

# NEWS TODAY

## BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS (BIS) COMPLETED 75 GLORIOUS YEARS

- BIS is the **National Standard Body of India** established under the BIS Act 1986, assuming the functions of the erstwhile **Indian Standards Institution (ISI)**.
  - It is responsible **for the harmonious development of the activities of standardisation, marking and quality certification of goods** and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
  - It functions under the aegis of Ministry of **Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**.
- **Significance of BIS**
  - **Standardisation:** BIS follows internationally accepted good standardization practices to provide safe, reliable and high quality products to consumers.
  - **Certification:** Under it, a manufacturer of a particular product is given the self-marking rights of the BIS standards mark (ISI mark).
    - BIS also operates various Management Systems Certification schemes
  - **Hallmarking:** BIS does hallmarking of gold, silver jewellery, gold bullion etc. to provide third party assurance to consumers on their purity or its fineness.
  - **Laboratory services:** BIS has established eight laboratories in the country to cater to the testing need of samples generated from conformity assessment schemes.
    - It also **established Laboratory Recognition Scheme (LRS)** for recognition of outside laboratories.

### BIS Agenda for next 25 years:



- Work as a **facilitator** not an obstructor.
- To develop as a **global organization**, learning from global experiences and integrating global standards.
- Work on **Gap analysis** to assess laboratory attesting needs of the country and set up high quality modern labs across India.
- Quality or standard revolution through **One Nation One Standard**
- Quality is not expensive it is **cost effective**.

## SUPREME COURT (SC) GRANTS LAST CHANCE TO CENTRE TO RESPOND TO PIL ON IDENTIFYING MINORITIES AT STATE LEVEL

- PIL is seeking directions for **framing of guidelines identifying minorities at the state level** as Hindus are in a **minority in 10 states**.
  - Plea has also been sought for **minority status for Hindus in 6 states and 2 UTs**, where number has fallen according to Census 2011.
- **Minority status in India**
  - **Constitution does not define the word Minority** and only refers to Minorities, rights of the minorities have been spelt out in detail under Article 29 and 30.
  - However, Centre, using **National Commission for Minorities (NCM) Act, 1992**, has declared Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians as 'minority'.
  - In **TMA Pai Case, 2002**, SC held that **linguistic and religious minority are determined** by taking **state as a unit** and not by taking into consideration the population of the country as a whole.
  - **National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) Act, 2004** has been enacted to safeguard the educational rights of the minorities.
- **Benefits of getting minority status**
  - Minority communities' avail of **exclusive schemes run by ministry of minority affairs**.
  - **Freedom to run educational institutions and trusts** due to Article 30(1) and few other sections.

### About NCMEI



- NCMEI, constituted under the **NCMEI Act, 2004**, serves as an **appellate authority in respect of disputes pertaining to minority status**.
- It is a quasi judicial body and has been endowed with the powers of a Civil Court.
- It has the **power to cancel the minority status** of an educational institution on grounds laid down in the Act.

# PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS REGULATORY BOARD (PNGRB) FLOATS BIDS FOR CITY GAS DISTRIBUTION (CGD) NETWORKS

- Recently, PNGRB invited bids under '11A CGD Bidding Round' for CGD network in 5 geographical areas (GAs).

➤ Upon finalisation of bids under these rounds, **88% of the country's area would be authorised for development of CGD Network** to provide access to natural gas to **approximately 98% of the country's population**.

- CGD refers to transportation or distribution of natural gas to enable the supply of cleaner cooking fuel (like **Piped Natural Gas (PNG)**) to households, industrial and commercial units as well as transportation fuel (like **Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)**) to vehicles through a network of pipelines.

- About CGD network:

➤ Under the **PNGRB Act 2006**, PNGRB grants the **authorization to the entities for developing a CGD network** (including PNG network) in a specified GA of the country.

➤ **CGD sector has 4 distinct segments:** CNG predominantly used as auto-fuel, and PNG used in domestic, commercial and Industrial segments.

➤ **Benefits of PNG include:** Safe and assured supply, convenient to use, no wastage, no hassle for replacement of cylinder or cylinder booking etc.

➤ **Benefits of CNG include:** Very low levels of emissions, unlikely to ignite due to high ignition temperature, lowest injury and death rate per vehicle mile etc.

## CGD Networks in India:

- Jagdishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra Pipeline Project
- Barauni- Guwahati Pipeline project
- North East Region (NER) Gas Grid
- Kochi-Koottanad- Bangalore-Mangalore Pipeline Project
- Ennore-Thiruvallur-Bangalore-Nagapattinam-Madurai-Tuticorin Natural gas pipeline.



# MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION RELEASES THE FIRST ADVANCE ESTIMATES (FAE) FOR 2021-22 I.E. FY22

- The FAE, first introduced in 2016-17, are typically published **at the end of the first week of January**.

