

**Current Affairs**  
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**India in Global Top 10 for Patents, Trademarks, and Industrial Designs**

India has secured a position in the global top 10 for patents, trademarks, and industrial designs, as reported in the World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPI) 2024 report. This achievement underscores India's rapid progress in intellectual property (IP) rights and highlights its emerging role as a key player in global innovation.

**Key Highlights**

- **India's Global Ranking in Intellectual Property:**
  - India ranks **6th globally** in patent filings, with **64,480 applications**.
  - Over **50% of patent applications** in India were filed by Indian residents, indicating growing domestic innovation.
- **Substantial Growth in Patent Approvals:**
  - India's patent office granted **149.4% more patents** in 2023 compared to the previous year, showcasing a significant enhancement in IP processing capabilities.
- **Industrial Designs and Trademark Filings:**
  - **Industrial design applications in India rose by 36.4%**, reflecting a growing emphasis on creative industries and manufacturing.
  - Leading sectors for design applications include **Textiles and Accessories, Tools and Machines, and Health and Cosmetics**.
- **Driving Factors:**
  - The Government of India's initiatives like **Startup India, Make in India, and Digital India** have played pivotal roles in fostering a supportive ecosystem for IP growth.
  - Increased funding, tax incentives, and fast-track processes for startups have encouraged innovation.

- **Significance in Global Innovation Landscape:**
  - India's consistent progress in IP rankings aligns with its goal of positioning itself as an innovation-driven economy.
  - This achievement contributes to **India's credibility on the global stage** and attracts foreign investments in research and development.
- **Challenges and Future Prospects:**
  - While progress is noteworthy, there remain challenges such as **enhancing enforcement mechanisms**, reducing **backlogs in patent approvals**, and improving **awareness of IP rights** among small businesses.
  - Ongoing reforms and policy initiatives are expected to address these areas, supporting India's vision of becoming a global IP powerhouse.

### **Background**

The World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPI) is an annual report by the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**. It provides data and insights into IP trends globally, assessing areas like patents, trademarks, and designs, and serves as a benchmark for countries aiming to strengthen their IP infrastructure. India's recent performance in WIPI reflects its evolving innovation landscape and sustained commitment to improving IP practices.

### **Supreme Court Issues Guidelines to Prevent Arbitrary Property Demolitions**

The **Supreme Court of India** has issued comprehensive guidelines to curb the practice of “**bulldozer justice**,” aiming to prevent arbitrary demolitions across India. The guidelines, set by a bench of Justices **BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan**, emphasize due process and protection of rights for affected parties, stressing that demolitions must follow proper legal procedures.

### **Key Points:**

- **SC Guidelines on Property Demolitions:**
  - The **Executive cannot act as both judge and enforcer**; demolitions cannot serve as punishment for alleged criminal actions.
  - Demolitions should not proceed without a **prior show-cause notice** to the affected party, allowing at least **15 days to respond**.

- The notice must be served by **registered post** and displayed on the outer part of the structure.
- Post-demolition, a report should be submitted to the **Municipal Commissioner** and must include a videographed record.
- **Rights of Affected Parties:**
  - Even after a demolition order, affected parties must have time to **challenge the decision** before a relevant forum.
  - Sufficient time must be granted to **vacate the premises** if the occupants do not contest the demolition.
  - Personal hearings should be conducted, with minutes recorded and reasons provided, especially where partial demolition may suffice.
- **Oversight and Accountability:**
  - **Nodal officers** will oversee demolitions, appointed by the **Collector and District Magistrate**.
  - **Videography** of demolition proceedings is mandatory, ensuring transparency.
  - Any violation of the guidelines will lead to **contempt of court proceedings** against the responsible authority.
- **SC's Rationale:**
  - The Supreme Court emphasized that **arbitrary demolition without judicial oversight** undermines the rule of law and violates constitutional principles.
  - Issued under **Article 142 of the Constitution**, these directions aim to protect citizens from unilateral actions that bypass due process.

### **Background:**

The practice of using “**bulldozer justice**”—whereby properties of alleged offenders are demolished without due legal procedures—has drawn criticism for potential misuse of executive power. In response, the Supreme Court’s guidelines prioritize procedural fairness, affirming that **accused persons’ properties cannot be demolished as punishment** without a proper legal foundation. This

intervention reinforces **checks and balances** on executive actions related to property rights.

### **India's Retail Inflation Surges to 6.21% in October: Key Insights and Implications**

India's retail inflation increased to **6.21%** in October, rising from **5.49%** in **September** for the current fiscal year. Data from the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** highlights that rural inflation reached **6.68%**, while urban inflation was lower at **5.62%**. The Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) data indicates that food inflation soared to **10.87%**, with rural areas reporting **10.69%** and urban regions at **11.09%**.

