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# BRITISH ACADEMY BOOK PRIZE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

## Author Nandini Das wins 2023 British Academy Book Prize

**Press Trust of India**
LONDON


Nandini Das

Indian-born author Nandini Das has been named the winner of the 2023 British Academy Book Prize for Global Cultural Understanding, a leading international non-fiction award with a prize money of £25,000, for her book *Courting India: England, Mughal India and the Origins of Empire*. The U.K.-based academic's debut work, described as the "true origin story of Britain and India told through England's first diplomatic mission to the Mughal courts", was revealed as this year's winner at a ceremony at the British Academy in London on Tuesday evening.

As a Professor in the English faculty at the University of Oxford, the 49-year-old author has sought to present a new perspective on the origins of empire through the story of the arrival of the first English ambassador in India, Sir Thomas Roe, in the early 17th century.

"By using contemporary sources by Indian and British political figures, officials and merchants, she has given the story an unparalleled immediacy that brings to life these early encounters and the misunderstandings that sometimes threatened to wreck the whole endeavour," said Professor Charles Tripp, Chair of the prize jury. He described how, through her beautiful writing and exceptional research, the jury was drawn to the contrast between an impoverished, insecure Britain and the flourishing, confident Mughal Empire.

The British Academy Book Prize, formerly known as the Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize, was established in 2013 to reward and celebrate the best works of non-fiction that demonstrate rigour.

Ms. Das will receive £25,000 for winning the prize and each of the shortlisted works, including *Black Ghost of Empire: The Long Death of Slavery and the Failure of Emancipation* by Caribbean-born Kris Manjapra, will receive £1,000 each.

**Context**: **Nandini Das, the India-born author**, recently achieved a significant milestone by winning the **2023 British Academy Book Prize for Global Cultural Understanding** for her book **'Courting India: England, Mughal India and the Origins of Empire,'** which comes with a substantial award of 25,000 British pound.

**Her work:** She has sought to present a new perspective on the origins of empire through the **story of the arrival of the first English ambassador in India**, Sir Thomas Roe, in the early 17th century.

**British Academy Book Prize for Global Cultural Understanding**

- **About:** This is awarded **annually for a non-fiction book** that has made an outstanding contribution to global cultural understanding for a wider public audience.
  - The **British Academy is the UK's national academy** for humanities and social sciences, and eligible books come from the subjects that fall within those disciplines, from archaeology, history and psychology to philosophy, languages and cultural studies.
- **Eligibility Criteria**
  - The **Prize rewards books that best contribute to improving global cultural** understanding among public audiences. The judges are seeking books that demonstrate rigorous original and high-quality research, and that are accessible and engaging to read.
  - **Authors can be of any nationality, based anywhere in the world** and working in any language.
  - **Translated books are eligible** provided that they are first published in English in the UK between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.
  - **Books that have previously been published outside the UK and Ireland** in the English language.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 19

# FSSAI REPORT ON FOOD SECURITY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Social Issues)

## In FSSAI index, nearly all major states slip on food safety compared to 2019

AGGAM WALIA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 1

FOUR YEARS after the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) published a state-wise index to spur food safety improvement, 19 out of 20 large states — including Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh — recorded a drop in their 2023 scores from 2019.

After adjusting for a new parameter included in the 2023 index, 15 out of 20 states recorded lower 2023 scores compared to 2019.

The steepest fall in scores over five years was seen in Maharashtra, which scored 45 out of 100 in 2023 compared to 74 out of 100 in 2019, followed by Bihar, which scored 20.5 in 2023 compared to 46 in 2019, and Gujarat, which scored 48.5 in 2023 compared to 73 in 2019. Ensuring food safety is the task of each state's apex food safety authority.

Since 2019, FSSAI has released the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) each year on June 7 on the occasion of World Food Safety Day. Over five years, the worst drop has been recorded in the 'Food Testing Infrastructure' parameter, where the average score for all large states dropped to 7 points out of 17 in 2023 from 13 points out of 20 in 2019. States including Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh all recorded lower scores for this parameter. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, meanwhile, recorded lower scores for the 'Compliance' parameter.

