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THE HINDU

Page 1

PMAY - G

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Government Schemes)

As Andhra Pradesh alters PMAY name, Centre puts ₹4,000-cr. funds on hold

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The Andhra Pradesh government's decision to add the ruling YSR Congress Party's imprint to the Union government's flagship rural housing scheme – Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) – and rebrand it to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-YSR are proving costly for the State.

Sources said the State government's decision had resulted in the Union Finance Ministry putting a temporary hold on ₹4,000 crore that Andhra Pradesh should get under a scheme for "special assistance to State for capital investment", apart from ₹1,300 crore in pending PMAY-G funds.

The funds have not been released despite the State government agreeing to remove its branding and logo from the scheme.



PM Narendra Modi with the CMs of Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, Jagan Mohan Reddy and Mamata Banerjee, in New Delhi. FILE PHOTO

For an identical violation in West Bengal, where the State government rebranded the scheme as the Bangla Awas Yojana, Central funds have not been released since 2022.

This financial year too, funds were not released to West Bengal for the "non-submission of satisfactory compliance of the directives of the Ministry".

The Union Rural Development Ministry wrote its first letter flagging Andhra Pradesh's violation on July 17, noting that instead of PMAY-G, the State government had called the scheme PMAY-YSR, and used its own logo alongside the Union government's logo.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Context: Recently, the **Andhra Pradesh government's decision** to integrate the ruling YSR Congress Party's identity into the Union government's flagship rural housing scheme, **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)**, and rebrand it as **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-YSR**, is proving to be costly for the state.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin

- **Launched**: In 2016 to address the housing gaps existing in the rural areas.
  - IAY (Indira Awaas Yojna) was overhauled and transformed into Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G), starting from April 1, 2016.
- **Ministry Involved**: Ministry of Rural development.
- **Aim**: To provide a pucca house with basic amenities to all rural families who are homeless or living in kutcha or dilapidated houses by 2022.
  - It was initiated with the objective of achieving "Housing for All" by 2022.
- **Beneficiaries**: SCs/STs, former bonded laborers, non-SC/ST populations, widows or the next-of-kin of defense personnel who died in action, ex-servicemen and retired paramilitary members, disabled individuals, and minorities.
- **Cost Sharing**: Divided between the Central and State Governments, with a ratio of 60:40 in plain areas and 90:10 in North Eastern and hilly states.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 4

TOMB OF BALBAN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - History)

An abode for fugitives to an architectural landmark: The story of Balban's Tomb

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 5

BUILT IN the 13th century and now renovated from ruins, the Tomb of Balban located inside Mehrauli's Archaeological park has served many purposes in its lifetime: an abode for debtors and fugitives, a slave-turned-Sultan's Tomb, and a landmark in India's architectural history.

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, a Sultan of the Mamluk (Slave) dynasty— the first of the Delhi Sultanate dynasties — ruled from Delhi between 1266 AD to 1287 AD.

Balban was sold as a slave to the then ruler Iltumish in 1232 CE, who later released him.

Historian and author Swapna Liddle said that "individuals captured as slaves during that particular period then rose to become rulers," giving the period its name.

Liddle told *The Indian Express* that the tomb "is a very important structure as it shows us the first use of the true arch construction in India"

According to the official website of the Ministry of culture, "Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, one of the most powerful slave sultans after Iltumish, is buried within the archaeological park, in a building once built by the Sultan himself called the Dar-ul-Amaan (Haven of Safety)".

"Unlike the corbelled arches of Qutub Complex, the true arches of Balban's tomb have the keystone placed at the centre, which evenly distributes the weight of the superstructure, From here on, True arches became a common feature of the Indo-Islamic architecture of Delhi," said the website, explaining its architectural significance.



Delhi L-G had recently unveiled the tomb of Balban after renovation. *Mustafa Naqvi/Delhi Karavan*

A few weeks ago, Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena unveiled six renovations nestled inside the park, one among which was the tomb of Balban.

"It's a square building with spacious rooms on either side… it is the same place where his son Sher Khan, Khan e Shaheed was interred only two years before him. However, only one grave is extant now" wrote author Rana Safvi in her book Where stones speak: Historical Trails in Mehrauli, the First City of Delhi.

