



WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (WPI)- ECONOMY

News: Wholesale price raise eased to 3- month low of 15.2% in June & Core Inflation index declined by 0.7%.

What is Inflation?

Inflation is defined as a situation where there is sustained, **unchecked increase in the general price level** and a fall in the purchasing power of money.

Core Inflation:

- Core inflation is the change in the costs of goods and services, but it **does not include those from the food and energy sectors.**
- This measure of inflation excludes these items because their prices are much more volatile

What is Wholesale Price Index?

- The wholesale price index is an index that measures and tracks the changes in the price of goods in the **stages before the retail level.**
- WPI is Published by the **Office of Economic Adviser**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- WPI includes three components:
 - Manufactured products - 64.2%
 - Primary articles - 22.6%
 - Fuel and power - 13.1%(M > P > F&P)
- base year for the WPI will be **2011-12.**
- The number of items covered in the new series of the WPI has increased from 676 to 697.
- The WPI **does not capture changes in the prices of services**, which CPI does.

I2U2 BACKED FOOD PARKS - GS II MAINS

News: India to give land for I2U2 -backed food parks.

- India will provide "appropriate land" for "food parks" across the country that will be built in collaboration with Israel, United States and the United Arab Emirates



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- The plan for the "**integrated food parks**" was announced in a Joint Statement by the leaders of the I2U2 grouping - **India, Israel, the UAE and the USA**.
- They would bring in private capital for specific projects in the fields of water, energy, transportation, health, space and food security.
- U.S. and Israeli private sectors will be invited to lend their expertise and offer innovative solutions that contribute to the overall sustainability of the project. These investments will help maximize crop yields and, in turn, help tackle food insecurity in South Asia and the Middle East.
- India will '**facilitate farmers' integration into the food parks**.

Significance of the I2U2 backed Food Parks to India:

1. **Private capital investment** will come to India especially into the food processing sectors
2. **Technology transfer** in the field of farming and processing
3. Food parks will facilitate India to integrate its farmers for a agricultural value chain. Hence, It's milestone step in the path of doubling farmers income.
4. It will help to tackle food security issues in the regions of South Asia and Middle east.
5. Food parks will ensure the cutting down of 'food wastage' and 'spoilage'
Eg. Nearly 40% of the food produced in India is wasted every year due to fragmented food systems and inefficient supply chains — a figure estimated by FAO
6. Food parks will also ensure **enhanced value addition** and increased nutritive value of the products.
7. **Employment generation** both directly and indirectly due to this food parks in the emerging field of food processing sector.

MONKEY POX - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

News: *A case of monkeypox was confirmed in Kerala on Thursday, making it the first such case to be reported in the country.*



What is Monkey Pox?

- Monkeypox is a **viral zoonotic disease** with symptoms similar to smallpox, although with less clinical severity.
- It was first discovered in **1958** in colonies of monkeys kept for research. Hence the name monkeypox.
- The monkeypox virus comes from the **same family of viruses as smallpox**, belonging to the orthopoxvirus genus in the family poxviridae.

Symptoms and Transmission:

- According to the WHO, monkeypox is usually a self-limited disease with the symptoms lasting from two to four weeks. Severe cases can occur.
- In recent times, the **case fatality ratio has been around 3–6 per cent**.
- It is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material contaminated with the virus.
- Normally, the virus is spread from one person to another by **close contact** with lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets and contaminated materials such as bedding.
- The symptoms of the disease are fever, rashes and swollen lymph nodes, which may lead to a range of medical complications.
- The viral zoonotic disease that occurs primarily in **tropical rainforest areas of central and west Africa** and is occasionally exported to other regions.
- The clinical presentation of monkeypox resembles that of smallpox, a related orthopoxvirus infection that was declared eradicated worldwide in 1980.
- Monkeypox is **less contagious than smallpox** and causes less severe illness.

RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIALS (RCT) - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

News: *Explained: what are randomised controlled trials, how do they work?*

What's in the news?

- **Economist and Nobel laureate Michael R Kremer** has said that for a diverse country like India Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) must be carried out at multiple sites for **better analysis and to see differences across states**.



- Randomized Controlled Trials were used by **Michael R Kremer, Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo** for their research, and the trio won the **2019 Nobel Prize winner in Economics**.
- They had made the use of RCT for their **research on poverty**. It is usually undertaken to study the effects of a new entrant into an environment, but the method also has its critics.

What are Randomized Controlled Trials?

- RCTs involve **dividing a population into smaller groups, in order to comparatively see the outcomes of an external stimulus**.
- For example, if the aim of a study is to understand whether a free grains distribution scheme helped improve the nutrition levels among people living in a district, researchers will first create two groups within the population, and then put people into those groups randomly.
- One group (called the control group) does not receive the grains or the external stimulus, while the other group (treatment group) does. After a designated period of time, details of how both the groups are doing would be collected. In this way, the goal is to **understand what the overall impact of introducing something new could be**.
- At the time of their win, the Nobel citation said of the trio's work: "The research conducted by this year's laureates has considerably improved our ability to **fight global poverty**...Their new experiment-based approach has **transformed development economics**."

