

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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Table of Content

Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur
Parakram Divas
19th NAM Summit
Social Audit Advisory Body (SAAB)
India's Toy Industry
Group of 77

NEWS IN SHORTS

Pact To Supply Green Ammonia From India To Japan
NATO
Wadge Bank Ecosystem
D.K. Basu Judgment
Mosquirix
Parvatmala Pariyojana

JAN NAYAK KARPOORI THAKUR

Context:

- Recently, the Government of India conferred '**Bharat Ratna**' (India's highest civilian award) to **Karpoori Thakur** (posthumously) on his 100th birth anniversary.

About Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur

Before Independence of India:

- Karpoori Thakur was greatly influenced by **Mahatma Gandhi and Satyanarayan Sinha**.
- He joined the **All India Students Federation (AISF)**, the oldest student organisation in India, during his schooling days.
- He was inspired by Indian nationalistic thought, and left his graduation studies to **join the Quit India Movement**, a massive mobilisation started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942 to force the colonial British rulers to leave India.

After Independence:

- He initially started working as a teacher in his village.
- He returned to active politics with a victory in the **Bihar Legislative Assembly** election in 1952 from **Tajpur constituency**, and soon represented the **Socialist Party**.
- He became a legend because of his **successful fights for the rights of the workers** and thus pushed for reservations for backward classes.
- He started his **fast-unto-death** agitation for the cause of the **labourers in Telco** in the year 1970, and was **arrested for leading worker strikes**.
- His life revolved around the **twin pillars of simplicity and social justice**.

Contributions made by Karpoori Thakur

- **Social Justice:** Thakur's political journey was marked by monumental efforts to create a society where **resources were distributed** fairly and everyone, regardless of their social standing, had access to opportunities.
 - ♦ He wanted to **address the systemic inequalities** that plagued Indian society.
- **OBC Politics:** He is known as the pioneer of OBC politics in Bihar. He implemented quotas for backward classes in the state, a move that was pivotal in **setting the stage for the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations**.

- ♦ He appointed the **Mungeri Lal Commission in 1970**, that identified the 128 '**backward**' and 94 '**most backward**' communities.
- ♦ It paved the way for **26% reservation** of which OBCs got a 12% share, the economically backward classes among the OBCs got 8%, women got 3%, and the poor from the 'upper castes' got 3%.
- **Affirmative Action:** One of Thakur's most significant contributions to India was his role in strengthening the affirmative action apparatus for the backward classes.
 - ♦ He hoped that they would be given the representation and opportunities they deserved.
- **Selflessness:** During his tenure as the Chief Minister of Bihar, a decision was taken to build a colony for political leaders, but he himself did not take any land or money from the scheme.
- **Alcohol Ban:** Thakur is notably recognized in Bihar for implementing a complete ban on alcohol in 1970.
- **Education:** He was instrumental in establishing numerous schools and colleges, particularly in the underdeveloped regions of Bihar, ensuring that education became accessible to those who had been historically marginalised

Source: *TH*

PARAKRAM DIVAS

Context:

- **Parakram Divas** is celebrated on January 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of freedom fighter **Subhas Chandra Bose**.

About

- Parakram Diwas has been **celebrated annually since 2021**.
- **In 2022**, a hologram statue of Netaji was unveiled at **India Gate**.
- **In 2023**, 21 largest unnamed islands of **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** were named after the 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees and a model of **National Memorial** dedicated to Netaji which was supposed to be built on **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep** was unveiled.

- During the **Parakram Diwas 2024 programme**, the '**Bharat Parv**' organized by the **Ministry of Tourism** will be launched to **showcase the nation's diversity** with Republic Day Tableaux and cultural exhibits.

Subhas Chandra Bose and his contribution

- Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945), often referred to as **Netaji**, was a prominent figure in India's freedom struggle from British rule.
- His life and legacy were marked by **revolutionary passion, strategic leadership, and a fervent desire for an independent India**.

Early Life and Activism:

- Born in Cuttack, Odisha, in 1897, Bose received a prestigious education and **initially joined the Indian Civil Service**.
- **Inspired by Gandhi's non-cooperation movement**, he resigned from the service in 1921 and actively participated in nationalist activities.
- He quickly rose through the ranks of the Indian National Congress and became its president in **1938 (Haripura Session)**.