"…from afar it looks very unattractive… To reach it, one has to scramble down from the Jamali Kamali mosque by following the ASI markers. Steep steps lead down from it to the ruins…. The Sultan was buried in this building, and I have visited his tomb," wrote Safvi.

Safvi cites Ibn Batuta, where he had referred to this structure, The Dar-ul-Amaan, as "One of his acts of generosity".

The structure served as a sanctuary for debtors and fugitives, offering refuge from debt collectors and angry pursuers.

Even those who had committed murder could find solace within its walls, as the Sultan would compensate the families of the victims. The Dar- ul-Amaan truly embodied its name, meaning "House of safety" providing protection for all who sought its shelter.

"Balban's tomb was one of the first domes to be constructed, but the dome was long destroyed" said author Sohail Hashmi, who also said that the structure is no longer accessible to people as it is currently locked and closed for visiting.

Safvi – who quotes Maulvi Zafar Hasan – wrote that the Sufi fakirs of Mehrauli and the dargah precincts of Qutub Sahab abound them said this had occurred because Balban was extremely cruel, "his ascension to the throne was marked by bloodletting and this could be the reason his afterlife is cursed"

PIN CODE 110001

Context: The **recently renovated Tomb of Balban**, originally built in the 13th century, has held **various roles throughout its history, serving as a shelter** for debtors and fugitives, a Sultan's final resting place, and a significant landmark in India's architectural heritage.

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban (1266 – 1287 AD)

- **About**: Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, a Sultan of the Mamluk (Slave) dynasty— the first of the Delhi Sultanate dynasties — ruled from Delhi between 1266 AD and 1287 AD.
- Balban was sold as a slave to the then-ruler Iltumish in 1232 CE, who later released him.
- **Early Life**: Balban, one of the most remarkable rulers, was born to a Central Asian Turkic noble origin and in his childhood, he was seized as a slave.
- **Ascension to the throne**: Balban was rewarded with the title of Ulugh Khan by Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah. He was also felicitated with the tag of Naib-i-mamlikat or Deputy Sultan.
- **Balban incorporated Persian customs** and traditions into his rule, including sizda, paibas (the practice of kissing the sultan's feet), jamnibas (kissing hands), and celebrating Naurauz, the Persian New Year.
- **Diwan-i-Ariz**: He **established a defense department**.
- Balban took **stringent measures against robbers and dacoits,** making the roads of Delhi safe for travel.

Tomb of Balban

- It's a **square building with spacious rooms on either side**.
- It is the **same place where his son Sher Khan**, Khan e Shaheed was interred only two years before him.
- However, **only one grave is extant now**," wrote author Rana Safvi in her book Where stones speak: Historical Trails in Mehrauli, the First City of Delhi.
- The s**tructure served as a sanctuary for debtors and fugitives,** offering refuge from debt collectors and angry pursuers.

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Nov 5

NEPAL EARTHQUAKE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management)

Prime Minister anguished by the loss of lives and damages due to the earthquake in Nepal

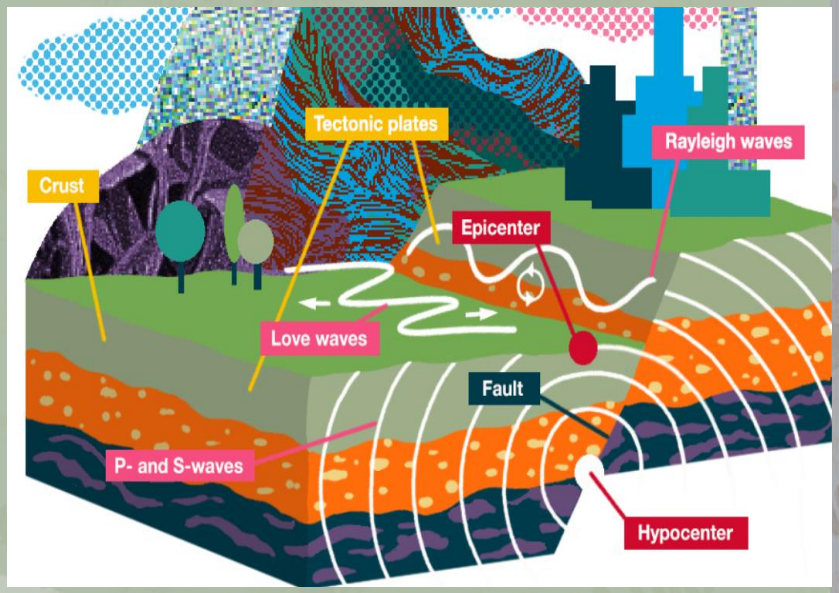
Context: The Prime Minister of India has expressed deep grief over the loss of lives due to the earthquake in Nepal.