In 2020, the average of total scores given to all large states improved marginally to 56 points out of 100 from 52 points in 2019, when the index was first published. In 2021 and 2022, however, the average score dropped to 51 points for both years. The steepest fall was observed in the 2023 index when the average score dropped to 40 points.

FSSAI did not respond to a detailed questionnaire.

SFSI scores, which have been assigned annually to states since 2019, are given out of a total of 100 points that are calculated on the basis of five parameters with different weightages — 'Human Resources and Institutional Data', 'Compliance', 'Food Testing Infrastructure', 'Training and Capacity Building', and 'Consumer Empowerment'.

In the 2023 index, a new parameter called 'Improvement in SFSI Rank' was added, which assesses improvement in each state's rank from the year before. To accommodate for the new parameter, weightages of other parameters were reduced so that the total score does not exceed 100. When the 2023 scores are adjusted to exclude the new parameter for comparison purposes, 15 out of 20 large states record a drop in their scores from their 2019 scores. When scores from the two years are compared as it is without any adjustment, all large states record a drop in their scores with the sole exception of Punjab, which improved to 57.5 in 2023 from 47 in 2019.

The worst drop has been observed in the 'Food Testing Infrastructure' parameter, which was given the fourth highest weightage of 17 per cent in 2023 (20 per cent in previous years). This parameter measures availability of adequate testing infrastructure with trained personnel in each state for testing food samples. The average score for all large states for this parameter dropped to 7 points out of 17 in 2023 from 13 points out of 20 in 2019.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

### STATES WITH STEEPEST INDEX FALL

| State | 2019 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| Maharashtra | 74 | 45 |
| Bihar | 46 | 20.5 |
| Gujarat | 73 | 48.5 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 47 | 24 |
| Chhattisgarh | 46 | 27 |

*Source: SFSI reports; all scores out of 100*

### SAFETY MEASURE

| Parameter | Weight |
|---|---|
| Compliance | 28 |
| Consumer Empowerment | 19 |
| Human Resources and Institutional Data | 18 |
| Food Testing Infrastructure | 17 |
| Improvement in SFSI Rank *(added in 2023)* | 10 |
| Training and Capacity Building | 8 |
| TOTAL | 100 |

**Context**: Recently, the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) noted** that, four years after **publishing a state-wise index to boost food safety**, 19 out of 20 large states, including Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh, recorded a decline in their 2023 scores compared to 2019.

### State food Safety Index

- **Developed by**: FSSAI
- **1st State Food Safety Index**: Released in 2019
- **Objective**: The index is a benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States/UTs.
- **Parameters**: Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing – Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training & Capacity Building and Consumer Empowerment.
- **Findings**: The **steepest fall in scores over five years** was observed in **Maharashtra, followed by Bihar and Gujarat.** Ensuring food safety is the responsibility of each state's apex food safety authority.

### Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- **Established**: Under Food Safety and Standards , 2006
- **Nodal Ministry**: A statutory body under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare with a mandate to ensure public health at large.
- **Headquarters**: Delhi
- **Aim**: To regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

PIB Nov 1

# ETCA
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

## India and Sri Lanka re-launch negotiations of the Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA)

**Context**: India and Sri Lanka recently held the 12th round of negotiations on the **Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) in Colombo**, fostering bilateral economic ties.

**Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA)**

- **Enhanced Economic Partnership**: ETCA, replacing CEPA, represents a pivotal reform for strengthening the economic partnership between India and Sri Lanka.
- **Focus**: ETCA aims to establish an agreement on trade in services and technological exchange, addressing the shortcomings of CEPA.
- **Technical Collaboration and Research**: The ETCA agreement seeks to promote cooperation in technical areas, scientific expertise, and research among institutions.
- **Improved Quality**: ETCA boost standard of goods and services, able to compete on global market and improve opportunities for man power training and human resource development
- **Investment in Key Sectors**: Oil farms in Trincomalee, renewable energy, infrastructure, and emerging business sectors.
- **India's Post-War Economic Involvement**: India views ETCA as a mechanism to actively participate in Sri Lanka's post-war economic development by making Indian investments in selected sectors.
- **Integration into Indian Supply Chain**: The Sri Lankan government aspires to leverage ETCA to become a part of the Indian supply chain, capitalizing on India's "Make in India" initiative to boost its manufacturing sector.

