

# DAILY PT POINTERS

26 December,  
2024



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express-GS2(Governance)/Economy-Page1

## At river-link project site, PM hails Ambedkar role in water works, slams Cong

ANAND MOHAN J

BHOPAL, DECEMBER 25

AS HE laid the foundation stone of the inter-state Ken-Betwa river linking project in Khajuraho on Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoked Dr B R Ambedkar, accusing the Congress of ignoring his (Ambedkar's) contribution to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses an event in Khajuraho, Wednesday. ANI

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Ken-Betwa river linking project in Khajuraho.
- **Ken-Betwa Project Details:** First river interlinking project under the National Perspective Plan (1980).
  - Transfers water from Ken river to Betwa river, benefiting Bundelkhand region. Provides irrigation, drinking water, and hydropower to water-starved areas.

## Indian Express-GS2(Governance)-Page5

### HC to govt: Sign MoU with Centre irrespective of poll code to implement PM-ABHIM

SOHINIGHOSH

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 25

THE DELHI High Court on Tuesday directed that the AAP government in the Capital to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare before January 5 to implement Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), irrespective of imposition of model code of conduct in the run-up to the Assembly elections.

PM-ABHIM is a Central government scheme that aims to strengthen public health infrastructure to respond to future pandemics and outbreaks.

The direction came from the bench of Justices Prathiba Singh

and Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora, which was dealing with a suo motu petition from 2017, along with other related petitions. The Delhi government has chosen not to implement the scheme.

The court, on December 24, recorded, "...the PM-ABHIM scheme would have to be implemented in its entirety to ensure that residents of Delhi are not deprived of the funds and the facilities under the said scheme... The non-implementation of the scheme in Delhi, when 33 states and UTs have implemented the same, would not be justified."

"...This MoU shall be signed irrespective of a model code of conduct, if any, as the same has been monitored by this court and is for the benefit of citizens of Delhi," it added.

- The Delhi High Court directed that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the national capital needed to sign an MoU with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare before January 5 for implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), irrespective of imposition of Model Code of Conduct in the run-up to the Assembly elections.
- To strengthen the Public Health Infrastructure and to effectively manage and respond towards any future pandemics and outbreaks, **Pradhan Mantri - Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)** was launched on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 with an outlay of **Rs.64,180 Cr** to be implemented over five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26, to fill critical gaps in health infrastructure, surveillance and health research - spanning both the urban and rural areas. The Scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with some Central Sector components.

## The Hindu-IR (GSII)-Page8

# U.S. and China renew S&T Agreement

What new measures were added to the Agreement in 2024? What does this indicate about the evolving relationship between the U.S. and China?

How has the U.S. benefited from its collaboration with China under this Agreement?

### EXPLAINER

Krishna Ravi Srinivas

#### The story so far:

**O**n December 13, China and the U.S. agreed to extend their Agreement on Co-operation in Science and Technology for an additional five years, effective from August 27, 2024, and also signed a protocol to amend it. Observers have welcomed the development as an affirmation of science and technology cooperation between the two major powers. The Agreement was first signed on January 31, 1979, by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping and U.S. president Jimmy Carter at a time when both countries had established diplomatic relations and



GETTY IMAGES

country has emerged as a strong contender for the leadership of global science.

According to one February 2024 paper, China's research and development (R&D) spending increased from \$375 million in 1979 to \$442 billion in 2021, second only to the U.S. In 1985, there were 2,770 Chinese undergraduate students in the U.S. and 109,525 in 2000. Both the number of papers coauthored by Chinese and U.S. authors and the variety of fields in which this has happened have increased. On the back of these data, Deborah Seligson of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, has argued that the U.S. wasn't poorly served by the Agreement and has received significant value as well.

For the same reasons, the incoming Trump administration isn't likely to

### THE GIST

▼ The U.S. and China renewed their Agreement on Co-operation in Science and Technology for five years with new amendments addressing researcher safety and data reciprocity.

▼ The Agreement catalysed China's rise from a junior partner in 1979 to a formidable global competitor in science and technology, marked by massive growth in R&D spending, student exchanges, and research output.