Nepal's Seismic Vulnerability

- **Location**: Nepal sits atop a convergent boundary, **where the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates** collide, leading to the accumulation of stress and strain in the crust.
- This pressure is eventually released in the form of earthquakes.
- **Subduction Zone**: Nepal is also **situated in a subduction zone**. This subduction process further amplifies the stress and strain within the crust, contributing to the occurrence of earthquakes in Nepal.
- **Poor building construction practices**: Many structures in Nepal are constructed with unreinforced masonry, which lacks strength and can easily crumble during an earthquake.

Earthquake

- **About**: An earthquake is a violent and abrupt shaking of the ground, caused by movement between tectonic plates along a fault line in the earth's crust.
- Earthquakes can result in ground shaking, soil liquefaction, landslides, fissures, avalanches, fires, and tsunamis.
- **Focus and Epicentre**: The initial point of energy release is the focus, and the surface point above it is the epicenter.
- **Foreshocks and Aftershocks**: Major earthquakes often involve minor aftershocks and sometimes have preceding foreshocks.
- **Swarms:** Clusters of small earthquakes are called swarms and often indicate impending volcanic activity.
- **Distribution of Earthquakes:** Circum-Pacific Belt, Alpine Belt, Oceanic Ridges and Rift Valleys.



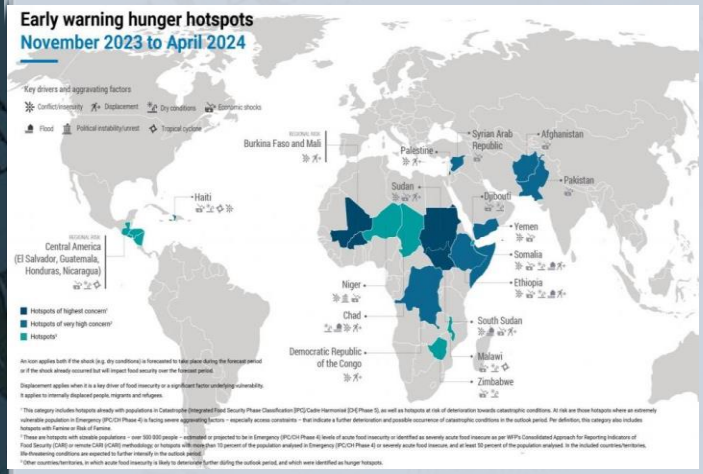
DTE

Nov 5

HUNGER HOTSPOTS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Social Issues)

Acute food insecurity: 4 African countries remain at highest concern level



Context: According to a **recently released outlook report by the Food and Agriculture Organization** of the United Nations (FAO) and the **World Food Programme (WFP)**, acute food insecurity is expected to deteriorate in **18 hunger hotspots through April 2024**.

Key Highlights of the Report

- These **hotspots comprise 22 countries or territories**, including two regional clusters.
- The **selection of hunger hotspots** in the document is **based on consensus among food security experts** and conflict, economic, and natural hazards analysts from FAO and WFP.
- **The countries identified are**: Burkina Faso, Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, Niger, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, **Pakistan**, Djibouti, Yemen, Somalia, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
- Of these, **four African countries** — Burkina Faso, Mali, South Sudan and Sudan — remain at the highest level of concern.
- The **report provided country-specific recommendations** on priorities for emergency response as well as anticipatory actions to address existing humanitarian needs.

