

11 November, 2023

Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023

Context: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has approved a path breaking "Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023".

- **Approval and Purpose:**
 - Ministry of Information and Broadcasting approves the "Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023."
 - Empowers the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) to conduct digital media campaigns.
- **Digital Landscape Significance:**
 - Acknowledges the shift in media consumption to the digital space.
 - Highlights the growth in internet penetration and telecom subscribers as of March 2023.
- **Citizen-Centric Messaging:**
 - Aims to deliver citizen-centric messages effectively to a targeted audience.
 - Leverages the vast subscriber base in the digital universe for cost-efficient public campaigns.
- **Media Platforms Inclusion:**
 - Enables CBC to empanel agencies in OTT, Video on Demand, Podcasts, and Digital Audio platforms.
 - Rationalizes the empanelment process for Internet Websites and introduces channelization through Mobile Applications.
- **Social Media and Digital Outreach:**
 - Recognizes the popularity of Social Media Platforms for public conversations.
 - Streamlines the process for placing government advertisements on social media.
 - Empowers CBC to empanel Digital Media Agencies for enhanced outreach.
- **Innovation and Adaptability:**
 - Recognizes the dynamic nature of the digital landscape.
 - Empowers CBC to onboard new and innovative communication platforms with committee approval.
- **Competitive Bidding and Transparency:**
 - Introduces competitive bidding for rate discovery.
 - Ensures transparency and efficiency in the rate discovery process.
 - Rates discovered through bidding valid for three years and applicable to eligible agencies.
- **Enhancing Government Digital Outreach:**
 - Supplements Ministries/Departments' social media outreach with CBC's Media Unit.
 - Aims to improve information dissemination to citizens through enhanced digital outreach.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
 - Formulated after extensive discussions with multiple stakeholders.
 - Outlines a roadmap for enhancing the digital outreach of the Government of India.
- **CBC's Commitment:**
 - Highlights CBC's commitment to adapting to the changing media landscape.
 - Embraces new technologies for effective communication about government programs, schemes, and policies.

Ben Gurion Canal

Context: The Ben Gurion Canal has come back in news after the crackdown of Israel on Hamas.

- **Purpose and Location:**
 - Proposed canal project in Israel connecting the Gulf of Aqaba to the Mediterranean Sea.
 - Named after David Ben Gurion, the Founding Father of Israel and its first Prime Minister.
- **Comparison with Suez Canal:**
 - Aims to rival the Suez Canal in Egypt.
 - Suez Canal history includes disturbances like the Israeli blockage, closures, and the 2021 obstruction.
- **Size and Length:**
 - Projected to be almost one third longer than the Suez Canal, approximately 182 miles (292.9 km).
 - Suez Canal's length is 120.1 miles (193.3 km).
- **Announcement and Construction:**
 - Israel announced on April 2, 2021, that construction was expected to start by June 2021.
 - Initial mentions in Hebrew language publications two years prior.
 - Construction cost estimates ranged from US\$16 billion to \$55 billion as of 2021.



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➤ **Route:**

- Canal starts from the Gulf of Aqaba, near Eilat on the Israeli-Jordanian border.
- Passes through the Arabah Valley, veers west before the Dead Sea basin, and traverses the Negev Mountain Range.
- Heads north, circumvents the Gaza Strip, and connects to the Mediterranean Sea.

➤ **Historical Considerations:**

- Early plans considered two routes, one through the Negev Desert hills and another through the Arabah valley.
- In 1963, a classified U.S. document suggested using 520 buried nuclear explosions for excavation in the Negev Desert hills. The document was declassified in 1993.

Effect of El Nino on Food Security

Context: The FAO indicated that \$160 million was urgently required to provide immediate support to 4.8 million people at risk, given the impact of El Niño on food security.

