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ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

**Science
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विज्ञान एवं
प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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121 more airports to use green energy

Twenty-five airports in the country are using 100% green energy, while another 121 airports will be made carbon neutral by 2025, Union aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia announced. Scindia made the comments in his virtual address at the two-day EU-India aviation summit.

"The emission contribution of the aviation industry has been under immense scrutiny. We have taken several measures to minimize the carbon footprint and mitigate emissions from the aviation industry," said Scindia asserting that India and the European Union have a common goal of tackling climate change. "We are encouraging our airports to use green energy by 2024 and achieve net zero by 2030. Twenty-five of our airports are already using 100% green energy. Our target is to make another 121 airports carbon neutral by 2025," he added.

PTI

Context: Twenty-five airports in the country are using **100 percent green energy**, while another 121 airports will be made carbon neutral by 2025, Union Aviation Minister said.

Key Facts

- The **Cochin International Airport (Kerala)** became the world's first fully solar-powered airport.
- The **Indira Gandhi International Airport** has become the first in India to run completely on solar and hydropower.
- India is **world's 3rd largest consumer of electricity** and world's 3rd largest renewable energy producer with 40% of energy capacity installed in the year 2022 (160 GW of 400 GW) coming from renewable sources.
- India **ranked third globally for the total installed capacity** of wind power (40.1 GW), behind China and the US.
 - With 72.3% of the total capacity, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Karnataka, and Maharashtra remained the top markets for wind.
- The **top three states for solar energy production** were Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.
- The **top five hydroelectric power plants** in the nation are located in the states of Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Maharashtra.
- Rajgir in Bihar, Manikaran in Himachal Pradesh, Surajkund in Jharkhand, Tapoban in Uttarakhand, and the Sohana region in Haryana are among the interesting **geothermal sites** for direct heat usage applications.
- The **major States for biomass power projects** are Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu.

No Move to Decriminalise 1st Time Drug Offenders

NDPS Act won't be amended; decriminalising law does not solve the problem, says official citing a study

Rahul.Tripathi@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: There will be no amendments to the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act, 1985, to decriminalise personal consumption of drugs, officials said after the first deliberations on the matter by the Central and State Anti-Narcotics Task Force.

Officials said it has been observed from a study carried out in countries facing major drug challenges that decriminalising the law does not resolve the problem and instead an estimated 70% of population in these countries, mostly youths, were addicted to



SEA CHANNEL

As many as 60-70% of drugs consumed in India are smuggled into the country mainly through the sea route, says NCB

drugs. Several non-governmental organisations and civil society groups have called for amending the NDPS Act and decriminalising section 27 of NDPS Act, 1985, for first-time users.

During the two-day conference, discussions were held on how to curb the use of dark net and cryptocurrency, use of modern tech such as block chain analysis, intelligence mapping and digital forensics, among others.

According to the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), the number of NDPS cases registered increased 181% to 3,544 in 2014-22 from 1,257 in 2006-13, while the number of people arrested during the period surged to 5,408 from 1,363 persons. Similarly, the value of drugs seized in 2014-22 was estimated to be ₹22,000 crore, as compared to ₹768 crore in 2006-13, a whopping increase of 30 times. The drugs seized during this period increased to about 373,000 kg from about 152,000 kg.

As many as 60-70 per cent of drugs consumed in India are smuggled into the country mainly through the sea route, said the NCB.

Penalty under NDPS Act

- The penalties under this Act are severe considering the consequences of drug abuse and its trafficking.
- The offences under the Act attract **jail terms ranging from one year to 20 years** and fine depending on the crime.
- Under the Act, **abetment, criminal conspiracy** and even attempts to commit an offence attract the same punishment as the offence itself.
- Preparation to **commit an offence attracts half the penalty**.
- **Repeat offences** attract one and a half times the penalty and in some cases, the death penalty.

Narcotics Control Bureau

- NCB is the **nodal drug law enforcement and intelligence agency** of India responsible for fighting drug trafficking and the abuse of illegal substance.
- It functions under **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.

