KERALA STATE CIVIL SERVICE ACADEMY

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WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE

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Monthly Current Affairs Magazine

PM DHAN DHANYA KRISHI YOJANA

The Indian government has launched the PM-DDKY, an ambitious umbrella scheme that merges 36 existing agricultural schemes to revitalize farming in 100 low-performing districts across India.

Key Features:

- Integration of 36 Schemes across 11 departments with involvement from states and private partners.
- Focus Areas include:
  - Increasing crop productivity through sustainable practices.
  - Promoting crop diversification toward climate-resilient and high-value crops.
  - Expanding irrigation and water-use efficiency.
  - Boosting rural credit and strengthening storage at panchayat/block levels.

Implementation Details:

- Target Districts: 100 districts selected based on low crop productivity, cropping intensity, and weak credit flow. Each state/UT has at least one district.
- District Committees: Local "Dhan-Dhaanya Samitis" will design and monitor farm-level plans with support from progressive farmers.
- Monitoring: A digital dashboard will track progress across 117 indicators, guided by NITI Aayog and central nodal officers.

Scheme Highlights:

Key Area	**Details**
Scheme Name	PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY)
Schemes Merged	36
Duration	6 years (starting FY26)
Annual Budget	₹24,000 crore
Target Coverage	100 districts, 1.7 crore farmers
Key Goals	Productivity, sustainability, credit, storage
Monitoring Framework	117 indicators, digital dashboard

Objectives:

- Enhance agricultural productivity and farmer incomes
- Promote natural and organic farming
- Strengthen water and soil conservation
- Develop district-level agricultural resilience

Learning Corner:

Major Agricultural Schemes in India

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- Launched: 2019
- Objective: Provides ₹6,000 per year in three installments to all landholding farmer families for income support.
- Implementing Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- Launched: 2016
- Objective: Crop insurance scheme that provides financial support in case of crop failure due to natural calamities, pests, or diseases.
- Premium: Farmers pay 2% for Kharif, 1.5% for Rabi, and 5% for commercial/horticulture crops.
- Implementing Agency: Ministry of Agriculture & State Governments

Soil Health Card Scheme

- Launched: 2015
- Objective: Provides soil health reports to farmers with recommendations on nutrient management for better crop yield and soil sustainability.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- Launched: 2015
- Objective: Promotes organic farming through the adoption of traditional practices and cluster-based certification.
- Support: Up to ₹50,000 per hectare for 3 years, including inputs and certification.

National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)

- Under: National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)
- Objective: Promotes climate-resilient farming, soil and water conservation, and efficient resource use.

Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY-RAFTAAR)

- Launched: 2007 (revised in 2017 as RAFTAAR)
- Objective: Assists states in boosting agriculture development, marketing infrastructure, and value chains.
- Flexible funding model for innovation and entrepreneurship.

E-NAM (National Agriculture Market)

- Launched: 2016
- Objective: Digital platform to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- Integrates mandis (APMCs) across India to enable transparent price discovery.

PM-Kisan Maandhan Yojana

- Launched: 2019
- Objective: Voluntary pension scheme for small and marginal farmers (age 18–40).
- Benefit: Monthly pension of ₹3,000 after the age of 60.

Agri-Infra Fund (AIF)

- Launched: 2020
- Corpus: ₹1 lakh crore
- Objective: Provides medium-long term debt financing for post-harvest infrastructure like cold storage, warehouses, etc.
- Interest subsidy: Up to 3% per annum

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY)

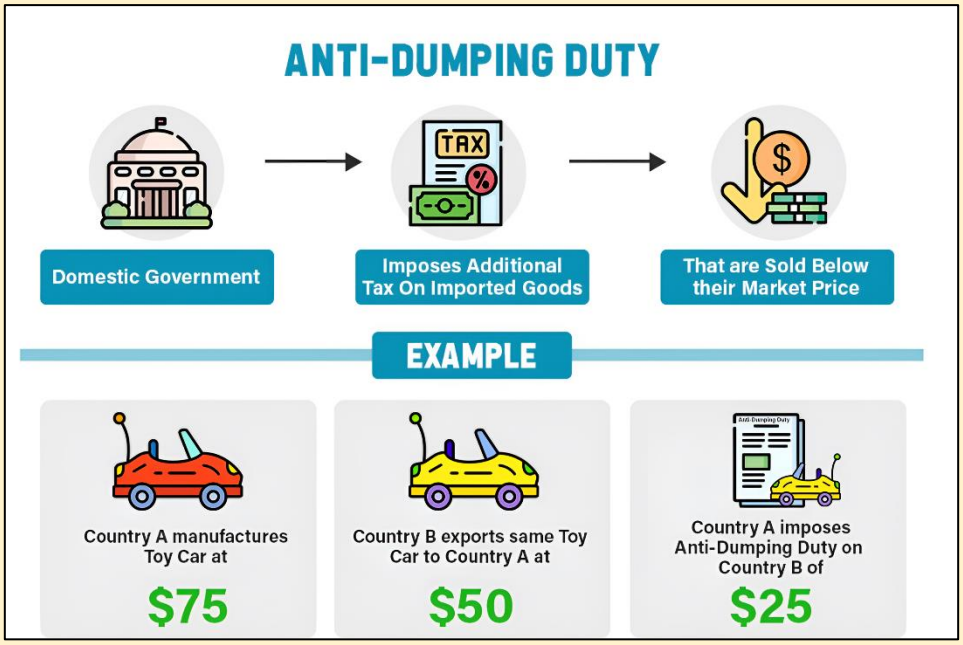
- Launched: 2015
- Objective: "Har Khet Ko Pani" – expands irrigation coverage and improves water use efficiency.
- Components: Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme, Watershed Development, and Per Drop More Crop.

INDIA'S ACTIONS ON DUMPING AND IMPORT SURGES (2025)

Anti-Dumping Measures

- Duties Imposed: India imposed or extended anti-dumping duties on goods like:
  - Plastic injection moulding machines (27–63% for 5 years)
  - Chemicals such as PEDA, Acetonitrile, Vitamin A Palmitate, Insoluble Sulphur
  - Aluminium foil and selected agricultural chemicals
- Focus Areas:
  Over 60% of actions target Chinese imports, protecting sectors like chemicals, plastics, and industrial goods.

- Criteria:
  Duties are imposed based on proof of dumping, injury to domestic producers, and causation, with adjustments to protect downstream users when necessary.



Monitoring Import Surges

- Real-time Surveillance:
  The Commerce Ministry and DGFT monitor unusual spikes in imports and alert concerned ministries.

- World Trade Watch:
  Monthly reports track country-wise and product-wise surges, helping formulate trade responses and export strategies.

- Notable Trends:
  Imports rose by 4.4% (April–June 2025). Major spikes were seen in electronics, machinery, and coal, while gold and petroleum imports stagnated or declined.

