



Budget 2022-23

For Prelims: Budget and Constitutional Provisions, Initiatives Mentioned in the Budget such as PM GatiShakti, One Station One Product concept, etc., Amrit Kaal, Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

For Mains: Budget and Constitutional Provisions, Key Highlights of Budget 2022.

Why in News?

Recently, the Minister of Finance presented the **Union Budget 2022-23**. With this Budget, India has marked the 75 years of Independence through **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**.

- Apart from this, the budget also lays down a plan for **next 25 years and refers to the same period as Amrit Kaal**.
- It has also announced some **important measures for taxpayers**.

Budget and Constitutional Provisions

- According to **Article 112 of the Indian Constitution**, the Union Budget of a year is referred to as the Annual Financial Statement (AFS).
- It is a statement of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government in a Financial Year (which begins on 1st April of the current year and ends on 31st March of the following year).
- Overall, the **Budget contains:**
 - Estimates of revenue and capital receipts,
 - Ways and means to raise the revenue,
 - Estimates of expenditure,
 - Details of the actual receipts and expenditure of the closing financial year and the reasons for any deficit or surplus in that year, and
 - The economic and financial policy of the coming year, i.e., taxation proposals, prospects of revenue, spending programme and introduction of new schemes/projects.
- In Parliament, the Budget **goes through six stages:**
 - Presentation of Budget.
 - General discussion.
 - Scrutiny by **Departmental Committees**.
 - Voting on Demands for Grants.
 - Passing an Appropriation Bill.
 - Passing of Finance Bill.
- The Budget Division of the Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance is the nodal body responsible for preparing the Budget.
- The first Budget of Independent India was presented in 1947.

What are the Key Highlights of Budget 2022?

- **Growth Rate:** India's economic growth in the current year (2021-22) is estimated to be **9.2% of**

GDP, the highest among all large economies.

- The revised **Fiscal Deficit** in the current year is estimated **at 6.9% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product)** as against 6.8% projected in the Budget Estimates.
- The Fiscal Deficit in 2022-23 is estimated **at 6.4% of GDP**, which is consistent with the broad path of fiscal consolidation announced last year to reach a fiscal deficit **level below 4.5% by 2025-26**.

▪ **Amrit Kaal:** India has entered into Amrit Kaal, the **25-year-long leadup to **

During the **Amrit Kaal**, the government aims to attain the following vision:

- Complementing the **macro-economic level growth** focus with a **micro-economic level all-inclusive welfare focus**.
- Promoting **digital economy & fintech, technology enabled development, energy transition, and climate action**.
- Relying on a **virtuous cycle** starting from private investment with public capital investment helping to crowd-in private investment.

▪ **Blueprint of Amrit Kaal:** Four Priorities:

- **PM GatiShakti**
- **Inclusive Development**
- **Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action**
- **Financing of Investments**

▪ **Productivity Linked Incentive:** 60 lakh new jobs to be created under the **productivity linked incentive scheme** in 14 sectors.

▪ **Other Major Announcements in Budget:**

- **Railways: One Station One Product concept** to help local businesses & supply chains.
- **Parvatmala:** It is a **National Ropeways Development Program**, Parvatmala to be taken up on PPP mode.
- **Kisan Drones:** For crop assessment, digitization of land records, spraying of insecticides and nutrients.
- **MSME:** Udyam, **e-shram, NCS and ASEEM portals** to be interlinked.
- **Skill Development: Digital Ecosystem for Skilling and Livelihood (DESH-Stack e-portal)** will be launched to empower citizens to skill, reskill or upskill through on-line training.
- **Education: 'One class-One TV channel' programme** of PM eVIDYA to be expanded to 200 TV channels.
- **Health:** An open platform for the **National Digital Health Ecosystem** to be rolled out.
- **Saksham Anganwadi (New Generation Anganwadi):** Integrated benefits to women and children through Mission Shakti, Mission Vatsalya, Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0.
- **PM-DevINE:** New scheme **Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East Region** (PM-DevINE) launched to fund infrastructure and social development projects in the North-East.
- **Vibrant Villages Programme:** Vibrant Villages Programme for development of Border villages with sparse population, limited connectivity and infrastructure on the northern border.
- **Sunrise Opportunities:** Government contribution to be provided for R&D in Sunrise Opportunities like Artificial Intelligence, Geospatial Systems and Drones, Semiconductor and its eco-system, Space Economy, Genomics and Pharmaceuticals, Green Energy, and Clean Mobility Systems.
- **GIFT-IFSC:** World-class foreign universities and institutions to be allowed in the **GIFT City**.
 - An **International Arbitration Centre** to be set up for timely settlement of disputes under international jurisprudence.
- **Digital Rupee:** Introduction of Digital Rupee by the Reserve Bank of India starting 2022-23.

TAX PROPOSALS ₹

Allowing taxpayers to file Updated Return within 2 years for correcting errors

- Tax relief to persons with disability
- Reducing Alternate Minimum Tax Rate and Surcharge for Cooperatives.

