

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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Table of Content

- World Day Against Child Labour
- Government's Tax Devolution to States
- Global Gender Gap Index: WEF
- Eco-Sensitive Zones in Western Ghats

NEWS IN SHORTS

- Nitrous Oxide Emissions
- Craters on Mars Surface
- PAROS Treaty
- Fatty Liver Disease
- Elephants Call Each Other by Name: Study
- Reaming of Joshimath and Kosiyakutoli

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

In Context

- In 2002, the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** established **June 12th as the World Day Against Child Labour** to raise awareness about the global issue of child labor and advocate for its elimination.

About

- This year, in 2024, the day is observed under the theme, **“Let’s Act on Our Commitments: End Child Labour,”** which emphasizes the need for collective action to eradicate child labour and protect children from exploitation.
- This year also marks the **25th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour**. It’s also a chance to encourage all stakeholders to enhance their implementation of the two main conventions on child labour, namely Convention No. 182 and Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment or Work.

What is Child Labour?

- Child labour is defined as any **work that is inappropriate for a child’s age, physical, or mental capacity**, and its far-reaching consequences can have devastating effects on their development and future.
- In India, the Constitution explicitly prohibits children under the age of 14 from working in mines, factories, or hazardous occupations. Similarly, the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** defines a child as anyone below the age of 18 who should not be involved in hazardous work.
- The activities such as **helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours** and during school holidays are **not included in the Child Labour**.
- Article 24 of the Indian constitution** prohibits the employment of children below the **age of 14 years** in any factory or mine or employed in any hazardous employment.

Types of Child Labour

- Hazardous Child Labour:** This involves children working in dangerous environments or performing tasks that pose significant risks to their health,

safety, or morals. Examples include mining, construction, manufacturing with hazardous chemicals, and work involving heavy machinery.

- Domestic Child Labour:** Children, predominantly girls, are employed within households for tasks like cooking, cleaning, and childcare. This often involves long hours, minimal pay, and potential exposure to abuse.
- Bonded Child Labour:** Children are forced to work to repay a debt incurred by their family. This traps them in a cycle of exploitation, as the debt often becomes insurmountable.
- Child Trafficking:** Children are recruited, transported, or harbored for the purpose of exploitation, which can include forced labor, sexual exploitation, or organ trafficking.
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC):** Children are used in commercial sex acts, including prostitution and pornography. This is a grave violation of their rights and well-being.

Child labour in India: Data Facts

- According to **UNICEF**, child Labour amounts to approximately 13% of our workforce, or in other words, 1 in every 10 workers in India is a child.
- According to the Census 2011, there are **approximately 10.1 million child labourers in India aged between 5 to 14 years**.
- Boys constitute about 5.6 million and girls about 4.5 million of the total child labour population.
- The **prevalence of child labour in rural areas (14%)** is close to three times higher than in urban areas (5%).
- The **majority of child labourers (around 70%) work in the agriculture sector**, including farming, livestock, forestry, and fisheries followed by 20% in services.
- Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of child labourers**, approximately 2.1 million.

Impacts

- Health and Physical Development:** Child labour accompanied by poor nutrition stunt a child’s growth and development.
- Educational Impact:** This will increase school dropouts and absenteeism and missing out on education results in low literacy rates and lack of essential skill.

- **Economic Impact:** Child labour contributes to the cycle of poverty. As children grow up without proper education and skills, they are likely to remain in low-paying, unskilled jobs.
- **Social Inequality:** Child labour reinforces social inequalities, as children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be pushed into work.

Steps Taken to Eradicate Child Labour in India

- **Indian Constitution:** Article 21 A (Right to Education): The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years in such manner as the State, by law, may determine.
 - ♦ **Article 23:** Any type of forced labour is prohibited.
 - ♦ **Article 24:** It states that a child under 14 years cannot be employed to perform any hazardous work in any factory or mine.
 - ♦ **Article 39:** It states that “the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused”.
- **Child Labour Act (Prohibition and Regulation) 1986:** It prohibits children under the age of 14 years to be working in hazardous industries and processes.
- **National Policy on Child Labour, 1987:** It contains the action plan for tackling the problem of child labour.
- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015:** It governs laws relating to children alleged and found to be in conflict with the law.
- **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012:** It seeks to prevent commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- **Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill:** There are specified penalties for offences divided into “trafficking” and “aggravated trafficking”. It widened the scope of “victims” to include transgender persons.
- **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme:** The government initiated it in 1988 to rehabilitate working children in 12 child labour endemic districts of the country and expanded with time. This is the major Central Sector Scheme for the rehabilitation of child labour.
- **The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA):** CALPRA states

that no child shall be allowed to work for more than five hours in a day, and for not more than three hours without rest. The provisions of CALPRA also state, that at least 20% of the income earned by the child from the production or event is to be directly deposited in a fixed deposit account in a nationalised bank in the name of the child which may be credited to her/him on attaining majority.