Context: There will be no amendments to the **Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act, 1985**, to decriminalise personal consumption of drugs, officials said after the first deliberations on the matter by the Central and State Anti-Narcotics Task Force.

- Several non-governmental organisations and civil society groups have called for amending the **NDPS Act and decriminalising section 27 of NDPS Act, 1985**, for first-time users.

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

- The NDPS Act **prohibits a person** from the production/manufacturing/cultivation, possession, sale, purchasing, transport, storage, and/or consumption of any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.
- Initially enacted in 1985, the Act was **amended three times in 1988, 2001 and 2014**.
- According to the Act, narcotic drugs include **coca leaf, cannabis (hemp), opium, and poppy straw**; and psychotropic substances include any natural or synthetic material or any salt or preparation protected by the Psychotropic Substances Convention of 1971.
- All the offences under the NDPS Act are **non-bailable**.
- Under the Act, **property** acquired by a person from drug-related offences, who has been convicted under the Act can be **seized, frozen and forfeited by the government**.
- Also, **no relief can be sought by the drug convicts** by termination, remission, and commutation of sentences passed.
- The **bail provision** under NDPS requires the court to have **"reasonable grounds"** to believe that the accused is not guilty and that he is unlikely to commit another offence while on bail.

In first-ever waterbody census, Bengal tops list of states with most ponds and reservoirs

Over 24 lakh waterbodies across India, states census data released recently by Ministry of Jal Shakti

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 20

INDIA HAS 24.24 lakh waterbodies like ponds, tanks and lakes, with West Bengal accounting for the most (7.47 lakh) and Sikkim the least (134), according to the report of the first census of waterbodies released by the Ministry of Jal Shakti recently.

The report states, "24,24,540 waterbodies have been enumerated in the country, out of which 97.1% (23,50,555) are in rural areas and only 2.9% (69,485) in urban areas."

The census defines a waterbody as "all natural or man-made units bounded on all sides with some or no masonry work used for storing water for irrigation or other purposes (example industrial, pisciculture, domestic/drinking, recreation, religious, ground water recharge etc)".

"Waterbodies are usually of various types known by different names like tank, reservoirs, ponds and bundhies etc. A structure where water from ice-melt,

The census defines a waterbody as 'all natural or man-made units bounded on all sides with some or no masonry work used for storing water for irrigation or other purposes'

streams, springs, rain or drainage of water from residential or other areas is accumulated or water is stored by diversion from a stream, nala or river will also be treated as waterbody," state the report. The waterbodies census was conducted along with the 6th Minor Irrigation Census for 2017-18. The results of the census have been released recently.

As per the report, 59.5 per cent (14,42,993) of waterbodies are ponds, followed by tanks (15.7 per cent i.e. 3,81,805), reservoirs (12.1 per cent i.e. 2,92,280), water conservation schemes/percolation tanks/check dams (9.3% i.e. 2,26,217), lakes (0.9% i.e. 22,361)

and others (2.5% i.e. 58,884)". According to the report, "West Bengal has the highest number of ponds and reservoirs, whereas Andhra Pradesh has highest number of tanks. Tamil Nadu has the highest number of lakes and Maharashtra is the leading state with water conservation schemes."

West Bengal's South 24 Parganas has been ranked as the top district having the highest (3.55 lakh) number of waterbodies across the country. In addition to West Bengal, six other states have over one lakh waterbodies, while four states and UTs account for less than 1,000 waterbodies each (see box).

The census also collected data on encroachment of waterbodies for the first time. "1.6% waterbodies out of all the enumerated waterbodies are reported to be encroached, out of which 95.4% are in rural areas and remaining 4.6% in urban areas. Out of all encroached waterbodies, 62.8% have less than 25% area under encroachment, whereas 11.8% waterbodies have over 75% area under encroachment," said the report.