Criticism on Randomized Controlled Trials:

- While the Nobel laureates had billed RCTs as a method to focus on more day-to-day answers to problems of poverty and deprivation, such as delivery of basic amenities, critics say the method **cannot be used in all cases**.
- Several scholars argued that it is **fundamentally flawed**, such as Angus Deaton, the winner of the Economics Nobel in 2015, had said "**randomisation does not equalise two groups**", and warned against over-reliance on RCTs to frame policies.
- Many others believe that two or more groups carved out from a singular population living in an area may not be totally random. There may be more women in one group, or one group may have more people having some kind of distinctiveness that affects the result. As a result, the outcomes may not give an accurate view, and the **very use of a scientific experiment tool in social sciences was questioned**.
- Further, RCTs also cannot be used to study something after it has happened, they need to be planned beforehand.



- RCTs show results for a particular population in an area, it may not be proof that the same results will be achieved elsewhere, especially if the sample size is not big or the trial deals with a very specific kind of population sub-group. This is what Kremer was referring to with regards to India and its diversity.

FLAG CODE - POLITY

News: *What is Flag Code and how it has been changed recently*

What's in the news?

- The Government will soon launch 'Har Ghar Tiranga'– a nationwide campaign to encourage people to hoist the Tricolour at their homes to mark the 75th Independence Day.
- According to officials in the Ministry of Culture, the plan is to reach out to more than 20 crore homes across the country by August 15, the 75th Independence Day.

Flag Code:

- The use, display and hoisting of the National Flag in the country is guided by an overarching set of instructions called the 'Flag Code of India 2002'.
- It brings together all laws, conventions, practices, and instructions for the display of the National Flag.
- It Governs the display of the National Flag by private, public, and Government institutions.
- The Flag Code of India took effect on January 26, 2002.
- As per Clause 2.1 of the Flag Code of India, there shall be no restriction on the display of the National Flag by members of the general public, private organizations, educational institutions etc. consistent with the dignity and honour of the National Flag.

Recent Amendment:

- The Flag Code of India, 2002 was amended vide Order dated December 30, 2021, and National Flag made of polyester or machine made flag have also been allowed.
- Now, the National Flag shall be made of hand-spun, hand-woven or machine-made.



Significance of the recent amendment:

- The amended flag code will facilitate the availability of flags on such a large scale and also make them affordable for the general public.
- Officials in the Ministry of Culture say the flags are now available for as low as Rs 30 on online portals.
- Once the flag code was amended, the Government reached out to manufacturers and e-commerce sites to boost its availability.
- The Ministry has also held meetings with e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart to make sure these sites would be a platform to buy flags.

Criticisms:

- Many feel that the recent amendment break the association between the Tricolour, the Independence movement and khadi.
- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission certified KKGSS as the sole manufacturer and supplier of the Tricolour to the entire country. The recent amendment puts this in vane.
- The recent amendment allowed polyesters to be used in manufacturing tri colour flag affecting the domestic manufactures, making them vulnerable to Chinese dominance.

JUDICIAL PENDENCY - GS II MAINS

News: *How to grease the wheels of justice*

From the Archives:

- The retired chief justice N.V.Ramana in his speech mentioned that "the notion that ordinary people want black robed judges, well-dressed lawyers in fine courtrooms as settings to resolve their disputes is incorrect. People with problems, like people with pains, want relief and they want it as quickly and inexpensively as possible." He to make them responsive to the needs of the Indian citizens.
- At present, despite good intentions, the nation's judiciary is hurtling towards a disaster and needs immediate attention.
- A measure of the justice delivery system is the pendency of cases in courts across the country.



Issues to address in judiciary:

1. Pendency of cases:

- In India, over 47 million cases pending in courts.
- More than 40% of cases are decided after three years in India, while in many other countries less than 1% of cases are decided after three years.
- The increase in corruption and crime is a direct fallout of the sluggish justice delivery system, thereby severely impacts the poor and marginalised, causing denial of justice, prison overload, etc.
- For them, the judicial process itself becomes a punishment.
- Data show that about 70% of prisoners in India are undertrials and are mostly poor citizens.

2. Filling vacancies:

- The nation neither needs 70,000 judges, as claimed by former Chief Justice of India T.S. Thakur, nor does it need to double the present number of judges. It needs to add about 20% of judges, the completion of sanctioned strength.
- Reduce the pendency of cases by filling sanctioned judicial positions.
- The responsibility of selecting judges is largely with the judiciary itself.
- The responsibility of appointments in the subordinate judiciary lies with the State Governments and their respective High Courts.
- The responsibility of ensuring near-zero vacancies should be with the Chief Justices of the High Courts and the Chief Justice of India and they should be held accountable for the same.
- Right now, nobody believes that they are accountable, and filling judicial vacancies is not considered a matter of priority.