- Specific Action – Liquid Gold:
  Curbs were imposed on colloidal precious metals to prevent misuse and smuggling.

Institutional Mechanisms

- Import Monitoring Group:
  A new inter-ministerial group tracks diverted imports—especially from China and Vietnam—to prevent India from becoming a dumping ground for globally rerouted goods.

- Trade Remedies:
  The DGTR (Directorate General of Trade Remedies) continues active investigations and recommendations, with an increased acceptance rate of its findings.

Duties on Foreign Trade

Foreign trade duties are taxes imposed on imports and exports to regulate international trade, protect domestic industries, and generate revenue.

Customs Duty

- Definition: General term for duties levied on goods when they are transported across international borders.
- Includes: Basic Customs Duty, Countervailing Duty, Safeguard Duty, etc.

Basic Customs Duty (BCD)

- Imposed on: All imported goods.
- Purpose: To protect domestic industries and generate revenue.
- Rates: Vary depending on product category and trade agreements.

Countervailing Duty (CVD)

- Imposed when: A foreign country subsidizes its exports, making them cheaper.
- Objective: Neutralize the unfair advantage and protect domestic producers.
- Legal Basis: WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

Anti-Dumping Duty

- Imposed when: Foreign goods are sold in India at a price lower than their domestic price (dumping).
- Purpose: Protect Indian industry from predatory pricing.
- Authority: Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR).

Safeguard Duty

- Imposed when: Sudden surge in imports threatens domestic industries.
- Temporary measure to allow the local industry to adjust to competition.
- WTO-compatible measure.

Protective Duty

- Recommended by: Tariff Commission.
- Purpose: To protect specific domestic industries against imports.
- Nature: Temporary and selective.

Social Welfare Surcharge (SWS)

- Rate: Usually 10% on the aggregate customs duties (excluding IGST).
- Objective: To finance education, health, and social welfare schemes.

Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) on Imports

- Imposed under: GST Act.
- Applied on: Imports to bring them at par with domestic goods.
- Collected by: Central Government.

BIRD SURVEY AT KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

- In the first such survey of avians conducted in March 2025, a team of forest officials, bird experts, scientists, and conservationists recorded 43 grassland species across Kaziranga's three wildlife divisions.

- The survey report marks a milestone in the documentation and protection of grassland-dependent bird species in the Brahmaputra floodplains.

Key findings of the survey:

- The recorded species included the critically endangered Bengal florican, the endangered Finn's weaver, and the swamp grass babbler.

- Among the remaining 40 species, six were in the vulnerable category — the black-breasted parrotbill, marsh babbler, swamp francolin, Jerdon's babbler, slender-billed babbler, and bristled grassbird.

- The study is significant because wet grasslands are not very well surveyed in India. Kaziranga's grassland bird diversity can, thus, be compared in terms of species richness with the dry grasslands of Gujarat and Rajasthan.

About Kaziranga National Park:

- **Location:** It is located in the State of Assam and covers 42,996 Hectare (ha). It is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.

- **Conservation status:** It was declared as a National Park in 1974. It has been declared a tiger reserve since 2007. It has a total tiger reserve area of 1,030 sq km with a core area of 430 sq. km.
- **Heritage:** It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985.
- **Speciality:** It is the home of the world's most one-horned rhinos. Much of the focus of conservation efforts in Kaziranga are focused on the 'big four' species – Rhino, Elephant, Royal Bengal tiger and Asiatic water buffalo.

The park has the Diphlu River running through it.

LOCUST SWARMS

Recent locust swarms have caused severe agricultural damage across East Africa, Pakistan, and India. The 2019-2020 outbreak was the worst in 25 years.

Traditional pesticide use harms the environment and food security. New research offers a pollution-free method to control locust swarming by targeting their pheromones.

Locust Swarming and Its Impact

Locusts shift from solitary to gregarious phases, forming large swarms that consume crops rapidly. These swarms can travel over 150 km daily, devastating thousands of hectares.

Swarming is triggered by chemical signals locusts release after feeding. Controlling these signals can prevent swarm formation.

Role of Pheromones in Swarming

The pheromone 4-vinylanisole (4VA) attracts locusts to gather. Locusts emit 4VA from their hind legs after eating.

This causes others to join, rubbing legs and releasing serotonin, which triggers collective behaviour. Blocking 4VA release can stop swarming.

Biochemical Mechanism Behind 4VA Production

Locusts convert a non-aggregating molecule 4VP into 4VA using enzymes 4VPMT1 and 4VPMT2.

The amino acid phenylalanine in their diet initiates this conversion. Deactivating the gene for 4VPMT1 stops locusts from becoming gregarious, preventing swarms.

Molecular Inhibition of Swarming

Researchers identified 4-nitrophenol (4NP) as a molecule that binds strongly to 4VPMT enzymes. It blocks conversion of 4VP to 4VA, halting aggregation pheromone production. This offers a targeted way to prevent swarming without broad pesticide use.

Environmental Concerns and Alternatives

4NP is toxic and persists in soil and water, raising environmental risks. Its use requires caution. Scientists suggest RNA interference (RNAi) technology to silence 4VPMT genes as a safer alternative. RNAi can prevent enzyme production and swarming without harmful residues.

Historical and Modern Locust Control Methods

Humans have fought locusts for millennia using noise, smoke, and arrows. Chemical pesticides emerged in the 19th century and remain common despite limited success and environmental damage. The 2019-2020 swarm renewed calls for sustainable control methods.

Proposed Integrated Locust Management Strategy

A five-step approach includes – using synthetic 4VA to lure locusts into traps; spraying 4VA to disrupt aggregation; monitoring populations via 4VA detection; releasing genetically modified locusts that remain solitary; and combining small-molecule inhibitors with biopesticides. This integrated method aims for effective, eco-friendly control.

INDIA'S FIRST DIGITAL NOMAD VILLAGE

The village of Yakten in Sikkim's Pakyong district was declared India's first digital nomad village. This initiative was launched to create a sustainable remote work hub in the Himalayas. It aims to support local homestay owners with steady income and attract digital professionals from across India and abroad.

Background and Recent Developments

Yakten's transformation is part of the 'Nomad Sikkim' project, a collaboration between the Pakyong district administration and NGO Sarvahitey. The project addresses the seasonal income gap for homestay operators, especially during the six-month off-season from April to October.

Infrastructure upgrades include dual internet lines, village-wide Wi-Fi, and power backups to ensure uninterrupted connectivity. Plans are underway to resolve water scarcity under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Significance of Yakten as a Digital Nomad Village

Yakten offers a unique blend of rural life and modern work needs. Unlike urban coworking spaces, it provides broadband-ready homestays run by local families, encouraging a warm and authentic experience.

The village setting includes orchards, mountain trails, and traditional meals, creating a balanced environment for work and well-being. This model promotes sustainable tourism and rural development.