WATERBODY COUNT

STATES WITH MOST WATERBODIES

State	No. of water bodies
West Bengal	7,47,480
Uttar Pradesh	2,45,087
Andhra Pradesh	1,90,777
Odisha	1,81,837
Assam	1,72,492
Jharkhand	1,07,598
Tamil Nadu	1,06,957

STATES/UTs WITH LEAST WATERBODIES

Sikkim	134
Chandigarh	188
Delhi	893
Arunachal Pradesh	993

WATERBODIES LOST TO ENCROACHMENTS

Uttar Pradesh	15,301
Tamil Nadu	8,366
Andhra Pradesh	3,920



No encroachment on waterbodies was reported from West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Chandigarh. Source: Waterbody census

Context: India has 24.24 lakh water bodies like ponds, tanks and lakes, with West Bengal accounting for the most (7.47 lakh) and Sikkim the least (134), according to the report of the first census of water bodies released by the Ministry of Jal Shakti recently.

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Key Points

- The census defines a waterbody as "all natural or man-made units bounded on all sides with some or no masonry work used for storing water for irrigation or other purposes (example industrial, pisciculture, domestic/drinking, recreation, religious, ground water recharge etc)"
- According to the report, "West Bengal has the highest number of ponds and reservoirs, whereas Andhra Pradesh has highest number of tanks. Tamil Nadu has the highest number of lakes and Maharashtra is the leading state with water conservation schemes."
- The census also collected data on encroachment of water bodies for the first time.
 - 1.6% water bodies out of all the enumerated water bodies are reported to be encroached, out of which 95.4% are in rural areas and remaining 4.6% in urban areas.
 - Out of all encroached water bodies, 62.8% have less than 25% area under encroachment, whereas 11.8% water bodies have more than 75% area under encroachment.

Sloth bear falls into well, drowns after being darted during rescue mission

The Hindu Bureau
 THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A sloth bear that fell into a well on a private property at Vellanad in the district drowned on Thursday morning.

The sloth bear, protected under Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act, had been darted around 9 a.m. However, it slipped from the net that had been lowered as a safety measure, fell into the water and drowned.

It was around 1.30 a.m. on Thursday that the Forest department received information that the bear had fallen into the well, presumably while trying to catch fowl. Around 5 a.m., Thiruvananthapuram DFO K.I. Pradeep Kumar visited the spot and conducted an assessment.



Tragic incident: The sloth bear which drowned after falling into a well at Vellanad in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday. PTI

It was felt that leaving the animal in the well for long would endanger its life. However, bringing it out without darting was risky since the area was in-

habited and more than 10 km away from the forest. As a last resort, it was decided to dart the bear, the DFO said.

The first attempt to dart the animal was unsuccessful but the second yielded the desired result. However, the bear that had been trying to clamber the walls of the well in order to come out slipped into the water when the net underneath it tilted, the DFO said. As the dart started taking effect, the animal went inside the water that was deep. Though attempts were made to reach it, these proved futile.

Minister for Forest A.K. Saseendran has announced a probe into the incident. The People for Animals has decided to move court against the death of the bear.

Context: A sloth bear that fell into a well on a private property at Vellanad in the district drowned.

Sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*)

- **About:** Sloth bears are found in **Sri Lanka, India, Bhutan and Nepal**, predominantly in lowland areas.
- **Habitat:** It is a **forest-dwelling member of the family Ursidae** (comprises 8 species of bears) that inhabits tropical or subtropical regions of India and Sri Lanka.
- **Feeding Habit:** Sloth bears primarily eat **termites and ants**, and unlike other bear species, they routinely carry their cubs on their backs.
 - They are also very **fond of honey**, hence their alternative name of “honey bear”.
 - Sloth bears **do not hibernate**.
- **Protection Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable.
 - **CITES listing:** Appendix I.
 - **Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I.