World Food Programme

- **Founded**: In 1961 by the FAO and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
- **Headquarters**: Rome, Italy
- **Member**: It is a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), a coalition of UN agencies and organizations aimed at fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Food and Agriculture Organization

- **About**: FAO, a specialized United Nations agency, plays a crucial role in leading global initiatives aimed at eradicating hunger.
- **World Food Day**: Every year, on the 16th of October.
- **Headquarters**: Rome, Italy,
- **Sister Organizations**: It collaborates closely with sister organizations like the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

LIVEMINT

Page 2

VGF SCHEME FOR BATTERY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Viability support for pump storage projects on cards

Fiscal support for PSP is being considered as storage systems are highly capital-intensive

Rituraj Baruah
rituraj.baruah@livemint.com
NEW DELHI

After announcing a ₹3,760-crore viability gap funding (VGF) support for battery energy storage systems, the Centre is now considering a VGF scheme for pump storage projects (PSP) as well.

A person aware of the development said that as guidelines have been announced for pump hydro projects, a need is being felt to support a few projects through VGF.

"The policy framework for pump hydro is likely to be finalized soon and a VGF support would be provided along the lines of that announced for battery energy storage systems," the person added. Another person said that battery storage would be able to cater to only four-six hours of the day and that pump hydro projects are needed to back it up.

In PSPs, excess energy is used to pump water to an upper reservoir when power demand is low. When demand rises, water is released, turning a turbine which generates electricity. PSPs and battery storage projects are often used alongside solar or wind to ensure stable power supply.

Queries sent to the power ministry remained unanswered at press time.

Fiscal support for PSP is being considered as storage systems—both battery and PSPs—are highly capital-intensive. However, PSP is usually cheaper than BESS, typically costing Rs 7-8 crore per MW.



PSPs and battery storage projects are often used alongside solar or wind to ensure stable power supply. MINT

₹3,760 cr The sum Cabinet approved for VGF to BESS projects

In September, the Union cabinet approved a ₹3,760-crore viability gap fund (VGF)—grants aimed at enhancing the viability of infrastructure projects—for battery energy storage systems (BESS). Under the scheme, the government will give financial backing of up to 40% of the capital cost of BESS projects totalling 4,000 megawatt-hours (MWh) till FY31.

An official statement post the announcement of the VGF for BESS said the scheme aims to reduce the levelized cost of storage (LCoS) to ₹5.50-6.60 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) from around ₹10-11 per kWh, making storage a viable option to manage peak power demand.

16.13 GW Estimated energy storage capacity needed for FY27

The need for storage solutions is set to grow as India aims to increase the share of renewables to 500 GW in its energy mix by 2030. The challenge with renewable sources arises due to the fact that supply varies according to time, climate, season and location, which leads to issues with grid balancing. Energy storage systems (ESS) such as BESS and PSP come into play in such cases as they can be used for storing energy from green sources and supplying at other times of the day. To achieve energy transition and shift from fossil fuel to renewable energy, green energy needs to become despatchable, and available round the clock.

According to the National Electricity Plan prepared by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), the estimated energy storage capacity requirement for FY27 is 16.13 GW including 7.45 GW of PSP and 8.68 GW of BESS, with a storage capacity of 47.6 GWh from PSP and 34.72 GWh from BESS.

Further, the fund requirement for PSP is projected to be ₹54,203 crore till 2027 and ₹75,240 crore till 2030.

The ministry of power has already come up with the guidelines for PSP projects where it has suggested easy land acquisition and environmental clearances, among other things.

Currently, the central government is providing budgetary support for construction of roads and bridges by hydropower project developers, including PSPs up to ₹1.5 crore per MW for projects up to 200 MW and up to ₹1 crore per MW for projects above 200 MW.

The coal ministry is also working on converting de-coaled, or closed mines, into pump hydro projects. In September, *Mint* reported that the CEA has received proposals for 39 GW capacity and the applicants have submitted the pre-feasibility report.

Context: Recently, after announcing a ₹3,760-crore **viability gap funding (VGF) support for battery energy storage systems**, the Centre is now considering a VGF scheme for pump storage projects (PSP) as well.

- In PSPs, excess energy is used to pump water to an upper reservoir when power demand is low. When demand rises, water is released, turning a turbine which generates electricity.