Infrastructure and Amenities

Internet connectivity is a priority, with two internet lines and comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage installed. Electricity supply is supported by inverters to prevent outages. Water management solutions are planned to address scarcity. The village is accessible via **Pakyong Airport,** with well-maintained roads ensuring year-round connectivity.

Community and Cultural Integration

Homestays are more than lodging; they are community spaces where guests share meals and stories with hosts. Local culture is showcased through folk music, dance, and visits to monasteries and historical sites. Nature walks and birdwatching are common activities, connecting visitors with the Himalayan environment.

Impact on Rural Economy and Remote Work Culture

Yakten's initiative provides a new income source for locals, reducing dependence on seasonal tourism. It exemplifies how rural areas can adapt to the digital economy without losing cultural identity.

This model may inspire similar projects across India, supporting decentralisation of work and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Tourism and Recreational Opportunities

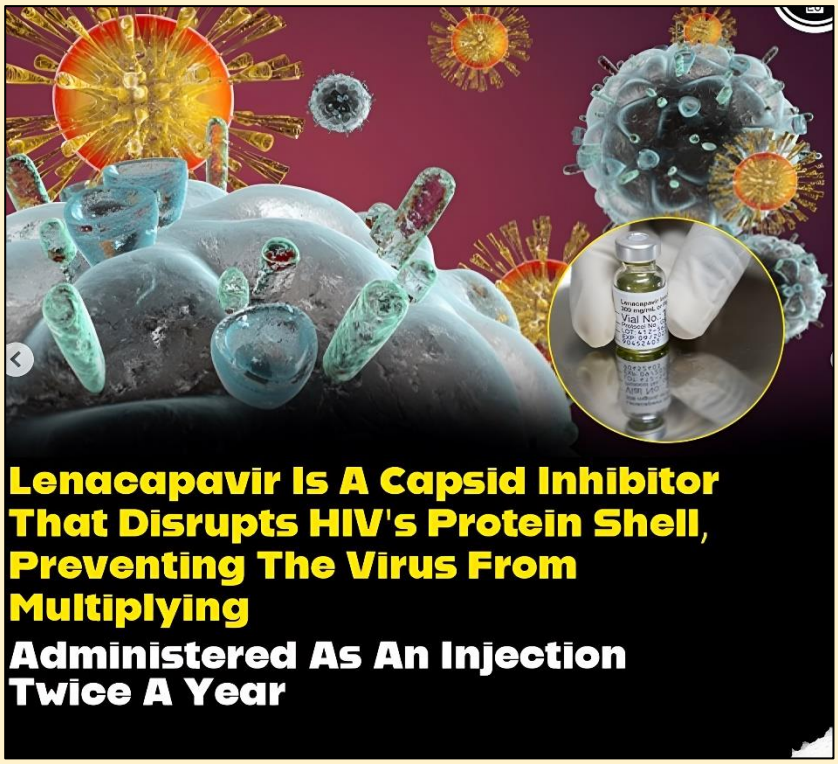
Visitors can explore scenic trails such as the 7-km trek to Jhandi Dara View Point with views of Mt. Kanchenjunga. The village offers peaceful walks through terraced fields and community gardens. Nearby historical ruins and monasteries add cultural depth to the visitor experience.

Future Prospects

Yakten's success lies in its small scale and quality-focused approach. It is a pilot for integrating remote work with rural life and sustainable tourism. The village's example encourages rethinking workspaces beyond cities and marks the potential of India's countryside in the digital age.

LENACAPAVIR

The World Health Organization (WHO) has updated its HIV prevention guidelines in 2025. It now recommends lenacapavir, a new long-acting antiretroviral, for people at high risk and areas with high HIV infection rates.



This announcement was made at the 13th International AIDS Society Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. Lenacapavir was approved by the US FDA as a twice-yearly injectable pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) treatment. This marks a key advancement in HIV prevention worldwide.

Lenacapavir – A Breakthrough in HIV Prevention

Lenacapavir is a long-acting injectable drug developed by Gilead Sciences in New Delhi. It belongs to the capsid inhibitor class. This drug blocks multiple steps in the HIV replication process.

Initially approved for HIV treatment in 2022, lenacapavir gained approval for prevention in 2024. Unlike daily oral PrEP pills, lenacapavir requires only two injections per year. This feature improves adherence and benefits those with limited healthcare access or stigma concerns.

WHO's Revised Prevention Strategy

WHO's endorsement of lenacapavir reflects a broader strategy to expand HIV prevention tools. The organisation aims to offer people more choices beyond daily pills. The new guidelines promote use of lenacapavir especially for populations at high risk. These include sex workers, men who have sex with men, transgender individuals, injecting drug users, prisoners, children, and adolescents. WHO also supports simplified HIV testing with rapid diagnostic kits to facilitate access.

Challenges in Global HIV Prevention

Despite advances, global HIV prevention has stalled. In 2024, about 1.3 million new infections were reported. Funding cuts, especially from the US, threaten progress. The US reduced aid to programmes like USAID and PEPFAR.

This has led to sharp declines in PrEP use in countries like Nigeria. The United Nations warns that millions could die from HIV-related causes by 2029 if funding is not restored. Some low- and middle-income countries plan to increase domestic spending but may not fully offset lost aid.

Access and Affordability of Lenacapavir

Gilead Sciences has partnered with the Global Fund to provide lenacapavir at cost price. This means no profit margin will be charged in low- and middle-income countries.

In the US, the drug's annual list price is about $28,218, similar to other PrEP treatments. The cost-effective supply model aims to improve accessibility in resource-limited settings. WHO and partners are working to ensure rapid and safe distribution of this new prevention option.

Future Directions in HIV Prevention

The introduction of lenacapavir signals a shift towards long-acting prevention methods. It offers a promising alternative to daily adherence challenges. Combined with rapid testing and community delivery models, it could transform HIV prevention. However, sustained funding and global cooperation remain critical to maximise impact.

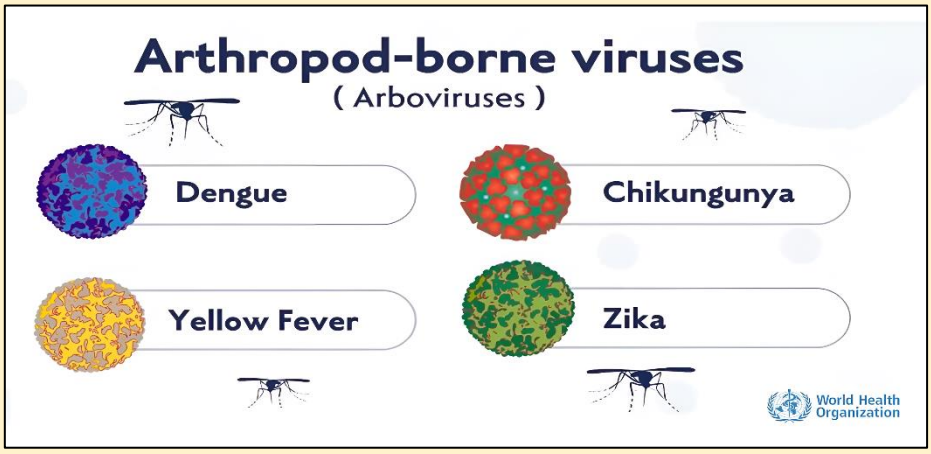
CLINICAL MANAGEMENT OF ARBOVIRAL DISEASES.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced its first comprehensive guidelines for the **clinical management of arboviral diseases.**

These include dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and yellow fever. The guidelines aim to standardise treatment and improve patient outcomes globally. They also assist health policymakers in preparing for epidemics and pandemics in regions affected by mosquito-borne viruses.

