



6th Rashtriya Poshan Maah

For Prelims: [Anganwadi Program](#), [Ministry of Women and Child Development \(MoWCD\)](#), [Government e-Market \(GeM\)](#), [POSHAN Abhiyaan \(Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition\)](#), PM Poshan SHAKti Nirman (PM-POSHAN), [National Food Security Act, 2013 \(NFSA\)](#), [Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0](#).

For Mains: Significance and Objectives of Poshan Abhiyaan, Significance, Vision and Objectives of Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0

Source: [PIB](#)

Why in News?

The [Ministry of Women and Child Development \(MoWCD\)](#) is celebrating the 6th Rashtriya [Poshan Maah](#) throughout September 2023.

What are the Key Highlights About Poshan Maah 2023?

- **Focus & Objective:**
 - The focus is on **comprehensively addressing malnutrition using a life-cycle approach**, which is a **key component of Mission Poshan 2.0**.
 - The main objective is to raise awareness about critical life stages, including pregnancy, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, in order to **promote better nutrition across India**.
- **Theme:**
 - **'Suposhit Bharat, Sakshar Bharat, Sashakt Bharat'** (Nutrition-rich India, Educated India, Empowered India), emphasising the importance of nutrition, education, and empowerment in **building a healthier and stronger country**.
- **This Year's Initiatives:**
 - During this month-long event, the MoWCD will lead nationwide efforts to raise awareness about nutrition, **focusing on key themes such as Exclusive Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding**.
 - **These efforts include activities like:**
 - **Swasth Balak Spardha** (Healthy Child Competition) to encourage healthy competition for better nutrition and overall well-being.
 - **Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi** (Nutrition and Education), improving nutrition through **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)**, sensitising tribal communities about nutrition, and **addressing anaemia through a Test, Treat, Talk approach**.
- **2022's Progress:**
 - During 2022 Poshan Maah, **more than 170 million sensitization activities took place**, focusing on key themes related to nutrition.
 - **Over 600 million activities have been conducted** as part of the **Jan Andolan movement during Poshan Pakhwadas** (March) and Poshan Maahs (September) each year.

What is Poshan Abhiyaan?

- **About:**
 - It is a **flagship initiative by the Government of India (GoI)** for addressing malnutrition comprehensively.
- **Aim:**
 - This integration aims to create an integrated nutrition support program that **enhances the content, delivery, outreach, and overall outcomes of nutritional services.**
 - The primary focus is on **promoting practices that improve health, wellness, and immunity against diseases and malnutrition.**
- **Target Audience:**
 - It targets **pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls, and children** under 6 years of age.
- **Poshan Tracker App:**
 - In 2021, the MoWCD **launched an application called Poshan Tracker.**
 - As of February 2022, the **number of beneficiaries registered on Poshan Tracker:**

Total Beneficiaries	Lactating Mothers	Pregnant Women	Children 0-6M	Children 6M-3Y	Children 3-6Y
10,10,50,463	52,41,440	80,40,215	45,95,834	4,06,33,040	4,25,39,934

What is Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0?

- **About:**
 - In FY 2021-22, the government restructured some schemes into **Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0**. It includes the following sub-schemes:
 - **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)**
 - POSHAN Abhiyaan
 - **Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG)**
 - **National Creche Scheme**
- **Fund:**
 - Poshan 2.0 is an **ongoing Centrally-Sponsored Scheme** being implemented through the State Govts/ UT administrations **based on a cost-sharing ratio between the Central and the State Government.**
- **Vision:**
 - Address the challenging situation of malnutrition among **children up to the age of 6 years, adolescent girls (14-18 years) and pregnant and lactating women.**
 - Achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDG 2 on Zero Hunger and SDG 4 on Quality Education) **lies at the forefront of this programme design.**
 - **Focus on the fundamental importance of nutrition and early childhood care** and education for the well-being, growth and development of children into healthy and productive adults.
- **Components:**
 - Nutrition Support for POSHAN through SNP **for children of the age group of 06 months to 6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers (PWLM).**
 - For Adolescent Girls **in the age group of 14 to 18 years in Aspirational Districts and North Eastern Region (NER).**
 - **Early Childhood Care and Education** (3-6 years) and early stimulation for (0-3 years).
 - Anganwadi Infrastructure including modern, upgraded Saksham Anganwadi, and Poshan Abhiyaan.

What are the Other Related Initiatives?