- **Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL):** It is an electronic platform that aims at involving Centre, State, District, Governments, civil society and the general public in achieving the target of child labour free society.

International Efforts

- The United Nations made 2021 the **International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour**, calling for urgent action needed to meet a goal of ending the practice by 2025.
- The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target 8.7** adopted by world leaders in 2015, include a renewed global commitment to ending child labour.
- **ALLIANCE 8.7:** It is an inclusive global partnership committed to achieving Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It works for eradicating forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour around the world.
 - ♦ The International Labour Organization (ILO) currently serves as Secretariat for Alliance 8.7.

Challenges in Tackling Child labours

- **Poverty and Economic Pressures:** High poverty rates force families to rely on the income generated by their children to meet basic needs.
- **Lack of Access to Quality Education:** Insufficient educational infrastructure, lack of schools, and poor quality of education discourage attendance and completion.
- **Weak Enforcement of Laws:** Inadequate implementation and monitoring of child labour laws due to corruption, lack of resources, and administrative inefficiencies.
- **Informal Economy and Unregulated Sectors:** A significant portion of child labour occurs in informal sectors like agriculture, domestic work, and small-scale industries, which are hard to regulate.

- **Cultural Norms and Social Acceptance:** In many communities, child labour is culturally accepted and seen as a norm, making it challenging to change mindsets.
- **Migration and Displacement:** Migrant families and displaced populations are more vulnerable to child labour due to lack of stable income and access to social services.
- **Lack of Awareness:** Many parents and communities are unaware of the long-term negative impacts of child labour and the benefits of education.
- **Gender Disparities:** Girls are particularly vulnerable to exploitation in domestic work and are often kept out of school to help with household chores.
- **Child Trafficking:** Trafficking of children for labour is a significant issue, exacerbated by weak law enforcement and border controls.
- **Impact of COVID-19:** The pandemic has exacerbated the situation, pushing more children into labour due to economic hardship, school closures, and lack of access to remote education.

Way Ahead

- **Ensuring Access to Quality Education:** Empowering children with the knowledge and skills needed to break free from the constraints of child labour.
- **Strengthening Enforcement of Labour Laws and Providing Social Protection:** Implementing robust labour law enforcement and comprehensive social protection measures to safeguard children from exploitation.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

- It is a specialised agency of the **United Nations**. It is the **only tripartite U.N. agency** since 1919.
- The unique tripartite structure brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- **Aim:** To promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.
- **History:** Established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations.

- Became the first affiliated specialised agency of the **United Nations in 1946**.
- India is a **founder member of the ILO**.
- **Headquarter:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- Received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969
- **Flagship Reports of ILO are:**
 - ♦ Global Wage Report
 - ♦ World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO)
 - ♦ World Employment and Social Outlook
 - ♦ World Social Protection Report
 - ♦ World of Work Report

Source: AIR

GOVERNMENT'S TAX DEVOLUTION TO STATES

In Context

- The Central Government has released an instalment of 1.39 lakh crore for tax devolution to the states.

About

- It includes the regular devolution amount for June 2024 and an additional instalment, enabling State Governments to accelerate development and capital spending.
 - ♦ The additional funds will support State Governments in enhancing their developmental activities and infrastructure projects, thereby boosting economic growth at the state level.
- The Interim Budget for FY25 had earmarked Rs. 12.19 trillion towards devolution of taxes to states. With this release, the total amount devolved for FY25 to states till 10 June stands at Rs. 2.8 trillion.