About Arboviral Diseases

Arboviral diseases are viral infections transmitted mainly by Aedes mosquitoes. The key diseases are dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and yellow fever. The Aedes aegypti mosquito can spread several viruses simultaneously in the same area.



Over 5.6 billion people worldwide live in regions at risk of these infections. Early symptoms often mimic common flu with fever, joint pain, and rash.

This similarity complicates clinical diagnosis without laboratory tests. Severe complications can occur, sometimes leading to death.

Need for Integrated Clinical Guidelines

Outbreaks of arboviral diseases are increasing in frequency, severity, and geographic spread. This rise is driven by ecological changes, urbanisation, and social factors. The diseases often coexist in the same regions, making differential diagnosis challenging.

Limited diagnostic resources in many areas add to the problem. WHO's integrated guidelines provide a unified, evidence-based approach to diagnosis and treatment.

They serve as a practical tool for frontline healthcare workers and health system planners to improve care and readiness.

Key Clinical Recommendations for Mild Cases

For non-severe arboviral infections, WHO recommends oral fluid therapy to prevent dehydration. Paracetamol or metamizole should be used for pain and fever relief.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are discouraged due to bleeding risks. Corticosteroids are also avoided in mild cases. These measures help manage symptoms safely and reduce complications.

Management of Severe Arboviral Disease

Severe cases require hospitalisation and careful fluid management using crystalloid solutions. Colloids are not recommended.

Monitoring capillary refill time and lactate levels guides hydration. The passive leg raise test helps assess fluid responsiveness in patients with shock.

Corticosteroids and immunoglobulin therapies are avoided even in severe illness. Platelet transfusions are reserved for patients with active bleeding.

For yellow fever-related liver failure, intravenous N-acetylcysteine is advised. Experimental treatments such as monoclonal antibody TY014 and sofosbuvir are limited to research settings.

Implications for Health Systems and Policy

The guidelines support policymakers and health administrators in epidemic preparedness. Standardised protocols enhance clinical care consistency and patient safety.

They also improve resource allocation during outbreaks. As arboviral diseases expand to new areas, these guidelines will be vital in managing public health challenges. WHO plans to update the recommendations as new evidence becomes available.

THALI INDEX

Poverty estimates in India, sparked by household consumption data (2023–24) from the National Statistics Office. Reports from SBI and the World Bank suggest a significant drop in poverty.

Decoding the context:

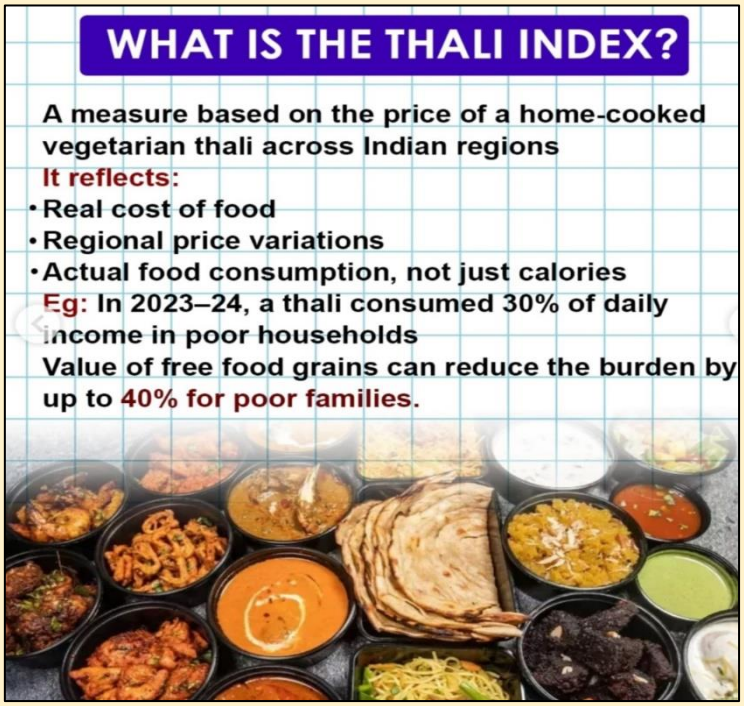
1. **Questioning Traditional Poverty Metrics:**
   - **Critique poverty measurement based solely on calorie intake and physiological needs**, calling it outdated and inadequate in capturing real-life deprivation.

2. **Introduction of the 'Thali Index':**
   - Propose the **Thali Index** as a more **realistic, relatable, and region-specific indicator**, measuring the cost of a **basic home-cooked meal**.
   - It reflects **actual food consumption patterns** and **regional variations in prices**, offering a clearer picture of living costs.

3. **Relevance to Policy and Subsidies:**
   - The Thali Index serves as a **practical tool for evaluating poverty** and guiding food subsidy policies.
   - It provides a **grounded economic perspective** by directly connecting food costs with livelihood realities.

4. **Critique of Premature Subsidy Removal:**
   - There should be caution against **removing food subsidies** based on **optimistic or debatable poverty estimates**.
   - Instead, there should be **rationalising subsidies**, as many citizens **still rely on them** for basic sustenance.

5. **Policy Recommendation:**
   - Poverty assessment and welfare decisions should be **anchored in real costs of living**, like those captured by the Thali Index, rather than relying on abstract statistical estimates.



Poverty Measurement in India

Poverty measurement in India has traditionally relied on **household consumption expenditure surveys** to estimate the proportion of people living below a defined poverty line. The focus has largely been on ensuring a **minimum calorie intake** necessary for survival and work.

Traditional Approach (Calorie-based):

- Based on the **Tendulkar Committee (2009)** and **Rangarajan Committee (2014)**.
- Defines poverty using a minimum **daily caloric intake** (e.g., 2400 kcal in rural, 2100 kcal in urban areas).
- The monetary poverty line is derived from the expenditure required to meet this intake.
- This is a **physiological approach** — focused on energy needs through food.

Consumption Expenditure Surveys:

- Conducted by the **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** and **NSO**.
- Data is used to estimate poverty headcount ratios, consumption patterns, and economic inequality.

