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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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INDIAN EXPRESS

Page 1

POCSO ACT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

REPORT TO LAW MINISTER

POCSO: Law panel says keep consent age 18, but take less severe look when kids in 16-18

Flags sexual curiosity, suggests changes when 'tacit approval' among children

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 29

STATING THAT "it is not advisable to tinker with" the existing age of consent — 18 years — under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to exempt adolescent sexual acts from the purview of the criminal law, the Law Commission of India has instead favoured introducing "guided judicial discretion in the matter of sentencing" in cases involving those in the 16-18 age group. It says "this will ensure that the law is balanced, thus safeguarding the best interests of the child".

Headed by former Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, the Commission, in its Report No. 283 on 'Age of Consent under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012' submitted to Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, has accordingly called for certain amendments to the Act "to remedy the situation in cases wherein there is tacit approval in fact though not consent

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

The concern, the need

THE LAW Commission report underlines the mental trauma and harassment children face if a consensual act falls under the ambit of the POCSO Act. Stating that this is an issue of concern, the panel has called for steps to "address this aberrant situation created by the working of law".

Context: The **Law Commission of India** has recently recommended maintaining the current age of consent at 18 years under the **POCSO Act and has proposed introducing** "guided judicial discretion in sentencing" for cases involving individuals **aged 16-18**.

POCSO Act

- **About:** This Act comprehensively outlines different categories of sexual offenses directed at children and imposes severe penalties on those found guilty of such crimes.
- **Establishment**: 2012

Key Provisions of the Act

- **Gender-neutral legislation**: The Act defines a child as "any person" under the age of 18.
- **Non-reporting is a crime:** Those responsible for institutions (excluding children) failing to report a sexual offense involving a subordinate can be punished.
- **No time limit for reporting abuse**: Victims can report offenses at any time, even years after the abuse has occurred.
- **Keeping victim's identity confidential**: The Act prohibits the disclosure of the victim's identity in any form of media unless authorized by the special courts established by the Act.

Law Commission of India

- **About**: A non-statutory body, is established by the Union government.
- **Objective**: To advocate for just and equitable laws and promote their effective enforcement.
- Functioning as an ad hoc body, it is created to fulfill specific objectives.
- It serves as an **advisory entity** to the **Ministry of Law and Justice**.
- Unlike bodies defined in **the Indian Constitution**, it is established under **Article 39A**.

BELOW-AGE EXCEPTIONS FLAGGED

- **Under Pocso Act, 2012, 18 is the 'age of consent'** — at which a person is considered legally capable of agreeing to sexual intercourse
- Prior to 2012 Act, age of consent was **not defined**; it was **fixed by virtue of Sec 375 of IPC,** which defines 'rape'
- Age of consent varied through the years: **in 1860, it was 10**; 12 in 1891; 14 in 1925; and 16 in 1940
- **Minimum age of marriage is 18 for women**, 21 for men

Law panel seeks judicial discretion in some cases:

- **Consensual romantic relationships** sans criminal intent among those aged 16-18
- If **less than 3-yr age gap** between the couple
- If **no criminal antecedents** are found and conduct is good after offence
- Says Juvenile Justice Act should have proviso **to bar trial of child as adult** for consensual relationships

THE HINDU

Page 1

CWMA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Cauvery dispute: CWMA upholds panel's decision

It endorses Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's recommendation asking Karnataka to release 3,000 cusecs to T.N. till October 15; Siddaramaiah govt. to file review petitions before SC, CWMA

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) on Friday upheld the decision of the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) asking Karnataka to release 3,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) to Tamil Nadu till October 15.

It also told Karnataka to make good the shortfall of 0.71 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) that arose during the 15-day period that ended on September 27. The CWRC took its decision at its meeting on September 26.

However, the Siddaramaiah-led Karnataka government has decided to file review petitions before the Supreme Court and CWMA on Saturday. It has also decided to form an advisory panel to collect data and provide advice to the government on the issue.

After the Friday's meeting, which lasted nearly two hours, CWMA chairman Saumitra Kumar Haldar told *The Hindu* from New Delhi that barring Karnataka, representatives of the other basin States joined the discussion through videoconference.