About Tax devolution

- It is a crucial revenue stream for states, involving the Centre allocating tax collection to states.
- **Article 270** of the Constitution provides for the scheme of distribution of net tax proceeds collected by the Union government between the Centre and the States.
 - ♦ The **taxes** that are **shared** between the **Centre and the States** include corporation tax, personal income tax, Central GST, the Centre's share of the Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) etc.

- **Article 280(1)** of the Constitution lays down that the modalities for setting up of a **Finance Commission** to make recommendation on the distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the Union and the States, allocation between the States of respective shares of such proceeds; grants-in-aid and the revenues of the States and measures needed to supplement the resources of the Panchayats during the award period.
- The divisible pool, however, does not include cess and surcharge that are levied by the Centre.

The basis for allocation

- The share of States from the divisible pool (**vertical devolution**) stands at 41% as per the recommendation of the 15th FC.
- The distribution among the States (**horizontal devolution**) is based on various criteria. The criteria as per the 15th FC can be briefly explained as follows.
 - ♦ **'Income distance'** is the distance of a State's income from the State with highest per capita income.
 - States with lower per capita income would be given a higher share to maintain equity among States.
 - ♦ **'Population'** is the population as per the 2011 Census. Till the 14th FC, weightage was given for the population as per the 1971 Census but that has been discontinued in the 15th FC.
 - ♦ **'Forest and ecology'** consider the share of dense forest of each State in the aggregate dense forest of all the States.
 - ♦ **'The demographic performance'** criterion has been introduced to reward efforts made by States in controlling their population.
 - States with a lower fertility ratio will be scored higher on this criterion.
 - ♦ **'Tax effort'** as a criterion has been used to reward States with higher tax collection efficiency.

Do you know ?

- The existing devolution formula is set by the Fifteenth Finance Commission for the five-year period till FY26.
- The Sixteenth Finance Commission chaired by Arvind Panagariya is currently working on evolving the framework for tax devolution for the period from FY27-31.
 - ♦ The Commission also examines the development needs of states and trends like tax buoyancy and major obligations of the Centre, while arriving at its recommendation.

Criticism and Issues

- The Constitutional scheme has always favoured a strong centre in legislative, administrative and financial relations.
- However, federalism is a basic feature and it is important that States don't feel short-changed when it comes to distribution of resources.
- While there are always political differences between the Union government and Opposition-ruled States that exacerbate the problem, there are genuine issues that need to be considered.

Suggestions and Way Ahead

- The divisible pool can be enlarged by including some portion of cess and surcharge in it.
- The Centre should also gradually discontinue various cesses and surcharges it imposes by suitably rationalising the tax slabs.
- The weightage for efficiency criteria in horizontal devolution should be increased.
- GST being a consumption-based destination tax that is equally divided between the Union and the State means that State GST accrual (inclusive of Integrated GST settlement on inter-state sales) should be the same as the Central GST accrual from a State.
 - ♦ Hence, relative GST contribution from States can be included as a criterion by providing suitable weightage in future FCs.
- Finally, similar to the GST council, a more formal arrangement for the participation of States in the constitution and the working of the FC should be considered.
- These are measures that need to be implemented by the Centre after discussion with all the States.
- It is also imperative that the States uphold principles of fiscal federalism by devolving adequate resources to local bodies for vibrant and accountable development.

Source: BS

GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX: WEF

Context

- Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) published the **18th edition** of the Global Gender Gap Report (2024).

About the Global Gender Gap Index (2024)

- It annually benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across **four key dimensions**, i.e. Economic Participation and Opportunity; Educational Attainment; Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.

Key Findings of the Report

- Global Results:** The global gender gap score in 2024 for all 146 countries included in this edition stands at 68.5% closed.
 - It means that on average, across the world, there is still a 31.5% gender gap that needs to be closed.
 - Compared against the constant sample of 143 countries included in last year's edition, the global gender gap has been closed by a further +0.1 percentage point, from 68.5% to 68.6%.
- Time to Parity:** Based on current data, it will **take 134 years to reach full parity**, which is **roughly five generations beyond the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target**.
 - The lack of meaningful, widespread change since the last edition effectively slows down the rate of progress to attain parity.
- Top Performers:** While **no country has achieved full gender parity**, 97% of the economies included in this edition have closed more than 60% of their gap.
 - It is a significant improvement compared to 85% in 2006.
 - Iceland (1st, 93.5%)**, along with the Finland