Issues with the Current Method:

- Does not reflect **nutritional quality, non-food needs**, or **regional variations**.
- Ignores changing lifestyles, health costs, education, housing, etc.
- Urban and rural cost differences often not adequately captured.

Emerging Approaches:

- Use of **"Thali Index"**: Cost of a simple, home-cooked meal (thali) to reflect real food expenditure and living standards.
- **Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)**: Used by NITI Aayog in line with UNDP — includes indicators like education, health, and living standards.

Policy Implications:

- Recent claims of poverty decline (SBI & World Bank reports) raise questions on how poverty is defined.
- Critics argue for more **realistic, consumption-linked, and multidimensional poverty** assessment.
- Emphasis is shifting from calorie-based to **livelihood and dignity-based measurements**.

Poverty estimation committees

Tendulkar Committee (2009):

- **Chairperson:** Suresh D. Tendulkar
- **Objective:** To revise the methodology for poverty estimation in India.

Key Features:

- Shifted from **calorie-based poverty line** to one based on **actual private consumption expenditure**, including health and education.
- **Introduced a uniform poverty line basket** for both rural and urban areas (earlier, calorie norms were different for each).
- Used **2004–05 NSS data** and updated the poverty line accordingly.
- Recommended using **Mixed Reference Period (MRP)** for consumption data.
- Estimated poverty in 2004–05 as:
    - **Rural:** 41.8%
    - **Urban:** 25.7%
    - **Overall:** 37.2%

Significance:

- Marked a major methodological shift and was adopted by the Planning Commission until 2014.
- Faced criticism for setting a **very low poverty line** (₹33/day in urban areas in 2011–12).

Rangarajan Committee (2014):

- **Chairperson:** C. Rangarajan
- **Objective:** To revisit the poverty estimation methodology due to criticisms of the Tendulkar Committee.

Key Features:

- **Restored calorie norms** (2400 kcal rural, 2100 kcal urban) and added norms for protein and fat intake.
- Considered **basic non-food expenses** more comprehensively (education, housing, clothing, etc.).
- Based on **2011–12 NSS data**, it set a higher poverty line:
  - **Rural:** ₹32/day
  - **Urban:** ₹47/day
- Estimated poverty in 2011–12 as:
  - **Rural:** 30.9%
  - **Urban:** 26.4%
  - **Overall:** 29.5%

SANTHAL REBELLION

On **June 30, 2024**, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** paid tribute to the tribal heroes of the **Santhal Rebellion (1855–56)** on the occasion of **Hul Diwas**, commemorating their courage in resisting British colonial rule.

He honored legendary leaders **Sidhu-Kanhu, Chand-Bhairav, and Phoolo-Jhano**, describing them as symbols of self-respect and bravery. In his **'Mann Ki Baat'** address, PM Modi highlighted the Santhal Rebellion as one of the earliest organized uprisings against British rule—**predating the Revolt of 1857**.

Led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu in the **Santhal Pargana region** (now in Jharkhand), the rebellion united the tribal community in a determined fight against colonial oppression.

Hul Diwas serves as a reminder of the **tribal community's valor, unity, and enduring legacy** in India's freedom struggle.

Tribal Revolts Against British Rule in India

During British colonial rule, numerous **tribal revolts** erupted across India in response to **land alienation, economic exploitation, forest laws, and disruption of traditional tribal life**. These revolts were often **localized, violent, and community-led**, and they reflected the tribals' resistance to both British authority and exploitative intermediaries like landlords and moneylenders.

Key Tribal Revolts:

1. **Santhal Rebellion (1855–56)**
    - **Leaders:** Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu
    - **Region:** Santhal Parganas (now in Jharkhand)
    - **Cause:** Exploitation by zamindars, moneylenders, and British officials.
    - **Significance:** One of the **earliest organized tribal uprisings**, predating the 1857 revolt.
2. **Kol Rebellion (1831–32)**
    - **Region:** Chotanagpur (Jharkhand)
    - **Cause:** British land revenue policy, encroachment by outsiders (dikus), and forced labor.
3. **Bhil Rebellion (1817–19, and others)**
    - **Region:** Western India (Rajasthan, Maharashtra)
    - **Cause:** Loss of autonomy, high taxation, and harsh forest laws.
4. **Munda Rebellion / Ulgulan (1899–1900)**
    - **Leader:** Birsa Munda
    - **Region:** Chotanagpur
    - **Cause:** Land alienation, Christian missionary activity, and British disruption of tribal governance.
    - **Outcome:** Sparked tribal identity and later inspired tribal rights movements.
5. **Khond Uprising (1846–55)**
    - **Region:** Odisha
    - **Cause:** Resistance to British interference in tribal customs, particularly human sacrifice.
6. **Rampa Rebellion (1879–80, 1922–24)**
    - **Leader (1922):** Alluri Sitarama Raju
    - **Region:** Godavari Agency (Andhra Pradesh)
    - **Cause:** Forest laws restricting tribal access to resources.

Common Features of Tribal Revolts:

- Led by charismatic leaders or community elders.
- Rooted in **loss of land, forest rights**, and **cultural autonomy**.
- Targeted both **British officials** and **local intermediaries**.
- Often brutally suppressed but laid the foundation for future **tribal rights movements**.

Significance:

Tribal revolts were **early expressions of anti-colonial resistance**. Though mostly localized, they highlighted the **exploitation of indigenous communities** and help

CANCER DRUG

A recent investigation by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, published in *The Hindu*, has revealed that many cancer drugs shipped globally have failed quality tests.

Common Chemotherapy Drugs Covered:

1. **Cisplatin**
   - **Type**: Platinum-based
   - **Use**: Treats testicular, ovarian, bladder, and lung cancers
   - **Mechanism**: Binds to cancer DNA, blocking division
   - **Side Effects**: Kidney damage, sickness, immune suppression, hearing issues
2. **Oxaliplatin**
   - **Type**: Platinum-based
   - **Use**: Advanced colorectal cancer
   - **Mechanism**: Similar to cisplatin
   - **Side Effects**: Similar to cisplatin
3. **Cyclophosphamide**
   - **Use**: Breast cancer, leukemia, sarcoma, lymphoma
   - **Mechanism**: Damages cancer DNA, lowers white blood cells
   - **Side Effects**: Inflammation in bladder, immune suppression
4. **Doxorubicin**
   - **Nickname**: "Red devil" (due to color and toxicity)
   - **Use**: Breast cancer, leukemia, lymphoma, sarcoma
   - **Mechanism**: Interferes with DNA replication
   - **Side Effects**: Heart damage, infections, skin issues, hair loss
5. **Methotrexate**
   - **Use**: Leukemia, lymphoma, tumor types
   - **Mechanism**: Blocks DNA synthesis
   - **Side Effects**: Toxic at high doses; managed by leucovorin
6. **Leucovorin**
   - **Type**: Not a direct chemotherapy drug
   - **Use**: Taken with methotrexate to reduce its toxicity
   - **Function**: A form of vitamin B9 used to protect healthy cells

Learning Corner:

Cancer Care and Treatment in India

Cancer is a major public health challenge in India, with over **1.5 million new cases**diagnosed annually. The country is working to strengthen its cancer care system through a mix of **public health programs, infrastructure development, and financial assistance schemes**.