**Objectives of ETCA**

- **To strengthen and advance the economic, trade**, investment and technology cooperation between the two parties
- To **promote further liberalization of trade in goods**, liberalizing trade in services and gradually establish fair, transparent and facilitative trading, investment and investment protection mechanisms
- To **expand areas of economic cooperation** and establish a cooperation mechanism.

WWF'S REPRT ON GRASSLANDS
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

# WWF: 32 million acres of grasslands across US & Canadian Great Plains ploughed up since 2012

**Context**: The **recent report from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)** reveals that an area of **Great Plains grasslands larger than the state of Delaware** in the United States has been lost in just one year, primarily due to ploughing for row crop agriculture.

**Key Highlights of Report**

- The **report analysed the rate of grassland** ploughing across the US and Canadian portions of the Great Plains.
- The **majority of the grasslands with the best agricultural soils** were ploughed up decades ago. The remaining intact grasslands are not always as productive for row-crop farming.
- The l**oss of grasslands affects all**, not just the people living in those areas. **When grasslands are ploughed, increasing amounts of carbon** are released into the atmosphere, increasing the likelihood of frequent and intense droughts.

**World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)**

- **Established**: In 1961
- **Headquarter**: In Gland, Switzerland.
- **Previously known as the**: World Wildlife Fund
- **Mission**: WWF's mission is to halt the degradation of the planet's natural environment and create a future in which humans coexist harmoniously with nature.
- **Global Reach**: The world's largest conservation organization, boasting over five million supporters across 100 countries.

NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Nov 1

# CAYMAN ISLANDS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

## Cayman Islands' exit from FATF grey list to boost FDI inflow in India




**Context**: Cayman Islands' **recent exit from the FATF grey list is expected** to bolster global private equity funds looking to invest in **non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) based in India**.

**Cayman Islands**

- **About**: The Cayman Islands, a British Overseas Territory in the Western Caribbean Sea, comprises three islands: Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman, situated south of Cuba and northwest of Jamaica.
- **History**: Colonized by the British during the 18th and 19th centuries and administered by Jamaica after 1863.
  - **In 1959, they became a territory** within the Federation of the West Indies.
  - When the **Federation dissolved in 1962,** the Cayman Islands chose to remain a British dependency.
- **Language**: English is the predominant language, but many residents speak local Creole dialects.
- **Geography**: The Cayman Islands have low-lying geography with coral reefs.
- **Capital**: George Town.
- **Currency**: Cayman Island dollar.

**Economy**

- The Cayman Islands **have a mixed economic system** and serve as a thriving offshore financial centre.
- They are **known as a tax haven because** they **do not impose corporate tax**, attracting multinational corporations to establish subsidiary entities for tax benefits.
- **Residents enjoy a tax-free environment** with no income, property, capital gains, payroll, or withholding taxes.
- **Revenue is generated through tourism-related fees**, work permits, financial transactions, and import duties.

PIB

Nov 1

# UNESCO'S CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK
## (Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – International Organization)

## PM lauds inclusion of Kozhikode as 'City of Literature' and Gwalior as the 'City of Music' in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network

**Context**: The **Prime Minister of India recently lauded** the inclusion of **Kozhikode as the 'City of Literature'** and **Gwalior as the 'City of Music' in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network**. Shri Modi congratulated the people of Kozhikode and Gwalior on this remarkable achievement.