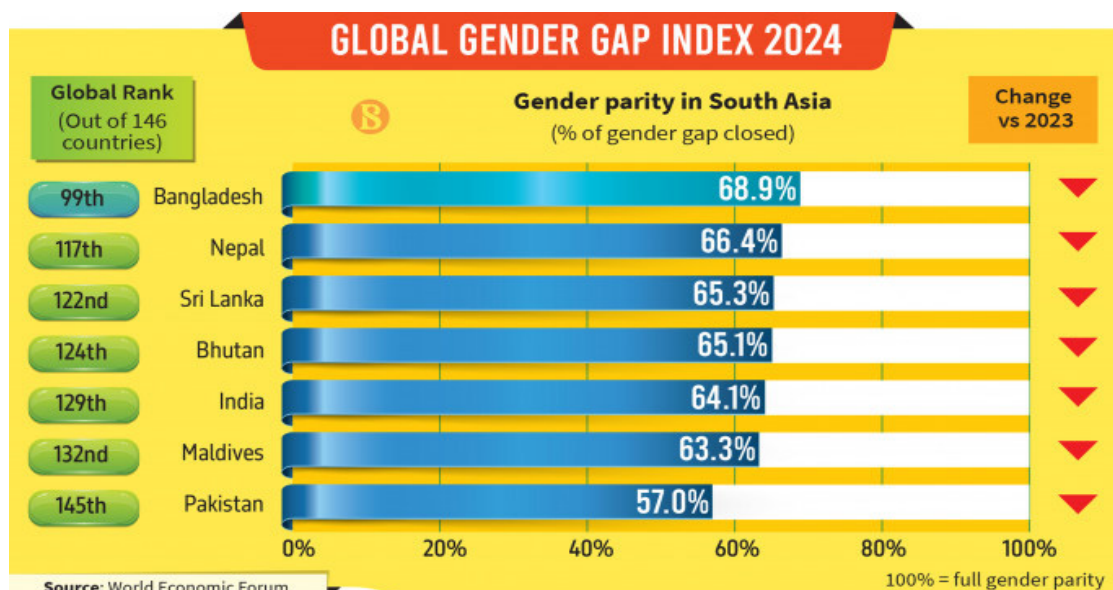
(2nd, 87.5%), Norway (3rd, 87.5%), Sweden (5th, 81.6%), Germany (7th, 81%), Ireland (9th, 80.2%) and Spain (10th, 79.7%) has been **leading the index** for a decade and a half.

- Finland** continues to be the **only economy** to have closed over 90% of its gender gap.

- Globally, Sudan was ranked last** on the index of 146 countries, while Pakistan slipped three places to 145th.
- Gender parity in labour-force participation** has shown some improvement. According to data from 101 economies tracked since 2006, the participation rate has rebounded from 63.5% in 2023 to 65.7% in 2024.

India's Performance

- India, with a population of over 1.4 billion, closed 64.1% of its gender gap in 2024. However, India has **slipped two places to 129th place (127th last year)**, mainly because of small declines in 'Educational Attainment' and 'Political Empowerment,' parameters, while 'Economic Participation' and 'Opportunity' scores slightly improved.
 - India showed the **best gender parity** in terms of enrolment in **secondary education**.
 - In the **Political Empowerment sub-index**, **India scored within the top-10** on the head-of-state indicator, but its scores for women's representation at the federal level, in Ministerial positions (6.9%) and in Parliament (17.2%), remain relatively low.



- **Within South Asia**, India was ranked fifth after Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan, while Pakistan was ranked last.
- India figured among the economies with the lowest levels of economic parity, alongside Bangladesh, Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, and Morocco. All of them registered less than 30% gender parity in estimated earned income.

Gender Inequality in India

Socio-Cultural Disparity

- **Sex Ratio:** As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-21), the Overall Sex Ratio in India is 1020 females per 1000 males.
 - ◆ However, the Sex Ratio at Birth remains low at 929, indicating continued sex selection at birth.
- **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR):** As per the Special Bulletin on MMR released by the Registrar General of India, the MMR of India stands at 97 per lakh live births for the period 2018-20.
- **Malnutrition:** As per the NFHS-5, 18.7% of women aged 15-49 years are underweight, 21.2% of women aged 15-49 years are stunted, and nearly 53% of women aged 15-49 years are anaemic,
- **Education:** As per the NFHS-5 (2019-21), the literacy rate in females is 70.3% compared to about 84.7% for men.
- **Gender-Based Violence:** As per the NCRB's 'Crime in India' 2021 report, over 4 lakh cases of crimes against women were recorded in the year 2021. With this figure reflecting only the reported incidents, the actual figure remains much higher.
- **Child Marriage:** As per the NFHS-5, 23.3% of women aged 20-24 years were married or in a union before age 18.