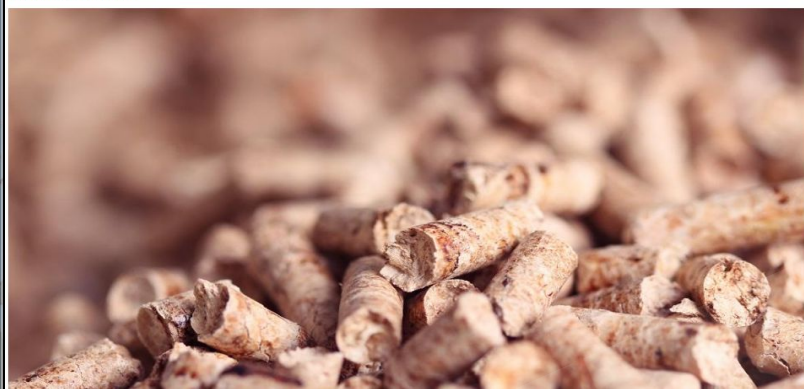
BIOMASS PELLET

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Biomass pellets: CPCB's revised grants highly inadequate to close demand-supply gap

CPCB has underestimated the cost of setting up a pellet manufacturing unit, say experts

By Anubha Aggarwal
Published: Thursday 20 April 2023



- In the case of **manufacturing torrefied biomass**, **no changes** are introduced in the fund allocation in the revised CPCB guidelines.
 - As previously, these units are entitled to receive Rs 28 lakhs per TPH of production capacity.
- Despite the mandate by the Ministry of Power and the Commission for **Air Quality Management in Delhi-NCR** and adjoining areas, the power plants co-fire biomass pellets only intermittently due to the unavailability of adequate and regular supply of biomass pellets to the power plants.
- There is an **imminent need to escalate the biomass pellet manufacturing capacity** in the country if the government is serious about the realisation of its policy for 5-10 per cent of biomass co-firing in coal thermal power plants.

Context: The **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** revised the financial grants for **biomass pellet** manufacturing units in March 2023.

Biomass Pellets

- **About:** Biomass Pellets are a **popular type of biomass fuel**, generally made from wood wastes, agricultural biomass, commercial grasses and forestry residues.
 - It is **mandatory to use biomass or agricultural residue** as combustion fuel along with coal in coal-fired thermal power plants.
 - The biomass used for **co-combustion in the power plants** is processed and refined into pellets with a calorific value comparable to coal.
- **Types:** Biomass pellets are of two kinds - **torrefied and non-torrefied**.
 - **Torrefied:** Biomass, **if processed at 250-350°C in the absence of oxygen**, leads to the formation of torrefied biomass.
 - **Non-torrefied:** Whereas, in the case of non-torrefied pellets, **biomass is shredded, grinded** and sent to a pellet reactor, where it is compressed into pellet form with the help of binders such as sawdust, bagasse, molasses, starch and others.

Revised Guidelines

- The CPCB has **underestimated the cost** of setting up a pellet manufacturing unit.
 - The revised guidelines have pitched the **capital for setting up a palletisation unit at Rs 70 lakhs** with machinery costing Rs 35 lakhs and the remaining Rs 35 lakhs for air pollution control device and automation unit.
- The CPCB has increased the **budget for manufacturing non-torrefied biomass** pellets to 28 lakhs from 14 lakhs.
 - The cost of machinery with a production capacity of one tonne per hour (TPH) is approximately Rs 1 crore.
 - This implies that grants would cover only 28 per cent of the capital investment on machinery as opposed to the claim by the CPCB to fund 40 per cent of the capital cost.

Sky is the limit for space sector in Isro's new policy

Door now open for private players

SHINE JACOB
Chennai, 20 April

The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) on Thursday came out with the Indian Space Policy 2023 to promote greater private sector participation in the entire value chain of the space economy.

According to the policy, Isro will encourage new-generation entities to participate in space exploration and human presence in outer space, including collaboration with domestic and international stakeholders.

The policy also sets a road map for Isro to transition from manufacturing operational space systems to focus energies on research and development in advanced tech-

nologies. The government's major focus point is to create a stable and predictable regulatory framework to provide a level playing field to non-government entities in the space sector through IN-SPACE, an organisation that acts as a medium

between Isro and the private space sector in India.