- **Anemia Mukh Bharat Abhiyan**
- **The National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013**
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**
- **PM POSHAN SHAKti Nirman (PM-POSHAN).**

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following are the objectives of 'National Nutrition Mission'? (2017)

1. To create awareness relating to malnutrition among pregnant women and lactating mothers.
2. To reduce the incidence of anaemia among young children, adolescent girls and women.
3. To promote the consumption of millets, coarse cereals and unpolished rice.
4. To promote the consumption of poultry eggs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2 and 3 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 only
(d) 3 and 4 only

Ans: (a)

India's Fiscal Deficit

For Prelims: [Fiscal Deficit](#), [Union Budget](#), [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#), [Inflation](#), [Devaluation of the currency](#), [Balance of Payments](#).

For Mains: Impact of Fiscal Deficit on Indian Economy.

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

- Recently, the [Centre's fiscal deficit](#) in the **first four months of 2023-24** touched **33.9%** of the **full-year target**.
 - In the [Union Budget](#), the government projected to bring down the **fiscal deficit** to **5.9%** of the [gross domestic product \(GDP\)](#) in the **current FY**.
 - The **deficit** was **6.4%** of the **GDP** in **2022-23** against the earlier estimate of 6.71%.

What is Fiscal Deficit?

- **About:**
 - **Fiscal deficit** is the **difference** between the **government's total expenditure** and its **total revenue** (excluding borrowings).
 - It is an indicator of the extent to which the government must borrow in order to finance its operations and is expressed as a percentage of the country's GDP.
- **High and Low FD:**
 - A **high fiscal deficit** can lead to [inflation](#), [devaluation of the currency](#) and an increase in the **debt burden**.

- While a **lower fiscal deficit** is seen as a **positive sign of fiscal discipline** and a **healthy economy**.
- **Positive Aspects of Fiscal Deficit:**
 - **Increased Government Spending:** **Fiscal deficit** enables the government to increase spending on **public services**, [infrastructure](#), and **other important areas** that can stimulate **economic growth**.
 - **Finances Public Investments:** The government can finance **long-term investments**, such as **infrastructure projects**, through **fiscal deficit**.
 - **Job Creation:** Increased government spending can lead to **job creation**, which can **help reduce unemployment** and **increase** the standard of living.
- **Negative Aspects of Fiscal Deficit:**
 - **Increased Debt Burden:** A persistent **high fiscal deficit** leads to an increase in government debt, which puts pressure on future generations to repay the debt.
 - **Inflationary Pressure:** **Large fiscal deficits** can lead to an increase in **money supply** and **higher inflation**, which reduces the [purchasing power](#) of the general public.
 - **Crowding out of Private Investment:** The government may have to borrow heavily to finance the **fiscal deficit**, which can lead to a **rise in interest rates**, and make it difficult for the private sector to access credit, thus crowding out private investment.
 - **Balance of Payments Problems:** If a country is running large **fiscal deficits**, it may have to borrow from **foreign sources**, which can lead to a decrease in [foreign exchange reserves](#) and put pressure on the [balance of payments](#).

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains:

Q. Do you agree with the view that steady GDP growth and low inflation have left the Indian economy in good shape? Give reasons in support of your arguments. **(2019)**

Coup in Gabon

For Prelims: Location of Gabon and its neighbours, [Coup in Niger \(2023\)](#).

For Mains: Effect of Policies and Politics of Countries on India's Interest, How Coup Affects the socio-economic fabric of a nation.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Gabon, a Central African nation, rich in oil but plagued by **poverty and political instability**, has witnessed another coup attempt by a **group of mutinous soldiers** who claimed to have seized power and placed the President of the country under house arrest.

- Coup attempt took place due to allegations of **election fraud and corruption against** Gabon's President Ali Bongo Ondimba, reflecting the growing discontent within the nation.

What are the Key Points About Gabon?

▪ **Geography:**

- Gabon, a country **surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean** in the west, is a former **French colony**, and retains strong ties to France and French language and culture. The capital is **Libreville**.
- It shares land borders with **Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea**, and the **Republic of Congo**.
- Gabon has a **population of 2.3 million (2021)** and **forests covering 88% of its territory**.
- Gabon is widely described as **'Africa's last Eden'**, the **Loango National Park is one of the country's best wildlife-watching spots**.



▪ **Urbanisation:**

- Gabon has one of the **highest urbanisation rates in Africa** with more than **four in five Gabonese citizens living in cities**.

▪ **Gabon's Economy:**

- Gabon is the **4th largest oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa**.
- Strong economic growth over the **past decade was driven mainly by oil and**

manganese production.

