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9 November 2023

International & National News

<p>India Bhutan regional connectivity</p> 	<p>In news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India and Bhutan agreed to discuss new routes of regional connectivity and upgrade border and immigration posts <p>Key points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 58-km cross-border rail link between Gelephu and Kokrajhar in Assam is to be built by India. Agreed to explore a second rail link for about 18 km between Samtse in Bhutan and Banarhat in the West Bengal tea gardens area. Allows Bhutanese trade items to be carried further on from Haldibari in West Bengal to Chilahati in Bangladesh Agreed to designate the Darranga-Samdrup Jongkhar border crossing between Assam and Bhutan as an immigration check post, so as to allow third-country nationals to enter and exit as well “for enhancing connectivity, and promoting tourism” Bhutan plans for a smart city at Gelephu on the border between Bhutan and Assam, and to have an international airport and Special Economic Zone at Gelephu.
<p>Production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme</p>	<p>In news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 80% of funds for semiconductor PLI remain unused. About \$8 billion of the \$10 billion allocated by the Centre for the production of semiconductors under the PLI. <p>Key points</p> <p>Production-linked incentive scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to enhance India’s manufacturing capabilities and exports in 14 economic sectors The scheme comes under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry Govt has allocated a \$26 billion fund. The PLI scheme is expected to have a cascading effect on the country's MSME ecosystem India is expected to raise bilateral trade with South Korea to \$50 billion by 2030 in battery storage solutions through the PLI scheme.
<p>The 14 sectors under PLI</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile Manufacturing and Specified Electronic Components Critical Key Starting Materials/Drug Intermediaries & Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients



4. Manufacturing of Medical Devices
5. Automobiles and Auto Components
6. Pharmaceuticals Drugs
7. Specialty Steel
8. Telecom & Networking Products
9. Electronic/Technology Products
10. White Goods (ACs and LEDs)
11. Food Products
12. Textile Products: MMF segment and technical textiles
13. High-efficiency solar PV modules
14. Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Drones and Drone Components.

The Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) initiative

In news

- **Navy Chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar** says the IPMDA initiative is proof of our commitment to a **free Indo-Pacific Region**.

Key fact about IPDMA

- The IPMDA was announced by the **Quad grouping**, comprising **India, Australia, Japan and the U.S.**, at the **Tokyo summit in early 2022**
- Aim to track “dark shipping” and build a “faster, wider, and more accurate maritime picture of near-real-time activities in partners’ waters”.
- **Integrating three critical regions** in the Indo-Pacific — the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Become a critical platform for fostering **cooperation** and addressing **maritime security** challenges in the IOR.
- **“Sharing of intelligence and information** also contributed to enhanced Maritime Domain Awareness [MDA].
- **The Navy’s Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** located at **Gurugram**, had greatly improved the situational awareness in the IOR region.

The “Quad” Counter to China





Fact-Checking Unit (FCU) by the Tamil Nadu government

Do you know

- **Center govt** proposed to constitute an FCU under the **Information Technology Act, 2020**, was challenged before the **Bombay High Court** which **reserved its verdict**.

In news

- The PIL in the High Court challenges the **formation of a Fact Checking Unit by the government**.

Key points

- **Objective of FCU:** The Fact Check Unit is to act as a **deterrent to creators and disseminators of fake news & misinformation** and to provide people with an easy avenue to report suspicious and questionable information about the Government of India for fact-checking.
- The **Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2020** ensures that all **electronic documents, records, and information of Indian citizens** are retained in data centers located in India.
- The bill also gives the **government the power to direct decryption and block information**

Bihar seeks to raise reservation to 65%.

Report Findings

- 34% of households in the State earn ₹6,000 or less each month.
- Among the upper castes, who make up about 15.4% of the population, the Bhumihars (2.9%) are poorer than others
- The Yadavs (14.3%) are poorer than other OBCs, who make up about 27% of the population.
- Overall, the State has **94 lakh poor families**.
- The State's **literacy** rate has increased from 61.8% in 2011 to **79.7%** now.

In news

- The Bihar Cabinet has approved a proposal to increase reservations in the State for SCs, STs, OBCs and Extremely Backward Classes EBCs to 65%.
- Decision comes after caste survey report published.

Key point

- Reservation for **SCs, STs, OBCs and EBCs to become 65%**.
- Including 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), the quota will go up to **75% crossing the ceiling set by the Supreme Court**.
- **Currently 50% quota in the state**.

According to a survey

SCs:-

19.7% of the population, should get a quota of 20%, higher than the current 16%.

STs:-

1.7% share in population, should get reservation doubled from 1% to 2%.

OBCs:-

27% population gets a quota of 12%, while EBCs 36% of the population and get a quota of 18%; together should get a quota of 43%.



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Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

Bharat Atta

In news

- With wheat flour (**atta**) becoming **costly around the festival season**, Govt. is expanding the 'Bharat Atta' sale.

Key points

- **Union Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry** released more stocks of the 'Bharat' brand atta for the **moderation of prices**.
- Bharat Atta will be available at **₹27.50 a kg** to increase supplies in the market at affordable rates.
- **100 mobile vans** used for distribution
- Other **outlets** at **Kendriya Bhandar**, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Ltd. (**NCCF**), and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (**NAFED**).

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