**UNESCO's Creative Cities Network**

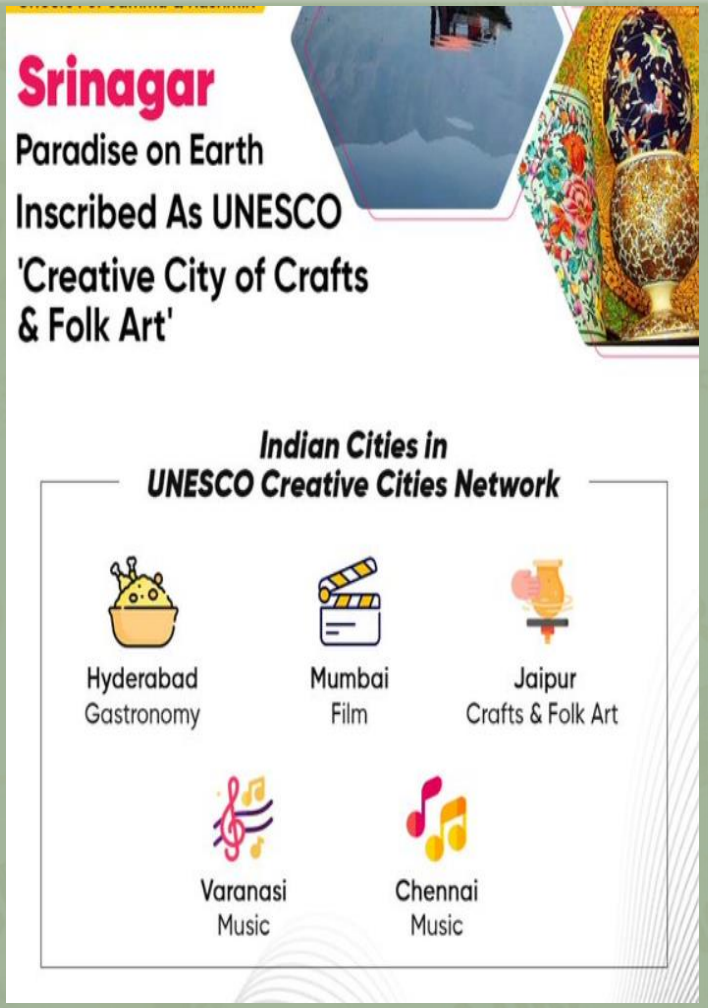
- **Established**: It was created in 2004.
- **Aim**: To "promote cooperation among cities which recognize creativity as a strategic factor in their urban development".
- **Aim**: Sustainable Development Goal 11 aims for Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- **Covers seven creative fields**: crafts and folk arts, media arts, film, design, gastronomy, literature and music.

**Indian Cities on UCCN**

- **Srinagar** - Crafts and Folk Arts (2021)
- **Mumbai** – Film (2019).
- **Hyderabad** – Gastronomy (2019).
- **Chennai** - Creative city of Music (2017).
- **Jaipur** - Crafts and Folk Arts (2015).
- **Varanasi** - Creative city of Music (2015).

**UNESCO**

- **Formation**: 1945, is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris.
- **Objective**: It works to achieve peace and security by promoting international collaboration through educational, scientific, and cultural reforms.
- **Members**: 195 member states and 10 associate members. India is a founding member of the Organization.
- **Headquarter**: Paris, France.



# EXIM BANK OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economics)

## India Exim Bank lists $1 billion sustainability bond on LSE

Rhik Kundu
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NEW DELHI

The Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) on Wednesday listed its maiden 10-year $ 1 billion Sustainability Bond on the Sustainable Bond Market (SBM) Platform at the London Stock Exchange (LSE), the development finance institution said in a statement.

Sustainability bonds are issues where proceeds are used to finance a combination of green and social projects. The listing will give India Exim Bank access to a deep pool of capital and a wider investor base.

"Today, the Bank has seven of its issuances amounting to $4.7 billion, listed at the London Stock Exchange," said Harsha Bangari, managing director of India Exim Bank.

"The partnership has given our bonds better visibility, apart from providing access to a deep pool of capital and wide investor base," Bangari added.

India Exim Bank, which finances and facilitates India's international trade, issued the 10-year $ 1 billion sustainability bond in January 2023 from investors across the globe.



Harsha Bangari, managing director of India Exim Bank. REUTERS

The Union government-backed institution received an External Post Issuance Review in July 2023 after the completion of an evaluation of the projects and assets funded with proceeds from this bond. Following this, the London Stock Exchange conducted due diligence to qualify the bond listing under its Sustainable Bond Market Platform.

**Sustainability bonds are issues where proceeds are used to finance green and social projects**

"The recent developments and collaborative efforts between India and the UK in the financial sector have laid a strong foundation for continued cooperation and growth," said Vivek Joshi, secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.

According to a report by S&P Global, green, social, sustainable and sustainability-linked bond (GSSSB) issuance is forecast to reach $900 billion to $1 trillion in 2023.