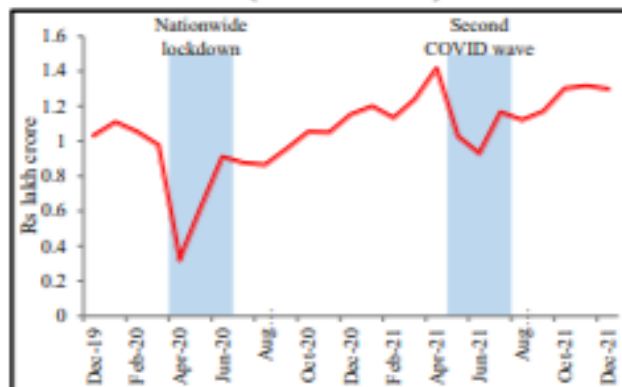
Increasing tax deduction limit on employer's contribution to NPS account of state government employees

Extending period of incorporation of eligible startups for providing tax incentives

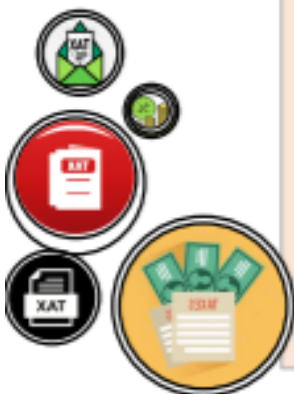
- Income from transfer of virtual assets to be taxed at 30%
- Better litigation management to avoid repetitive appeals

Any Surcharge or Cess on Income and Profits not allowable as business expenditure

Buoyant GST collections during 2021-22 (Rs lakh crore)



- Customs administration to be fully IT driven in SEZs
- Phasing out concessional rates in capital goods and project imports gradually and apply a moderate tariff of 7.5%
- Review of customs exemptions and tariff simplification
- Customs duty rates are being calibrated to provide a graded rate structure to facilitate domestic electronics manufacturing
- Rationalisation of exemptions on implements and tools for agri sector manufactured in India
- Extension of customs duty exemption to steel scrap
- Reduction of duty on certain inputs required for shrimp aquaculture
- Unblended fuel shall attract additional differential excise duty



Budget 2022-23: PM GatiShakti

For Prelims: Constitutional Provisions related to Budget, PM GatiShakti, its features and components.

For Mains: Significance of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan and associated concerns.

Why in News?

Recently, the Minister of Finance presented the **Union Budget 2022-23**.

- This section deals with proposals related to **'PM GatiShakti'**.

What is PM GatiShakti?

- **About:**
 - PM GatiShakti National Master Plan for Multi-Modal Connectivity, **launched in October 2021**, is an initiative **aimed at coordinated planning and execution of infrastructure projects**. The objective is **to bring down logistics costs**.
 - **GatiShakti is a digital platform** bringing development projects of 16 ministries, including railways and roadways, together for integrated planning and implementation.
 - When launched, the **GatiShakti scheme subsumed the Rs 110 lakh crore [National Infrastructure Pipeline](#)** announced in 2019.
- **Focus Area for Budget 2022-23:**
 - Its scope will **encompass the seven engines** (Roads, Railways, Airports, Ports, Mass Transport, Waterways and Logistics Infrastructure).
 - It will also include the **infrastructure developed by the state governments** as per the GatiShakti Master Plan.
 - The touchstone of the Master Plan will be **world-class modern infrastructure and logistics synergy** among different modes of movement - both of people and goods - and location of projects.

PM GATISHAKTI



- Driven by seven engines: Roads, Railways, Airports, Ports, Mass Transport, Waterways, and Logistics Infrastructure.
- National Master Plan aimed at world class modern infrastructure and logistics synergy



Formulation of Master Plan for expressways.
Completing 25000 km national highways in 2022-23



- Unified Logistics Interface Platform allowing data exchange among all mode operators
- Open Source Mobility Stack for seamless travel of passengers
- 4 Multimodal Logistics parks through PPP to be awarded in 2022-23



- Integration of Postal and Railways Network facilitating parcel movement.
- One Station One Product
- Extending coverage under Kavach
- 400 new generation Vande Bharat Trains



- Multimodal connectivity between mass urban transport and railway stations
 - National Ropeways Development Plan as sustainable alternative to conventional roads.
- Capacity building for infrastructure Projects

What are the Major Proposals for PM GatiShakti?

▪ Road Transport:

- PM GatiShakti Master Plan for **Expressways will be formulated in 2022-23** to facilitate faster movement of people and goods.
- **National Highways network** to be expanded by 25,000 km in 2022-23. **Rs. 20,000 crore** to be mobilized for the expansion.

- **Seamless Multimodal Movement of Goods and People:**
 - The **data exchange** among all mode operators will be brought on [Unified Logistics Interface Platform \(ULIP\)](#), designed for [Application Programming Interface \(API\)](#).
 - This will provide **real time information to all stakeholders**, lead to **efficient movement of goods** through different modes, and improve international competitiveness.
 - **Open-source mobility stack**, for organizing seamless travel of passengers will also be facilitated.
- **Multimodal Logistics Parks:**
 - Contracts for implementation of [Multimodal Logistics Parks](#) at four locations through **PPP (Public-Private Partnerships) mode** will be awarded in **2022-23**.
- **Railways:**
 - Railways will **develop new products and efficient logistics services** for **small farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises**, besides taking the lead in integration of **Postal and Railways networks** to provide seamless solutions for movement of parcels.
 - **'One Station-One Product'** concept to help local businesses & supply chains.
 - As a part of [Atmanirbhar Bharat](#), **2,000 km of network** will be brought under **Kavach, the indigenous world-class technology** for safety and capacity augmentation in 2022-23.
 - **400 new-generation Vande Bharat Trains** to be manufactured during the next three years.
 - **100 PM GatiShakti Cargo Terminals** for multimodal logistics facilities will be developed during the next three years.
- **Mass Urban Transport including Connectivity to Railways**
 - Innovative ways of **financing and faster implementation** will be encouraged for **building metro systems** of appropriate type at scale.
 - **Multimodal connectivity between mass urban transport and railway stations** will be facilitated on priority.
- **Parvatmala: National Ropeways Development Programme:**
 - As a preferred ecologically sustainable alternative to conventional roads in difficult hilly areas, **National Ropeways Development Programme** will be taken up on PPP mode.
 - The aim is to **improve connectivity and convenience** for commuters, besides **promoting tourism**.
 - This may also **cover congested urban areas**, where conventional mass transit systems are not feasible.
- **Capacity Building for Infrastructure Projects:**
 - With technical support from the **Capacity Building Commission**, central ministries, state governments, and their infra-agencies will have their skills upgraded.
 - This will **ramp up capacity in planning, design, financing** (including innovative ways), and implementation management of the PM GatiShakti infrastructure projects.