Economic Disparity

- **Employment:** As per the PLFS, only around 32.8% of females of working age (15 years and above) were in the labour force in 2021-22.
- **Informalisation:** According to the ILO, 81.8% of women's employment in India is concentrated in the informal economy.
 - ◆ It indicates that most of the female workers in India are not able to get into high-paying jobs.

- **Wage Gap:** The wage gap between genders in India is among the widest in the world. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, on average, women in India were paid 21% of the income of men.

Political Disparity

- **Representation in Parliament and in State Legislatures:** At present, around 14% of the total number of MPs and MLAs are women.
- **Representation in Local Panchayats:** As per the Ministry of Panchayati Raj data from April 2023, around 46.94% of panchayat elected representatives are women. However, the prevalence of the '**Sarpanch-Pati**' culture means that this figure is effectively very low.

Source: TH

ECO-SENSITIVE ZONES IN WESTERN GHATS

In News

- Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa, three of the six states where the Centre has proposed **eco-sensitive areas (ESA)** to protect the Western Ghats, have sought a reduction in the extent of these ESAs to allow development works.

Do you know ?

- The Western Ghats are internationally recognized as a region of immense global importance for the conservation of biological diversity, besides containing areas of high geological, cultural and aesthetic values.
 - ◆ The Ghats traverse the **States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat.**
 - ◆ They stand as a barrier between the west coast and the rest of the Indian peninsula.
 - ◆ They attract a high level of rainfall, helping make the area so biologically rich and geographically unique.
 - ◆ Several important rivers run from them, including the Bhima, Godavari, Krishna, and Kaveri.

About Eco-Sensitive Zones

- The National Environment Policy (2006) defined the Eco-Sensitive Zones "as areas/zones with identified environmental resources having incomparable values which require special attention for their conservation" because of its landscape, wildlife, biodiversity, historical and natural values.

- ESAs are notified and regulated by the MoEFCC under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.
- As per the National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016), Eco-Sensitive Areas (ESAs) are regions located within 10 km of protected areas such as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

Purpose

- Protect the environment and avoid its degradation due to anthropogenic activities.
- Create some kind of barrier/ shock absorber for the specialized ecosystem (PAs).
- Act as transition zone from areas of higher protection to areas involving lesser protection.

K. Kasturirangan Committee Recommendations

- In August 2012, the MoEF constituted a high-level working group (HLWG) under the chairmanship of K. Kasturirangan
- It was tasked with suggesting an all-round and holistic approach for sustainable and equitable development while focusing on the conservation of ecological systems in Western Ghats, a biological hotspot.
- Accordingly, the Kasturirangan report in 2013 identified an area of 59,940 sq. km of natural landscape of Western Ghats, spread across six states — Karnataka, Gujarat, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra— as ecologically sensitive.
- It recommended prohibition or regulation of development projects and activities in the ESA which would have maximum interventionist and destructive impact on ecosystems.

Concerns

- The states flagged the need for rationalisation of these ESAs in the Ghats in their discussions with an expert panel appointed by the Centre to finalise a draft notification.
- states maintained its opposition to the K Kasturirangan panel report saying the livelihood of people in the region would be hit.
- It will also “hinder” development activities in the region.
- It is being argued that declaration of the ESA in Western Ghat will lead to relocation of thousands of villagers living in the region.

Way Ahead

- Ecologically sensitive regions help in conserving fragile ecosystems which would sustain livelihoods. It is for people and the approach helps the community through the sustenance of water, better pollination, high yield of crops, and minimal human animal conflicts.
- There is also a need to consider the states' demands and stick to the principles of ecological protection and follow a uniform approach.
 - ♦ The expert committee will submit its report to the Environment Ministry by September despite a June-end deadline.

Source:IE

NEWS IN SHORT

NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS

Context

- According to a global assessment of Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) emissions, **India is the world's second largest source** of it that heats up the atmosphere far more than carbon dioxide.