- The U.S. and China renewed their Agreement on Co-operation in Science and Technology for five years with new amendments addressing researcher safety and data reciprocity.
- The Agreement catalysed China's rise from a junior partner in 1979 to a formidable global competitor in science and technology, marked by massive growth in R&D spending, student exchanges, and research output.
- While Trump's administration might scrutinise the Agreement more closely, it recognises the importance of maintaining cooperation with China, particularly to monitor and manage China's technological advancements.

## The Hindu-IR (GSII)-Page8

# What is Australia's Online Safety Amendment about?

How will ARSMPs ensure compliance with the new age restrictions?

R.K.Vij

### The story so far:

Australia's House of Representatives recently passed the "Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill, 2024" which imposes obligation on certain social media platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent children under 16 years of age from having an account.

### What is the new law about?

The object of the amendment (a new Part 4A- social media minimum age inserted in Australia's existing the Online Safety Act of 2021) is to 'reduce the risk of harm to age-restricted users from certain kinds of social media platforms'. The age-restricted user shall mean 'an Australian child who has not reached 16 years'.

The age-restricted social media platforms (ARSMP) affected by the

some exclusions) an electronic service which enables online social interaction between two or more end-users, and allows end-users to post material on the service.

The Australian Minister of Communication clarified that the government expects the ARSMP will, at minimum, include TikTok, Facebook, Snapchat, Reddit, Instagram, X, among others.

### How will the ban be implemented?

The law proposes that the providers of ARSMPs 'must take reasonable steps to prevent age-restricted users having accounts with the age-restricted social media platforms'. Failing to meet this requirement may result in a maximum civil penalty of \$49.5 millions. However, what is meant by 'reasonable steps' is not defined within the Bill.

It shall be the duty of the eSafety Commissioner to formulate, in writing, guidelines for taking reasonable steps to

accounts with age-restricted social media platforms and to promote those guidelines.

The proposed restriction will not take place earlier than 12 months after the proposed day of enforcement. The affected stakeholders shall be consulted and government's age assurance trial will guide the industry on which age assurance technologies would be considered 'reasonable' and consistent with minimum age obligation. However, it was confirmed that all account holders on ARSMPs will have to verify their age.

The law does not otherwise place any obligation on ARSMPs to prohibit people under the age of 16 from accessing content on their platforms. There is no civil penalty for parents who provide access to ARSMPs for children under 16.

### What are privacy concerns?

It has been observed that 'age assurance technologies can pose privacy risks due to the type and amount of data they collect.

privacy concerns, the proposed law will establish privacy obligations where an 'entity' holds personal information about an individual that was collected for the purpose of taking reasonable steps to establish identity. Penalties may be imposed under the Privacy Act, 1988 if the entity uses or discloses information, without falling within one of the exceptions under the Act.

There will also be an obligation on entities to destroy the collected information 'after using or disclosing it for the purposes for which it was collected. The government also announced its intention to legislate a 'Digital Duty of Care' to 'place the onus on digital platforms to proactively keep Australians safe and better prevent online harms.'

### Is social media harmful to children?

Emerging research indicates that social media may impact children's mental health. Despite various benefits, the risks of social media are also well acknowledged.

However, a blanket ban to prohibit children from using social media is not considered to be the most advantageous solution. Some researchers and academics expressed concern 'that a ban is too blunt an instrument to address risks effectively'. The Australian Greens criticised saying that the legislation was 'rushed, reckless and goes against the evidence'.

R.K. Vij, a former Indian Police Service

### THE GIST

▼ Australia's Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill, 2024, mandates that platforms take reasonable steps to prevent children under 16 from creating accounts, with penalties for non-compliance reaching \$49.5 million.

▼ While aimed at reducing harm to children, the law raises privacy concerns over data collection for age verification, with safeguards requiring the destruction of personal data after use and penalties for misuse under the Privacy Act, 1988.

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The age-restricted social media platforms (ARSMP) affected by the proposed amendment would cover (with some exclusions) an electronic service which enables online social interaction between two or more end-users, and allows end-users to post material on the service.

## The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page10

### Centre yet to formally scrap FMR with Myanmar

Tighter guidelines issued to regulate movement of people between the two countries; earlier, those living within 16 km of border were allowed to cross but the limit has now been set at 10 km

Vijaita Singh  
NEW DELHI

Months after announcing that the Free Movement Regime (FMR) along the Myanmar border has been entirely suspended, the Union Home Ministry has brought in fresh protocol to regulate the movement of people living within 10 kilometres on either side of the largely unfenced international border.