[Source: PIB](#)

Budget 2022-23: Inclusive Development

For Prelims: Budget 2022, Inclusive Development, Agriculture, Food Processing, Interlinking of Rivers, Digital Payments, MSME, Skill Development and various Schemes Mentioned in the Budget.

For Mains: Growth & Development, Planning, Government Budgeting, Inclusive Growth, Government Policies & Interventions, Budget 2022, Sector-Wise Analysis.

Why in News?

Recently, the Finance Minister presented the [Union Budget 2022-23](#) in [Parliament](#).

- In this section we will discuss the '**Inclusive Development**' Pillar of the Budget 2022-23.

What is New for Agriculture & Food Processing?

- Agriculture:



Record Foodgrains Production and Enhanced procurement



2.37 lakh crore direct payment of MSP to **163 lakh farmers**



Promoting chemical free natural farming



Promoting post harvest value addition, consumption and branding of millet products



Delivery of Digital and Hi-Tech services to farmers in PPP mode



Use of **Kisan Drones** to aid farmers



Launching fund with blended capital to finance agriculture start ups



Ken Betwa Link Project to **benefit 9.1 lakh hectare farm land**

- **Rs. 2.37 lakh crore direct payment to 1.63 crore farmers** for procurement of wheat and paddy.
- **Chemical-free Natural Farming** will be promoted throughout the country, with a focus on farmers' lands in 5-km wide corridors along river Ganga, at the first stage.
- **2023** has been announced as the [International Year of Millets](#). Support will be provided.
- A **comprehensive scheme to increase domestic production of oilseeds** will be implemented.

- **For delivery of digital and hi-tech services to farmers**, a scheme in [Public Private Partnership \(PPP\)](#) mode will be launched.
- **NABARD** to facilitate funds with **blended capital to finance startups for agriculture & rural enterprise**.
- **'Kisan Drones'** for crop assessment, digitization of land records, spraying of insecticides and nutrients.
- **Ken Betwa project:**
 - 1400 crore outlay for implementation of the [Ken - Betwa link project](#). 9.08 lakh hectares of farmers' lands to receive irrigation benefits by Ken-Betwa link project.
 - Draft DPRs (Detailed Project Reports) of five river links, namely **Damanganga-Pinjal, Par-Tapi-Narmada, Godavari-Krishna, Krishna-Pennar and Pennar-Cauvery have been finalised**.
- **Food Processing:**
 - For farmers to adopt suitable varieties of fruits and vegetables, and to use appropriate production and harvesting techniques, **government will provide a comprehensive package with participation of state governments**.

What is there for Industry & Skill Development?

- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs):**
 - **Udyam, e-shram**, National Career Service and [Atma Nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping \(ASEEM\)](#) portals to be interlinked.
 - 130 lakh MSMEs provided with additional credit under [Emergency Credit Linked Guarantee Scheme \(ECLGS\)](#)
 - ECLGS to be extended up to March 2023. Guarantee cover under ECLGS to be expanded by Rs. 50,000 Crore to total cover of Rs. 5 Lakh Crore.
 - Rs 2 lakh Crore additional credit for Micro and Small Enterprises to be facilitated under the [Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises \(CGTMSE\)](#).
 - **Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) programme** with outlay of Rs 6000 Crore to be rolled out. This will help the MSME sector become more resilient, competitive and efficient.
- **Skill Development:**
 - **Digital Ecosystem for Skilling and Livelihood (DESH-Stack e-portal)** will be launched to empower citizens to skill, re skill or upskill through on-line training.
 - Startups will be promoted to facilitate **'Drone Shakti' and for Drone-As-A-Service (DrAAS)**.

What About the Education & Health Sector?

- **Education:**



- 'One class-One TV channel' programme of [PM eVIDYA](#) to be expanded to 200 TV channels.
- **Virtual labs and skilling e-labs** to be set up to promote critical thinking skills and simulated learning environment.
- High-quality e-content will be developed for delivery through **Digital Teachers**.
- **Digital University** for world-class quality universal education with personalised learning experience to be established.
- **Health:**
 - An open platform for the **National Digital Health Ecosystem** to be rolled out. **National Tele Mental Health Programme** for quality mental health counselling and care services to be launched.
 - A network of 23 tele-mental health centres of excellence will be set up, with [NIMHANS](#) being the nodal centre and International Institute of Information Technology-Bangalore (IIITB) providing technology support.
 - Integrated benefits to women and children through [Mission Shakti](#), **Mission Vatsalya**, **Saksham Anganwadi** and [Poshan 2.0](#).
 - Two lakh anganwadis to be upgraded to Saksham Anganwadis.