➤ Finance Ministry **uses the FAE GDP estimates to decide the next financial year's budget allocations**.

➤ They are the **"first" official estimates of how GDP is expected** (hence called "advance" estimates) to grow in that financial year.

➤ However, **they do not include the formal Q3 GDP data**, which is published at the end of February as part of the Second Advance Estimates (SAE).

- Key take away of FAE for FY 2022

➤ **GDP growth:**

**Real GDP**

(GDP calculated using

constant

2011-12

prices) will

grow by

**9.2%,**

**nominal GDP**

(GDP calculated using current market prices) will grow by **17.6%**.

## About GDP

○ GDP refers to the **total value of all final goods and services produced** within the country in a financial year.

○ Nominal GDP is the actual observed variable. **All Budget calculations start with the nominal GDP**. Real GDP is a derived metric.

○  $\text{Real GDP} = \text{Nominal GDP} - \text{Inflation Rate}$ .



➤ The difference between the two growth rates — about 8.5% — **is essentially a marker of inflation**.

➤ **Spending:** Government spending and investment will recover. But, average Indian in terms of income and expenditure recovery is still pre Covid level.

➤ **Low Private Consumption:** Weak levels of private demand will make it difficult to sustain economic growth.

# 'UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (UCC) IS PUBLIC POLICY MATTER, NO DIRECTION CAN BE ISSUED TO PARLIAMENT': CENTRE TO DELHI HIGH COURT

- Centre further informed Delhi High Court that the matter of implementation of the UCC is **currently pending with the Law Commission of India**.

- A UCC refers to a **single law, applicable to all the citizens their personal matters** such as marriage, divorce, custody, adoption and inheritance.

➤ It is **intended to replace the system of fragmented personal laws**, which currently govern interpersonal relationships and related matters within different religious communities

- Arguments favouring of UCC**

➤ **Article 44 of Constitution** stating 'State shall endeavor to secure a UCC'.

➤ To **make judicial pronouncements enforceable** (Mohd. Ahmed Khan v. Shah Bano Begum, 1985 and Sarla Mudgal v Union of India, 1995).

➤ **National integration** as Different laws for different religious groups breed communalism

➤ **Gender Justice** as Mostly the religious or customary personal laws are biased in favour of men.

- Arguments against UCC**

➤ **Parliament does not have exclusive jurisdiction over 'Personal laws'** (mentioned in the Concurrent List).

➤ **Contradicts to Article 25** (individual's fundamental right to religion), **Article 26(b)** (right of each religious denomination).

➤ **Against the diversity** of the country.



## ASIAN WATERBIRD CENSUS (AWC) BEING CONDUCTED IN INDIA

- AWC is being carried out across **7 wetlands in the NCR**- Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary; Dhanauri and Surajpur wetlands in Greater Noida; Delhi Zoo and Sanjay Lake; Okhla Bird Sanctuary; Najafgarh Jheel; and Yamuna River.
- **About AWC:**
  - It is **conducted in January** each year and is coordinated by the **Wetlands International South Asia and the Bombay Natural History Society** (a NGO).
  - It is an integral part of the global waterbird monitoring programme, the **International Waterbird Census (IWC)**, coordinated by **Wetlands International**.
    - IWC is a **monitoring programme** to collect information on the **numbers of waterbirds at wetland sites**.
  - It runs in **parallel with other regional programmes** of the International Waterbird Census in **Africa, Europe, West Asia, the Neotropics and the Caribbean**.
  - It is also an important part of the environment ministry's **National Action Plan for conservation of Migratory Birds and their habitats** along the Central Asian Flyways.
- **Objectives of the census:**
  - To obtain **information on an annual basis of waterbird populations** at wetlands in the region during the **non-breeding period** of most species (January).
  - To **monitor on an annual basis** the status and condition of wetlands,
  - To encourage **greater interest in waterbirds** and wetlands amongst citizens.

## ALSO IN NEWS



### Supreme Court Upholds Validity Of OBC Quota

- SC has **upheld the constitutional validity of the 27% reservation for OBC** in NEET UG and PG hence allowing the resumption of counselling for NEET-PG and UG courses.
- **SC Judgement:**
  - **Upheld 10% for the EWS** in the All India Quota (AIQ) seats.
  - **Question of the validity of the EWS criteria**, including income threshold would be **decided upon by SC in March 2022**.
  - **₹8 lakh gross annual family income limit** criterion for identifying the EWS, **as originally notified would be implemented**.



