

Trade and Development Report (April 2024)

➤ **Published By** – UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)

Key Findings Of The Report

- **Global merchandise trade decline:** Trade tensions, subdued global demand, and disruptions in shipping routes led to a **1% decrease** in **global merchandise trade in 2023**.
- **Impact of developed economies' monetary policy:** Tightening of monetary policy in developed countries increased debt servicing costs and challenges in securing financing for developing countries.
 - Depreciation of currencies and high central bank interest rates in developing nations affected domestic demand, employment, and household incomes.
- **Global debt crisis:** Developing countries faced increasing debt payment obligations, resulting in a net negative resource transfer from developing to developed countries.
 - Nine low-income countries fell into debt distress, with an additional **25 on the brink by 2023**.

India's Population Trends and Reproductive Health Inequalities : UNFPA Report

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) State of World Population - 2024 report** sheds light on India's population estimates, reproductive health disparities, and strides in maternal healthcare.

Highlights of the report:

- **Population:** Estimated at 1.44 billion, projected to double in 77 years, surpassing china.
- **Age Demographics:** 24% aged 0-14, with notable segments in 10-19 and 10-24.
- **Maternal Health:** Improved access reduces maternal deaths to 8% of global total.
- **Inequities:** Significant disparities persist in maternal mortality among districts and vulnerable groups.
- **Gender-Based Violence:** Women with disabilities face up to 10 times higher risk.
- **Healthcare Access:** Improvements primarily benefit wealthier and ethnic groups, leaving marginalized communities behind.

Finance Ministry notifies new FDI limits for satellite related activities under FEMA

- The Ministry of Finance notified the amendment to **Foreign Exchange Management (Non-Debt Instruments Rules) 2019** to implement new **FDI limits** for satellite-related activities.
- The amended rules, known as **Foreign Exchange Management (Non-Debt Instruments) (3rd Amendment) Rules, 2024**, became effective **from April 16, 2024**.

Highlights of the notification:

- For manufacturing components, systems, or sub-systems for satellites, up to 100% FDI is allowed under the automatic route.
- For satellite-related activities, up to 74% FDI is permitted automatically, while approval is needed for FDI exceeding 74%.
- For launch vehicles and spaceports, up to 49% FDI is allowed automatically, with government approval needed for FDI above 49%

IIT Kanpur and BFI to accelerate healthcare innovation in India

- On April 16, 2024, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, and the Blockchain For Impact (BFI) Foundation in Bengaluru, Karnataka, announced a strategic partnership under the BFI-Biome Virtual Network Program.
- This collaboration aims to foster innovations and propel advancements in healthcare across India.

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) signed record 125 Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) in FY 2023-24

- The highest number of **APA** signings in any financial year since the **program began in 2012**.
- **Composition of APAs:** Out of the 125 APAs signed, there are 86 Unilateral APAs (UAPAs) and 39 Bilateral APAs (BAPAs).
- **Definition of APA:** An agreement between the Tax Authority and a taxpayer determining the arm's length price for international transactions in advance.
- **Arm's Length Price:** Refers to transactions where parties act independently without undue influence.

Key Features:

- Signed under the Income-tax Act, 1961.
- Voluntary nature.
- Duration of up to 5 future years, extendable for 4 more proceedings years.

Types of APAs:

- **Unilateral:** Involves only the taxpayer and the tax authority of the taxpayer's country.
- **Bilateral:** Involves the taxpayer, the host country's tax administration, and the foreign tax administration.
- **Multilateral:** Involves the taxpayer, the host country's tax administration, and multiple foreign tax administrations.

Key Benefits:

- Supplements Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) mechanism.
- Promotes ease of doing business, especially for Multi National Enterprises (MNEs).

About CBDT:

- A statutory body, established under the Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963,
- **Ministry** - Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- It is responsible for formulating policies related to the assessment and collection of direct taxes.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)

- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** undertook disciplinary action against Insolvency Professionals.

About IBBI:

- Established in 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code).
- Responsible for implementing the Code, amending laws related to the reorganization and insolvency resolution of corporate entities, partnership firms, and individuals within specified timeframes.

Governing board composition:

- Chairperson.
- Three members chosen from Central Government officers, not below the rank of Joint Secretary or equivalent.
- One member nominated by the RBI.
- Five other members nominated by the Central Government, of whom at least three are full-time members.

1st International Workshop on Emerging Technologies & Challenges for Exoskeleton

- **Organizer:** Defence Bio-Engineering & Electromedical Laboratory of DRDO.
- **Venue:** Bengaluru
- **Participants:** Over 300 participants from DRDO, Services, Industry, Academia, and Researchers attended the workshop.
- **Focus:** Exoskeleton technology involves wearable structures that enhance human body capabilities.