What is there for Upgrading Basic Amenities?

- **Har Ghar, Nal Se Jal:**
 - Rs. 60,000 crore allocated to cover 3.8 crore households in 2022-23 under [Har Ghar, Nal se Jal](#).
- **Housing for All:**
 - Rs. 48,000 crore allocated for completion of 80 lakh houses in 2022-23 under [PM Awas Yojana](#).
- **Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PMDevINE):**
 - New scheme PM-DevINE launched **to fund infrastructure and social development projects in the North-East**.
 - An initial allocation of Rs. 1,500 crore was made to enable livelihood activities for youth and women under the scheme.
- **Vibrant Villages Programme:**
 - Border villages with sparse population, limited connectivity and infrastructure often get left out from the development gains. **Such villages on the northern border will be covered under the new Vibrant Villages Programme.**

- The **activities will include** construction of village infrastructure, housing, tourist centres, road connectivity, provisioning of decentralised renewable energy, direct to home access for Doordarshan and educational channels, and support for livelihood generation.

How is the Budget Promoting Digital Payments?

- **Anytime - Anywhere Post Office Savings:** In 2022, 100% of 1.5 lakh post offices will come on the [core banking system](#) enabling financial inclusion and access to accounts through net banking, mobile banking, ATMs, and also provides online transfer of funds between post office accounts and bank accounts.
- **Digital Banking:** It has been proposed to set up **75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs) in 75 districts of the country by Scheduled Commercial Banks.**
- **Digital Payments:** The **financial support for the digital payment ecosystem announced in the previous Budget will continue in 2022-23.**

[Source: PIB](#)

Budget 2022-23: Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action

For Prelims: Constitutional Provisions related to Budget, Different Government Interventions such as C-PACE, AVGC, etc.

For Mains: Proposals for EODB and Ease of Living, Energy Transition and Climate Action.

Why in News?

Recently, the Minister of Finance presented the [Union Budget 2022-23](#).

- One of the priority areas is **'productivity enhancement and investment; sunrise opportunities; energy transition and climate action'**.
- It aims **to ensure ease of living and doing business and to attain the vision of promoting energy transition and climate action** during the Amrit kaal.

How does the Budget promote Ease of Living and Doing Business?

- **Next Phase of Ease of Doing Business & Ease of Living:**
 - In recent years, over 25,000 compliances were reduced and 1486 union laws were repealed, result of ['minimum government & maximum governance'](#), and Ease Of Doing Business (EODB).
 - For the Amrit Kaal, the next phase of [Ease of Doing Business EODB 2.0](#) and Ease of Living, will be launched.
 - EODB 2.0 would entail digitisation of manual processes, integration of central and state level systems through IT bridges, single-point access for all citizen-centric services and standardisation and removal of overlapping compliance requirements.
 - The government will follow the idea of **'trust-based governance'**.
- **Green Clearances:** Expansion of the single window portal, [PARIVESH \(Proactive and Responsive Facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub\)](#), for all green clearances, which was launched in 2018.
- **e-Passport:** [e-Passports](#) with embedded chip and futuristic technology to be rolled out.

- **Urban Development:** A **high-level committee of reputed urban planners, urban economists and institutions** will be formed to make recommendations on urban sector policies, capacity building, planning, implementation and governance.
- **Urban Planning:**
 - Modernization of building bye laws, Town Planning Schemes (TPS), and **[Transit Oriented Development \(TOD\)](#)** will be implemented.
 - Battery swapping policy to be brought out for setting up charging stations at scale in urban areas.
- **Land Records Management:**
 - **[Unique Land Parcel Identification Number](#)** for IT-based management of land records.
 - The facility for transliteration of land records across **any of the [Schedule VIII languages](#)** will also be rolled out.
 - The adoption or linkage with **[National Generic Document Registration System \(NGDRS\)](#)** with the '**One-Nation One-Registration Software**' will be promoted as an option for uniform process for registration and 'anywhere registration' of deeds & documents.
- **Amendments in Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code** to facilitate cross border **[insolvency resolution](#)**.
- **Accelerated Corporate Exit:** The **Center for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE)** with process re-engineering, will be established to facilitate and speed up the voluntary winding-up of these companies from the currently required 2 years to less than 6 months.
- **Government Procurement:** To enhance transparency and to reduce delays in payments, a completely paperless, end-to-end **[online e-Bill System](#)** will be launched for use by all central ministries for their procurements.
- **AVGC Promotion Task Force:** An **[Animation, Visual effects, Gaming, and Comic \(AVGC\)](#)** promotion task force to be set-up to realize the potential of this sector.
- **Telecom Sector :** A scheme for design-led manufacturing will be launched to build a **strong ecosystem** for **[5G](#)** as part of the **[Production Linked Incentive Scheme](#)**.
- **Export Promotion:** The **[Special Economic Zones Act](#)** will be replaced with a new legislation that will enable the states to become partners in '**Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs**'.
- **AtmaNirbharta in Defence:**
 - 68 % of the capital procurement budget will be earmarked for domestic industry in 2022-23, up from 58% in 2021-22.
 - Defense R&D will be opened up for industry, startups and academia with 25 % of defense R&D budget earmarked.
 - Independent nodal umbrella body to be set up for meeting testing and certification requirements.
- **Sunrise Opportunities:** **[Artificial Intelligence](#)**, **[Geospatial Systems and Drones](#)**, **[Semiconductor and its ecosystem](#)**, **[Space Economy](#)**, **[Genomics and Pharmaceuticals](#)**, **[Green Energy](#)**, and **[Clean Mobility Systems](#)** have immense potential to assist sustainable development at scale and modernize the country.

PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT AND INVESTMENT



Ease of Doing Business 2.0

Trust based governance

Integration of central and state level systems through IT bridges

Expanding scope of PARIVESH Portal

Unique Land Parcel Identification Number for IT based management of land records.

Establishing C-PACE to facilitate voluntary winding up of companies

End to end online e-Bill System and utilising surety bonds in government procurement.

AVCG promotion task force

Support to 5G under PLI scheme

Opening up defence R&D for industry, startups and academia



Ease of Living

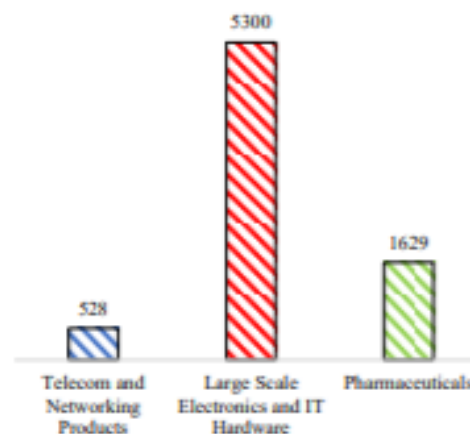
Issuance of chip embedded e-Passports

Modernisation of building byelaws, implementing Town Planning Schemes and Transit Oriented Development

Establishing Centres of Excellence in urban planning

Providing a battery swapping policy as an alternative to setting up charging stations in urban areas

Allocation under PLI Schemes, 2022-23 BE (in crore)



How does the Budget promote Energy Transition and Climate Action?

▪ Solar Power:

- To facilitate domestic manufacturing for the ambitious **goal of 280 GW of installed solar capacity by 2030**, an additional allocation of **19,500 crore for Production Linked Incentive for manufacture of high efficiency modules**, will be made.

- **Circular Economy:**
 - The [Circular Economy](#) transition is expected to help in productivity enhancement as well as creating large opportunities for new businesses and jobs.
 - The action plans for ten sectors such as electronic waste, end-of-life vehicles, used oil waste, and toxic & hazardous industrial waste are ready.
- **Transition to Carbon Neutral Economy:**
 - **Five to seven per cent biomass pellets** will be co-fired in thermal power plants resulting in CO₂ savings of 38 MMT annually.
 - This will also provide extra income to farmers and job opportunities to locals and **help avoid [stubble burning](#)** in agriculture fields.
 - Four pilot projects for [coal gasification](#) and conversion of coal into chemicals required for the industry will be set-up.
 - **Financial support to farmers** belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who want to take up **agro-forestry**.

[Source: PIB](#)

Budget 2022-23 Highlights: Financing of Investments

For Prelims: Budget 2022-23 highlights, Green Bonds, Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

For Mains: Budget 2022-23, Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) and related issues, Issue of Public Finance.

Why in News?

Recently, the Finance Minister presented the **Union Budget 2022-23**.

- One of the Priority Areas is '**Financing of Investments**'.

What is in the Budget related to Financing of Investments?

- **Public Capital Investment:**
 - Outlay for capital expenditure **stepped up sharply by 35.4% to Rs. 7.50 lakh crore in 2022-23** in comparison to the current year. Outlay in 2022-23 to be **2.9% of GDP**.
 - The '**Effective Capital Expenditure**' of the Central Government is estimated at **10.68 lakh crore in 2022-23**, which will be about **4.1% of GDP**.
 - Capital expenditure is the money spent by the government on the development of machinery, equipment, building, health facilities, education, etc. It also includes the expenditure incurred on acquiring fixed assets like land and investment by the government that gives profits or dividends in future.
- **Green Bonds:** As a part of the government's overall market borrowings in 2022-23, [sovereign Green Bonds](#) will be issued for mobilizing resources for green infrastructure.
- **GIFT-IFSC:**
 - **World-class foreign universities and institutions** will be allowed in the [Gujarat International Finance Tec-City \(GIFT City\)](#) to offer courses in Financial Management, FinTech, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics free from domestic regulations, except those by [International Financial Services Centre Authority \(IFSCA\)](#) to facilitate availability of high-end human resources for financial services and technology.
 - An **International Arbitration Centre** will be set up in the GIFT City for timely settlement

of disputes under international jurisprudence.