Key Components of Cancer Treatment in India

1. **Types of Treatment Available**
   - **Surgery**: Removal of tumors or cancerous tissues
   - **Radiation therapy**: Use of high-energy rays to kill cancer cells
   - **Chemotherapy**: Use of anti-cancer drugs
   - **Immunotherapy & Targeted Therapy**: Advanced treatments to boost the body's immune response or attack specific cancer cells
   - **Bone marrow transplant**: For blood cancers like leukemia
   - **Palliative care**: To improve quality of life in advanced stages

Government Initiatives and Support

1. **National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS)**
   - Focuses on early detection, screening, and referral for cancer
   - Implemented under **Ayushman Bharat Health & Wellness Centres**

2. **Tertiary Cancer Care Centres (TCCC)**
    - Upgrading existing medical colleges and hospitals to provide advanced cancer care
3. **Financial Assistance Schemes**
    - **Ayushman Bharat–PMJAY**: Free treatment for poor and vulnerable families
    - **Health Minister's Cancer Patient Fund**
    - Support from state-level insurance schemes (e.g., Arogyasri in Telangana/AP)

Recent Developments

- Launch of **Digital Cancer Registry** and **AI-based diagnostics**
- Expansion of **National Cancer Grid** (NCG) to link over 300 cancer centers
- Promotion of **indigenous cancer drugs and equipment** to lower treatment costs.

INS UDAYGIRI

On 1 July 2025, the Indian Navy received INS Udaygiri, the second ship of Project 17A stealth frigates. This delivery signifies a major advancement in India's naval capabilities.

Udaygiri is built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai, and is part of a series of seven ships designed for modern naval warfare. The frigate is a successor to the Shivalik class and is equipped to operate in a 'Blue Water' environment, addressing both conventional and non-conventional threats.

Project 17A

Project 17A is a follow-on to the earlier Shivalik class (Project 17) frigates. The project includes the construction of seven multi-mission frigates. These ships are designed with enhanced stealth features and advanced weaponry. The capabilities of the Project 17A frigates represent upgrade from their predecessors.

Design and Construction

Udaygiri showcases the Indian Navy's in-house design capabilities. The Warship Design Bureau has led this initiative. The frigates are built using 'Integrated Construction' philosophy, allowing extensive pre-outfitting to reduce build times. Udaygiri was delivered in a record 37 months since its launch.

The advanced weapon suite comprises a supersonic surface-to-surface missile system, a medium-range surface-to-air missile system, and various rapid-fire close-in weapon systems.

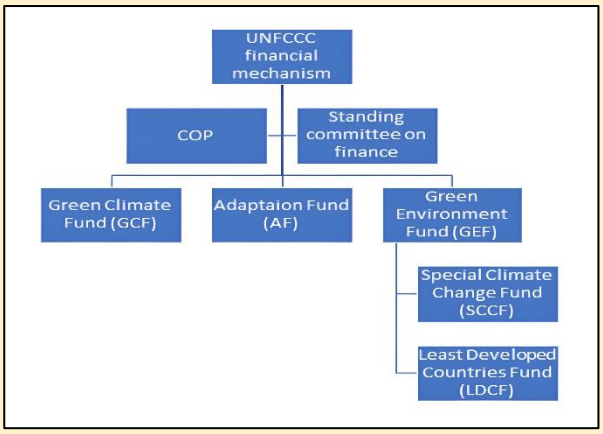
Indigenous Manufacturing and Employment

Udaygiri exemplifies India's commitment to self-reliance in shipbuilding. The project has generated direct employment for around 4,000 personnel, with more than 10,000 jobs created indirectly through ancillary sources. The involvement of over 200 medium, small, and micro enterprises (MSMEs) has boosted the industrial ecosystem.

Future Prospects

The remaining five Project 17A frigates are under construction at both Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers. They are scheduled for progressive delivery by the end of 2026. The completion of these ships will further enhance India's naval capabilities and military manufacturing strength.

GREEN CLIMATE FUND



The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has approved over USD 120 million for new projects.

About Green Climate Fund

It is the world's largest climate fund.

Mandated to support developing countries raise and realize their Nationally Determined Contributions ambitions towards low- emissions, climate-resilient pathways.

Established at COP 16 of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Cancun, 2010.

It serves the Paris Agreement in accordance with Article 9.

Governance: Fund is governed by the GCF Board and it is accountable to and functions under the guidance of the COP,

UNFCCC.

Hq: Songdo, Incheon City, Republic of Korea.

SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION

Recent studies show critical challenges in marine conservation, particularly regarding sea turtles. As nations strive to achieve the 30×30 goal of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,

it is evident that current Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) may not suffice. Only 23% of sea turtle hotspots are within MPAs, and merely 3% of these areas are effectively managed. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of static conservation measures in the face of climate change.