### Marital rape

- The Delhi HC is hearing pleas seeking to **criminalise marital rape in India**.
- **Legal provisions regarding Marital Rape**
  - In India, **marital rape is not defined** in any law.
  - **Section 375 of IPC deals with rape**, according to which sexual intercourse by a man with his wife aged 15 years (increased to 18 years by Supreme Court in 2018) or above is not rape even if it is without her consent.
  - **Section 498A of IPC** deals with women being subjected to cruelty by her husband or any relative of her husband.



### Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)

- Thousands of troops from CSTO arrived in Kazakhstan **to restore order amid spiraling unrest in Kazakhstan**.
- CSTO is a **Russia-led military alliance** that promotes the collective defence of any member that comes under external aggression.
  - CSTO **originates from Collective Security Treaty** signed in 1992 by Russia and few Central Asian states.
  - CSTO is **based on the principle of collective defense** just like NATO.
  - **Current members:** Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian and the Tajikistan.








### India's Nuclear Doctrine (ND)

- India **welcomed the joint statement by nuclear weapon states** (Britain, China, France, Russia and US) on preventing nuclear war while reiterating on maintaining its own nuclear doctrine.
  - 5 key nuclear-armed nations had earlier said that a **nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought while vowing to prevent the spread of atomic weapons**.
- **India's stand on Nuclear weapons**
  - Building and maintaining a credible minimum deterrence.
  - Goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament.
  - "No First Use" policy
  - Non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.



### Aadhaar enabled Payments Systems (AePS)

- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has introduced limits for cash withdrawals and mini statements to standardise transactions through AePS.
  - Presently, Cash withdrawal from micro ATMs of AePS has a **limit of Rs 10,000 per transaction**.
- AePS is a **bank led model which allows online interoperable financial inclusion transaction** at PoS (MicroATM) through the Business correspondent of any bank using the Aadhaar authentication.
  - BC are **retail agents engaged by banks for providing banking services** at locations other than a bank branch/ATM.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AePS is <b>provided by NPCI</b>. Only inputs required for a customer to do a transaction are: <b>Bank Name, Aadhar Number and Fingerprints</b>.</li> </ul>
 <b>Current Account Deficit (CAD)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per RBI data, <b>India's current account balance recorded a deficit of USD 9.6 billion (1.3% of GDP)</b> in the second quarter of the fiscal and is widening further.</li> <li>A CAD is a <b>trade measurement that says a country imported more goods, services, and capital than it exported</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If the value of goods and services country <b>import exceeds the value of those it export</b>, the country is said to be in a deficit, and the difference in the two values is CAD.</li> <li>➤ The current account includes <b>net income, including interest and dividends, and transfers, like foreign aid</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <b>Sea Dragon 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a <b>multi-lateral anti-submarine warfare exercise in the Pacific Ocean</b>.</li> <li><b>Nations participating:</b> India, Australia, Japan, the US, Canada, and South Korea.</li> <li>Out of this, <b>India, Japan, Australia and US are also part of the Quad</b>, and also participate in the Malabar exercise.</li> </ul>
 <b>National Water Awards (NWA) 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the 3rd NWA-2020, <b>Uttar Pradesh has been awarded the first prize</b>, followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.</li> <li>These award were instituted to recognize and encourage exemplary work and efforts made by States, districts, individuals, organizations, etc across the country in <b>attaining the government's vision of a 'Jal Samridh Bharat'</b>.</li> <li>It is given with the <b>objective of encouraging the stakeholders to adopt a holistic approach towards water resources management</b> in the country as well as create awareness among people.</li> <li>It has been instituted by the <b>Ministry of Jal Shakti since 2018</b>.</li> </ul>
 <b>Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recently, <b>Ministry of Tourism</b> inaugurated various projects at Govardhan, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh under PRASHAD Scheme.</li> <li>PRASHAD scheme is a <b>Central Sector Schemes</b> focussing on <b>developing and identifying pilgrimage sites across India</b> for enriching the religious tourism experience. It aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To <b>integrate pilgrimage destinations</b> in a prioritised, planned and sustainable manner.</li> <li>➤ At <b>infrastructure development to envisage world class infrastructural development</b> of the sites with special emphasis on Tourist Facilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <b>Gangasagar Mela</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Calcutta High Court allowed West Bengal to hold this year's Gangasagar Mela (fair)</b> amidst the fresh surge in Covid-19 cases.</li> <li>The fair takes place at <b>Gangasagar Island on the Sunderbans</b> on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is the <b>second largest congregation of pilgrims in India</b> after the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj.</li> <li>➤ Thousands of pilgrims take a <b>holy dip in the confluence of Ganga and Bay of Bengal</b>, and offer prayers at the <b>Kapil Muni Temple</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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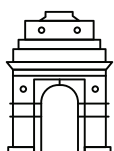
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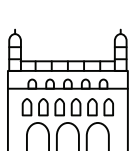
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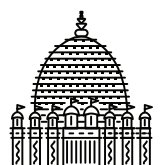
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