- **Services for global capital for sustainable & climate finance** in the country will be facilitated in the GIFT City.
- **Infrastructure Status: Data Centres and Energy Storage Systems** including dense charging infrastructure and grid-scale battery systems will be included in the [harmonized list of infrastructure](#).
- **Venture Capital and Private Equity Investment:** The government will form **an expert panel** to encourage venture capital and private equity investments.
 - Venture Capital and Private Equity invested more than 5.5 lakh crore last year facilitating one of the largest [start-up](#) and growth ecosystems.
- **Blended Finance for Sunrise Sectors:** For encouraging important **sunrise sectors such as Climate Action, Deep-Tech, Digital Economy, Pharma and Agri-Tech**, the government will **promote thematic funds for blended finance** with the government share being limited to 20% and the funds being managed by private fund managers.
 - Government backed Funds [National Investment and Infrastructure Fund \(NIIF\)](#) and SIDBI Fund of Funds have provided scale capital creating a multiplier effect.
- **Digital Rupee:** Government will introduce [Digital Rupee](#), using [blockchain](#) and other technologies, to be issued by the **Reserve Bank of India starting 2022-23**.
- **Financial Assistance to States for Capital Investment:**
 - The outlay for the [‘Scheme for Financial Assistance to States for Capital Investment’](#) is being enhanced from Rs. 10,000 crore in Budget Estimates 2021-22 to Rs. 15,000 crore in Revised Estimates 2021-22.
 - **For 2022-23**, the allocation is **1 lakh crore** to assist the states in catalysing overall investments in the economy.
 - These fifty-year interest free loans are over and above the normal borrowings allowed to the states.
 - This allocation **will be used for PM GatiShakti related and other productive capital investment of the states**. It will also include components for:
 - Supplemental funding for priority segments of [PM Gram Sadak Yojana](#), including support for the states’ share,
 - Digitisation of the economy, including [digital payments](#) and **completion of Optic Fibre Cable (OFC) network**, and
 - Reforms related to building byelaws, town planning schemes, transit-oriented development, and transferable development rights.
 - In 2022-23, in accordance with the recommendations of the [15th Finance Commission](#), the states will be allowed a **fiscal deficit of 4% of GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) of which 0.5% will be tied to power sector reforms**.

[Source: PIB](#)

Dilution of Lokayukta Powers in Kerala

For Prelims: Lokayukta, Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013.

For Mains: Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013, Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Issues Associated with the functioning of Lokpal and the way forward, Anti-Corruption Measures.

Why in News?

Recently, the Kerala government has proposed to amend the **Kerala Lokayukta Act, 1999** with an ordinance, a move that has drawn criticism from the opposition.

- The proposed ordinance **envisages to limit the powers of the anti-corruption watchdog.**

What are the Proposed Changes?

- The Kerala cabinet has recommended to the [Governor](#) that he promulgates the [ordinance](#).
- The proposal sought to give the government powers to **“either accept or reject the verdict of the Lokayukta, after giving an opportunity of being heard”.**
- By this ordinance, the quasi-judicial institution will turn into a toothless advisory body, whose orders will no longer be binding on the government.

What is the Concept of Lokpal and Lokayuktas?

- The [Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013](#) provided for the **establishment of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States.**
- These institutions **are statutory bodies** without any constitutional status.
- They **perform the function of an “ombudsman”** and inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for related matters.
- The **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 provides for establishing a Lokpal** headed by a Chairperson, who is or has been a Chief Justice of India, or is or has been a judge of the Supreme Court, or an eminent person who fulfills eligibility criteria as specified.
 - Of its **other members**, not exceeding eight, 50% are to be judicial members, provided that not less than 50% belong to the SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, or are women.
 - The **Lokpal was appointed in March 2019** and it started functioning since March 2020 when its rules were framed. The Lokpal is **at present headed by former Supreme Court Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose.**
 - The **Lokpal has jurisdiction** to inquire into allegations of corruption against anyone who is or has been Prime Minister, or a Minister in the Union government, or a Member of Parliament, as well as officials of the Union government under Groups A, B, C and D.
 - Also covered are chairpersons, members, officers and directors of any board, corporation, society, trust or autonomous body either established by an Act of Parliament or wholly or partly funded by the Centre.
 - It also covers any society or trust or body that receives foreign contributions above Rs. 10 lakh.

What is the Historical Background of Ombudsman in India?

- In 1809, the institution of ombudsman was inaugurated officially in Sweden.
- In the 20th century, the Ombudsman as an institution developed and grew most significantly after the [Second World War](#) (1939-45).
- In 1967, on the recommendations of the **Whyatt Report of 1961**, Great Britain adopted the institution of the ombudsman and became the first large nation in the democratic world to have such a system.
- **In India**, the concept of constitutional ombudsman **was first proposed by the then law minister Ashok Kumar Sen** in parliament **in the early 1960s.**
- The terms Lokpal and Lokayukta **were coined by Dr. L. M. Singhvi.**
- In 1966, the **First Administrative Reforms Commission** recommended the setting up of two independent authorities- at the central and state level, to look into complaints against public functionaries, including MPs.
- In 1968, **Lokpal bill was passed in Lok Sabha** but lapsed with the dissolution of Lok Sabha and since then it lapsed in the Lok Sabha many times.
- In 2002, the Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution headed by **M.N. Venkatachaliah** recommended the appointment of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas; also recommended that the PM be kept out of the ambit of the authority.
- In 2005, the **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** chaired by **Veerappa Moily** recommended that the office of Lokpal should be established without delay.
- In 2011, social movement "India Against Corruption movement" led by Anna Hazare put pressure on the government at the Centre and resulted in the passing of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill, 2013.

How does Lokayukta Work in the States?

- **Section 63** of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 states: “Every state shall establish a body to be known as the Lokayukta for the State, if not so established, constituted or appointed, by a law made by the State Legislature”.
- It will be created **to deal with complaints relating to corruption against certain public functionaries**, within a period of one year from the date of commencement of this Act.
 - However, the law is a mere framework, leaving it to the states to decide the specifics.
 - Given that states have autonomy to frame their own laws, the **Lokayukta’s powers vary from state to state** on various aspects, such as tenure, and need of sanction to prosecute officials.
- When the 2013 Act was passed, Lokayuktas were already functioning in some states - including in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka where they were very active.
 - Following the Act and the intervention of the Supreme Court, most states have now set up a Lokayukta.