- In 2020, the oil sector accounted for **38.5% of [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#) and 70.5% of exports despite efforts to diversify the economy.**
- Gabon is a member of the [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries \(OPEC\)](#), but its oil wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few — and nearly **40% of Gabonese aged 15 to 24 were out of work in 2020**, according to the [World Bank](#).

Other Recent Upheavals in Africa:

- [Coup in Niger \(2023\)](#)
- [Crisis in Sudan \(2023 and 2021\)](#)
- [Burkina Faso Coup \(2022\)](#)
- [Military Coup in Mali \(2021, 2020\)](#)

Red Sand Boa

For Prelims: [Red Sand Boa](#), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)-India

For Mains: Significance of addressing illegal wildlife trade

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, a report by the **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)-India** titled '**Illegal Trade of [Red Sand Boa](#) in India 2016-2021**' has exposed the trade of red sand boa.

- This alarming revelation underscores the pressing concern about the illegal trade of Red Sand Boas and the urgency for conservation efforts.

What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- The report documents a total of **172 incidents of seizures involving red sand boas between 2016 and 2021**, revealing the alarming extent of illegal trade.
- Illegal trade spans **18 Indian states, 1 Union Territory, and 87 districts; Maharashtra and UP record the highest incidents.**
 - **Maharashtra dominates with 59 cases**, including urban areas like Pune, Thane, Mumbai Suburban.
 - Uttar Pradesh closely follows 33 incidents, often near Nepal's border in districts like Bahraich, and Lakhimpur-Kheri.
- Social media, especially **YouTube, aids illegal trade, with 200 sales-promoting videos in 2021.**
- The report's findings underscore the urgent need for **conservation efforts to prevent the further decline of the red sand boa** population and protect India's biodiversity.

What are the Key Facts About Red Sand Boa?



▪ **About:**

- **The Red Sand Boa (*Eryx johnii*)**, commonly called the **Indian Sand Boa**, is a **non-venomous species**.
- It is a primarily **reddish-brown and thick-set snake that grows to an average length of 75 cm**.
- Unlike most snakes, the tail is almost as thick as the body and gives the reptile the appearance of being "**double-headed**".
- **The Red Sand Boa is the largest of the sand boa in the world. Nocturnal and spends the majority of its time under the ground.**

▪ **Distribution:**

- Found in the whole of India **excluding North-east states and North-Bengal**; also not found in **Indian islands**.

▪ **Status:**

- [IUCN Red List](#): **Near Threatened**
- [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#): **Appendix II**.
- [Indian Wildlife \(Protection\) Act of 1972](#): **Schedule IV**.

▪ **Threats to Red Sand Boa:**

- Expansion of human settlements and activities.
- Demand upsurge in pet trade, as well as for use in **black magic**.
- Poached for perceived medicinal benefits.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)-India:

- **WCS-India** is a Section 25 (association having objects to promote commerce, art, science, religion, charity or any other useful purpose and not having any profit motive) **non-profit organization** in India, demonstrates a strong commitment to conservation.
- It operates in full compliance with Indian regulations, emphasizing its dedication to preserving the country's natural environment and its rich biodiversity.

Civil Services Examination, Previous Year's Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. King Cobra is the only snake that makes its own nest. Why does it make its nest? (2010)

- (a) It is a snake-eater and the nest helps attract other snakes
- (b) It is a viviparous snake and needs a nest to give birth to its offspring
- (c) It is an oviparous snake and lays its eggs in the nest and guards the nest until they are hatched
- (d) It is large, cold blooded animal and needs a nest to hibernate in the cold season

Ans: (c)

Exp:

- King cobras are venomous snakes that are found in South and Southeast Asia. They can grow up to 18 feet long which makes it the longest venomous snake in the world. They are threatened by habitat destruction and have been listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List since 2010.
- Being an oviparous (who lays eggs) reptile, it makes nests to lay eggs and guard them.
Therefore, option (c) is the correct answer.

Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ABRY)

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

The **Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ABRY)** has surpassed its initial [employment generation targets](#), demonstrating its effectiveness in promoting job creation and aiding the **recovery efforts amidst the [Covid-19 pandemic](#)**.

What is Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ABRY)?

- **About & Aim:**
 - The ABRY **came into effect on October 1, 2020**, with the primary goal of stimulating the **creation of new job opportunities**.
 - It **achieved this by offering financial assistance to employers** of enterprises **registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)**.
 - The scheme **specifically aimed to incentivise the employment of individuals, including those who had lost their jobs due to the pandemic**.
 - It **covered both employee and employer contributions**, equivalent to 24% of earnings, for businesses employing up to 1000 workers.
 - For larger firms with over 1000 employees, **the scheme covered only the employee's EPF payments, equivalent to 12% of salaries**.
- **Achievements:**
 - As of July 31, 2023, the ABRY exceeded **its initial employment generation target by enrolling approximately 7.58 million new employees**.
- **Significance:**
 - The initiative **has played a significant role in reviving the job market, contributing to the broader economic recovery** during the pandemic.