Regarding the private sector participation, the policy said Indian consumers of space technology or services (such as communication, remote sensing, data-services, launch-services, etc), whether from public or private sectors, will be allowed to directly procure them from any source, whether private or public. "This policy provides the much-needed clarity on all space

INDIAN CONSUMERS OF SPACE TECHNOLOGY OR SERVICES WILL BE ALLOWED TO DIRECTLY PROCURE THEM FROM ANY SOURCE, WHETHER PRIVATE OR PUBLIC



According to the policy, Isro will encourage new-generation entities to participate in space exploration and human presence in outer space

activities, especially regarding space communication and other applications. It will be a catalyst for development of a robust, innovative and globally competitive space ecosystem in India," said A K Bhatt, director general, Indian Space

Association. The policy states that new-generation entities will be allowed to undertake end-to-end activities in the sector through establishment and operation of space objects, ground-based assets and related services, such as com-

munication, remote sensing, and navigation.

Through IN-SPACE, new-generation entities will be encouraged to offer national and international space-based communication services, through self-owned or procured or leased GSO/NGSO communication satellites.

According to the plan, Isro may enable open data access from remote sensing satellites.

Data with a ground sample distance of five meters and higher will be made easily accessible on a timely basis.

The policy also made the public sector undertaking NewSpace India responsible for commercialising space technologies and platforms created through public expenditure. It will also look into aspects like manufacture, lease, or procure space components, technologies, platforms and other assets from the private or public sector, on sound commercial principles.

Context: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) came out with the **Indian Space Policy 2023** to promote greater private sector participation in the entire value chain of the space economy.

Highlights of the Indian Space Policy 2023

- The policy seeks to **institutionalize the private sector participation** in the space sector, with ISRO focusing on research and development of advanced space technologies.
- The private sector can take part in **end-to-end space activities** that include building satellites, rockets, launch vehicles, data collection, and dissemination.
- The policy **encourages the private sector to invest in creating new infrastructure** for the sector and outlines the framework for the private sector to use ISRO facilities for a small charge.
- **India's share in the global space economy** (currently at less than 2%) will be increased to 10% in the future.
- The policy delineates the roles and responsibilities:
 - **ISRO:** It will focus on developing new technologies, new systems, and research and development. It will not do any operational and production work for the space sector.
 - **NSIL:** It will carry out strategic activities related to the space sector and will work in a demand-driven mode.
 - **INSPACE:** It will be the interface between Indian Space Research Organisation and non-governmental entities.
- The **operational part** of ISRO's missions will be **moved to the NSIL**

Assam, Arunachal end decades-old border row

Bharti Jain & Prabin Kalita

New Delhi/Guwahati: Taking a big step in establishing “long-lasting peace” in the northeast, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh on Thursday signed a pact to settle the decades-old border dispute relating to 123 villages spread over the 700-km inter-state border.

The boundary agreement was signed by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma and Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Pema Khandu in the presence of home minister Amit Shah here at the North Block. Law minister Kiren Rijiju was also present during the occasion. Shah welcomed the “historic feat” to settle a boundary row that was left to simmer for past several decades.

► Talks on: Himanta, P 14



Assam CM Himanta B Sarma (L) & Arunachal CM Pema Khandu signed the pact in Amit Shah's presence

India for promoting talks: Shah at SCO

At an SCO meet chaired by Amit Shah in Delhi on Thursday, India emphasised its priority in the region is to ensure an environment of security and respect for sovereignty & integrity. Shah said India attaches special importance to the SCO in promoting dialogue on political, security & economic issues. P 14

Context: Assam and Arunachal Pradesh signed a pact to settle the decades-old border dispute relating to 123 villages spread over the 700-km inter-state border.