A senior government official told *The Hindu* that the notification ending the FMR, which involves a bilateral agreement with Myanmar, is yet to be notified by the External Affairs Ministry.

Home Minister Amit Shah had announced on February 8 that the FMR had been scrapped to ensure internal security of the country and to maintain the demographic structure of the northeastern States. However, the new guidelines indicate that the regime has not been done away with but stricter regulations, such as reducing the range of free movement to 10 km from the ear-



**Dividing line:** The 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar runs along Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram. FILE PHOTO

Manipur border said, "MHA, Government Of India has recommended for scrapping the FMR to MEA, GoI and a formal order in this regard is awaited."

The scrapping of the FMR was opposed by Nagaland and Mizoram. The Nagaland government, led by the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party, an ally of the BJP, has passed a resolution in the Assembly against scrapping the FMR.

In Manipur, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has attributed the ongoing ethnic violence, which has claimed more than 250 lives since May 2023, to the unregulated movement of people from across the bor-

der (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km) and Mizoram (510 km).

#### New rules

For entry into India from Myanmar, individuals will have to report at the designated border crossing points and fill a form.

The Assam Rifles will conduct the document inspection followed by a security and health check by the State police and health department officials, respectively.

The Assam Rifles will upload all the forms on the Indo-Myanmar Border portal, record biometrics, and issue a border pass with a photograph of the applicant and a QR code. The pass will have to be deposited on return at the same crossing point before completion of seven days.

The protocol stated that the police will do physical checks to verify the visit of Myanmar nationals as per the details provided in the border pass and anyone violating the conditions will face legal action.

Eight pilot entry and exit points will be made func-

the "Instructions for regulation of cross-border movement of people of border area across the Indo-Myanmar Border" from 43 designated entry and exit points, instead of entirely scrapping the regime.

#### Familial and ethnic ties

The FMR came into existence in 1968 as people on either side of the border have familial and ethnic ties. The territorial limit of free movement then was 40 km, which was reduced to 16 km in 2004, and additional regulations were enforced in 2016.

According to the new guidelines, a resident crossing the border from

- Union Home Ministry announced new protocol for regulating movement along the India-Myanmar border. Formal notification to end the Free Movement Regime (FMR) by the External Affairs Ministry is still awaited. Home Minister Amit Shah announced FMR scrapping to ensure internal security and maintain demographic structure.

#### Regulations and Adjustments:

New guidelines reduce free movement range to 10 km from 16 km.

Verbal announcements about ending FMR, but no formal orders yet.

- FMR established in 1968 to support familial and ethnic ties across the border.
- Initial free movement limit was 40 km, reduced to 16 km in 2004, with additional regulations in 2016.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



## PIB-Economy (GSIII)

Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation



### Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) Results for 2023-24 (Reference & Survey period: October 2023 to September 2024)

The estimated number of establishments grew by 12.84% during the period October, 2023 – September, 2024 over previous year

Total estimated employment in the sector showed a robust growth of 10.01% during this period over the previous year

Gross value Added (GVA) also grew by 16.52% (at current price) during this period.

Posted On: 24 DEC 2024 3:50PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) results for 2023-24, covering the period October 2023 – September 2024.

This survey measures the economic and operational characteristics of unincorporated non-agricultural establishments in manufacturing, trade, and other services sectors, excluding construction. The data serves as a crucial input for policymaking and supports National Accounts Statistics.

#### **Key Highlights from ASUSE 2023-24:**

**Growth in Establishments and Productivity:**

Total establishments increased from 6.50 crore in 2022-23 to 7.34 crore in 2023-24, a growth of 12.84%.

"Other Services" sector saw a growth of 23.55%, followed by a 13% increase in the manufacturing sector.