#### **Key Points:**

- **Current Inflation Rates:**
  - **Overall retail inflation** for October 2024: **6.21%**, above the RBI's upper tolerance limit.
  - **Rural inflation:** 6.68%; **Urban inflation:** 5.62%.
  - **Food inflation** based on CFPI: **10.87%** (rural: 10.69%, urban: 11.09%).
- **Main Drivers of Inflation:**
  - **High prices** in vegetables, fruits, oils, and fats have driven food inflation higher.
  - **Decreases** were recorded in the prices of pulses, eggs, sugar, and spices, providing some relief.
- **RBI's Inflation Target and Implications:**
  - The **Reserve Bank of India** aims to keep inflation within a range of **2-6%** and targets a medium-term inflation rate of **4%**.
  - Persistent inflation above the RBI's range could lead to **policy adjustments**, such as raising interest rates to control demand and ease inflation.
- **Factors Contributing to Rising Inflation:**
  - **Supply chain disruptions**, seasonal variations, and input cost increases in agriculture and food processing have contributed to inflation.

- **Global commodity price hikes**, especially in crude oil and essential goods, add to domestic inflation pressures.
- **Government Measures and Challenges:**
  - The government has taken steps like **import tariffs adjustments and subsidies** on essential commodities to stabilize food prices.
  - Balancing economic growth with inflation control remains a challenge, as raising interest rates to curb inflation can impact growth and employment.
- **Impact on the Common People:**
  - Rising inflation affects **household budgets** and purchasing power, especially for low- and middle-income families.
  - High food prices can impact **nutrition and living standards**, particularly in rural areas where people rely heavily on agriculture.

### **Background**

Retail inflation, measured by the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, tracks changes in the price level of essential goods and services purchased by households. Food inflation, a major component of CPI, is sensitive to seasonal changes and supply chain disruptions.

**Inflation** is the sustained increase in the general price level of goods and services over time, which decreases the purchasing power of money.

**Deflation** is the opposite, where there is a general decline in the price level of goods and services, increasing the purchasing power of money.

### **Indian Navy to Conduct 4th Coastal Defence Exercise 'Sea Vigil-24' from November 21-22**

The **Indian Navy** is set to conduct the **4th edition** of the Coastal Defence Exercise 'Sea Vigil-24' on **November 21-22, 2024**. This extensive exercise aims to reinforce coastal security across a wide geographical scope, engaging **six ministries and 21 organizations and agencies**. 'Sea Vigil-24' will focus on safeguarding critical coastal assets, such as **ports, oil rigs, single-point moorings, cable landing points**, and other essential coastal infrastructure, along with nearby coastal populations.

### **Key Points**

- **Exercise Details:**
  - **Name:** Sea Vigil-24 (4th edition).
  - **Date:** November 21-22, 2024.
  - **Scope:** Extensive geographical reach with inter-ministerial and inter-agency collaboration.
- **Objectives of Sea Vigil-24:**
  - To **strengthen coastal security** by protecting vital coastal assets, including ports, oil rigs, cable landing points, and key infrastructure.
  - To **safeguard the coastal population** by testing emergency responses and preventive measures.
- **Participation and Collaboration:**
  - Six central **ministries** and **21 organizations** and agencies will be involved.
  - Both the **Indian Army and the Air Force** are participating, adding a tri-service dimension to the exercise.
- **Background:**
  - Sea Vigil was first introduced in **2018** following the 26/11 Mumbai attacks to bolster coastal defence measures.
  - Part of India's **maritime security strategy**, it serves as a critical framework for validating coastal defence capabilities.
- **Significance:**
  - **National Security:** Enhances preparedness against threats to India's coastal regions and maritime resources.
  - **Inter-Agency Coordination:** Strengthens cooperation across ministries, agencies, and the armed forces.
  - **Response Readiness:** Tests the responsiveness of security forces and agencies to potential maritime threats.

### **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010**

The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has recently clarified the reasons for denying Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) clearance for

organizations receiving foreign funds. This is the first instance of such explicit reasoning, aimed at enhancing transparency in FCRA decisions.

### **Key Points:**

- **About the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010:**
  - **Purpose:** Regulates the acceptance and use of foreign contributions, especially financial donations, by individuals and organizations.
  - **Objective:** To ensure that foreign funds do not influence the sovereignty, integrity, or security of India, and to prevent the misuse of foreign contributions.
- **New Developments:**
  - The **Ministry of Home Affairs** has publicly outlined specific reasons for denying FCRA clearance, a first for the department.
  - This move enhances transparency and accountability, allowing applicants to understand the grounds for denial.
- **Conditions for Approval and Denial:**
  - **Approval:** Requires that the recipient entity complies with FCRA guidelines and that funds are used for approved purposes.
  - **Denial:** FCRA clearance may be denied if the organization does not meet criteria related to national security, compliance with legal standards, or proper use of funds.
- **Impact:**
  - The clarity in FCRA decisions may improve trust in the regulatory process and guide organizations on compliance requirements.
  - Organizations now have clear guidelines to address gaps and reapply for foreign funding.