VGF Scheme for Battery Storage

- **About:** VGF stands for Viability Gap Funding, which aims at supporting infrastructure projects that are economically justified but fall marginally short of financial viability.
- **Initiated**: In 2004, supports projects falling under Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).
  - This scheme operates **as a Plan Scheme**, with budget allocations made on an annual basis by the Ministry of Finance.
- **Aim:** VGF grants are given as capital subsidies to encourage private sector involvement in financially unviable PPP projects.
  - These projects often lack commercial viability due to extended gestation periods and limited future revenue prospects.

Benefits of VGF

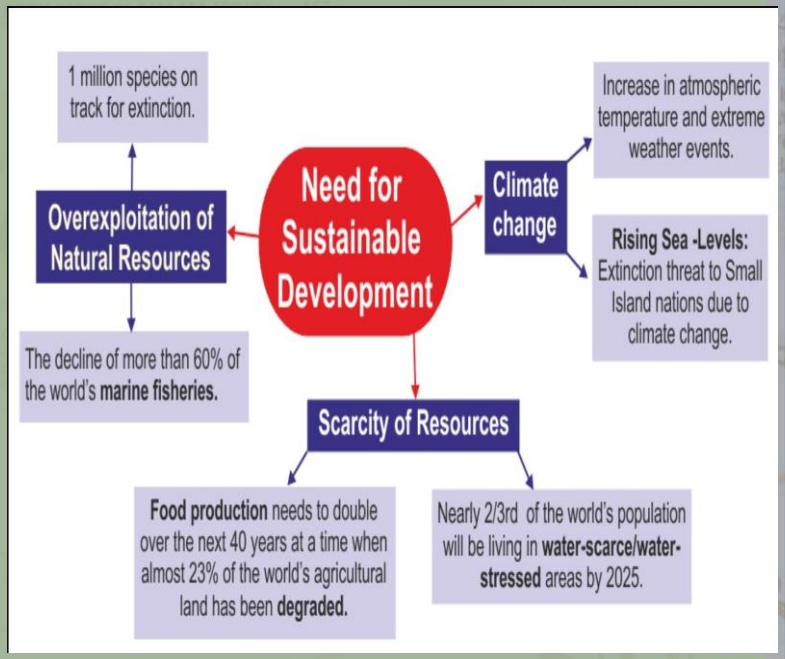
- VGF grants for Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) developers are awarded through a competitive bidding process.
- VGF **supports a production-linked incentive program** that encourages domestic manufacturing, driving technology innovation.
- VGF **serves a crucial role in covering the development costs** for battery manufacturers during technology development phases.

PIB Nov 5

WORKSHOP ON SDGs
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

NITI Aayog to organize Workshop on "Accelerating Progress on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" as mentioned in the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration

Context: NITI Aayog **organizing a workshop** at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi, focusing on accelerating progress toward the domestic adoption and **implementation of Sustainable Development Goals**.



Sustainable Development Goals

- **About**: It is the universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- **Adopted by**: United Nations in 2015
- **Vision**: To achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.
- The **17 SDGs came into force with effect from 1st January 2016** as a part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **India is one of the signatory countries** that has committed to achieving these goals by 2030.
- **India's Ranking in SDGs**: India has been ranked 112 out of 162 countries in terms of the SDG Index with a score of 63.45 out of 100.

NITI Aayog

- **About**: It is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Union Government, providing both directional and policy inputs.
- **Establishment**: In 2015 via an executive resolution by replacing the Planning Commission of India
- **Objective**: To develop a common vision for both the Central and State governments, recognizing that robust states are the foundation of a robust nation.
- To encourage an ongoing environment of competitive and cooperative federalism among the states.

BUSINESS LINE
Nov 5

E-DNA
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Sci and Tech)

Environmental DNA: A novel method to detect all life forms in an ecosystem

Context: Recently, **researchers at the CSIR-Centre** for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad, specifically from the Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES), **introduced a novel eDNA sequencing method** for assessing biodiversity.