As for Tamil Nadu, the officiating Principal Secretary for Water Resources, K. Manivasan, attended the meeting online, while Cauvery Technical Cell chairperson R. Subramanian was personally present in New Delhi.

As in the past, there was an intense exchange of views between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. While the former wanted continuous release of water and demanded 12,500 cusecs, the latter referred to difficulties in continuing with the supply.

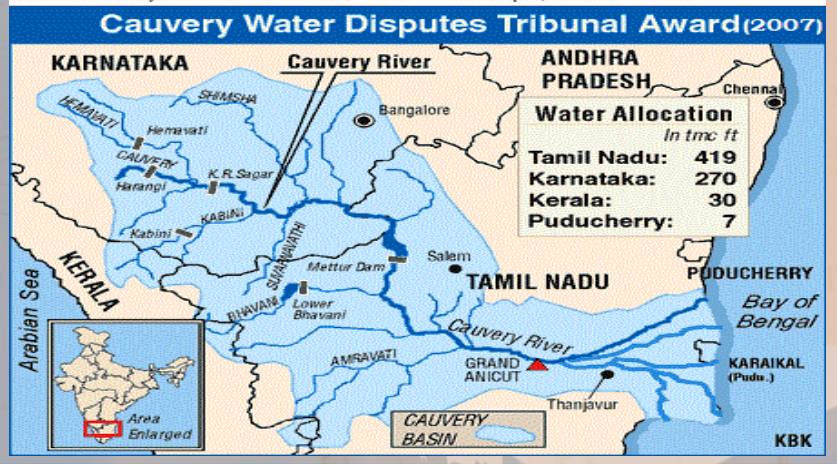
CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8



Tensions rise: Protest held at the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu boundary near Hosur, over the Cauvery issue, on Friday. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

Bandh passes off peacefully in Karnataka

BENGALURU
The Karnataka bandh called over the inter-State Cauvery water dispute passed off peacefully on Friday, with Bengaluru and districts in the Cauvery basin region seeing the most impact. » PAGE 5



Context: The **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)** recently confirmed the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's (CWRC) decision, instructing **Karnataka to continue releasing 3,000** cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu until October 15.

Cauvery Water Management Authority CWMA

- It has been created as per the Cauvery Management Scheme earlier framed by the Centre and approved by the Supreme Court.
- **Formation**: February 2018 by instructions of the Supreme Court
- **Composition**: Chairman, a secretary and eight members.
- Out of the eight members, **two will be full time**, while **two will be part-time** members from the center's side.
- Rest four will be part-time members from the states.
- **Functions**: To ensure the enforcement and adherence to the directives of the Supreme Court concerning the "storage, allocation, management, and oversight of Cauvery waters."
    - It will also offer **guidance to the states on implementing** measures to enhance the **efficiency of water utilization**.

Cauvery

- **About**: It is the largest river in the Karnatka state.
- **Known as**: Dakshina Ganga **(the Ganges of the South)** and considered one of the sacred rivers of India.
- **Origin**: Bramahagiri Hills near Madikeri in Coorg.
- **Tributaries**: Harangi, Hemavathi, Lakshmanatirtha, Kabini, Shimsha, Arkavati, Suvarnavathi or Honnuholé, Bhavani, Lokapavani, Noyyal.

PIB

Sept 28

SANKALP SAPTAAH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Government Schemes)

PM to launch a unique week-long programme for Aspirational Blocks called 'Sankalp Saptaah' on 30th September

Context: The Prime Minister is set to inaugurate a unique week-long initiative, **'Sankalp Saptaah,'** at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

Sankalp Saptaah

- **Effective ABP Implementation:** The initiative is directly tied to the successful execution of the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP).
- **Chintan Shivirs**: chintan shivirs" or brainstorming sessions were conducted at both the village and block levels nationwide. The Sankalp Saptah marks the culmination of these brainstorming sessions.
- **Observance**: Sankalp Saptah will be observed in all 500 aspirational blocks as part of the program.
- **Dedicated Themes for Each Day**: The themes for the first six days include "Sampoorna Swasthya" (Complete Health), "Suposhit Parivar" (Nourished Family), "Swachhta" (Cleanliness), "Krishi" (Agriculture), "Shiksha" (Education), and "Samridhi Diwas" (Prosperity Day).
- **Culminating Celebration**: The last day of the week will be a celebration of the collective work carried out during the entire week, known as "Sankalp Saptah – Samavesh Samaroh."