### **Background:**

The **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)** was enacted in **2010** to replace an earlier version from 1976. The Act empowers the government to regulate the flow and usage of foreign funds to ensure they align with India's national interests. It applies to NGOs, trusts, educational institutions, and other organizations receiving foreign donations. This latest step in explicitly listing

denial reasons marks a step toward greater regulatory transparency, providing entities with actionable feedback for better compliance.

### **Global Nature Conservation Index 2024: India's Low Ranking**

India has ranked **176th out of 180 countries** in the inaugural **Global Nature Conservation Index (NCI) 2024**. This places it among the five lowest-ranked countries, alongside **Kiribati (180), Turkey (179), Iraq (178), and Micronesia (177)**. The low ranking is attributed to **inefficient land management** and **rising biodiversity threats**.

#### **Key Points:**

- **India's Ranking:**
  - India ranks **176th** in the **Global Nature Conservation Index 2024**, indicating critical areas for improvement in conservation efforts.
  - Ranked alongside low-performing countries, reflecting concerns in biodiversity protection and environmental governance.
- **Reasons for Low Ranking:**
  - **Inefficient land management** practices.
  - **Growing biodiversity threats**, which undermine conservation and ecological stability.
- **About the Nature Conservation Index (NCI):**
  - **Developed by:** Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change at **Ben-Gurion University** in collaboration with **BioDB.com**, a biodiversity database.
  - **Launch:** First edition released in **October 2024** to assess global conservation efforts and sustainability.
- **Key Indicators in the NCI:**
  - **Land Management:** Evaluates efficiency and sustainability in land use.
  - **Biodiversity Threats:** Assesses species extinction risk and habitat loss.
  - **Capacity and Governance:** Measures policy effectiveness, resources, and governance structures.



- **Future Trends:** Looks at anticipated changes in environmental impact and conservation outlook.
- **Significance and Implications:**
  - The index highlights India's urgent need for **improved conservation policies**, sustainable land practices, and biodiversity protection measures.
  - Provides a benchmark for **policy reforms** and **environmental planning** to address conservation gaps.

### British Author Samantha Harvey Wins 2024 Booker Prize for 'Orbital'

British author **Samantha Harvey** has won the **2024 Booker Prize** for her novel **Orbital**, marking the first time a space-set novel has won the award.

#### Key Points:

- **Award and Recognition:**
  - Samantha Harvey won the **2024 Booker Prize** for her novel *Orbital*, the first space-set book to win this prestigious literary award.
  - *Orbital* has been highly successful in the UK, with sales outperforming recent Booker winners.
- **About the Book – 'Orbital':**
  - *Orbital* is set aboard the **International Space Station (ISS)** and presents a unique perspective on Earth through the eyes of astronauts.
  - The novel explores themes of humanity, perspective, and environmental awareness, offering insights from a vantage point beyond Earth.
- **Prize Details:**
  - Harvey will receive a prize of **£50,000** for her Booker-winning work.
  - She is the **first female author to win since 2019**, marking a notable achievement in recent Booker history.
  - Harvey dedicated her award to those advocating for the **Earth and peace**, highlighting the novel's themes of global reflection and harmony.

- **Booker Prize Background:**

- The **Booker Prize**, one of the world's most prestigious literary awards, was established in 1969 and is awarded annually for the best novel written in English and published in the UK or Ireland.
- Known for celebrating literary excellence, the Booker often brings international recognition and increased readership to its winners.

**PRACTICE QUESTIONS:**

1. Which of the following government initiatives has played a key role in fostering intellectual property growth in India?

1. Digital India
2. Make in India
3. Startup India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. With reference to the Supreme Court's guidelines on property demolitions, consider the following statements:

1. Demolitions cannot be carried out without issuing a prior show-cause notice to the affected party.
2. Affected parties are not allowed to challenge the demolition order after it has been issued.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the Above

3. Consider the following statements about inflation control in India:

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) aims to maintain retail inflation within a target range of 4-6%.
2. Persistent inflation above the RBI's range could lead to interest rate adjustments to control demand.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the Above

4. Which of the following were key objectives of the 'Sea Vigil-24' coastal defence exercise?

1. Testing the responsiveness of emergency measures for coastal protection.
2. Enhancing inter-agency coordination and tri-service collaboration.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the Above

5. What is the primary objective of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010?

- (a) To regulate foreign donations and prevent their misuse in India.
- (b) To monitor domestic funds donated for social causes in India.
- (c) To encourage the inflow of foreign funds for infrastructure development.
- (d) To promote foreign investments in non-governmental organizations.

6. Consider the following statements about the Booker Prize:

1. The Booker Prize is awarded annually for the best novel published in any language.
2. Samantha Harvey is the first woman to win the Booker Prize since 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the Above