Environmental DNA

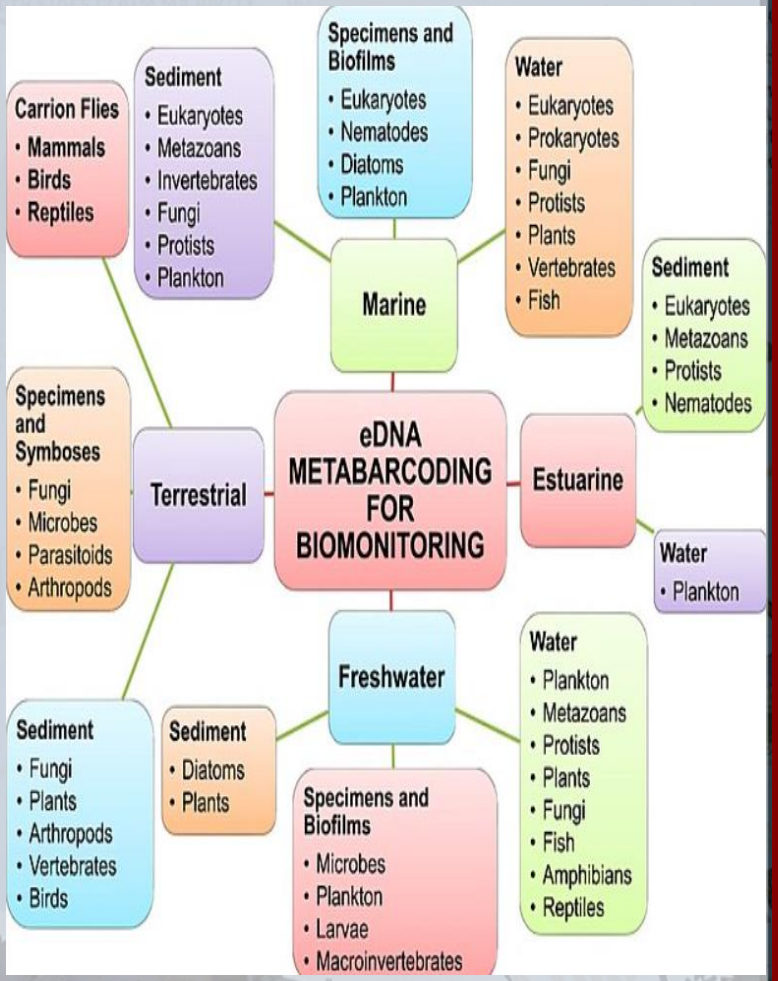
- eDNA consists of **DNA released by organisms** through natural processes during their lifetime or after death.
- This **DNA originates from cellular material** that organisms shed, such as through their skin or excrement, into aquatic or terrestrial environments.
- **Modern molecular methods enable the sampling** and monitoring of this eDNA in these environments.

Key Points

- The new **non-invasive method can assess the total biodiversity** of any ecosystem by sequencing the DNA fragments found in environmental samples such as water, soil, or air.
- This **method can detect all kinds of organisms**, including viruses, bacteria, archaea, and eukaryotes such as fungi, plants, insects, birds, fish and other animals.
- In this method **scientists can filter out eDNA from environmental samples**, read their sequences, and thus, identify the source of the eDNA.

Significance

- Enable early detection of invasive species and the identification of rare and cryptic species.
- Detect the presence of human remains through eDNA analysis.



NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Nov 5

ODONATA SPECIES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Survey in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve: 50 Odonata species identified

Context: Recently, during the **two-day Odonata survey** that began in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR), **approximately 50 Odonata species were identified** on the first day.

Odonata Species

- **About**: Odonata is an insect order categorized into three distinct groups: Anisoptera (comprising dragonflies), Zygoptera (which includes damselflies), and Anisozygoptera (a relict group with only two known living species).
- **Order of Insects**: Odonata stands as one of the ancient orders of insects, with a long evolutionary history.
- **Diversity of Odonata:** Odonata is a highly diverse group, with over 6,000 known species exhibiting various characteristics.
- **Global Distribution**: Odonata species are found worldwide, ranging from the tropics, where they are most abundant and diverse, to the boreal forests of Siberia and North America.
- **Diversity in India:** In India, Odonata is remarkably diverse, with more than 500 known species residing in the country.
- **Habitats**: Odonata species inhabit a wide range of environments, primarily freshwater settings like ponds, rivers, and lakes. They are typically associated with bodies of water during their larval stage.