3. Use of technology:

- Filling all vacancies may result in a requirement of about 5,000 courtrooms.
- The case listing should give main weightage to 'first in, first out' by use of technological e-filing.
- The e-Committee made detailed SOPs on how petitions and affidavits can be filed and payment of fees can be done electronically without lawyers or litigants having to travel to the courts or use paper.
- Need to focus on virtual hearings. COVID-19 prompted the courts to adopt virtual hearings. However, virtual hearings were held only in some cases while physical hearings were held in most cases.
- All the courts in the country must switch to a hybrid virtual mode immediately and start disposing cases. Even after the COVID-19 crisis ends, it would be beneficial to continue



hybrid virtual courts. This will make access to justice easier for litigants, reduce costs, and also give a fair opportunity to young lawyers from small towns. The required hardware is available in all courts.

If all this is done, India's judicial system can rank among the 10 top countries of the world. These changes would make India the preferred nation for international investments and also fulfil the fundamental right to speedy justice of citizens.

ETHICS CORNER:

Attitude:

1. It is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour.
2. The evaluations which people make can range from extremely unfavourable to the extremely favourable, or can be more moderate.
3. Attitudes can be mixed, and with regard to the same object, may vary from time to time.

Components of the Attitude:

Attitude has three components.

Affective (Emotional):

It consists of the feeling which the object, person, issue or event evokes. The behavioural part consists of the manner in which the attitude influences a person's behaviour.

For example: I am scared of spiders.

Behavioural (Conative):

Conative in psychology means a mental process involving the will-impulse, desire or resolve.

For example: I will avoid spiders and scream if I see one.

Cognitive:

It means 'relating to the process of acquiring knowledge through reason, intuition and perception'.

It consists of a person's thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object.



For example: I believe spiders are dangerous

What are the Techniques to Bring Change in Attitude?

1. Classical/ Pavlovian Conditioning:

In this technique, the person is exposed to a positive and neutral stimulus repeatedly and after some time the response to neutral stimuli becomes the same as response to positive stimuli.

2. Instrumental Conditioning:

A process in which a positive behavior when rewarded has more chances of repetition unlike the negative behavior which if repeated would lead to punishment and thus less chances of repetition.

Example:

Parents celebrating the success of a child by praising them among friends will form a positive attitude of the child towards success. Further, when parents punish the child for their mistakes, it discourages the child from making those mistakes again.

3. Social Observation:

This involves learning from our social environment such as family, school, media and its expression.

What are the Functions of Attitude?

1. Knowledge Function:

Attitudes have a knowledge function, which enables individuals to understand their environment and to be consistent in their ideas and thinking. Most attitudes serve this basic function in some measure.

2. Utilitarian Function:

Attitude helps individuals in maximizing benefits and minimizing disadvantages while interacting with individuals, groups and situations in their environment. Utilitarian attitudes lead to behaviour that optimizes one's interests.

3. Performing a Social Role:

Attitudes help perform a social role, helping in an individual's self-expression and social interaction.

Subscribing to a given set of attitudes signals one's identification with important reference groups to express one's core values, and to establish one's identity. This social role of attitudes is known



as social identity function, it underlies an individual's desire to establish his individual and social identity.

4. Maintain an Individual's Self-Esteem:

Attitudes can serve as defence mechanisms for handling an individual's internal mental conflict which reflect tensions within the individual psyche.

The defence mechanisms hide an individual's true motives from himself or psychologically isolate him from groups perceived as hostile or threatening.

Attitudes maintain self-esteem in other ways also. An individual's attitudes toward many things are influenced by his view on how they affect his own self-assessment.

For Example: Our attitudes toward our friends and social acquaintances depend on whether we regard such association as enhancing or lowering our social standing.

Prelims practice questions:

1. Which of the given statements is **incorrect**?

- A. Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic disease belonging to the orthopoxvirus genus in the family poxviridae.
- B. The case fatality ratio of Monkeypox virus is around 10-12 percent.
- C. Monkeypox is less contagious than smallpox.
- D. The disease occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of central and west Africa.

2. Which of the following statements regarding Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT).

- 1. RCT works out by dividing a population into smaller groups, in order to comparatively see the outcomes of an external stimulus.
- 2. RCT has a potential to fight out against global poverty.
- 3. The critics point out that randomisation does not equalise two groups in all cases.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2



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- B. 1 only
- C. 2 and 3
- D. 1, 2 and 3

3. Consider the following statements with respect to the Flag code of India.

1. It Governs the display of the National Flag by private, public, and Government institutions.
2. The code doesn't allow the individual citizen to host the National flag in his house without the permission of the Government.
3. The recent amendments makes the National Flag to be made of hand-spun, hand-woven or machine-made.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 1 and 3
- D. 1, 2 and 3

4. Consider the following statements regarding Wholesale price Index (WPI).

1. The WPI captures changes in the prices of services.
2. WPI is Published by the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Choose the correct answer

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None



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5. Consider the following statements regarding I2U2 backed food parks

1. India, Israel, UAE, USA backed public Investment in Food Parks
2. India planned to give land for integrated food parks

Choose the correct answer;

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None

Answers: 1.B, 2.D, 3.C, 4.B, 5.C

Mainstreaming:

1. Discuss the reason behind the judicial pendency in India and suggest steps to be taken to reduce pendency of cases. (10 marks, 150 words)
2. Recently I2U2 announced their plan to bring in private investment in Food parks. In this context throw a light on the significance of this announcement for India and the world. (15 marks, 250 words)



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