The report stated that government action, broader market uncertainty, adaptation financing, and responding to credibility questions will help determine total issuance.

Apart from the London Stock Exchange, the India Exim Bank has listed its maiden 10-year $1 billion sustainability bond on the India International Exchange (INX), the country's first international exchange located at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

The bond is also listed on AFRINEX Ltd (Afrinex)'s AFEX Green platform dedicated to social, green, and sustainable financing and on the Singapore Exchange Securities Trading Ltd (SGX-ST).

**Context**: The **Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank)** recently listed its maiden 10-year $1 billion sustainability bond on the **Sustainable Bond Market (SBM) platform at the London Stock Exchange (LSE)**, the development finance institution said in a statement.

- **Sustainability bonds are issues** where proceeds are used to finance a combination of green and social projects.
- The **listing will give India Exim Bank access to a deeper pool** of capital and a wider investor base.

**EXIM Bank**

- **About**: It is the premier export finance institution of the country.
- **Established by**: Government of India, under the Export-Import Bank of India Act, 1981
- **Owned by**: Government of India.
- **Headquarter** : New Delhi.
- **Services:**
  - EXIM Bank offers **financial support to both exporters and importers**.
  - The **bank offers Lines of Credit (LOCs)** to foreign financial institutions, regional development banks, sovereign governments, and other overseas entities.
  - **EXIM Bank acts as the primary financial institution** responsible for coordinating the efforts of organizations involved in financing the import and export of goods and services, with the goal of enhancing the country's international trade.

TIMES OF INDIA

Nov 1

# BLACK STORK

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

# Black Stork spotted for 1st time in Hastinapur



**Context**: Recently, a **Black Stork, a species rarely seen**, has been spotted in the **Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh**.

**Black Stork**

- **About**: The black stork (Ciconia nigra ) is a large bird in the stork family Ciconiidae
- **Habitat**: It breeds in swampy, coniferous, and mixed forests.
  - It can also be found in grasslands, agricultural fields, and on the margins of lakes and rivers during winter.
  - It is a long-distance migrant, with European populations wintering in tropical Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asian populations in the Indian subcontinent.
- **Distribution**: It is mainly found in Europe, Asia, and African countries.
- **IUCN Status**: Least concern

**Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh**

- **Location**: State of Uttar Pradesh and It is one of the largest wildlife sanctuaries in northern India.
- It lies alongside the northern tip of the River Ganga, flowing through the districts of Muzaffarnagar and Bijnor.
- **Flora**: It has a variety of landforms and is a mixture of different habitats such as wetlands, marshes, dry sand beds, and gently sloping ravines.
- **Fauna:** Swamp Deer, Leopard, Wild Cats, Wild Otter, Pythons etc.
- It is a part of the "Asia Flyway" project, and many migratory Birds, both local and foreign, flock in numbers near the numerous water bodies present in the region

**HINDUSTAN TIMES** Page 11

# COMMITTEE OF PRIVILAGE

**(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)**

## RS panel to hold meeting, take up pending cases of privilege breach

HT Correspondent
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The Rajya Sabha's privileges committee will hold a meeting on Friday to review all pending cases of breach of privilege against lawmakers, officials aware of the matter said, two days after the Supreme Court said that an indefinite suspension of a member of Parliament, especially from the Opposition, was a matter of serious concern.

The complaints against suspended Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) lawmakers Raghav Chadha and Sanjay Singh, and Trinamool Congress (TMC) parliamentarian Derek O'Brien were pending before the panel and are likely to be taken up during the November 3 meeting, according to the officials cited above.

"The Rajya Sabha's committee of privileges will meet on November 3 to review all pending cases to secure expeditious processing and finalisation of its report in breach of privilege cases for consideration of its recommendations by the states," said an official, requesting anonymity. In a notification, the Rajya Sabha secretariat confirmed that the meeting will take place on Friday but added that its agenda will be circulated later.

"The complaints against AAP MPs Raghav Chadha and Sanjay Singh, and TMC MP Derek O'Brien are before the committee. The upcoming meet of the committee holds significance against the backdrop of the recent Supreme Court observations while hearing Raghav Chadha's petition against his suspension," said the official quoted earlier.