Features of Odonata

- They have minute antennae.
- Their **eyes are** extremely **large, occupying most of the head**.
- Odonata possess two pairs of transparent membranous wings with numerous small veins.
- Their abdomen is long and slender.

Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR)

- **Location**: Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu, spanning 321 sq. km. at the tri-junction of Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
- Nestled on the Northeastern and Northwestern slopes of the Nilgiri Hills within the Western Ghats.
- An integral part of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, India's first Biosphere Reserve.
- **Border Shared With**: Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala) to the West, Bandipur Tiger Reserve (Karnataka) to the North, Nilgiris North Division to the South and East, and Gudalur Forest Division to the South West.
- **Terrain**: Characterized by undulating terrain, with elevations ranging from 960m to 1266m.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 2

REPORT OF ILO

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

At 48 hrs a week, Indians 6th most hardworking globally: ILO

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA
New Delhi, 5 November

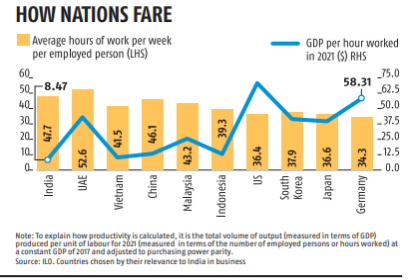
Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy triggered a debate recently when he said youths should work 70 hours a week, but in fact, Indians are already the sixth most hardworking out of 163 countries in the world.

The ranking is based on taking the average number of hours per week for each employed person in India, which works out to 47.7 hours, according to the latest International Labour Organisation (ILO) data of April 2023.

This figure shows that Indians work longer than workers in China (46.1 hours), Vietnam (41.5 hours), Malaysia (43.2 hours), the Philippines (39.2 hours), Japan (36.6 hours), the United States (36.4 hours) and the United Kingdom (35.9 hours).

But Indians work less than smaller countries with small populations such as Bhutan, the Congo, Lesotho, and Gambia. The issue, as many industrialists who engaged with Murthy in the debate, is not hours but productivity.





India is ranked at 131 out of 189 countries based on GDP per hour worked (GDP constant at 2017) for 2021, adjusted for purchasing power parity. Based on this parameter, India is pegged at $8.47 dollars, lower than Vietnam ($10.22), the Philippines ($10.07), Indonesia ($12.96), China ($13.35), Mexico ($20.23) and Malaysia ($25.59) – countries with which India either competes for exports or woos for investment.

A similar result can be seen through another measure to calculate labour productivity. This one is based on the annual growth rate of output per worker in percentage terms (based on GDP which is constant at 2015). India's annual growth rate of output per worker was up by only 3.1 per cent in 2022, much lower than Vietnam (4.8 per cent), China (3.4 per cent), Cambodia (3.6 per cent) and even Bangladesh (4.1 per cent).

For some perspective, while India's output per worker fell in both 2019 (by 2.9 per cent) and 2020 (minus 2 per cent) to recover by 3.5 per cent in 2021, China saw massive growth in these two years of 6 .4 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, slowing down to 3.6 per cent in 2021.

Vietnam recorded a similar trajectory for the same period.

Many people have responded to Murthy by saying workers need better pay given that Indian ages are among the lowest in the world.

According to Morgan Stanley Research, manufacturing wages here are $0.8 per hour. In China, they are eight times higher, in Malaysia almost six times higher and in Vietnam twice as high. Only Indonesia at $1 per hour was the closest to India out of the competing countries.

The call for a 70-hour week also has to be put in the context of ILO data which shows that only three countries currently have a longer than 50-hour week. The UAE came out on top with over 52 hours.

Further, ILO's historical data from 13 countries (which include India, South Korea, and Brazil) show that China was the only country which had hit over 2,500 hours a year since the 1950s (Murthy suggests 3,640 days).

By 2000, no country did more than 2,000 hours a year as country after country introduced regulation to fix the working week. But a more detailed look at ILO data on the percentage of employed workers who work more than 49 hours a week shows some interesting trends.

Bangladesh tops the list with 50 per cent of the employed working more than 49 hours. In Indonesia it was 26 per cent, in the Philippines 19 per cent and in South Korea and Thailand it was over 17 per cent. (On this, data for India was not available with the ILO).