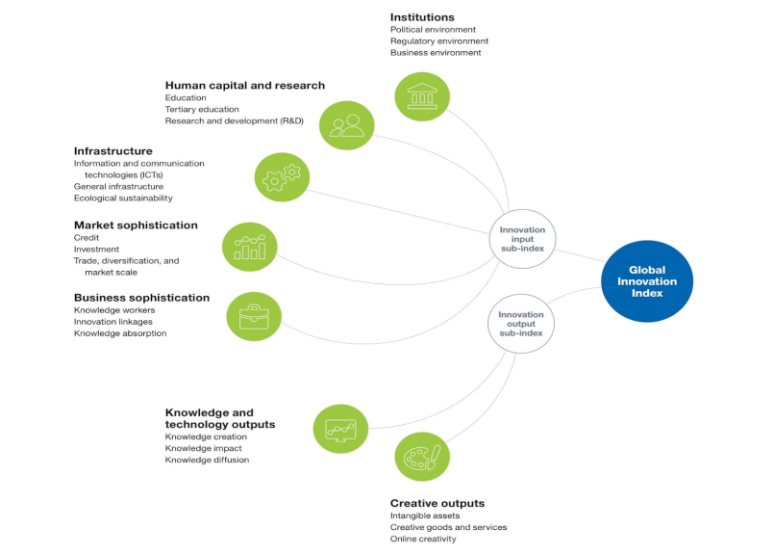
Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)

- **Launched**: On January 7, 2023
- **Aim:** Enhancing governance and improving the quality of life in 500 Aspirational Blocks spanning 329 districts across India.
- **Over half of these blocks are in 6 states**: Uttar Pradesh (68 blocks), Bihar (61), Madhya Pradesh (42), Jharkhand (34), Odisha (29) and West Bengal (29).

GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Report and Indics)

India maintains 40th rank in the Global Innovation Index 2023



World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)

- **Found:** 1967
- **Aim**: To encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- WIPO currently administers **26 international treaties.**
- **Members:** 193 countries
- **Headquarters**: Geneva, Switzerland.
- **World Intellectual Property Day**: Every year on 26th April

Context: Recently, India maintained its **40th position among 132 economies** in the **Global Innovation Index (GII) for 2023**, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization's report.

Key Points of Report

- **Switzerland maintains its top spot** as the most innovative economy for the 13th consecutive year in 2023, with Sweden following closely behind.
- **India ranked first among the 37** lower-middle group income and first among the 10 economies in Central and South America
- I**ndia maintains its 40th position** overall and takes the helm in the lower middle-income group. It holds the record for overperforming on innovation for the 13th consecutive year.

Global Innovation Index (GII)

- **About:** The GII is a reliable tool for governments across the world to assess the innovation-led social and economic changes in their respective countries.
- **Co-publishers of the Report:** Cornell University, INSEAD Business School, and WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization).
- **Innovation Measurement Criteria:** Institutions, human capital and research, infrastructure, credit, investment, linkages, creation, absorption, and diffusion of knowledge, as well as creative outputs.

Live Mint

Sept 29

SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1– Modern History)

Bhagat Singh birth anniversary: 'Beacon of courage' PM Modi, other leaders pay tribute to the legendary freedom fighter