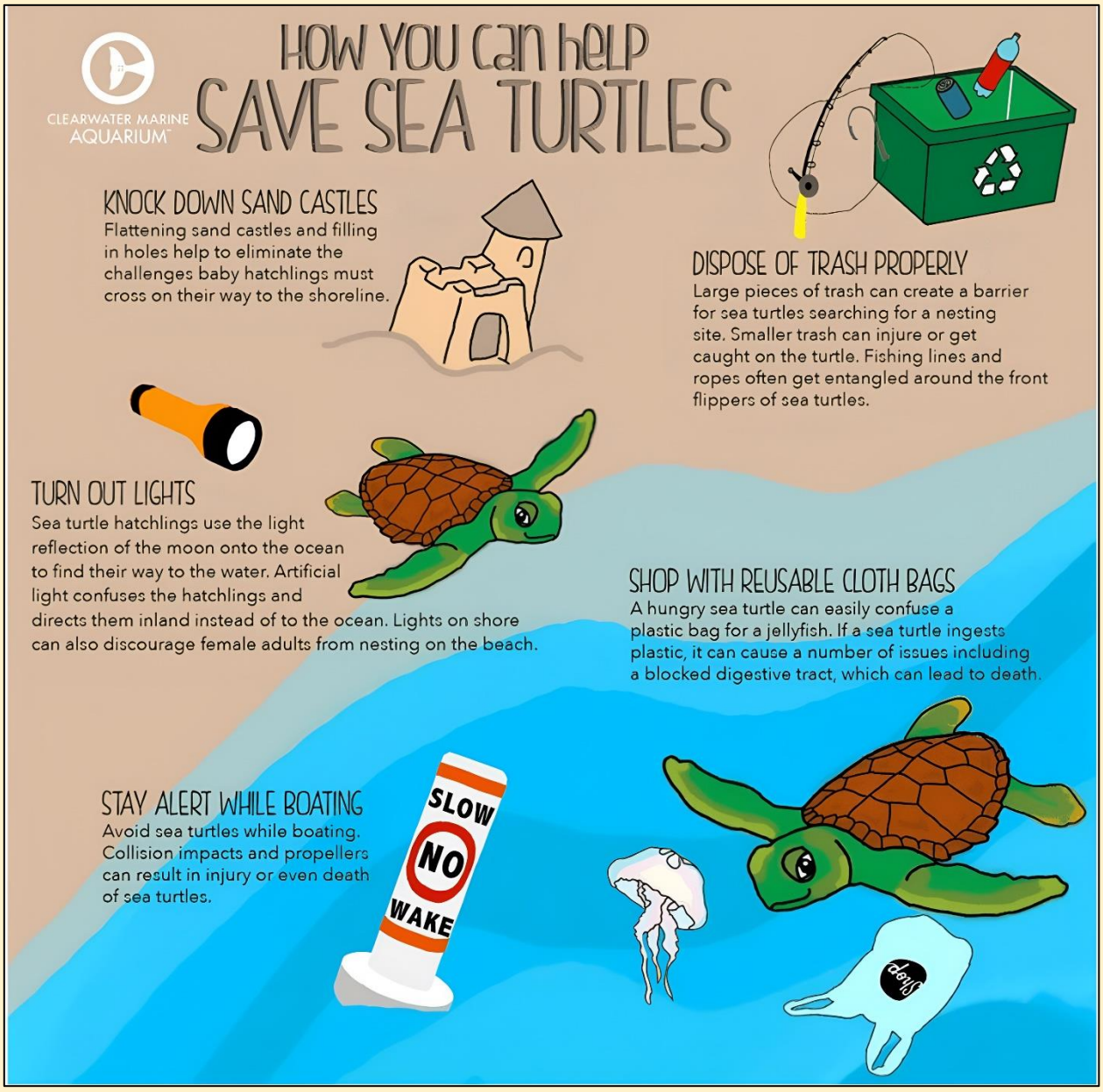
The 30×30 Biodiversity Target

The 30×30 target aims to protect 30% of marine environments by 2030. This initiative is crucial for preserving biodiversity and mitigating climate impacts. However, the current coverage of MPAs is inadequate. Many critical habitats for sea turtles remain unprotected, putting these species at risk.

Climate Change Impact on Sea Turtles

Climate change is shifting sea turtles from their traditional habitats to cooler waters. This transition often leads them outside protected areas and into shipping lanes.

The North Sea, Mediterranean, and East China Sea are examples of high-risk zones where turtles face increased threats from vessel strikes.



Research Findings

A comprehensive study analysed over 27,000 sea turtle sightings and ship locations. It revealed that over 50% of current sea turtle hotspots could disappear by mid-century.

In worst-case scenarios, certain species may lose up to 67% of their habitats. This alarming trend puts stress on the urgency for adaptive conservation strategies.

Adaptive Conservation Strategies

Researchers advocate for flexible conservation methods that adapt to changing ocean conditions. Real-time data-driven initiatives, like those used for whale conservation, could be adapted for sea turtles. These strategies aim to reduce vessel speeds in high-risk areas, thereby decreasing collision risks.

Recommendations for Future Conservation

To align with the 30×30 goal, several recommendations have been made:

1. Expand MPA coverage in future turtle hotspots.
2. Design dynamic MPAs that can adjust based on species distributions.
3. Implement targeted shipping regulations to mitigate risks in high-traffic areas.

The Need for Innovative Approaches

As sea turtles migrate in response to climate stress, conservation methods must evolve. The integration of high-resolution species models with real-world shipping data offers a pathway for developing forward-thinking marine conservation strategies. This approach ensures that protection measures follow species as their habitats change.

SUGAMYA BHARAT APP

The Sugamya Bharat App (SBA) is a vital initiative by the Government of India aimed at improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and elderly citizens.

Launched in 2021 by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, this app has undergone revamp to enhance user experience and effectiveness.

As of June 2025, the app has achieved remarkable milestones, including over 14,358 registered users and 83,791 downloads, predominantly from Android devices.

Key Features of the Sugamya Bharat App

The revamped SBA introduces several features designed to improve accessibility. It now boasts a more intuitive user interface that simplifies navigation. An AI-powered chatbot has been integrated to provide real-time assistance to users.

This feature allows users to receive immediate support for their queries. Additionally, the app includes notifications about new initiatives aimed at enhancing accessibility. It also offers a compilation of government schemes and resources beneficial for persons with disabilities.

User Engagement and Feedback

The app encourages users to actively participate in reporting accessibility issues. Users can upload geo-tagged photos of locations where barriers exist. This feature allows authorities to identify and address these issues promptly.

Since its inception, the app has received 2,705 complaints from users. Out of these, 1,897 have been resolved, reflecting the government's commitment to encouraging an inclusive environment.

Impact on Accessibility Reporting

The Sugamya Bharat App serves as a central platform for citizens to report accessibility challenges across various sectors, including public infrastructure and transportation.

The ease of reporting accessibility issues empowers users to contribute to the creation of a barrier-free India. The app's success is evident in the volume of complaints received and resolved, denoting its effectiveness in addressing user concerns.

Future Prospects and Government Commitment

The ongoing development of the app aims to incorporate more features based on user feedback. The DEPwD continues to promote public participation in reporting accessibility challenges.
This initiative aligns with the broader vision of creating an inclusive society where all citizens can access essential services without barriers.

NEW AGROFORESTRY GUIDELINES

The Government of India has introduced new model rules to support agroforestry. Announced on June 18, 2025, these regulations aim to boost farmers' income and address climate change.

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is leading this initiative. The rules create a structured framework for the felling of trees on agricultural land, ensuring sustainable practices while improving market access for farmers.

Objectives

The primary goal is to enhance farmers' income. The rules aim to increase tree cover and reduce timber imports. They also seek to ensure that agroforestry practices are sustainable. By creating a clear regulatory framework, the government hopes to encourage more farmers to adopt agroforestry.

Regulatory Framework

A streamlined regulatory framework has been established. This includes guidelines for the promotion, maintenance, and felling of trees. The model rules also include a certification process for timber sourced from non-forest land. This framework is crucial for creating effective market linkages for agroforestry products.

State-Level Committee Role

Each state will form a committee to evaluate applications for tree felling. The committee is responsible for verifying the details provided by applicants. This includes information about the agricultural land and the trees to be felled. The committee plays a vital role in ensuring compliance with the new regulations.

