

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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## SEX RATIO AT BIRTH DROPPED IN HARYANA

### Context

- As per the Data from Civil Registration System (CRS), sex ratio at birth in Haryana **dropped to 910 in 2024**, the lowest it has been since 2016 when the ratio was 900.

### About

- After **peaking at 923 in 2019**, the sex ratio at birth in Haryana dropped to 910 in 2024, **an eight-year low**.
  - Of the 516,402 children born in Haryana in 2024, **52.35% were boys**, while 47.64% were girls.
- The Sex ratio at birth** is defined as the number of female births per 1000 male births.
- The sex ratio** is the measure of the **number of females per 1,000 males in a given population**.
- Reasons for Increase in Past:**
  - Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act, 1994:** The gains made between 2014 and 2019 came due to the **strict enforcement of the PNDT Act** coupled with an intense awareness campaign.
- Reason for Decrease:** More needs to be done to change attitudes, and in recent years, enforcement of laws aimed towards curbing female foeticide has loosened.
  - The **concept of 'only boy'** was not a popular phenomenon until now, but a section of the families have started opting for it due to the decreasing land holdings.

### Sex Ratio in India

- Census 2011:**
  - The sex ratio at all India levels was **943** and the same for **rural and urban areas are 949 and 929 respectively**.
  - The sex ratio for the **0-19 age group** was **908** while that of the **60+ age** group was **1033**.
  - The sex ratio in the economically active age group (15-59 years) was **944**.
  - The sex ratio was **highest in Kerala** (1084) followed by Puducherry (1037) and **lowest in Daman & Diu** (618) followed by Dadar & Nagar Haveli (774) and then Chandigarh (818).
- National Family Health Survey 2021:**
  - According to the NFHS-5, the overall **sex ratio at birth in India was 929**.
  - The sex ratio of the population for the country was estimated as **1020**.

### Why Historically there has been an Imbalance in the Sex Ratio in India?

- Cultural Preference for Sons:** Sons were preferred for carrying on the family name, performing religious rites, and providing financial support in old age.
  - This led to a neglect of daughters, who were seen as a financial burden due to dowry practices.
- Gender Discrimination:** Girls have historically faced neglect in terms of nutrition, education, and healthcare, which contributed to higher mortality rates among females.
- Female Infanticide:** In some regions, female infants were either abandoned or killed due to their perceived lower value.
- Sex-Selective Abortion:** Advances in medical technology, such as ultrasound, enabled the practice of sex-selective abortion, leading to a disproportionate number of male births.
- Economic Factors:** In agrarian societies, the labor of sons was seen as more valuable for agricultural work, further reinforcing the preference for male children.

### Government Initiatives to Improve Sex Ratio

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):** Launched in 2015, this campaign aims to address gender-based discrimination, promote the value of the girl child, and improve access to education for girls.
  - It also focuses on raising awareness about the importance of girls' welfare and preventing female foeticide.
- Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994:** This law prohibits sex determination and sex-selective abortion.
  - It aims to curb the misuse of prenatal diagnostic technologies for gender-based sex selection.
- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana:** This is a savings scheme for the girl child, which encourages families to save for the future education and marriage of their daughters. It promotes a positive perception of girls.
- Maternity Benefits:** The government has introduced maternity benefits through schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), which provides financial assistance to pregnant women and lactating mothers, aiming to reduce the economic burden on families and support maternal and child health.

- **The National Health Mission (NHM):** This program focuses on improving healthcare services for women, including maternal health, to reduce the mortality rate among women and girls.
- **Awareness Campaigns and Legal Reforms:** The government conducts awareness campaigns to sensitize people about the importance of gender equality.

### Way Ahead

- **Community Awareness and Education:** Campaigns like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao should continue to raise awareness about the value of the girl child and the harmful effects of gender discrimination.
- **Improving Women's Health and Access to Healthcare:** Providing better healthcare access for women and girls, especially in rural areas, can help reduce female mortality rates.
- **Changing Social Norms and Attitudes:** Promoting gender-sensitive education, involving men in gender equality discussions, and tackling the dowry system can help break the traditional biases against girls.
- **Robust Data Collection and Research:** Continuous monitoring and research into the reasons behind sex ratio imbalances can help tailor future interventions and track the success of existing initiatives.

Source: IE

## CONCERNS REGARDING UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT (UAPA), 1967

### Context

- The Delhi police opposed the bail pleas of activists who are accused in the 2020 north-east Delhi riots case.

### What is Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA)?

- The UAPA gives powers to the government to probe and prosecute people for acts of terrorism, and to designate an organization as an "unlawful association" or a "**terrorist organization**", or an individual as a "**terrorist**".
- It was enacted on the recommendation of the National Integration Council, set up in **1961** to find ways to counter problems that were dividing the country.
  - ♦ However, in its original form, the Act largely dealt with secessionist activities, with no explicit mention of terrorism.

### Amendments of the Act

- In **2004**, the Act was amended for the first time, with "and for dealing with terrorist activities" added to its title.
- **After the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008**, another set of amendments broadened the definition of terrorism in the Act, and introduced longer incarceration and more stringent bail conditions.
- In **2012**, the UAPA was amended to include "**economic security**" of the country in the ambit of terrorism.
  - ♦ Under this, the statute went on to designate production, smuggling and distribution of counterfeit Indian currency as a terrorist act.
- The **2019** amendment gave the government the powers to designate an individual as a terrorist. Until then, only organizations could be designated as "terrorist".
  - ♦ This was criticized as overturning the founding principle of the criminal justice system that presumes innocence until proven guilty for every suspect.