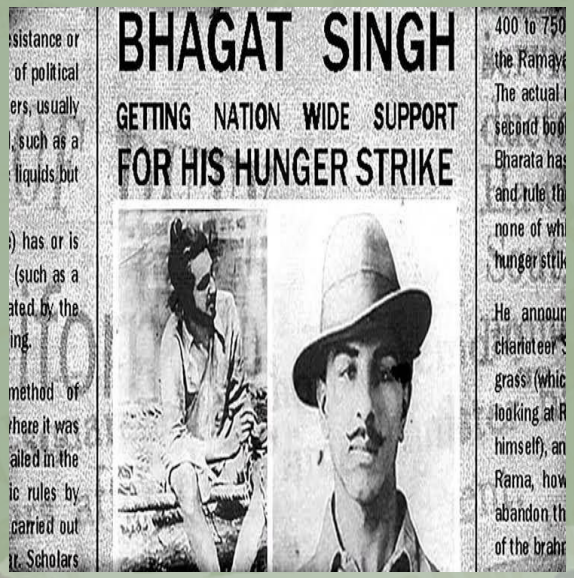
Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently honoured the memory of the legendary revolutionary **Shaheed Bhagat Singh** on his birth anniversary.

Shaheed Bhagat Singh

- **About**: He was born in Banga village of Punjab, British India (now Pakistan).
- In 1925, inspired by European nationalist movements, he formed Naujawan Bharat Sabha.
- **Influence**: His family was influenced by the Ghadar Movement and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, which fueled his early patriotism and revolutionary fervor.
- **Books**: Why I am an Atheist, Jail notebook.
- **Ideology**: Revolutionary, Socialist, secular.
- **Values**: Sacrifice, Courage, Bravery

Involvement in the Freedom Struggle

- **HSRA Involvement**: Bhagat Singh became a member of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA), a revolutionary organization committed to overthrowing British rule through armed struggle.
- **Protest Against Simon Commission**: Lala Lajpat Rai led a protest against the Simon Commission, sustaining injuries in a police baton charge that led to his death.
- **Assembly Bombing**: Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt staged a non-lethal smoke bomb attack in the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi in April 1929 to protest repressive laws and draw attention to their revolutionary ideals.
- **Lahore Conspiracy Case**: He was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Lahore Conspiracy Case for the killing of J.P. Saunders, a police officer connected to Lala Lajpat Rai's death.
- **Hunger Strike**: Bhagat Singh's hunger strike challenged unequal treatment of Indian political detainees, demanding their rights and improved living conditions.


BHAGAT SINGH
GETTING NATION WIDE SUPPORT
FOR HIS HUNGER STRIKE

BUSINESS STANDARD

Sept 28

GLOBAL TERRIORISM INDEX

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Reports and Indics)

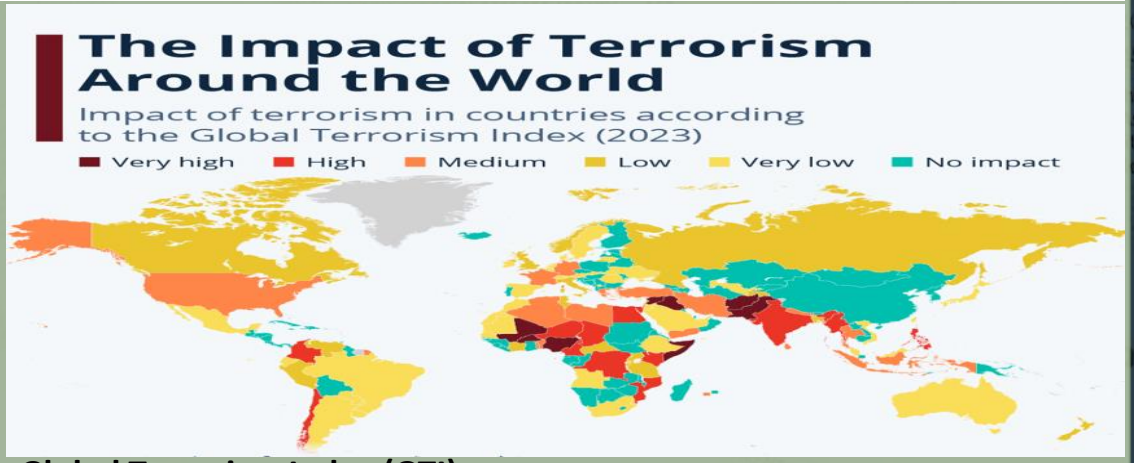
India makes progress in Global Terrorism Index, efforts can save $159 bn

Context: In a recent report, it was noted that **India has made commendable strides** in bolstering its security measures in recent years.

