmiki Tiger Reserve' (VTR) located in West Champaran district.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- The VTR has seen a significant increase in the tiger population, prompting state wildlife officials to focus on reviving the rhino population in the region.
- At present, VTR has only one rhino, while Patna Zoo has 14 rhinos. With the formation of a 'rhino task force', officials aim to bring more rhinos back into the reserve.

#### **Valmiki Tiger Reserve selected for National Rhino Conservation Plan:**

- Valmiki Tiger Reserve has been selected as a potential site under the National Rhino Conservation Plan.
- This national level scheme allows rhinos to be introduced into Valmiki Tiger Reserve from other reserves across the country to boost their conservation.

#### **Committee Recommendations Lead to Formation of 'Rhino Task Force':**

- A committee was set up about two years ago to evaluate the habitat and security conditions in Valmiki Tiger Reserve.

- The main objective of the committee was to assess the feasibility and potential challenges of reintroducing rhinos to the reserve.
- Based on the recommendations and findings of the report of the committee, a 'Rhino Task Force' is being formed.

**The revitalization plan Aims to Expand Rhino-Bearing Areas in VTR:**

- The reintroduction plan aims to increase the areas within the Valmiki Tiger Reserve where rhinos can thrive.
- The goal is to expand rhinoceros-bearing areas by about 5% over the next two years.
- This includes strategic relocation of rhinos from congested habitats to identified locations within the reserve, such as Ganauli and Madanpur, to provide more space for breeding and population growth.

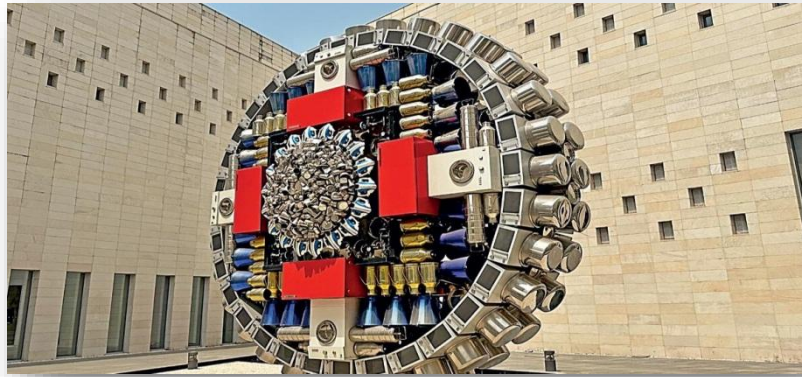
**India's Vital Role in One-Horned Rhino Conservation:**

- India plays a critical role in the conservation of the one-horned rhinoceros species.
- Approximately 75% of the world's rhino population is found in India.
- Notably, over 93% of India's rhino population resides in just one protected area, the Kaziranga National Park in the state of Assam.
- This highlights India's significant responsibility in safeguarding and preserving the endangered one-horned rhinoceros for its global conservation efforts.

**About Valmiki Tiger Reserve**

- It is located in the West Champaran district of Bihar and was established in 1990 as the 18th Tiger Reserve. It covers a core area of 909.86 km<sup>2</sup> within the Valmiki Sanctuary.
- Valmiki Tiger Reserve has seen a significant increase in tiger population, which ranks fourth in tiger density. From 31 tigers recorded in 2018, the reserve sees a significant increase to 54 tigers in 2022, representing a 75% increase in numbers.
- In the last four years, there has been an impressive addition of 23 tigers to the reserve, further boosting conservation efforts.
- The successful increase in the number of tigers in Valmiki Tiger Reserve has prompted the Bihar government to take action. He has initiated the process of developing the 'Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary (KWC)' into another tiger reserve or 'tiger-bearing landscape' within the state.

➤ **A special art exhibition titled "Together We Art" begins at Bihar Museum, Patna**



On 7 August 2023, a special art exhibition dedicated to the G-20 member countries in Bihar titled "Together We Art" will open at the Bihar Museum in Patna.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- The exhibition will run for two months starting today and will end on 7th October 2023.
- Chief Minister Nitish Kumar will inaugurate the exhibition.
- The event is organised by the Union Ministry of Art and Culture as part of India's chairmanship of G-20 countries.
- A total of 29 countries including India are participating in the exhibition.
- To mark the foundation day, the Bihar Museum Biennial 2023 will also begin, which will run for five months.

#### **About the G20**

- It is an international forum of the world's leading economies established in 1999.
- Its primary objective is to promote international financial stability and sustainable economic growth.
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change.

#### **Bihar:**

- Formation - 22 March 1912
- Capital - Patna
- District - 38
- Governor - Rajendra Arlekar
- Chief Minister - Nitish Kumar
- Deputy Chief Minister - Tejashwi Yadav
- Rajya Sabha - 16 seats
- Lok Sabha - 40 seats

#### ➤ **Cabinet okays draft telecom, postal bills**



The Union Cabinet has cleared the Draft Indian Telecommunications Bill, 2022 and Postal Services Bill, 2023.

#### **What is Draft Indian Telecommunications Bill, 2022?**

The Bill consolidates three separate acts that govern the telecommunications sector — Indian Telegraph Act 1885, Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act 1933, and The Telegraph Wires, (Unlawful Protection) Act 1950.

#### **What are the key provisions of the Bill?**

**Inclusion of OTTs in the definition of Telecommunications services:** The Bill proposes to bring over-the-top (or OTT) communications services such as WhatsApp, Telegram, satellite-based communication services and the internet into the definition of telecommunication services.

– So, OTT communication services have to take a license now and be subjected to the same conditions governing telecom players in India, like the quality of service and security rules, etc.