About Nitrous Oxide

- Nitrous Oxide, a potent greenhouse gas, its emissions have grown by 40% between 1980 and 2020.
- **India** was responsible for **nearly 11%** of the global man-made Nitrous Oxide emissions in 2020, **just after China (16.7%)**.
 - ♦ The major source of these emissions comes from fertiliser usage, particularly nitrogen-based fertilisers, and animal manure in agriculture.
- On the other hand, the **US (5.7%), Brazil (5.3%) and Russia (4.6%)** were the top five emitters, along with China and India.
 - ♦ However, the **per capita emissions** (Kg Nitrous Oxide/Person) **in India** have the **lowest (0.8)** in comparison to countries like China (1.3), US (1.7), Brazil (2.5) and Russia (3.3).
- The increase in greenhouse gases has already raised the Earth's average surface temperature by 1.15°C compared to the 1850-1900 average.
 - ♦ Anthropogenic Nitrous Oxide emissions contribute to about 0.1 degrees of this warming.

Impact

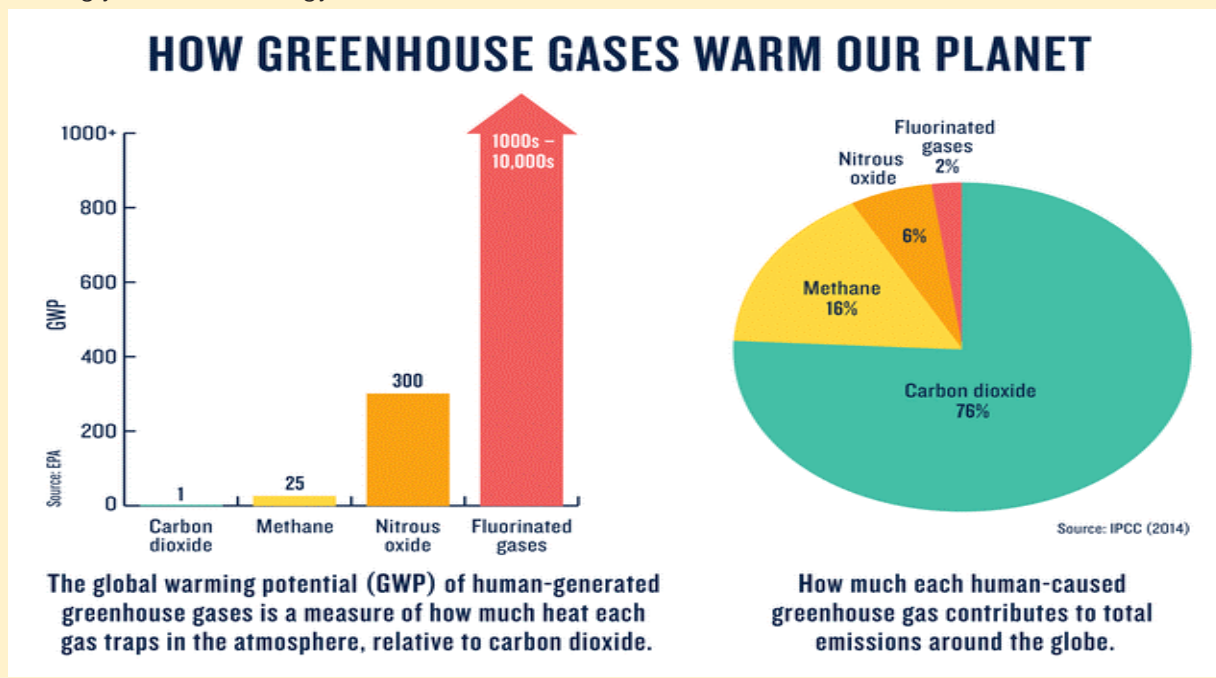
- High levels of N₂O in the atmosphere can deplete the ozone layer and compound the effects of climate change.
- On the earth, excess nitrogen contributes to soil, water, and air pollution.

Global Warming

- Global warming is a phenomenon where **gases produced by the burning of fossil fuels** prevent the heat from leaving the atmosphere.
- These greenhouse gases are **carbon dioxide, chlorofluorocarbons, water vapour, methane, and nitrous oxide**.
- The **excess heat** in the atmosphere has caused the average global temperature to rise over time, otherwise known as global warming.
- As greenhouse gas emissions **blanket the Earth**, they **trap the sun's heat** that leads to **global warming and climate change**.

