

National Air Sports Policy

(GS Paper 2, Governance)

Why in news?

- The Minister of Civil Aviation launched National Air Sport Policy 2022 (NASP 2022).

Vision:

- NASP 2022 lays out the vision of **making India as one of the top sports nations by 2030**, by providing a safe, affordable, accessible, enjoyable and sustainable air sports ecosystem in India.

Key Objectives of NASP 2022



Air sports & potential in India:

- Air sports encompasses various sports activities involving the medium of air. These include sports like air-racing, aerobatics, aero modeling, hang gliding, paragliding, para motoring and skydiving etc. India has the potential to be among the leading nations in the world of air sports.
- It has a large geographical expanse, diverse topography, and fair-weather conditions. It has a large population, especially the youth. It has a growing culture for adventure sports and aviation. The NASP 2022, is a step in this direction.
- It has been drafted based on the inputs received from policy makers, air sports practitioners and public at large and will ensure establishment of good quality of infrastructure, equipment, instructors and services.

The policy will cover the following air sports in India:

- Aerobatics
- Aero modeling and model rocketry
- Amateur-built and experimental aircraft
- Ballooning
- Drones
- Gliding and powered gliding
- Hang gliding and powered hang gliding
- Parachuting (including skydiving, BASE jumping and wing suits etc.)
- Paragliding and para motoring (including powered parachute trikes etc.)
- Powered aircraft (including ultra light, micro light and light sports aircraft etc.)
- Rotorcraft (including autogyro)

Four-tier governance structure:

Under the new policy, there will be four-tier governance structure for air sports in India namely

- Air Sports Federation of India (ASFI) as the apex governing body
- National associations for individual air sports or a set of air sports, as appropriate
- Regional (e.g. West/ South/ North East etc.) or State and Union Territory level units of the national air sports associations, as appropriate; and
- District-level air sports associations, as appropriate.

Way Forward:

- The policy will serve to attract air sports enthusiasts from all over the world, especially those who live in areas where harsh winters prevent them from participating.
- The air sports enthusiasts from Europe, North America, and Australia would flock to India to practice in the winters.

4th State Food Safety Index

(GS Paper 3, Indian Economy)

Why in news?

- In an effort to galvanize States/UTs to work towards ensuring safe food for citizens, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare released Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)'s 4th State Food Safety Index (SFSI).

FIVE PARAMETERS

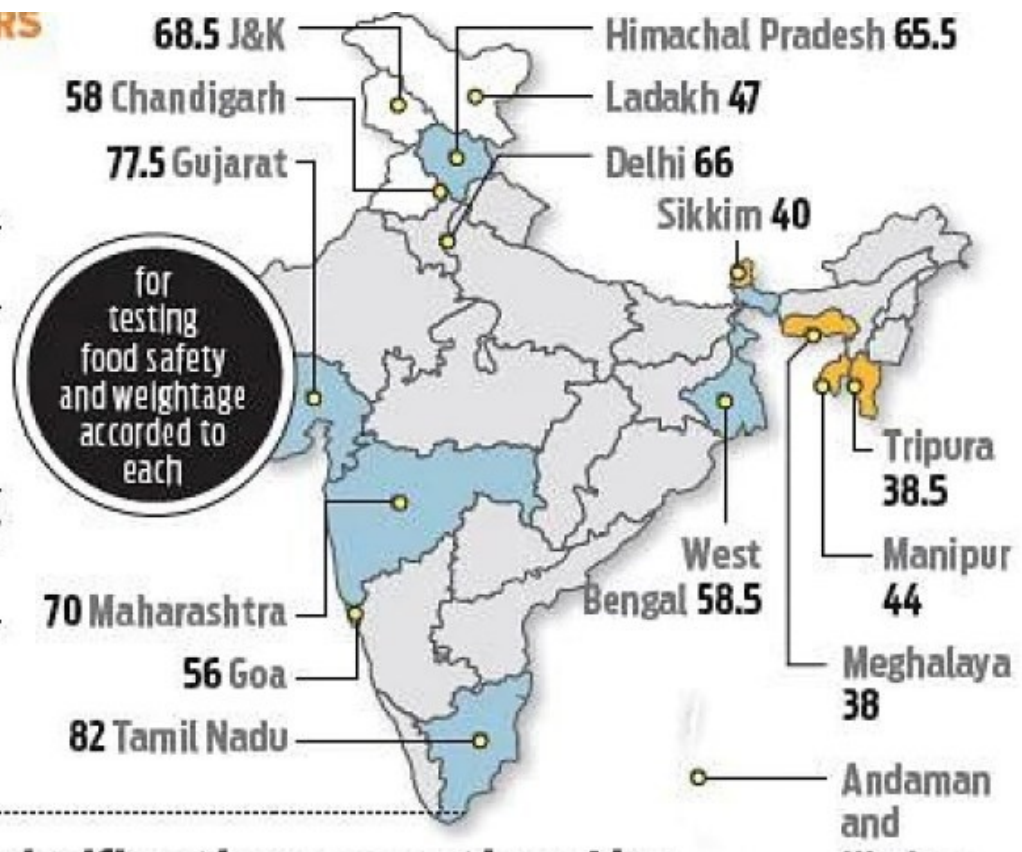
Human Resources and Institutional Data: **20%**