The Rajya Sabha's committee of privileges will meet on November 3.

The 34-year-old AAP MP was suspended on August 11 during the Monsoon session of Parliament over an alleged breach of privilege. Chadha was accused of not taking the consent of five Rajya Sabha MPs before including their names in a select committee for considering the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill 2023 that seeks to diminish the power of the elected AAP government in the Capital over services.

On a complaint by the five MPs alleging breach of privilege, the same was referred to the privileges committee and he was suspended till the committee submitted its final report.

Singh was suspended from the Upper House on July 24 for repeatedly "violating" the directives of the chair. At least three privilege notices are pending against Derek O'Brien.

Hearing Chadha's plea against his suspension, the top court on Monday said that ousting an opposition MP not only deprived the people of that constituency of representation in the House but also removes a voice distinct from the ruling party. "He (Chadha) is a member of the Opposition and it's important to have such voices in Parliament. We must be very careful about excluding members of the Opposition from Parliament," said a bench, led by Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud.

**Context**: The **Rajya Sabha's privileges committee** will meet next week to review the **recently reported cases of breach of privilege** against members of Parliament (MPs).

### Breach of Privilege

- A breach of privilege **refers to the violation of the privileges of MPs or Parliament**.
- Actions that **cast reflections on MPs, Parliament, or its committees** can be regarded as breaches of privilege.
- Such actions encompass the **publishing of news items, editorials, or statements** in newspapers, magazines, TV interviews, or public speeches.

### Parliamentary Privilege

- Parliamentary privilege **encompasses the rights, immunities, and exemptions** granted to Parliament and individual MPs, enabling them to fulfil their constitutional duties effectively.
- **When any of these rights and immunities are violated**, it constitutes a breach of privilege, subject to legal consequences under parliamentary law.
- A **member of either House can initiate proceedings** against those **found guilty of breaching privilege** by submitting a motion in the form of a notice.

### Committee of Privileges

- **About:** It is a Parliamentary Committee present in both the Houses of the Parliament.
- **Composition:** 15 members in Lok Sabha (10 in case of Rajya Sabha) nominated by the Speaker (Chairman in case of Rajya Sabha).
- **Functions**: The **committee reviews matters related to breaches of privilege**.
- The **committee outlines the steps** for the House to implement its recommendations.
- If the **Speaker refers a privilege question to the Committee**, the **Committee's report is presented** to the Speaker, who may make final decisions or have it placed on the House's Table.

DTE

Nov 1

# IMF REPORT ON RENEWABLE ENERGY
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env & Eco)

## Morocco should harness its abundant renewable energy potential for climate mitigation: IMF

**Context**: A **recent report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)** highlighted that Morocco possesses significant renewable energy potential that can serve as a **strategic tool for climate mitigation**.

**Key Points**

- **According to the IMF** report, **Morocco can capitalise on its abundant renewable energy** resources to reduce its persistently high dependence on fossil fuels.
- Morocco has one of the **world's highest rates of solar insolation**, with around 3,000 hours of sunshine annually.
- The Morocco Country Climate and Development Report for 2022 forecasts that over **85% of electricity could originate from renewable energy** sources by 2050.

**India's Status in Renewable Energy**

- **India stands 4th globally in Renewable Energy** Installed Capacity (including Large Hydro), **4th in Wind Power capacity** & **4th in Solar Power capacity** (as per REN21 Renewables 2022 Global Status Report).
- The country has set an enhanced **target at the COP26 of 500 GW** of non-fossil fuel-based energy by 2030.

**Morocco**

- **Location**: Western North Africa.
- **Boundary**: Algeria to the east and southeast, Western Sahara to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north.
- **Strait**: It lies directly across the Strait of Gibraltar from Spain.
- **Climate**: Mediterranean climate, with mild wet winters and hot dry summers.
- **Mountain Ranges**: The Atlas Mountains dominate the central part of the country, while the Rif Mountains make up the northern edge.

**International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

- **About:** The IMF works to achieve sustainable growth and prosperity for all of its member countries.
- **Establishment**: In 1944 in the aftermath of the Great Depression of the 1930s.
- **Member countries**: 190 countries.
- **Headquarters**: Washington, D.C

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