What are the Government's Initiatives to Generate Employment Opportunities?

- [Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise \(SMILE\)](#)
- [PM-DAKSH \(Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi\)](#)
- [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act \(MGNREGA\)](#)

- [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana \(PMKVY\)](#)
- [Start-Up India Scheme](#)
- [Rozgar Mela](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Disguised unemployment generally means (2013)

- (a) large number of people remain unemployed
- (b) alternative employment is not available
- (c) marginal productivity of labour is zero
- (d) productivity of workers is low

Ans: (c)

Q. Among the following who are eligible to benefit from the “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act”? (2011)

- (a) Adult members of only the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe households
- (b) Adult members of below poverty line (BPL) households
- (c) Adult members of households of all backward communities
- (d) Adult members of any household

Ans: (d)

Rapid Fire Current Affairs

World Organ Donation Day

- **World Organ Donation Day** is observed every year on **13th August** to spread awareness around the importance of **organ donation** and **bust myths** around it.
 - **India's National Organ Donation Day** was celebrated annually on **November 27**, however, from **2023** the day has been **shifted to 3rd August** to commemorate the first successful deceased heart transplant in India on **3rd August 1994**.
- **Organ donation** involves the **surgical extraction** of an **organ** from a **living donor** or, in the case of a **deceased donor**, their next of kin's consent, for the purpose of **transplantation** into another individual.
 - Organs which can be donated include liver, **kidney, pancreas, lung, heart intestine, cornea, bone, tissues** and many more.
- **Organ donation in India** is regulated by **Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994**.

Read More: [Organ Donation in India](#), [Ethical Concerns of Organ Donation and Transplantation](#), [National Organ Transplantation Guidelines](#)

Golden Globe Race

- **Abhilash Tomy, former Commander** in the **Indian Navy** who became the **first Indian** to go around the world on a sailboat solo has now attained another record of completing a **solo circumnavigation** when he made **podium finish** at the **Golden Globe Race (GGR), 2022**.
 - He is currently working with the [Indian Space Research Organisation \(ISRO\)](#) on its **manned space mission, Gaganyaan**, advising on **recovery of astronauts at sea**.
 - He is working to **assist in the recovery of astronauts** once the **capsule splashes** into the **sea** on return.
- The **Golden Globe Race** is a **non-stop, solo, unassisted yacht race around the world** which was held for the **first time** in **1968-69**.
 - The second edition of the race was held 50 years later, in 2018.
 - The sailing is along a stipulated route, rounding the three great capes, **the Cape of Good Hope** in South Africa, **Cape Leeuwin** in Australia and **Cape Horn** in Chile.

A Comic Book by NCERT & UNESCO

The Ministry of Education, **unveiled a new comic book, "Let's Move Forward"**, developed jointly by **NCERT and UNESCO** in New Delhi.

- This partnership **marks a step towards advancing the objectives of the School Health and Wellness Programme (SHWP)**.
 - It was **launched in 2018** as part of the [Ayushman Bharat campaign](#) and jointly administered by the MoE and the MoHFW.
 - The aim is to **provide health education, prevent diseases, and improve access to health services**.
- The comic **covers information related to the 11 thematic components** (emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, gender equality, nutrition and health, prevention of substance abuse, promoting healthy lifestyles, reproductive health, internet safety, and more) **of the SHWP**.
- It is **accessible in multiple languages**; Hindi, English, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, and Telugu.

Read More: [Prioritizing Mental Well-being](#)

Superfoods

Superfoods are **nutrient-rich foods, primarily plant-based but including some fish and dairy, packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants** beneficial for health.

- According to the American Heart Association, **superfood lacks scientific recognition, with no established criteria to define it**.
- Nevertheless, **certain foods like blueberries** (rich in vitamins), salmon (prevent heart disease), kale (promote digestive health), acai and millets (the energy, proteins, good fats, minerals and vitamins that **millets provide makes them a superfood**) **are exceptionally nutritious compared to less nutrient-dense options**.
- Scientists **claim that the use of the term superfood is largely a marketing tool, with no root in academic research**.

Read More: [India's Millet Revolution](#)