**Assigning of Spectrum:** The Bill laid down a clear statutory framework and regulations on assigning spectrum. It says spectrum should primarily be given through auction.

– For specific functions related to the government and public interest like defence, transportation and research, the Bill proposes assignment through the administrative process.

**Right of Way (ROW):** The Bill tries to achieve through law a 'right of way' (ROW) enforceable at the state- and at the municipal-corporation level.

– It lays down a framework in which a public entity that owns the land has to grant 'right of way' permission expeditiously unless it gives a substantive ground for refusal.

**Cyber Security:** To prevent cyber fraud, the Bill provides that the identity of the person sending a message through telecom services shall be available to a user receiving it.

#### **What is the Postal Services Bill, 2023?**

The Bill seeks to replace the Indian Post Office Act of 1898, which governs the functioning of post offices in the country.

The bill is aimed at bringing significant reforms in postal services.

The bill seeks to revamp the postal department, especially its parcel services, making them competitive with private players to generate revenue.

It also seeks to enhance financial services in rural areas through the postal system.

**Significance of the bill:** At a time the postal department is facing several challenges from private players in the areas of dominance, the proposed new postal bill may help in revitalizing the department as well as its officials in scripting new success stories in the days to come.

➤ **Jyothi Yarraji Wins India's First Ever 100m Hurdles Medal At WUG.**



- Star athlete Jyothi Yarraji won India's first ever bronze medal in the women's 100m hurdles at the World University Games in China.
- India's Jyothi Yarraji improved her own national record as she won a bronze medal.
- Yarraji clocked 12.78 seconds, her previous best was 12.82 seconds at the National Open Athletics Championships in Bengaluru last year. Yarraji missed the Paris Olympics qualifying mark of 12.77 seconds by 0.01 seconds.

➤ **Indiaspora to host G20 Forum in New Delhi from August 22 to 24.**





- In the run-up to the 18th summit of the G20 nations, US-based Indiaspora will host a G20 Forum in New Delhi from August 22 to 24.
- The nonprofit to assemble 200 diaspora leaders from 25 countries to explore ways it can contribute to India's journey toward 100 years of independence.

➤ **Tamil Nadu celebrated Cultural Festival Aadi Perukku:**



- On the 18th day of the Tamil month Aadi all the people of South India celebrated Aadi Perukku, the monsoon festival in a grand way. Monsoon season commences in the month of Aadi and symbolizes prosperity.
- Aadi Perukku is also known as Pathinettam Perukku. This festival is an auspicious festival to honor the monsoon season and the fertility of the soil.
- It is considered the ideal time to sow, plant seeds and take up other forms of vegetation. It is to pay tribute to the monsoon rains which fill the rivers.

➤ Parliament passed the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023.



- The Rajya Sabha passed the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023, which amends the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002. The Act regulates mining in maritime zones of India.
- The proposed amendments introduce auction for allocation of operating rights in offshore areas.

➤ South Indian Bank launched SIB EXIM Current Account.



- South Indian Bank (SIB) has launched SIB EXIM Current Account specially curated for customers involved in the import and export business.
- The current account is available in two variants SIB EXIM Silver and SIB EXIM Gold with the required Quarterly Forex Throughput (QFT) of \$15,000 and \$50,000 respectively.



➤ **Balladeer, ‘people’s singer’, ex-Maoist ideologue: Telangana poet Gaddar dies at 77.**



**Context:** Balladeer and poet Gaddar, a prominent face of the Telangana statehood movement and an **activist for the rights of Dalits** and marginalized people, died in Hyderabad Sunday. He was 77.

**About Gummadi Vithal Rao, Gaddar:**

- Gummadi Vittal Rao well-known as Gaddar is a **revolutionary balladeer** who was active as a Naxalite before he joined the Telangana movement, backing the **demand for separate statehood**.
- Once a bank employee, Gaddar was an active Naxalite till 2010 and was known for presenting vociferous songs that stirred the conscience of the people in questioning the Government’s policies, particularly when **concerned with the underprivileged and poor**.
- He **encouraged people to voice against the Government’s failure** to take up welfare measures for the upliftment of the downtrodden.
- Later after joining the Telangana movement which was picking up pace in the late 2010s, he supported the demand of a separate State along with other leaders of the movement. Following separate Statehood Gaddar for some time kept aloof from politics.

➤ **National Handloom Day**



**Context:** National Handloom Day is observed across India on August 7 every year. The primary goal of celebrating Handloom Day is to **promote handloom** and to **recognize the efforts as well as skills of the community of weavers** engaged in the sector.

#### **National Handloom Day 2023: History**

- The National Handloom Day was first observed in 2015 which was inaugurated by Prime Minister. The day was initiated to spread **awareness about the importance of the handloom sector**.
- August 7 was chosen for celebrating National Handloom Day to commemorate **the launch of the Swadeshi Movement on the same day in 1905** in Calcutta (now Kolkata). The movement was then led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai.
- The **Swadeshi Movement** was initiated to improve the usage of India-made goods which prominently involved handlooms. This movement also played **a major role in the Independence** of the country during British Rule.

#### **National Handloom Day 2023: Significance**

- It is essential for all to know the significance of the day as it not only **preserves the rich heritage of our country but also promotes the skill set**. Reportedly, the **handloom sector is one of the major pillars** of the economy after the agricultural sector in our country.
- A large section of women contributes their service as weavers and other artistic hands in this industry which is becoming the largest epitome for employment as well.
- These artisans and craftsmen as an industry have been supporting the country as **a soft power** by ensuring a flow of income.