- **According to a Ficci CASCADE report**, India has a GTI score of 7.43 and a crime index score of 44.7, reflecting fewer terror and crime incidents compared to the levels observed in 2016

Highlights of Global Terrorism Index 2023

- **Afghanistan continues** to hold the unfortunate distinction of being the country most severely affected by terrorism, maintaining this position for the fourth consecutive year.
- **India secured the 13th spot** on the terrorism impact index, reflecting a slight reduction compared to the previous year.
- **Pakistan experienced the second-largest** surge in terror-related fatalities worldwide in the past year, with a total of 643 casualties reported.
- Military personnel accounted for a significant portion, constituting at **least 55% of all terrorism**-related casualties.



Global Terrorism Index (GTI)

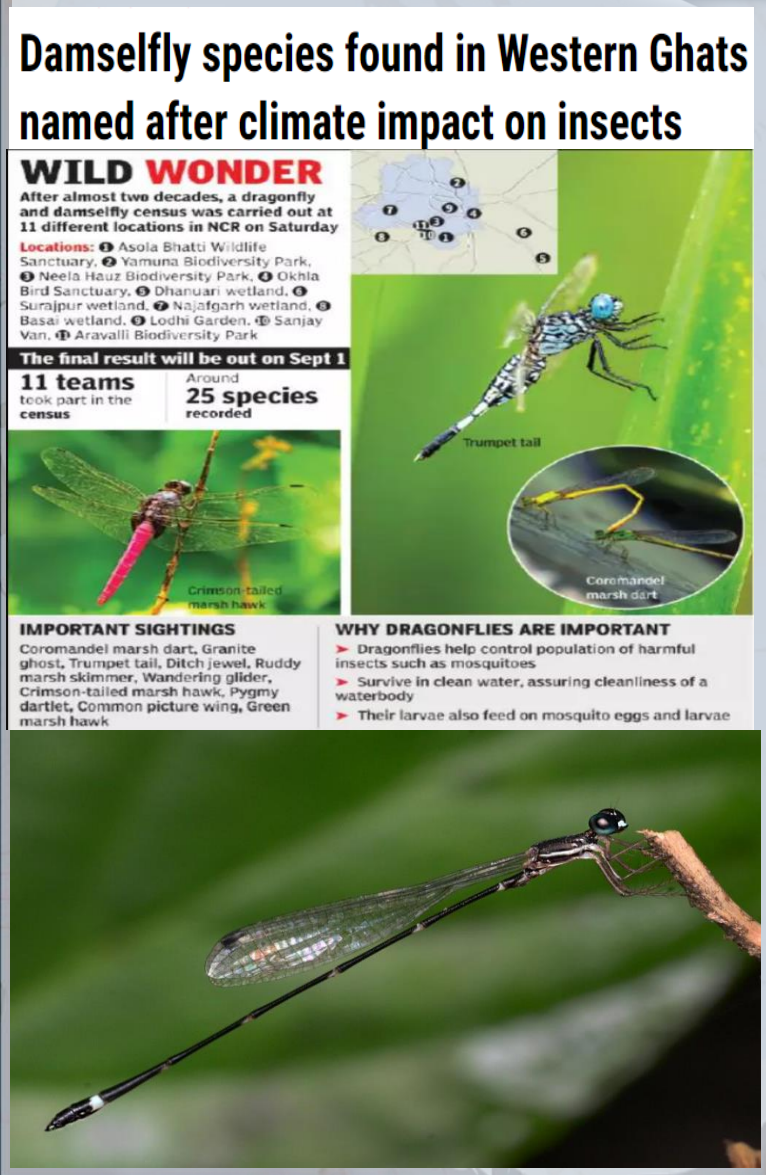
- **About**: GTI is a comprehensive study analysing the impact of terrorism for 163 countries covering 99.7 percent of the world's population.
- **GTI Score**: The GTI scores each country on a scale from 0 to 10;
- Where 0 represents no impact from terrorism and 10 represents the highest measurable impact of terrorism.
- **The GTI considers** deaths, incidents, hostages and injuries from terrorism.
- **Released by**: Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)
- **Report ranks** 163 countries on the impact of terrorism.
- **Indicators**: Include the number of terrorist incidents, fatalities, injuries, and hostages.