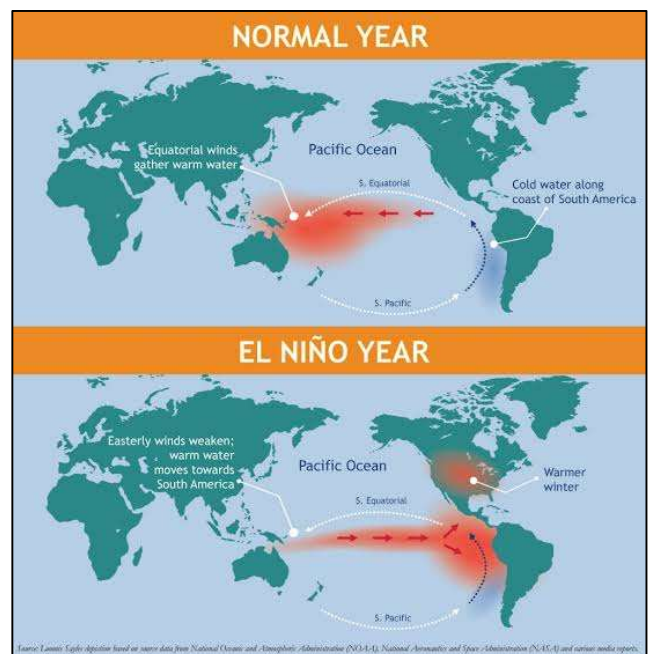
- FAO initiated a plan to counter El Nino's impacts on agriculture and food security.
- WMO forecasts El Nino continuation until April 2024, predicting extreme weather events.
- Urgent need for nearly \$160 million according to the Anticipatory Action and Response Plan.
- Plan prioritizes actions in 34 vulnerable countries across regions based on historical impacts and climate forecasts.
- Objectives include mitigation, capitalizing on positive effects, and delivering early responses.
- Current El Nino cycle occurs amid 258 million facing acute hunger with limited funds.
- Previous 2015-2016 El Nino episode affected over 60 million people, prompting \$5 billion in international assistance.
- El Nino defined as warmer-than-normal phase in the equatorial Pacific, disrupting global weather patterns.
- Regional impacts vary, with Eastern Africa experiencing heavy rains and potential flooding, while Southern Africa faces rainfall deficits.
- FAO emphasizes urgent funding for its El Nino plan to address early warnings and provide immediate support.

➤ **El Nino**

- Peruvian fishermen off Peru's coast first recognized El Nino, noting unusually warm water.
- Spanish immigrants termed it "El Nino," translating to "the little boy" in Spanish.
- El Nino is the warmer-than-normal phase of the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO).
- It brings generally warmer temperatures and reduced rainfall worldwide, including in India.
- During El Nino events, equatorial Pacific Ocean Sea Surface Temperatures (SST) rise at least 0.5 degrees Celsius above the long-term average.
- Strong events, like in 2015-2016, can see anomalies reaching record highs of up to 3°C.
- El Nino events are irregular and occur unpredictably at two- to seven-year intervals.
- Climatologists observe El Nino concurrently with the Southern Oscillation, which involves changes in air pressure over the tropical Pacific Ocean.

• **Impact:**

- **Weak Monsoon in India:** El Nino in May or June 2023 may weaken the crucial southwest monsoon, vital for 70% of India's rainfall and relied upon by most farmers.
- **Sub-seasonal Factors:** Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) and monsoon low-pressure systems could temporarily boost rainfall, as seen in 2015.
- **Hot Temperatures and Droughts:** El Nino may trigger heatwaves and droughts in India and other regions like South Africa, Australia, Indonesia, and the Pacific Islands.
- **West Gets Heavier Rainfall:** El Nino brings heavy rainfall and floods to places like California in the United States, potentially causing coral reef bleaching and death.
- **Global Temperature Rise:** The 2023-2024 El Nino may contribute to a global average temperature increase of up to 1.5°C above the preindustrial average.
- **Oceans Warming:** El Nino events impact ocean heat content, especially concerning as current levels are at a record high, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).



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NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Cell Broadcast Alert System



Recently, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) tested its Cell Broadcast Alert System (CBAS), designed to send mass alerts during natural disasters.