Warming Potentials of GHGs

- Greenhouse gases have different warming potentials, which are measured using a metric called **Global Warming Potential (GWP)** that is calculated based on how long it remains in the atmosphere and how strongly it absorbs energy.



Source: TH

CRATERS ON MARS SURFACE**Context**

- Recently, the scientists of the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) discovered the **three craters on Mars**.

About

- The **Martian surface** contains thousands of impact craters because, unlike Earth, Mars has a stable crust, low erosion rate, and no active sources of lava.

- They provide insights into the age and geology of a planet's surface.

Recent Discovery

- Scientists of the **Physical Research Laboratory, located in Ahmedabad**, have discovered the **Tharsis Volcanic Region on Mars**, where these three craters are located, is **characterised by extensive lava flows**.
- These are:
 - ♦ **Lal Crater:** It was named after **Prof. Devendra Lal**, a renowned Indian geophysicist and former director of PRL from 1972-1983.

- ♦ **Mursan Crater:** It was named after a town in **Uttar Pradesh**, India, that was superimposed on the eastern side of the rim of the Lal crater.
- ♦ **Hilsa Crater:** It was named after a town in **Bihar**, superimposed on the western side of the rim of the Lal crater.
- The above three names of the craters that have been **approved by the Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature** of the **International Astronomical Union (IAU)**.

Mars

- It is the fourth planet from the Sun and is a cold desert world. It is nearly half the size of Earth.
- It is sometimes called the **Red Planet**, because of **rusty iron in the ground**.
 - ♦ It has **lower gravity (about one-third that of Earth)** but its atmosphere is just 1% as thick, making it much harder to generate lift.
- It is also a dynamic planet with seasons, polar ice caps, canyons, extinct volcanoes, and evidence that it was even more active in the past.
- It has a very **thin atmosphere** made of **carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and argon**.
- There are signs of ancient floods on Mars, but now water mostly exists in icy dirt and thin clouds.

Physical Research Laboratory (PRL)

- It was founded in 1947 by **Dr. Vikram Sarabhai**.
- As a unit of the **Department of Space, Government of India**, it carries out **fundamental research in selected areas** of Physics, Space & Atmospheric Sciences, Astronomy, Astrophysics & Solar Physics, and Planetary & Geo-Sciences.

Source: TH

PAROS TREATY

Context

- Recently, the **BRICS Ministers** reiterated their support for the long-term **sustainability of outer space activities** and the **Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)** and its weaponisation.

About the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) Treaty

- It is a **proposed international agreement** aimed at preventing the deployment of weapons in space and ensuring the peaceful use of outer space.
- It addresses concerns about the potential militarisation and weaponization of space, which could lead to an arms race and destabilise global security.

Historical Background

- The concept of preventing an arms race in outer space originated in the 1950s when the **United Nations (UN)** first considered proposals to prohibit the **use of space for military purposes** and the placement of **weapons of mass destruction** in space.
- The **Outer Space Treaty** (1967) prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in space and their stationing on celestial bodies.
- However, the **treaty does not explicitly ban** other types of weapons in space, prompting ongoing discussions and proposals for a more comprehensive treaty.

Current Status

- The proposed PAROS treaty is currently being discussed in the **Conference on Disarmament**.
- In 2008, **Russia and China** presented a draft treaty to the **Conference on Disarmament** aimed at preventing the placement of weapons in outer space and banning the use of anti-satellite weapons.

India's Stance

- India supports substantive consideration of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and remains committed to a legally-binding instrument on PAROS which is universally acceptable, verifiable, and multilaterally negotiated in the **Conference on Disarmament**.
- It believes that Outer Space should not become an arena of conflict, but a new and expanding frontier of cooperative activity.

About BRICS

- It is an **acronym** that refers to a group of five major emerging national economies: **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**.

- Later, **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined BRICS as new full members, as per the decision adopted by the 15th BRICS Summit in 2022.
- Over a period of time, BRICS countries have come together to deliberate on important issues under the **three pillars** of:
 - ◆ Political and Security;
 - ◆ Economic and Financial;
 - ◆ Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges.