Gross Value Added (GVA) rose by 16.52%, driven by a 26.17% growth in the other services sector.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## Air: Miscellaneous

### President Murmu To Confer 'Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar' On 17 Children From 14 States/UTs In New Delhi



*Celebrating*  
**Veer Baal Diwas**

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

26<sup>th</sup> December 2024

- President of India Droupadi Murmu to confer Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar on 17 children
- Awardees recognized for exceptional achievements in Art, Culture, Science, Innovation, Sports, Social Service, and Environment

*Celebrating the passion, perseverance, and potential of our young heroes*

*Let's cheer for the change makers of tomorrow!*



- President Droupadi Murmu will confer the 'Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar' on 17 children for exceptional achievements in seven categories in New Delhi tomorrow. Children hail from 14 states and UTs.
- The government confers the Bal Puraskar to children for achievements in art and culture, bravery, innovation, science and technology, social service, sports, and the environment. Each awardee will receive a medal, certificate, and citation booklet.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

**Air: Health(GS2)**

**India Achieves 97% Reduction In Malaria Cases, Targets Malaria-Free Status By 2030**

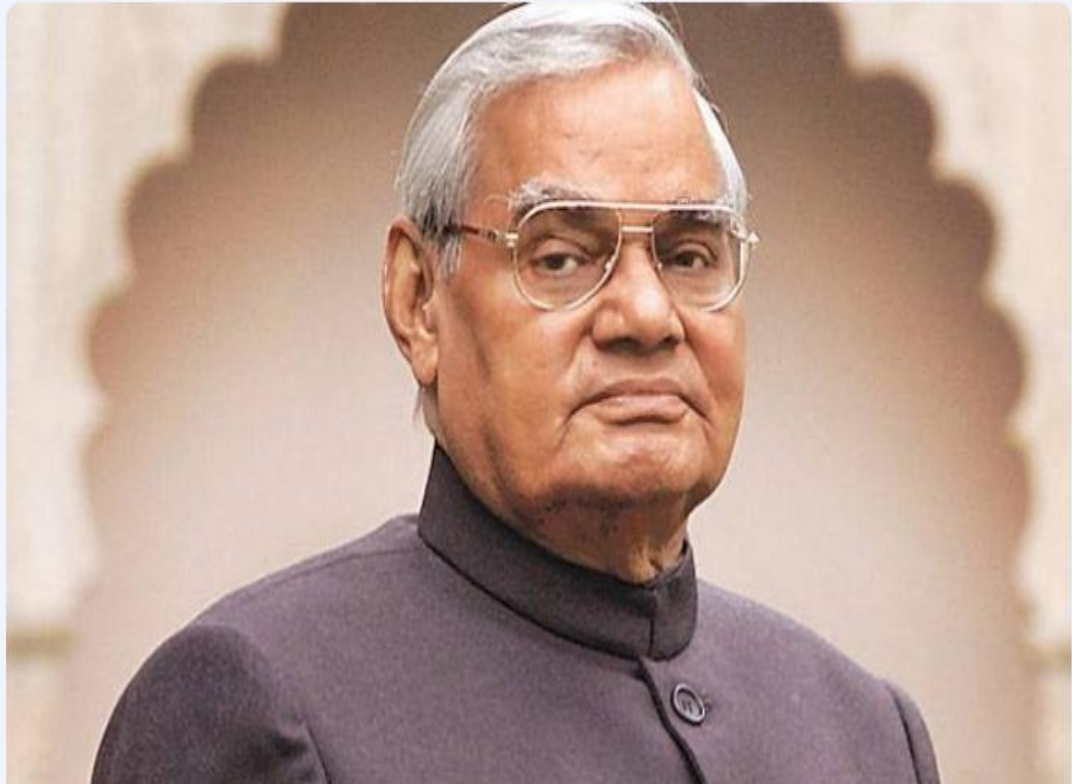


- The Health Ministry today said that the number of annual malaria cases declined from 7.5 crore at the time of independence to 20 lacs by 2023, with over a 97 percent reduction.
- India has exited from the World Health Organisation's High Burden to High Impact group in 2024, signifying a turning point in its fight against malaria. In 2023, zero malaria cases were reported in 122 districts across various states. India is making strides in its march toward a malaria-free nation while setting global benchmarks in public health. The government is working with the vision of achieving malaria-free status by 2030, with comprehensive and multi-pronged strategies like the National Framework for Malaria Elimination and the National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## Air: History

### Nation Pays Tribute To Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee On His 100th Birth Anniversary



- Prime Minister pays tribute to former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 100th birth anniversary
- The day is also celebrated as Good Governance Day.
- Born on 25th December 1924 in Gwalior, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's personality had many facets, he was a forceful orator, a writer, poet, a selfless social worker, journalist, but more than anything else, he was a leader among leaders. He served thrice as the Prime Minister of India. His legacy comprises forward looking economic policies, massive infrastructure projects and development of national highways as well as roads in the rural areas.