Compliance: **30%**

Food Testing-Infrastructure and Surveillance: **20%**

Training and Capacity Building: **10%**

Consumer Empowerment: **20%**



What is State Food Safety Index (SFSI)?

- The State Food Safety Index (SFSI) measures the performance of States on the basis of five parameters prescribed by the Health Ministry.
- The rating is done by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- SFSI was started from 2018-19** with the aim of creating a competitive and positive change in the food safety ecosystem in the country.
- The index will help in providing safe and nutritious food to our citizens.

Winners:

- The Union Health Minister felicitated the winning State/UTs based on the ranking for the year 2021-22 for their impressive performance across parameters.
- **Among the larger states, Tamil Nadu was the top ranking state**, followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra. Among the smaller states, Goa stood first followed by Manipur and Sikkim.
- Among UTs, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi and Chandigarh secured first, second and third ranks.

EatSmart Cities Challenge:

- To motivate Smart Cities to develop and execute a plan that supports a healthy, safe and sustainable food environment through adoption of various Eat Right India initiatives, he also felicitated 11 winning smart cities of the EatSmart Cities Challenge, launched by FSSAI in 2021 in association with the Smart Cities Mission under the aegis of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- He also felicitated winners of the Eat Right Research Challenge for Cities and Districts and Eat Right Research Awards and Grants.

AyurvedaAahar:

- He further launched various innovative initiatives by FSSAI including the Eat Right Research Awards and Grants – Phase II.
- Eat Right Creativity Challenge – Phase III, a competition at the school level and logo for **AyurvedaAahar** which contains the **initials of Ayurveda and Ahara with 5 leaves symbolising five elements of nature**. This logo would be beneficial in creating a unique identity, easy identification and proven benefits to improve health and wellbeing.

Green Open Access Rules, 2022

(GS Paper 3, Environment)

Why in news?

- In order to further accelerate ambitious renewable energy programmes, with the end goal of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and green energy for all, Green Open Access Rules, 2022 have been notified by Ministry of Finance.
- These rules are notified for promoting generation, purchase and consumption of green energy including the energy from Waste-to-Energy plants.



Key Highlights:

- The notified Rules enable simplified procedure for the open access to green power. It will enable faster approval of Green OA, Uniform Banking, Voluntary purchase of RE power by commercial & industrial consumers, Applicability of OA charges etc.
- Commercial and Industrial consumers are allowed to purchase green power on voluntarily basis.
- Captive Consumers can take power under Green Open Access with no minimum limitation.
- Discom Consumers can demand for supply of Green power to them.