Differences with Gandhi and Departure from Congress:

- **Bose advocated for a more militant approach** to achieving independence, advocating for armed struggle alongside diplomatic and civil disobedience tactics.
- His differences with **Gandhi's focus on non-violent resistance** led to him **resigning from Congress in 1939**.
 - ♦ He then formed a political party named, **All India Forward Bloc in 1939**, a faction within the Indian National Congress.

Formation of the Indian National Army (INA):

- **During World War II, Bose sought international support** for India's freedom by traveling to Germany and seeking alliances with Axis powers.
- He rejuvenated the **Indian National Army (INA)/ Azad Hind Fauz**, a military force composed of Indian soldiers captured by the Japanese and Indian expatriates in Southeast Asia.
- The INA aimed to liberate India from British rule with Japanese assistance, leading to their **famous slogan, "Chalo Delhi" (March to Delhi)**.

Legacy and Significance:

- The INA established its **own provisional government** and initiated an attack against the British in India.
 - ♦ After limited success, however, they were defeated during the battle of Imphal in 1944 and disbanded altogether after the defeat of Japan in 1945.
- Bose's **unwavering commitment** to independence and his **willingness to employ unconventional methods** inspired millions of Indians.
- His **image and message of self-reliance and militant resistance** resonated with many, fueling the movement for freedom.

Source: **PIB**

19TH NAM SUMMIT

Context

- The 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit was held in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

Key discussions at the summit

- **Israel-Hamas war:** The leaders of NAM countries have denounced Israel's offensive in Gaza and demanded an immediate ceasefire during the summit.
 - ♦ India urged establishing a free Palestinian state and asked for a **two-state solution** where the Palestinian people can live within a secure border.
- **India's "Vishwa Mitra" initiative:** India emphasized its role as a friend to the world, or "Vishwa Mitra" to global solidarity and cooperation in his address.

What is Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)?

- **NAM** is an alliance of developing nations that refuses to identify with any major superpower during the Cold War.
- **History:** It has its origins in the 1955 **Bandung conference** in Indonesia during which representatives from 29 Asian and African countries, including many newly independent states that had been colonized for years, discussed common concerns.
- **NAM was established** and held its first conference in **1961 in Belgrade**, the capital of Yugoslavia.

- **Founders:** The movement's founders are President Sukarno of Indonesia, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and President Josip Tito of Yugoslavia.
- **Secretariat:** NAM does **not have a permanent secretariat** or a formal founding charter, act, or treaty. After the United Nations, NAM is the second-largest grouping of nations.
- **Members:** Currently, NAM membership consists of **120 countries**: 53 from Africa, 39 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and two from Europe. It also includes the non-UN member state of Palestine, and 17 other observer countries.

Challenges faced by NAM in today's world

- **Changing Geopolitical Dynamics:** The geopolitical landscape continues to evolve, with emerging powers and shifting alliances. NAM is facing it challenging to navigate these changes.
- **Human Rights:** Issues related to human rights and governance like Crisis in Gaza have gained prominence on the international stage. It is difficult to balance the diverse political systems while addressing concerns related to democracy, human rights abuses, and good governance.
- **Internal Differences:** The NAM consisted of countries with diverse political systems, economic structures, and cultural backgrounds. Solving internal differences and maintaining cohesion within the movement is an ongoing challenge.

Relevance of NAM today

- **Address economic Challenges:** After the Cold War, there is still an economic divide between developed and developing countries. NAM has significant relevance in today's world as the movement now shifts from a political concept to an economic one.
- **To ensure World Peace:** The movement plays a key role in maintaining world peace and preserving the independence of every nation is equally relevant. It acts as a catalyst to foster cooperation between South nations.
- **Development of nations:** It also raises key issues of economic, political, and social development to achieve the desired results of moving from developing to developed nations.

Way ahead

- Despite these challenges, the Non-Aligned Movement has remained a forum for cooperation and dialogue among its member nations, contributing to diplomatic efforts, conflict resolution, and the promotion of peace and development.

Source: *TH*

SOCIAL AUDIT ADVISORY BODY (SAAB)

Context

- The 1st meeting of the **Social Audit Advisory Body (SAAB)** was held recently.

About

- The Meeting was chaired by the **Secretary, Department of Social Justice & Empowerment.**
- This advisory body, a first of its kind, has been established **to guide the Ministry in institutionalizing social audits for its various schemes.**
- **Members:** Representatives from key ministries and academic institutions are members of this advisory body.