DTE

Sept 29

DAMSEFLY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)



Context: A new damselfly species has been discovered in Kerala's southern Western Ghats.

- The insect **'Armageddon reedtail' or protosticta armageddonia**, to draw attention to the global decline of insect populations due to rampant habitat loss and climate change.
- The term **'ecological armageddon'** is used to describe the devastating decline of insect populations around the world.
- **Damselfly Species**
- **Name**: Anamalai Reed-tail (scientific name: Protosticta anamalaica Sadasivan, Nair and Samuel, 2022).
- **First Time Spotted**: Peechi Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Habitat**: Tropical, subtropical and temperate jungles of the Indian subcontinent and south-eastern Asia.
- **Distribution**: In India, they are distributed in the Western Ghats and north-eastern region towards Myanmar.
  - The genus was described from Sulawesi in Indonesia.
- **Found Species**: 15 species of Protosticta in India, among which 12 inhabit the Western Ghats.
- Kerala has 182 odonates species with 69 endemics.

DTE

Sept 29

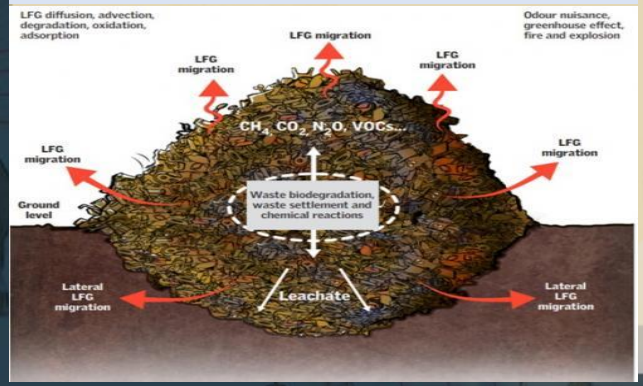
METHANE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env & Eco)

Methane from Indian dumpsites – a missed opportunity & potential climate pollutant

Methane

- **About:** It is a **hydrocarbon** that is a primary component of natural gas.
- Methane is **also a greenhouse gas (GHG)**, so its presence in the atmosphere affects the **earth's temperature** and climate system.
- Properties: **Colourless, odourless** and highly flammable gas.
- **China, the United States, Russia, India, Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Mexico** are estimated to be responsible for nearly half of all **anthropogenic methane emissions**.



Context: In a recent development, the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** has determined that methane has a **Global Warming Potential (GWP)** ranging from 28 to 36 when assessing its impact over a 100-year period.

- This finding is crucial in understanding the **greenhouse gas emissions** from the waste sector, which encompass **carbon dioxide**, **methane**, **nitrous oxide**, and various other contributors to climate change.

Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)

- **About:** A greenhouse gas is a gas that absorbs and emits infrared radiation.
- They **absorb infrared energy (heat energy) emitted from the earth's surface** and reradiates it back to the earth's surface.
- **Most abundant greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere:** Water vapour, Carbon dioxide, Methane, Nitrous oxide, Ozone, Chlorofluorocarbons, Hydrofluorocarbons.
- **Other GHGs:** Carbon monoxide, fluorinated gases, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), black carbon (soot), and brown carbon.
  - **Carbon monoxide (CO) is not considered a direct greenhouse gas**, mostly because it does not absorb terrestrial thermal IR energy strongly enough.
- **Global Initiative to fight GHGs:** Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement, SDG (2030) etc.