Way Forward

- Battle against corruption, in order to be effective today, can be achieved only through a comprehensive reform of our political, legal, administrative and judicial systems and not through one-off or piece-meal measures.
- The establishment of an effective Lokpal institution is one such measure.
- Thus, Lokayuktas should be set up in the states **“on the lines of the Lokpal”** with “all state government employees, local bodies and the state corporations under their purview”.

[Source: IE](#)

Draft National Higher Education Qualification Framework

For Prelims: NQF, NEP 2020.

For Mains: Initiatives related to Education.

Why in News?

Recently, the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has released a **Draft National Higher Educational Qualification Framework (NHEQF)** as a part of the [National Education Policy \(NEP\) 2020](#) to assess students at different levels.

- The NEP 2020 aims at making **“India a global knowledge superpower”**.
- Given the size of the higher education system and the diversity of institutions and programmes of study in India, the country needs to move towards developing a nationally accepted and internationally comparable and acceptable qualifications framework to facilitate transparency and comparability of higher education qualifications at all levels.

What is Draft NHEQF?

- The framework is **not intended to promote a uniform curriculum or national common syllabus**. The purpose is **to bring up/elevate all HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) to a**

common level of benchmarking to ensure that all institutions are providing quality education.

- The draft framework has **outlined several learning level “descriptors” or parameters** based on which **students can be assessed at every level.**
- **These parameters include** generic learning outcomes, constitutional, ethical, and moral values, employment ready skills, entrepreneurship mindset, and application of knowledge and skills among others.
- The NHEQF has **divided parameters into levels 5 to 10.**
 - Levels 1 to 4 cover the school education.
 - The NHEQF level 5 represents learning outcomes appropriate to the first year (first two semesters) of the undergraduate programme of study, while Level 10 represents learning outcomes appropriate to the doctoral-level programme of study.
- The NHEQF envisages that students on completion of a programme of study **must possess and demonstrate the expected graduate profile/attributes acquired.**
- It **also fixes the number of credits** required to clear the different levels of the four-year undergraduate programme, postgraduate degrees and doctoral degrees.
 - The **NEP 2020 allows multiple entry and exits at the undergraduate level.** It effectively means that students can exit after completing one year of undergraduate programme with a certificate, after two years with a diploma, after three years with a bachelor’s degree, or can complete four years and get an honours degree with a honours/research degree.
 - A credit is a unit by which the coursework is measured.

What is the Background of the National Qualifications Framework in India?

- India **recognized the need for NQF both for general education and for Vocational Education and Training (VET).**
- The **Ministry of Labour and Employment** developed the **National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF)** and the **Ministry of Human Resource Development** (renamed as Ministry of Education, after NEP 2020 recommendations) **developed the Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF).**
- These two frameworks were considered and used while developing the **National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) notified in 2013.**

University Grants Commission (UGC)

- It **came into existence on 28th December, 1953 but became a statutory organization** of the Government of India by the UGC Act, 1956, under the Ministry of Education.
- The **UGC’s mandate** includes:
 - Promoting and coordinating university education.
 - Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination and research in universities.
 - Framing regulations on minimum standards of education.
 - Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disbursing grants to the universities and colleges.
 - Serving as a vital link between the Union and state governments and institutions of higher learning.
 - Advising the Central and State governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university.

[Source: IE](#)

World Heritage Nomination 2022-2023

For Prelims: World Heritage site, Hoysala architecture, Nagara & Dravidian architecture.

For Mains: Indian Heritage & Culture.

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Culture** has **nominated Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas temples** for consideration as a **World Heritage site for the year 2022-2023**.

- The sacred ensembles of the **Hoysalas**, built in the **12th-13th centuries** and represented by the **three components of Belur, Halebid and Somnathapura in Karnataka**. All these three Hoysala temples are protected monuments of the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#).
- The '**Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala**' have been on **UNESCO's Tentative list** since **15th April, 2014** and stand testimony to the rich historical and cultural heritage of India.
- Earlier, the **UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC)** had agreed to [publish Hindi descriptions of India's UNESCO World Heritage Sites](#) on the WHC website.

What are the Features of Belur, Halebid, and Somnathapura temples ?

- **Chennakeshava Temple, Belur:**
 - Construction of the temple commenced in 1117 AD and took 103 years to complete.
 - The temple is dedicated to **Lord Vishnu known as Chennakesava**, which means beautiful (chenna) Vishnu (Keshava).
 - The richly sculptured exterior of the temple narrates scenes from the life of Vishnu and his reincarnations and the epics, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.
 - However, some of the representations of Shiva are also included.



- **Hoysaleshwara Temple, Halebidu:**
 - The Hoysaleshwara temple at Halebidu is the **most exemplary architectural ensemble of the Hoysalas extant today**.
 - Built in 1121CE during the reign of the **Hoysala King, Vishnuvardhana Hoysaleshwara**.
 - The temple, **dedicated to Shiva**, was sponsored and built by wealthy citizens and merchants of Dorasamudra.
 - The temple is most **well-known for the more than 240 wall sculptures** that run all along the outer wall.
 - Halebid has a walled complex containing three **Jaina basadi (temples)** of the Hoysala period as well as a stepped well.



