



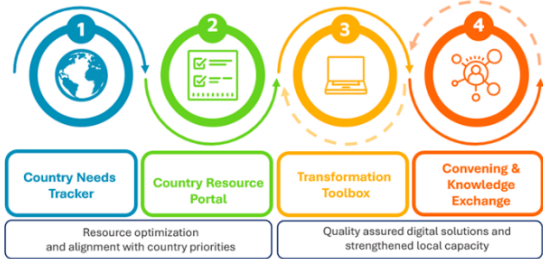
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22 February 2024

### National & International News

#### Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)



#### Context:

- Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, addressed the public launch event of the World Health Organization's Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH) virtually.
- It was collectively launched as a key deliverable of India's **G20 Presidency during the Health Ministers' Meeting in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, on August 19, 2023.**

#### About:

GIDH: a network of networks

As a WHO Managed Network ("Network of Networks"), GIDH will address challenges such as duplication of efforts and "products-focused" digital health transformation through a focus on four foundational pillars:

- **Country Needs Tracker** - facilitating digital health investments to be informed by country priorities;
- **Country Resource Portal** – identifying traditional as well as innovative resource opportunities, and promoting transparency, while reducing the risk of duplication for enabling a standards-based prospective and retrospective analysis of resourcing gaps in digital health.
- **Transformation Toolbox** – advocating for quality-assured tools and resources that strengthen country's capacity and autonomy to manage the national digital health transformation.
- **Convening and Knowledge Exchange** - promoting strengthened collaboration and knowledge exchange across global, regional, and national networks in digital health.

#### Schengen Zone

#### Context:

- **Kosovo** recently secured visa-free access to the Schengen Zone in Europe.

#### About:

- The Schengen zone refers to an area in Europe where internal border controls have been abolished among **27 countries**.
- This allows for passport-free travel within these countries. Recent developments include Kosovo gaining visa-free access, **Croatia joining in 2023, and Romania and Bulgaria set to gain partial entry in March.**



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- The Schengen Area operates under a **common visa policy, including 23 EU member states and four non-EU members.**
- The area aims to promote tourism and trade, enhance security, and provide convenience, but it also faces challenges such as managing migration and standardizing procedures.
- **Four non-EU members: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and Norway.**

### Nigeria



**Context:**

- Nigeria is currently grappling with one of its severest economic crises in recent years, largely due to **skyrocketing inflation caused by monetary policies** that have drastically devalued the currency against the dollar.
- This dire situation has sparked widespread anger and protests throughout the country.

**About:**

- Officially known as the **Federal Republic of Nigeria**, it is located in **West Africa**, bordered by **Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, Cameroon to the east, and Benin to the west.**
- the Sahel borders Nigeria **to the north and the Gulf of Guinea to the south** in the **Atlantic Ocean.**
- It stands as the **sixth-most populous country globally**, comprising **36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, with Abuja as the capital.**
- **Lagos**, one of the world's largest metropolitan areas, is Nigeria's largest city.

**Economy:**

- The country's economy has been severely affected, experiencing its deepest recession in four decades in **2020.**



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2023, Nigeria witnessed a <b>17-year high inflation rate of 25.8%</b>, contributing to sluggish growth and pushing millions into poverty.</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several economic challenges plague Nigeria, including the <b>devaluation of its currency</b> due to monetary policies, an <b>ongoing supply crisis in the power sector</b> despite abundant coal, oil, and gas reserves, and a <b>soaring cost of living</b> exacerbated by rising prices and heightened insecurity on the roads.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relics of Kapilavastu</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>National Museum in Delhi</b> is home to 20 relics of Lord Buddha, categorized as '<b>AA</b>' (rare) artifacts, and are considered significant cultural treasures.</li> <li><b>Four of these relics are currently being transported to Thailand</b> for a month-long exhibition, following a special request from the Thai Government.</li> </ul> <p><b>Significance of the Relics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These relics hold immense religious and cultural importance for Buddhists worldwide.</li> <li>They are <b>revered as sacred objects</b> and are often enshrined in <b>pagodas</b>.</li> <li><b>Stupas for veneration.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Kapilavastu Relics were excavated from <b>Piprahwa, located in the Siddharthnagar District of Uttar Pradesh</b>, once part of the ancient city of Kapilavastu.</li> <li>Kapilavastu, also known as Taulihawa, is a municipality and administrative center located in Kapilavastu District, Lumbini Province, southern Nepal.</li> <li>It lies approximately 25 kilometers southwest of Lumbini, the UNESCO World Heritage Site and the birthplace of Gautama Buddha.</li> </ul>
<p><b>A recent report on local fintech players</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The recent report on local fintech players, presented to <b>Parliament by the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology</b>, highlights concerns about the dominance of foreign-owned fintech apps in India. It recommends promoting local</li> </ul>



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players.

### Key findings:

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) data reveals its substantial contribution to digital payments in the fiscal year 2022-23.
- While UPI accounted for 73.5% of total digital payments by volume, its share by value stood at only 6.67% during the same period.
- The dominance of foreign-owned fintech entities, exemplified by **PhonePe and Google Pay, is notable in the Indian fintech landscape.**
- PhonePe holds the highest market share in terms of transaction volume, closely followed by Google Pay.
- **In contrast, NPCI's BHIM UPI trails behind significantly in transaction volume.**
- Local fintech players have an inherent understanding of the local market, while foreign entities excel in technology and global connectivity.
- A balanced presence of both local and foreign players is deemed crucial for the holistic development of India's fintech ecosystem.

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