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh border dispute

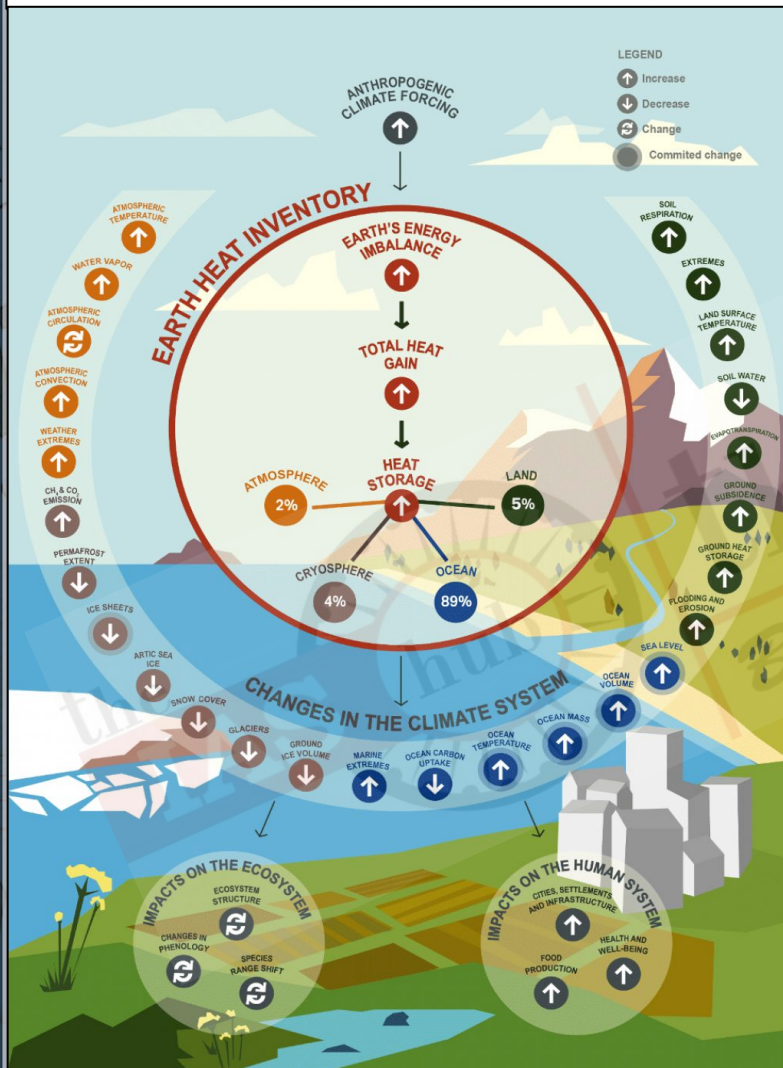
- Arunachal Pradesh and Assam have **disputes at about 1,200 points along their 804 km boundary.**
- The disputes cropped up in the 1970s and intensified in the 1990s with frequent flare-ups along the border.
- However, the issue dates back to 1873 when the **British government introduced the inner-line regulation** vaguely separating the plains from the frontier hills that were later designated as the North-East Frontier Tracts in 1915.
- This area became the **North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1954**, three years after a notification based on the 1951 report saw 3,648 sq. km of the “plain” area of Balipara and Sadiya foothills being transferred to the Darrang and Lakhimpur districts of Assam.
- Arunachal Pradesh has been celebrating its **statehood** on a grand scale with an eye on China since 1987, but what has been causing resentment is the inability of the people living in the transferred patches to join in the celebration.
- Leaders in Arunachal Pradesh claim the transfer was done arbitrarily without consulting its tribes who had customary rights over these lands.
 - Their counterparts in Assam say the 1951 **demarcation is constitutional and legal.**
- The apex court appointed a **local boundary commission in 2006** headed by one of its retired judges.
 - In its September 2014 report, this commission recommended that **Arunachal Pradesh** should get back **some of the areas transferred** in 1951 besides advising both the States to find a middle path through discussions. **This did not work out.**

EARTH'S ENERGY BALANCE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)

Oceans absorb 90% of human-induced planet warming: Study

Earth's energy is out of balance; planet to warm more if imbalance persists or increases, paper warns



Context: Human-induced climate change is skewing **Earth's energy balance** and oceans are bearing the brunt of the heat accumulation, according to a new study.