The salient features of the Rules are as under:

- The Green Open access is allowed to any consumer and the limit of Open Access Transaction has been reduced from 1 MW to 100 kW for green energy, to enable small consumers also to purchase renewable power through open access.
- Provide certainty on open access charges to be levied on Green Energy Open Access Consumers which includes transmission charges, wheeling charges, cross-subsidy surcharge and standby charges. Cap on increasing of cross-subsidy surcharge as well as the removal of additional surcharge, not only incentivise the consumers to go green but also address the issues that have hindered the growth of open access in India.
- Transparency in the approval process of the open access application. Approval to be granted in 15 days or else it will be deemed to have been approved subject to fulfilment of technical requirements. It will be through a national portal.
- Determination of green tariff: The tariff for the green energy shall be determined separately by the Appropriate Commission, which shall comprise of the average pooled power purchase cost of the renewable energy, cross-subsidy charges if any, and service charges covering the prudent cost of the distribution licensee for providing the green energy to the consumers.
- The Rules will help to streamlining the overall approval process for granting Open Access including timely approval, to improve predictability of cash flows for renewable power producers. It will also bring Uniformity in the application procedure.
- Banking of surplus green energy with the distribution licensee mandated.
- There shall be a uniform renewable purchase obligation, on all obligated entities in area of a distribution licensees. It has also included the Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia for fulfilment of its RPO.
- Consumers will be given the green certificates if they consume green power.
- Cross subsidy surcharge and additional surcharge shall not be applicable if green energy is utilized for production of green hydrogen and green ammonia.

Centre amends rules for appointment of next Chief of Defence Staff

(GS Paper 2, Governance)

Why in news?

- The Ministry of Defence has issued a notification amending the rules of defence forces for the appointment of next Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

Why amendment has been introduced?

- The post of Chief of Defence Staff has been lying vacant since the death of Gen BipinRawat in a helicopter crash on December 8, 2021.
- The changes made to the rules are seen as the government beginning the process to appoint the next Chief of Defence Staff amid the country facing myriad national security challenges.
- The government issued separate gazette notifications bringing the changes to the Air Force Act, the Army Act and the Navy Act providing for making any serving or retired Lt General, Air Marshal or Vice Admiral eligible to be appointed as the CDS.

Key Highlights:

- The amendment to the service rules of the Army, Navy and Air Force will make serving three-star officers and retired three-and four-star officers eligible for appointment as the next CDS.
- The government may consider officers who are serving as Lieutenant General equivalent, General equivalent or officers who have retired in the rank of Lt Gen or Gen but have not attained the age of 62 years, for the post of CDS.

- For the Air Force, the government may consider an officer who is serving as Air Marshal or Air Chief Marshal or an officer who has retired in similar ranks but has not attained the age of 62 years on the date of appointment. Similar notifications have been issued for the Navy.



Tenure:

- The government may extend the service of the Chief of Defence Staff for such a period as it may deem necessary subject to a maximum age of 65 years.
- Identical notifications were issued under the Army Act 1950 and the Navy Act 1957.
- The tenure of three service chiefs is three years of service or when they turn 62, whichever is earlier.
- In effect, the recently retired Chiefs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force are unlikely to be considered for the post of the CDS as the age to become eligible for the post has been put at 62 years.
- The changes will allow recently retired former commander-in-chief rank officers as contenders as their retirement age is 60.

Office of the Chief of Defence Staff:

- The office of the Chief of Defence Staff was one of the biggest military reforms and has resulted in more coordination in working between the government and the defence forces.
- The defence forces in the country earlier used to go through bureaucracy to get their modernisation projects, promotions cleared, but ever since the Department of Military Affairs was formed, all these functions have come under the military domain.
- The task of creating consensus on military issues among the three services has also been given to the CDS.

World Bank cuts India's economic growth forecast to 7.5% for FY23

(GS Paper 3, Indian Economy)

Why in news?