Context: **According to the latest International Labour Organisation (ILO)** data on working hours, Indians are already the sixth most hardworking out of 163 countries in the world. The ranking is based on taking the average number of hours per week for each employed person in India, which works out to 47.7 hours.

Key Points

- **Indian workers put in longer hours compared to several countries**, including China, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Japan, the United States, and the United Kingdom.
- However, **India's working hours are shorter than those in smaller nations** like Bhutan, the Congo, Lesotho, and Gambia.
- The central **concern, as highlighted in discussions with industrialists like Murthy**, revolves around productivity rather than the number of hours worked.
- **India's global economic ranking is 131 out of 189 countries** in 2021, based on GDP per hour worked, with data adjusted for purchasing power parity and GDP held constant at 2017 values.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

- **About**: The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency for the world of work.
- **Mandate**: Its mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.
- **Motto**: ILO's mandate as the basis for peace is expressed today as Decent Work for all.
- **Headquarters**: Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Parent organization**: Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.
- **Members**: The ILO has 187 member states: 186 out of 193 UN member states plus the Cook Islands.
- **Structure**: It is the only tripartite U.N. agency that brings together governments, employers and workers' representatives of 187-member States.

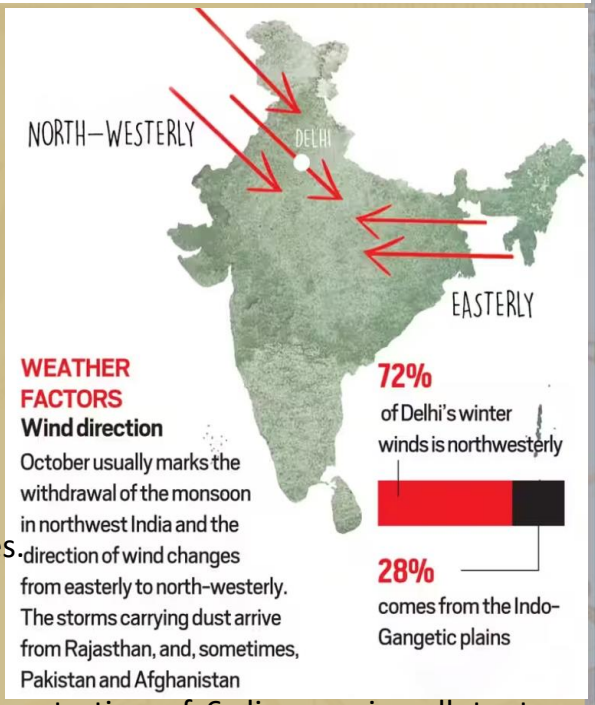
DTE Nov 5

POLLUTION SPIKES IN DELHI

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Delhi PM2.5 levels rose by 68 per cent within a day in early November: CSE

Context: According to an **analysis by Delhi-based think tank**, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), the **Particulate Matter (PM)2.5 concentration in Delhi** saw a recent and alarming spike, with a sudden 68 percent increase within 24 hours on November 2, 2023, marking the first significant pollution surge of the winter season.



Key Points

- "SAFAR's estimate has shown that the **percentage contribution of farm stubble fire** to Delhi's **PM2.5 concentration** had crossed 25 per cent on November 2.
- SAFAR or System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research is a **country-wide initiative by the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences**, with an objective to provide location-specific information about air quality on a real-time basis.
- The **share of PM2.5 in PM10** is an important indicator of the impact of combustion sources.
- **NO2 or Nitrogen Dioxide** levels are also **rising in the region**. NO2 largely comes from vehicles.

Air Quality Index

- **Air Quality Assessment**: AQI is a tool for assessing the safety of the air you breathe.
- **Monitoring and Reporting**: Organizations responsible for AQI reporting measure the concentration of 6 diverse air pollutants - Particulate matter (PM2. 5 and PM10), Ozone (O3), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), Sulphur Dioxide (SO2), Lead (Pb) and Ammonia (NH3) at various monitoring stations.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)

- **About:** It is a not-for-profit public interest research and advocacy organisation based in New Delhi, India. Established in 1980, CSE works as a think tank on environment-development issues in India, poor planning, climate shifts devastating India's Sundarbans and advocates for policy changes and better implementation of the already existing policies.

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