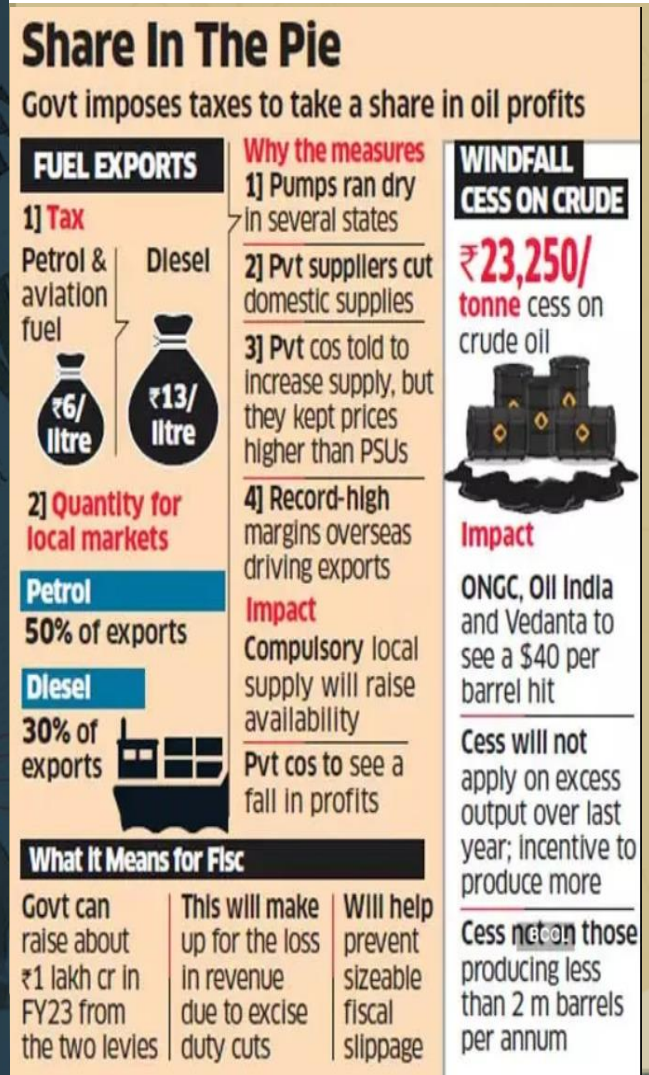
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

- **Establishment:** It was created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- **Objective:** The objective of the IPCC is to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies.
- **IPCC reports:** They are also a key input into international climate change negotiations.
- **Members:** 195 members.

ECONOMIC TIMES Sept 29

WINDFALL TAX
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Centre hikes windfall tax on crude oil to Rs 12,000 per tonne



Context: The center recently increased the **windfall tax** on domestically produced crude oil to Rs 12,000 per tonne, up from Rs 10,000 previously.
On July 1, 2022 the **government imposed an export duty** of Rs 6 per litre on petrol and ATF and a Rs 13 per litre duty on export of diesel.

Windfall Tax

- The **purpose of a windfall tax is to impose additional taxes** on a company's profits generated from an external event, often unexpected, such as the increase in energy prices due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- **According to the United States Congressional Research** Service, a windfall is defined as an increase in income that is neither earned nor anticipated, and it does not result from any extra effort or expenses on the part of the entity.
- **These profits cannot be attributed** to the company's intentional actions, such as an investment strategy or business expansion.
- Governments typically **impose a retroactive one-time tax, known as a windfall tax**, on such profits, in addition to the regular tax rates.

The reason for implementing a windfall tax

- It is **introduced to finance social welfare** initiatives.
- It **serves as an additional source of income** for the government.
- It functions as a means for the **central authority to reduce the nation's expanded** trade deficit.

PIB Sept 28

SMART CITY MISSION
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Government Schemes)

PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES INDIA SMART CITIES CONCLAVE 2023

Context: Recently, **the President of India**, Smt. Droupadi Murmu attended the India **Smart Cities Conclave 2023** in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

- India's commitment to the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and emphasized the significance of **SDG 11**, which aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Smart City Mission

- **Launched by**: June, 2015.
- **Ministry**: Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry.
- **Objective**: To promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment, and give a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions'.
- **Focus Area**: Sustainable and inclusive development by the creation of replicable models that act as lighthouses to other aspiring cities.
- **Coverage**: 100 cities
- **Duration**: FY2015-16 to FY2019-20
- **Madhya Pradesh wins** the best '**State Award**', Tamil Nadu secures second place, and Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh jointly hold the third position.
- **Chandigarh tops the UT category** and excels in the best governance category for its e-governance services.
- **Indore secures** the first place among **100 cities under the Smart Cities Mission**, followed by Surat and Agra.



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