What is Social Audit?

- Social Audit is the examination and assessment of a programme/scheme for **comparing official records with actual ground realities.**
 - ♦ It includes an audit of the quality of works being executed at different levels along with the details of disbursements made, the number of labourers employed and materials used.
- **Objective:** The basic objective of social audit is to ensure public accountability in the implementation of projects, laws and policies.
- **Significance:** Social Audits play an important role in **bringing transparency and driving corrective actions** based on valuable feedback from citizens.

National Resource Cell for Social Audit (NRCSA)

- The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has established the **National Resource Cell for Social Audit (NRCSA)** to ensure social audits through **dedicated Social Audit Units at the state level.**

Source: *TH*

INDIA'S TOY INDUSTRY

Context:

- As per the recent official press release, the **toy industry** became a **net exporter between FY 2014-15 and FY 2022-23**.
- Its **exports increased by 239%** and **imports declined by 52%**, turning India into a net exporter.

Indian Toy Industry

- The Indian toy industry is among the fastest-growing globally, projected to reach \$3Bn by 2028.
- Domestic market size** currently stands at an estimated value of \$1.5Bn. The sector is **dominated by small & medium sized manufacturers**.
 - Labor-intensive toy** categories like dolls, soft toys and board games offer significant manufacturing potential in India due to inherent cost competitiveness and growing demand.
 - It is expanding **its global presence**, with increased high-value exports to **Middle East and African countries**.

Toy sector trade and production statistics

Summary of trade and production statistics from 2014-15

Year	Net exports (₹ crore)		Toy industry - factory sector (At constant 1998-99 prices)		
	Toys (HS-9503)	Total toys (HS codes 9503+9504+9505)	Gross value of output (₹ crore)	Labour productivity (₹ lakh)	Fixed capi- tal/worker (₹ lakh)
1	2	3	4	5	6
2014-15	-1,438	-1,450	324.9	7.5	2.4
2015-16	-1,555	-1,549	453.9	6.5	2
2016-17	-1,323	-1,245	301.7	5	2
2017-18	-1,317	-1,372	220.8	3.9	1.5
2018-19	-1,360	-1,176	348.6	4.8	1.7
2019-20	-1,055	-743	423.5	4.9	2.4
2020-21	83	451	-	-	-
2021-22	1,051	1,614	-	-	-
2022-23	729	1,319	-	-	-

Source: India's official trade data and Annual Survey of Industries

- The toy manufacturers in India are mostly located in **NCR, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and clusters across central Indian states**.

How India became a net exporter?

- India followed an **inward-oriented industrial policy in the Planning era**, which sheltered domestic production by providing a **'double protection'** — by import tariffs and reservation of the product for exclusive production in the small-scale sector — known as the **'reservation policy'**.

- Import Curb (Protectionism): Basic Customs Duty (BCD)** on toys was increased from 20% to 60% in February 2020, and subsequently to 70% in Budget 2023.
 - The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** has mandated sample testing of each import consignment to curb the import of sub-standards toys.
- Quality Assurance:** A **Quality Control Order (QCO)** for Toys was issued in 2020, with effect from 01.01.2021.
- Licensing:** Special provisions were notified by **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** to grant licences to micro sale units manufacturing toys without testing facility for one year and without establishing in-house testing facility, which was further **extended by three years**.
 - BIS has granted more than 1200 licences to domestic manufacturers and more than 30 licences to foreign manufacturers for manufacture of toys with **BIS Standard Marks**.
- 'Make in India'** had a negligible effect on strengthening toy production and exports on a sustained basis.
 - 100% FDI** is allowed under the **Automatic Route**.
- National Action Plan for Toys (NAPT):** It has 21 specific action points, implemented by 14 Central Ministries/Departments, with DPIIT as the coordinating body.
 - The Government is planning to provide comprehensive support to promote **'Vocal for Local'** in toys through NAPT.

What are the associated challenges?

- High Cost:** Small manufacturers are unable to upgrade to machinery production as taxes levy on the equipment is high.
- Regulation and Adhering to Standards:** Many of them have struggled to keep up with the regulatory changes and adhere to BIS standards.
- Supply Shortage:** The small-scale retailers face a shortage of supply, and unwillingly buy a lower-quality product.
 - They depend on the bigger companies producing and supplying quality products.
- Unemployment:** The output of the **informal or unorganised sector shrank**, though it continues to account for the majority of establishments and employment.