About Cell Broadcast Alert System:

- The Cell Broadcast Alert System (CBAS) is a technological platform enabling the government to transmit crucial and time-sensitive messages via mobile devices.
- These messages primarily focus on disaster management scenarios.
- It ensures broad coverage by delivering alerts to all mobile devices within a specific geographic area.
- Various government agencies and emergency services actively employ the CBAS for communication purposes.
- The system serves as a vital tool to inform the public about potential threats and relay updates during critical situations.
- It excels in providing real-time alerts during disasters such as tsunamis, flash floods, earthquakes and landslides.

Bhima River



Recently, the Bhima River in Western and South India has dried up, causing distress in about 100 villages reliant on its waters.

About the Bhima River:

- The Bhima River, also known as Chandrabhaga, is a significant watercourse flowing through Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana, ultimately joining the Krishna River.
- Originating near Bhimashankar Temple in Pune District, Maharashtra, the river is fed by tributaries such as Aria, Kumandala, Indrayani, Vel, Kamania, Mula-Mutha and Ghod.
- The river basin houses twenty-two dams, including significant ones like Chas Kaman, Ujjani (the largest) and Bhatghar.
- Various hydroelectric projects, such as the Bhira Hydroelectric Project, Khopoli, Bhivpuri, and Ujjani Dam, contribute to power generation.

Echidna



Recently, a scientist successfully captured the first-ever footage of the ancient egg-laying mammal, named after Sir David Attenborough, dispelling fears of its extinction.

About Echidna:

- Echidna is a monotreme, the only group of mammals that lays eggs.
- It is exclusively found in Australia and New Guinea.
- It is characterized by its spiky, furry appearance and distinctive beak.
- Echidna, along with the platypus, is one of the few mammals that lays eggs.
- Female echidna lays eggs, and they are incubated outside the womb.

IUCN Status: Critically endangered

Finance Commission



Recently, the Finance Commission holds paramount significance in the fiscal federalism of India.

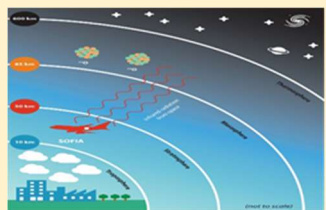
About the Finance Commission:

- The Finance Commission is a constitutional body established under Article 280 of the Constitution.
- It recommends the distribution of tax revenues between the Union and States and among States.
- It provides principles for grants-in-aid to States and suggests measures to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State for local bodies.
- The Parliament has the authority to determine qualifications and selection procedures through the Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1951.

Composition:

It consists of a Chairman and four members appointed by the President. Chairman selected for experience in public affairs; other members based on judicial, financial, administrative or economic expertise.

SOFIA



Recently the scientists have detected atomic oxygen in Venus's atmosphere using the SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy) airborne observatory.

About Venus:

- Venus is the second planet from the Sun and is Earth's closest planetary neighbour.
- This planet is often referred to as "Earth's twin."
- Unlike Earth, Venus rotates clockwise (east to west), which is considered backward in comparison to most planets.
- Venus has no moons or rings.
- It is known as the hottest planet due to the "runaway greenhouse effect."

Significance: The discovery provides crucial insights into Venus's atmospheric composition.

SOFIA:

- SOFIA is the world's largest airborne observatory.
- It is a joint program of NASA and the German Aerospace Center.
- It operates in the stratosphere, flying above 99% of Earth's infrared-blocking atmosphere.
- It is designed to observe the infrared universe, offering unique astronomical perspectives.

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POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ Which tectonic plates are involved in forming the boundaries of the Pacific Ring of Fire? -Pacific, Juan de Fuca, Cocos, Indian-Australian
- ❖ Which volcanic peak, located in the Cascade Range of southwestern Washington, is known for its significant eruption in 1980? -Mount St. Helens
- ❖ How many new pulsars were recently discovered with the Five-hundred Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST)? -Five
- ❖ What are the three Bills recently introduced by the Government to replace the core criminal laws in India? -Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita Bill and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill
- ❖ Who regulates the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) proceedings? - Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)

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