▪ **Keshava Temple, Somanathapura:**

- The Keshava temple at Somanathapura is another **magnificent Hoysala monument, perhaps the last.**
- This is a breathtakingly beautiful Trikuta Temple dedicated to Lord Krishna in three forms – Janardhana, Keshava and Venugopala.
- Unfortunately, the main Keshava idol is missing, and the Janardhana and Venugopala idols are damaged.



What are the Characteristics of Hoysala Architecture?

- Hoysala architecture is the building **style developed under the rule of the Hoysala Empire between the 11th and 14th centuries, mostly** concentrated in southern Karnataka.
- Hoysala temples are **sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style** seems neither completely Dravida nor Nagara, but somewhere in between.
 - The Hoysala temples have a **basic Darvidian morphology** but show strong influences of the **Bhumija mode widely used in Central India**, the **Nagara traditions** of northern and western India, and the **Karntata Dravida modes** favoured by the **Kalyani Chalukyas.**

- Therefore, the **Hoysala architects made considered and informed eclectic selections** of features from other temple typologies which they further modified and then complemented with their own particular innovations.
- The result was the birth of a completely novel '**Hoysala Temple**' form.
- The Hoysala temples, **instead of consisting of a simple inner chamber** with its pillared hall, contain **multiple shrines grouped around a central pillared hall** and laid out in the shape of **an intricately-designed star (stellate-plan)**.
- Since they are **made out of soapstone which is a relatively soft stone**, the artists were able to carve their sculptures intricately. This can be seen particularly in the jewellery of the gods that adorn their temple walls.

What is a World Heritage Site?

- **About:**
 - Any of various areas or objects inscribed on the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [World Heritage List](#)**.
 - The sites are designated as having **“outstanding universal value”** under the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972.
 - The World Heritage Centre is the **Secretariat to the 1972 Convention**.
 - It **provides a framework for international cooperation** in preserving and protecting cultural treasures and natural areas throughout the world.
 - There are **three types of sites:** Cultural, Natural, and Mixed.
 - **Cultural heritage sites** include hundreds of historic buildings and town sites, important archaeological sites, and works of monumental sculpture or painting. Example: Dholavira: a Harappan City.
 - **Natural heritage sites** are restricted to those natural areas that have excellent ecological and evolutionary processes, unique natural phenomena, habitats of rare or endangered species etc. **Example:** Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area.
 - **Mixed heritage sites** contain elements of both natural and cultural significance. **Example:** Khangchendzonga National Park.
- **No. of World Heritage Sites in India:** India has **40 world heritage sites**, including **32 cultural properties, 7 natural properties** and **1 mixed site**. **[Dholavira: a Harappan City](#)** is the recent addition.
- **Nomination Process:** As per Operational Guidelines, 2019 of UNESCO, it is **mandatory to put any monument/site on the Tentative List (TL) for one year** before it is considered for the final nomination dossier.
 - Once the nomination is done, it is sent to the **World Heritage Centre (WHC)**, which will do the technical scrutiny of the same.
 - Once the submission is made, UNESCO will communicate back by early March. After that the site evaluation will happen in September /October 2022 and the dossier will be taken up for consideration in July /August 2023.

[Source: PIB](#)

Indian Coast Guard

Why in News

On 1st February 2022, [Indian Coast Guard \(ICG\)](#) celebrated its **46th Raising Day**.

- ICG was **established in August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978** as an independent Armed force of India.

- As the **fourth largest Coast Guard in the world**, it has played a significant role in securing the Indian coasts and enforcing regulations in the maritime zones of India.

What are the Functions of ICG?

▪ Background:

- It is an **Armed Force, Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement agency** under the **Ministry of Defence**.
- It is headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- The concept of forming ICG came into being **after the 1971 war**.
- The blueprint for a multidimensional Coast Guard was conceived by the visionary **Rustamji Committee**.
- For effective command and control, the **Maritime Zones of India are divided into five Coast Guard Regions**, namely, North-West, West, East, North-East and Andaman & Nicobar, with the respective Regional Headquarters located at Gandhinagar, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Port Blair. .

▪ Functions:

- **Preventing Smuggling:** One of the primary duties of the ICG is prevention of smuggling through maritime routes.
 - It has jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India including contiguous zone and **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.
 - It is responsible for marine environment protection in maritime zones of India and is coordinating authority for response to **oil spills** in Indian waters.
- **Aid to Civil Authority:** It has also rescued approximately 13,000 personnel till date during various '**Aid to Civil Authority**' operations viz. assistance provided to civil authorities during floods, cyclones and other natural calamities; most recently during the recent floods in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa.
 - It is also working in close coordination with Central and State agencies to put in place a **robust coastal security mechanism**.
- **Maritime Security:** It is also collaborating with littoral countries to combat transnational maritime crimes and enhance maritime safety in its area of responsibility and in the Indian Ocean Region.
 - Under **SAGAR' - Security and Growth for all in the Region & 'Neighbourhood First' policy**, the ICG has nurtured professional relationships across oceans and established ties with countries in the Indian Ocean Region **for Ocean Peacekeeping**.
- **Role in Disaster Management:** The ICG has successfully averted major ecological disasters and emerged as the '**First Responder**' in the region.
 - For example, by undertaking a major fire-fighting and pollution response operation off the Sri Lanka coast, the most recent being '**Sagar Aaraksha-II**' onboard Chemical carrier MV X-Press Pearl.

Source: PIB