- ♦ India's toy industry is minuscule and during the one-and-half decades between 2000 and 2016, industry output was **halved in real terms (net of inflation) with job losses**.

Conclusion

- The toy industry has turned net exporter since 2020-21. 'Make in India' policies with rising tariff and non-tariff barriers made it possible.
- Complementing protectionism requires the implementation of investment policies and the establishment of localized public infrastructure tailored to specific industries or clusters. This approach aims to create a positive cycle, fostering the growth of domestic capabilities to effectively contend with international competition.

Source: *TH*

GROUP OF 77

In Context

- Third **summit** of the **Group of 77 (G-77) and China** was held in Kampala, Uganda.
 - ♦ China is **not a member of the group**, but often aligned politically with the group that is why it is often labelled '**G-77 plus China**'.

About

- The Group of 77 refers to the **largest intergovernmental group** of emerging countries in the United Nations.
- It was established in **1964** by **seventy-seven developing countries** at the end of the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in **Geneva**.
- **Charter**: The Group of 77 is guided by the **Charter of Algiers**, which acts as its institutional structure.
- **The Annual Meeting** of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 is convened at the beginning of the regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York.
- **Members**: The members of the G-77 have increased to 134 countries, the original name was retained due to its historic significance.
- **Highest Political Body**: The Chairmanship, which is the highest political body within the organizational structure of the Group of 77, rotates on a regional basis (between Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean)

Major Highlights of the Meeting

- **Crisis in Middle East**: Highlighting the conflict in Gaza, the Secretary-General of UN called for action to prevent a spillover across the region.
 - ♦ He stressed the need for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, access for humanitarian aid and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

Reforms in UNSC: Meeting called for reform of the UN Security Council, mentioning it does not reflect the reality of today's world.

- ♦ The Council has 15 members, and five – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States – have the right to veto any resolution.
- **Climate Change**: Decided to unite against the climate catastrophe and urged members to hold developed countries accountable for climate justice and for leading an equitable and just transition based on the phaseout of fossil fuel and massive investment in renewable energy.

Source: *UN*

NEWS IN SHORT

PACT TO SUPPLY GREEN AMMONIA FROM INDIA TO JAPAN

In Context

- ACME Group, a leading renewable energy company in India, and IHI Corporation, a Japanese integrated heavy industry group, **signed an agreement for supply of green ammonia from Odisha to Japan**.

Green Ammonia

- **Ammonia (chemical formula NH₃)** is a compound of nitrogen and hydrogen and is commonly used in various industrial applications, such as fertilizers, refrigerants, and cleaning products.
- **Green ammonia** refers to ammonia that is produced using environmentally friendly and sustainable methods, typically with a focus on minimizing carbon emissions.
 - ♦ **Green ammonia production** aims to address these environmental concerns by utilizing renewable energy sources and adopting alternative production pathways.

- **Traditional ammonia production** methods, known as the **Haber-Bosch process**, involve the use of natural gas as a feedstock and release a significant amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere.

Source: *TOI*

NATO

In News

- Turkey's parliament ratified Sweden's North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership bid.

About NATO

- It was formed in 1949 with the signing of the Washington Treaty.
- **NATO's founding member countries were:** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- It is a security alliance of countries from **North America and Europe**.
 - ♦ Its purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means.
- **Joining NATO:** The Open Door Policy is a founding principle of NATO.
 - ♦ This means that any country in Europe is free to join NATO if it is prepared to meet the standards and obligations of membership, contributes to the security of the Alliance, and shares NATO's values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law.
- **Mandate**
 - ♦ It promotes **democratic values** and enables members to consult and cooperate on **defence and security-related issues** to solve problems, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict.
 - ♦ It is committed to the **peaceful resolution of disputes**.
 - If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake crisis-management operations.
 - Under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.

Source: *Air*

WADGE BANK ECOSYSTEM

Context

- The exploration of oil and gas blocks has raised serious concerns in Kanniyakumari district as it could badly affect the Wadge Bank Ecosystem.

Wadge Bank Ecosystem

- It is a part of the sea that is a **fertile fishing ground** and rich in biodiversity.
- The wadge bank ecosystem off the coastline of Kanyakumari, situated in the southwest off the shore, is the mainstay of marine resources for fisherfolk of the southern districts of India adjacent to the site.