Source: BS

FATTY LIVER DISEASE

In News

June 13 marks International Fatty Liver Day.

- The theme for this year is ‘**Act Now, Screen Today**’.

The liver

- It is located on the upper-right side of the abdomen, and is the largest internal organ of the human body.
- The main functions of the liver are to remove toxins and process food nutrients.
- Blood from the digestive system filters through the liver before travelling anywhere else in the body.

About Fatty liver disease (steatosis)

- It is the build-up of excess fat in the liver cells, and is a common liver complaint in various countries.
- It is normal for the liver to contain some fat, but if fat accounts for more than 10 per cent of the liver’s weight, then it is a fatty liver and serious complications may be developed.

- Fatty liver may cause no damage, but sometimes the excess fat leads to inflammation of the liver.
 - ◆ This condition, called steatohepatitis, does cause liver damage.
- Sometimes, inflammation from a fatty liver is linked to alcohol abuse.
 - ◆ This is known as alcoholic steatohepatitis.
 - ◆ Otherwise, the condition is called non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, or NASH.

Source: TH

ELEPHANTS CALL EACH OTHER BY NAME: STUDY

In News

The study’s findings indicate that elephants “address one another with something like a name.

- Previous research has shown that they engage in complicated behavior – visual, acoustic and tactile gestures – when greeting each other.

About Elephants

- They are Earth’s largest land animals and are highly intelligent
- They are known to have keen memory and problem-solving skills and sophisticated communication.
- They eat grasses, leaves, shrubs, fruits and roots depending on the season and their habitat.
- They communicate in a variety of ways - including sounds like trumpet calls (some sounds are too low for people to hear), body language, touch and scent.
- There are three species of elephant: **African Savanna (Bush), African Forest and Asian**



ANIMALIA - MAMMALIA GLOBAL
African Forest Elephant
Loxodonta cyclotis

↓ Decreasing

GLOBAL

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ANIMALIA - MAMMALIA GLOBAL
Asian Elephant
Elephas maximus

↓ Decreasing

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ANIMALIA - MAMMALIA GLOBAL
African Savanna Elephant
Loxodonta africana

↓ Decreasing

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- The greatest threat to African elephants is poaching for the illegal ivory trade, while Asian elephant populations are most at risk from habitat loss and resulting human-elephant conflict.

Do you know ?

- The Government of India has declared the Indian elephant as a **National Heritage Animal**. Indian elephants are also provided the highest degree of legal protection by listing it in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- India's proposal to include Great Indian Bustard, **Asian Elephant** and Bengal Florican in Appendix I of UN Convention on migratory species was unanimously accepted in 2020.

Source: TH

RENAMING OF JOSHIMATH AND KOSIYAKUTOLI

In News

- The Centre has approved the Uttarakhand government's proposal to rename Joshimath as **Jyotirmath**, and Kosiyakutoli as Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham

About

- **Joshimath**: It is a village in Chamoli District in the Indian state of Uttarakhand.
 - ♦ It is located at a height of 6,150 feet (1,875 m) and is a gateway to several Himalayan

Mountain climbing expeditions, trekking trails, and pilgrim centres like **Badrinath**.

- ♦ It is a place of great religious significance for Hindus.
- ♦ It is one of the four cardinal pthas established by Adi Shankara in the 8th century. The other three pthas are Dwaraka in Gujarat, Puri in Odisha, and Sringeri in Karnataka.
- ♦ It is believed that the area was originally called Jyotirmath after Adi Guru Shankaracharya visited it in the 8th century to perform penance under the Amar Kalpa tree and attained enlightenment (Divya Gyan Jyoti).
- **Kosya Kutauli**: The proposal to rename Kosya Kutauli tehsil of Nainital district as **Baba Neem Karoli Maharaj's ashram Shri Kainchi Dham** has also been approved.
 - ♦ Every day a large number of Baba's devotees reach the Dham for darshan.
 - ♦ Kainchi Dham has also been included in the Manaskhand Mandirmala Mission.

Additional Information

- Article 3 of the Constitution gives Parliament the power to regulate the formation of states, alteration of boundaries, change of name, etc.
- Specifically, Article 3 (e) allows the alteration of the name of a place through a law. "Parliament may by law, alter the name of any state,

Source:IE