National Timber Management System (NTMS)

Farmers must register on the NTMS. This system requires them to update details about their agricultural land and tree plantations. Applicants must provide specific information about tree species, number of saplings, and plantation dates. Regular updates are essential to maintain compliance.

Felling Application Process

For felling trees, an online application must be submitted. Applicants need to specify the number of trees intended for felling and the date. For up to ten trees, photos must be uploaded to assess the trees' size and species. This process ensures that only suitable trees are felled.

Verification and Permit Issuance

Verifying agencies will assess the application details. They will provide a report on the potential timber yield. For more than ten trees, a felling permit will be issued after verification. For fewer trees, a No Objection Certificate will be automatically generated.

Monitoring and Supervision

Divisional Forest Officers will oversee the implementation of these rules. They will monitor the verifying bodies to ensure adherence to regulations. This oversight is crucial for maintaining sustainable agroforestry practices.

What is Agroforestry?

- Agro forestry is a **land use system that integrates trees, crops and animals** in a way that is scientifically sound.
    - It integrates trees and shrubs on farmlands and rural landscapes to **enhance productivity, profitability, diversity and ecosystem sustainability**.
- It is a dynamic, ecologically based, natural resource management system that, through integration of woody perennials on farms and in the agricultural landscape, diversifies and sustains production and builds social institutions.

How is Agroforestry Significant?

- **Economic Value:** It meets **almost half of the country's fuelwood needs**, about two-thirds of the **small timber demand**, 70-80% of the **plywood requirement**, 60% of the r**aw material for the paper pulp**industry, and 9-11% of the **green fodder needs**.
    - Tree products and tree services also **contribute robustly to rural livelihoods**.
    - Fruit, fodder, fuel, fibre, fertiliser, and timber add to **food and nutritional security**, income generation, and work as **insurance against crop failure**.
- **Carbon Sequestration:** Agroforestry or tree-based farming is an established nature-based activity that can **aid carbon-neutral growth**.
    - It enhances tree **cover** outside forests, works as a **surrogate for natural forests sequestering carbon**, keeps the pressure off natural forests, and helps increase farmers' income.
- **Lower Consumption of Fertilisers:** Nitrogen fixing trees grown in the agroforestry systems are c**apable of fixing about 50 -100 Kg Nitrogen/ha per year** - one of the most promising components of the agroforestry system.
    - The leaf litter after decomposition forms humus, releases nutrients and improves various soil properties, it also **reduces the fertiliser needs.**
    - Due to lower requirement of chemical fertilisers agroforestry can supplement **organic farming**.
- **Ecology Friendly:** Use of lesser chemicals will also help in **mitigating anthropogenic effects on climate**.
    - Agroforestry helps in **erosion control and water retention, nutrient recycling,** carbon storage, biodiversity preservation, and cleaner air and helps communities withstand extreme weather events.
- **Global Climate Goals:** Agroforestry can also help India meet its international obligations on -
    - **Climate** - creating an **additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030 and **net-zero by 2070.**
    - **Desertification** - achieving 26 million hectares of **Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030,** thus, meeting 9 of the **17 Sustainable Development Goals**.

- **Better Agriculture Yields:** Higher yields of crops have been observed in forest-influenced soils than in ordinary soils.
    - Appropriate agroforestry systems **improve soil physical properties,** maintain soil organic matter and **promote nutrient cycling**.
    - Agroforestry will also help in generation and promotion of sustainable renewable **biomass based energy**.

How has India Responded to Agroforestry?

- In 2014, **India became the first country** to adopt an agroforestry policy - **National Agroforestry Policy (NAP)** - to promote employment, productivity, and environmental conservation.
- In 2016, a under the NAP was launched, with nearly **₹1,000 crore to transform agroforestry** into a national effort with the tagline: **"Har medh par ped"** (trees on every field boundary).
- In the **2022-23 Union Budget,** the Finance Minister of India announced that the Government of India would **promote agroforestry**.
    - However, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare **merged the SMAF with the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana** which deprived the agroforestry sector of its flagship implementation arm.

QUAD CRITICAL MINERALS INITIATIVE

The Quad (United States, Japan, India, and Australia) launched the Initiative to strengthen cooperation on priorities such as securing and diversifying reliable supply chains, and electronic waste (e-waste) critical minerals recovery and re-processing.

The Initiative will expand the Quad's cooperation on supply chain resilience measures for critical minerals.

Need for Critical Minerals Initiative

Diversifying Supply Chain: : Production and processing of many critical minerals are geographically concentrated, making global supply vulnerable to several risks such as political stability, etc.

E.g., Democratic Republic of Congo supplies ~70% of the world's cobalt.

China refines 68% of the world's cobalt, 65% of nickel, and 60% of lithium.

Economic & National Security: E.g., In 2024, China banned exports of gallium, germanium, and other key materials to the US (weaponising critical mineral exports).

Other: Inadequate recycling infrastructure, etc.

What are Critical Minerals?

About: Critical minerals are naturally occurring elements or compounds including lithium, cobalt, nickel, etc.

These are classified as critical due to high demand (diverse applications), supply risks, etc.

Applications: Industry (Electric Vehicles, Electronics); Defence (Radars, Missiles); Clean Energy (Battery storage, Solar Modules), etc.

Other initiatives taken to secure Critical Minerals supply
India Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023, enables exploration and mining of critical minerals.
National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)
National Mineral Policy, 2019
International Collaborations & Agreements
Minerals Security Partnership (MSP): India joined this US-led initiative in 2023.
Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL), 2019: A joint venture company of Ministry of Mines to acquire critical minerals globally.
♦ E.g., India-Argentina Agreement (2024) for exploration of lithium mines.

CITES

Originally conceived in 1963 at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) meeting, it entered into force in 1975,as a first of its kind global agreement.
About CITES
Aim: Voluntary international agreement between governments ensuring international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
It subjects international trade to certain controls covering all import, export, re-export, through a licensing system.
Secretariat: Administered by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) at Geneva, Switzerland.
IUCN provides scientific and technical services to the CITES Secretariat.
Parties: 185 parties (States or regional economic organizations). India ratified in 1976.

CITES Appendices (Lists Species in 3 Appendices based on their degree of protection)		
Appendix I: Species threatened with extinction, trade permitted in only exceptional cases.	Appendix II: Species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled.	Appendix III: Species protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade.

Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties, it does not take the place of national laws, rather each party implements it through CITES Appendices (Lists Species in 3 Appendices based on their its own domestic legislation degree of protection) Conference of Parties (CoP): Highest Decision making body. CoP3 was held in New Delhi in 1981.
Key Initiatives
Protects over 40,900 species (6,610 species of animals and 34,310 species of plants). MIKE Programme, established by Resolution adopted at the 10th CoP (1997, Harare). Site-based system to monitor trends in levels of illegal killing of elephants across the range of African and Asian elephants.

Others: International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), 2010; CITES Tree Species Project, 2024, etc.

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