Significance

- It is like a warehouse, a feeding house for the fish, and a number of reef systems exist in this region with over 200 varieties of rare fish species and more than 60 kinds of aquatic species.
- Wadge Bank was an invaluable treasure that indigenous people and communities depended on for food and resources that were important to their culture.

Source: *TH*

D.K. BASU JUDGMENT

Context:

- Recently the Supreme Court of India highlighted the **D.K. Basu Judgment (1996)** against police abuse and custodial violence.

About the D.K. Basu vs. State of West Bengal Case (1996):

- It is a landmark judgement of the Supreme Court of India in the **realm of human rights** jurisprudence, and drawing attention to **deaths in police custody** in India.
- The petitioner, D.K. Basu, Executive Chairman of Legal Aid Services, West Bengal, addressed a letter to the Supreme Court of India drawing attention to deaths in police custody.
 - ♦ The letter was treated as a **Writ Petition** within the '**Public Interest Litigation**'.

The Judgement:

- It held that **custodial violence**, including torture and death in lock-ups, violates the **rule of law and human dignity**.

- ◆ It broadened the horizons of the meaning of fundamental rights.
- It held that **compensation** can be awarded for the **infringement of fundamental rights**.
- The SC has **laid down the 'Basic Requirements' for Arrest and Detention**, that includes:
 - ◆ Identification;
 - ◆ Memo of Arrest;
 - ◆ Information of Arrest;
 - ◆ Informing the right to the Arrestee;
 - ◆ Diary Entry;
 - ◆ Inspection Memo;
 - ◆ Medical Examination;
 - ◆ Copies of documents to Illaqa Magistrate;
 - ◆ Right to Lawyer;
 - ◆ Police Control Room;
- **Transmission Types:** Humans can contract malaria through mosquito bites, infected blood transfusions, or sharing needles with an infected person.
- **Typical Symptoms:** Fever, chills, sweating, headache, muscle aches, nausea, and vomiting.
 - ◆ In severe cases, malaria can lead to **anemia, organ failure, coma, and death**, especially in young children and pregnant women.
- **Prevention and Treatment:**
 - ◆ **Mosquito Control:** Using mosquito nets, repellents, and insecticide-treated bed nets are crucial for prevention.
 - ◆ **Vaccine Development:** A malaria vaccine is under development and shows promise in clinical trials, offering future hope for effective prevention.
 - ◆ **Antimalarial Drugs:** Early diagnosis and treatment with effective antimalarial medications can significantly reduce the risk of complications.

Source: **IE**

MOSQUIRIX

Context

- **Cameroon** will be the first country to routinely give children **a new malaria vaccine-Mosquirix**.

About

- It is also known as **RTS,S/AS01**. In 2021, WHO licensed Mosquirix for children in sub-Saharan Africa with moderate-to-high **Plasmodium falciparum malaria** transmission.
- Africa accounts for 95% of the world's malaria deaths. **GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation)** is working with 20 other African countries to help them to vaccinate **more than six million children through 2025**.
 - ◆ GAVI was set up **as a Global Health public-private Partnership in 2000** with the goal of creating **equal access to new and underused vaccines for children** living in the world's poorest countries.

About Malaria

- Malaria is a **mosquito-borne infectious disease** that affects millions of people around the world, **primarily in tropical and subtropical regions**.
- **Parasite:** Malaria is caused by **Plasmodium parasites**, transmitted through the bites of infected **Anopheles mosquitoes**.
- **Life Cycle:** Once inside a human, the parasite goes through several stages in the liver and red blood cells, causing symptoms like fever, chills, and fatigue.

Source: **TH**

PARVATMALA PARIYOJANA

News

- Union minister for road transport and highways announced over 200 Ropeway Projects Worth 1.25 Lakh Crore under Parvatmala Program.

About Parvatmala Pariyojana

- Union Finance Minister, while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23, announced the **National Ropeways Development Programme – "Parvatmala"** – which will be taken up on PPP mode.
 - ◆ The focus is on PPP under **Hybrid Annuity Model with 60%** contribution support by Government of India.
- It will be a preferred, ecologically sustainable alternative in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas.
- It is being started for areas such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu-Kashmir and the North-East.

Importance

- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.

Source: **PIB**