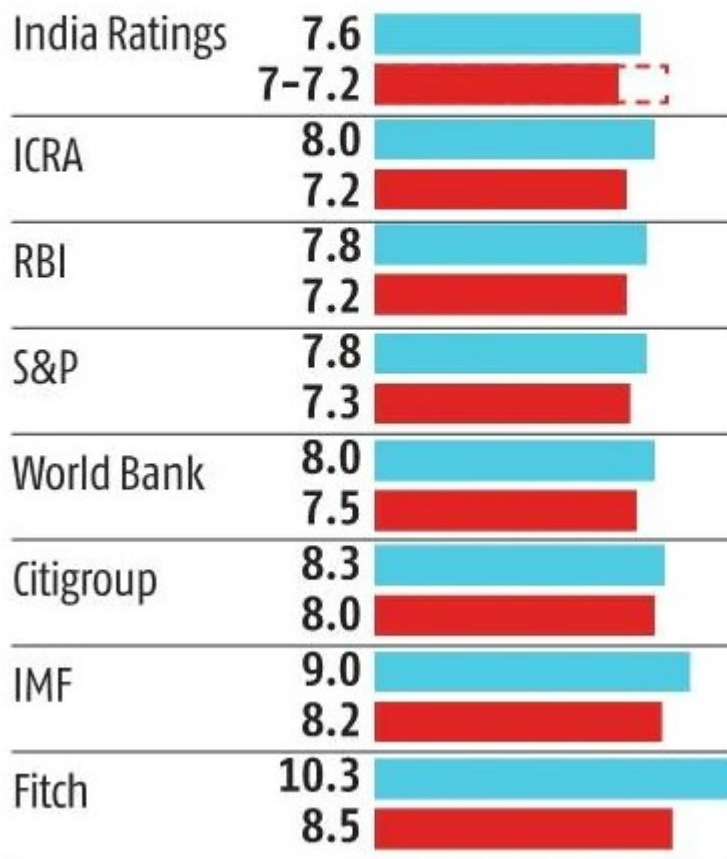
- The World Bank recently, cut India's economic growth forecast for the current fiscal to **7.5%**.

- India's economic growth forecast has been reduced due to **rising inflation, supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions** tapering recovery.

SCALING DOWN EXPECTATIONS

FY23 GDP growth forecast for India

■ Earlier ■ Now in % YoY



Background:

- This is the second time that the World Bank has revised its GDP growth forecast for India in the current fiscal 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). **In April, it had trimmed the forecast from 8.7% to 8% and now it is projected at 7.5%.**
- The GDP growth compares to an 8.7% expansion in the previous 2021-22 fiscal.
- A rise in prices across all items from fuel to vegetables and cooking oil pushed **WPI or wholesale price-based inflation to a record high of 15.08 per cent in April** and retail inflation to a near eight-year high of 7.79%.
- High inflation prompted the Reserve Bank to hold an unscheduled meeting to raise the benchmark interest rate by 40 basis points to 4.40%.

Response of various global rating agencies:

- Prior to the World Bank's action, global rating agencies too had slashed India's economic growth forecast.
- Earlier, **Moody's Investors Service trimmed the GDP projection to 8.8%** for the calendar year 2022 from 9.1% earlier, citing high inflation.

- **S&P Global Ratings** too had cut India's growth projection **for 2022-23 to 7.3%, from 7.8% earlier**, on rising inflation and longer-than-expected Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- In March, **Fitch had cut India's growth forecast to 8.5%, from 10.3%**, while IMF has lowered the projection to 8.2% from 9%
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pegged India's growth at 7.5%, while RBI in April cut the forecast to 7.2% from 7.8% amid volatile crude oil prices and supply chain disruptions due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Key Highlights:

- According to the World Bank report, growth in India slowed in the first half of 2022 as activity was disrupted both by a surge in COVID-19 cases, accompanied by more-targeted mobility restrictions and by the war in Ukraine. The recovery is facing headwinds from rising inflation.
- The **unemployment rate has declined** to levels seen prior to the pandemic, **but the labour force participation rate remains below pre-pandemic levels** and workers have shifted to lower-paying jobs.
- In India, the focus of government spending has shifted toward infrastructure investment, labour regulations are being simplified, underperforming state-owned assets are being privatised, and the logistics sector is expected to be modernized and integrated.

Global Growth:

- World Bank said after multiple crises, long-term prosperity will depend on returning to faster growth and a more stable, rules-based policy environment.
- There is good reason to expect that, once the war in Ukraine stops, efforts will redouble to rebuild the Ukrainian economy and revive global growth.
- Global growth is expected to slow sharply from 5.7% in 2021 to 2.9% in 2022. This also reflects a nearly one-third cut to our January 2022 forecast for this year of 4.1 per cent.

Conclusion:

- The surge in energy and food prices, along with the supply and trade disruptions triggered by the war in Ukraine and the necessary interest-rate normalization now underway, account for most of the downgrade.