Key Points

- About 89 per cent of the warming in the last 50 years has been absorbed by the ocean and the rest by the **land, cryosphere and atmosphere**.
 - About 381 zettajoules (ZJ) of heat accumulated on the planet from 1971-2020 due to anthropogenic emissions.
 - One ZJ is equal to 10 to the power of 21 joules.
- This roughly equals a heating rate (**Earth Energy Imbalance or EEI**) of approximately 0.48 watts per square metre.
 - EEI is the **difference between incoming and outgoing solar radiation**.
 - It is an **indicator of climate change** that provides an estimate of how much, how fast, and where the Earth's climate is warming, as well as how this will evolve in the future.
- About **89 per cent of the accumulated heat is stored in the ocean**, six per cent on land, a per cent in the atmosphere and about four per cent available for melting the cryosphere.
- Antarctic Ice Sheet**, including the floating and grounded ice, contributed about 33 per cent to the total cryosphere heat gain.
- Arctic sea ice** stood second, having contributed 26 per cent.
- Melting glaciers and the Greenland ice sheet** was responsible for 25 per cent and 17 per cent. The Antarctic Sea ice accounted for about 0.2 per cent.

Heat Budget

- The earth receives a certain **amount of Insolation (short waves)** and gives back heat into space by **terrestrial radiation (longwave radiation)**. Through this give and take, or the heat budget, the earth maintains a constant temperature.
- Earth's energy balance is governed by the first law of **thermodynamics**, also known as the law of conservation of energy.
- This law states that energy can be **transferred from one system to another** in many forms, but it cannot be created or destroyed.
- Therefore, any **energy "lost" during one process will equal** the same amount of energy "gained" during another.

PM Shri Narendra Modi inaugurates First Global Buddhist Summit hosted by Ministry of Culture in collaboration with International Buddhist Confederation.

Context: The Prime Minister addressed the inaugural session of the **Global Buddhist Summit** in New Delhi.

Key Points

- The two-day Summit is being hosted by the **Ministry of Culture** in collaboration with **International Buddhist Confederation** on 20-21 April.
 - International Buddhist Confederation** is the biggest religious Buddhist confederation, based in Delhi, India.
- The **theme** of the Global Buddhist Summit is **“Responses to Contemporary Challenges: Philosophy to Praxis”**.
- It is an effort towards engaging the global Buddhist Dhamma leadership and scholars on matters of Buddhist and universal concerns, and to come up with **policy inputs to address them collectively**.
- The discussion at the Summit explored how the Buddha Dhamma’s fundamental values can provide **inspiration and guidance** in contemporary settings.

4 Buddhist Councils after the death of Gautama Buddha

Council	First Council	Second Council	Third Council	Fourth Council
Year	486 BC	386 BC	250 BC	72 AD
Location	Rajgir	Vaishali	Pataliputra	Kundalavana
King	Ajatasatru	Kalasoka	Ashoka	Kanishka
Presiding Priest	Maha Kasyapa	Sabakami	Mogaliputta Tissa	Vasumitra
Purpose	Preserve Buddha’s teachings and rules for disciples	Settle a dispute over Vinaya and Ten Points Rules	Reconcile different schools of Buddhism and purify the Buddhist movement	Deal with a serious conflict between Sarvasthivada teachers of Kashmir and Gandhara
Outcome	Collection of Pali Tipitaka	Split of the Buddhist order into Theravada and Mahasanghika	Codification of Abhidhamma Pitaka and declaration of Sthaviravada School as orthodox	Sarvasthivada doctrines organized into commentaries; the Final division of Buddhism into Mahayana and Hinayana

PM praises “Abhilekh patal” a portal with over 1 Crore Pages of Historical Records of the National Archives

Context: The Prime Minister has praised “**Abhilekh patal**” a portal with over 1 Crore Pages of Historical Records of the National Archives.

Abhilekh patal

- **About:** Abhilekh patal is a **full-featured web-portal to access the National Archives of India's** reference media and its digitized collections through the internet.
 - Abhilekh is a Sanskrit term used in **India for records** since ancient times and Patal is a Sanskrit word meaning a board, platform, or a surface.
 - A combination of both these words has been adopted as an acronym for Portal for Access to **Archives and Learning**.
- **Functions:** It is ‘**work-in-progress**’ and both the reference media and the digital data will be regularly augmented.
- **Nodal Agency:** The **National Archives of India is the repository** of the non-current records of the Government of India and is holding them in trust for the use of records creators and general users.
 - It is an Attached Office of the **Ministry of Culture**, Government of India.

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