### Concerns associated with the UAPA Act

- **Stringent Bail Provisions:** The UAPA restricts a judge from granting bail if, after reviewing police reports, there are "reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation is prima facie true."
  - ♦ This provision introduces elements of **criminal trial into the bail stage**, which contradicts the principle of presumption of innocence.
- **Extended Detention:** The UAPA allows prolonged detention without formal charges, extending the period of pre-trial incarceration.
  - ♦ This conflicts with **Article 21** of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty.
- **Vagueness in Definition:** The definition of "unlawful activity" and "terrorist act" under UAPA is broad and ambiguous, leading to potential misuse.
- **Freedom of Expression:** UAPA has been invoked against activists, journalists, and students, raising concerns about stifling dissent.
  - ♦ This could be seen as a violation of **Article 19**, which guarantees freedom of speech and expression.
- **Highly Discretionary:** It confers upon the government broad discretionary powers and also authorizes the creation of special courts with the



ability to use secret witnesses and to hold closed-door hearings.

### Way Ahead

- **Legal Reforms:** Amendment to the UAPA is needed to ensure clearer definitions of offences and reduce the harsh bail restrictions.
- **Judicial Oversight:** There is a need to establish mechanisms for periodic judicial review to prevent misuse.
- **Safeguard Freedom of Expression:** Introduce guidelines to prevent the misuse of the law against dissenting voices.

### Concluding remarks

- While the UAPA serves a critical role in safeguarding national security, its stringent provisions raise significant concerns about civil liberties and due process.
- A balanced approach through reforms and judicial safeguards is essential to uphold constitutional values while addressing security threats effectively.

Source:TH

## 18TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS & INDIAN DIASPORA

### Context

- PM Modi inaugurated the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Odisha.

### About

- **The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention** is the flagship event of the Government of India that provides an important platform to connect and engage with the Indian diaspora and enable them to interact with each other.
- **Theme:** "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat".

### Indian Diaspora

- As of May 2024, there were around **35.42 million** people of Indian origin living outside of India, making it the world's largest diaspora.
- This includes around **15.85 million** non-resident Indians (NRIs) and **19.57 million** people of Indian origin (PIOs).
- The **United States** has the largest Indian population in the world, with over **5 million** people.

### Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- PBD, also known as Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day, is celebrated on **January 9**.

- The day also commemorates the **return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa** to India in **1915**.
- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was **first celebrated in 2003** and its format was later revised in 2015 to celebrate the event **once every two years**.

### Who are Girmitiyas?

- The Girmitiyas were indentured laborers from British India who were transported to work on plantations in the **19th and early 20th centuries**.
- Girmitiyas were sent to countries like Fiji, Mauritius, Seychelles, Réunion, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, British Guiana (now Guyana), Suriname, Malaysia, and Kenya.
- The laborers signed a **contract called a Girmit**, which bound them to work for a single employer at a fixed wage for a fixed period of **three–five years**.

### Contribution of Indian Diaspora

- **Cultural Diplomacy:** It strengthens India's cultural ties with the global community and promotes the richness of Indian heritage.
- **Economic Contributions:** The diaspora plays a critical role in remittances and investments that contribute to India's economic growth.
  - ◆ India received **\$125 billion** in remittances in 2023, which accounted for **3.4%** of the country's GDP.
- **Entrepreneurship:** A growing number of Indian professionals are returning from abroad to **establish startups** in India, leveraging their international experience to drive innovation and economic growth.
- **Political Influence:** The Indian diaspora exerts political influence through lobbying efforts, advocating for policies that strengthen bilateral relations and benefit India's strategic interests.

### Concluding remarks

- The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas highlights the significant contributions of the Indian diaspora to India's development.
- It strengthens global ties and reinforces India's vision for a "Viksit Bharat," fostering a collaborative approach for national progress and prosperity.

Source: PIB

## INDONESIA BECOMES FULL MEMBER OF BRICS

### In News

- Indonesia has officially joined BRICS as a full member effective from January 2025.

- ♦ The inclusion of Indonesia marks another step in expanding BRICS' influence among emerging economies.

### About BRICS

- **Definition:** BRICS is an intergovernmental informal grouping of emerging economies aimed at fostering cooperation and enhancing their global influence.
- **Members:** Brazil, Russia, India, China (these are founding members); South Africa joined in 2010; Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia joined in 2024.
  - ♦ Argentina was initially expected to join in 2024 but later opted out.
- **Background:** The first BRIC Summit was held in Russia in 2009.

### Significance of BRICS

- **Economic Influence:** Represents a large share of the global economy:
  - ♦ Accounts for approximately 35% of global GDP.
  - ♦ Comprises 46% of the world's population, providing a vast market and workforce.
  - ♦ Encourages trade and investment among emerging economies.
- **Counterbalance to Western Dominance:** Provides a platform for emerging economies to challenge the G7 and other Western-led financial systems.
  - ♦ Promotes a multipolar global order, reducing reliance on dominant powers like the US and Europe.
  - ♦ Focus on Local Currencies and Non-Dollar Transactions: Aims to reduce dependence on the US dollar in international trade and finance.
  - ♦ Strengthens local currencies, reshaping global trade practices and reducing vulnerabilities to dollar-based systems.
- **Advocacy for Global Institutional Reforms:** Pushes for greater equity and inclusivity in global institutions like the IMF and UN.
  - ♦ Addresses the need for a more balanced representation of developing nations in global decision-making.
- **Collaboration Among Emerging Economies:** Encourages cooperation in areas like technology, sustainable development, and infrastructure.
  - ♦ Facilitates knowledge sharing and joint efforts to tackle global challenges like climate change and public health crises.
- **Energy and Resource Security:** Many BRICS members are major producers or consumers

of energy resources, allowing for strategic partnerships in energy security and sustainability.

- **Support for Multilateralism:** Strengthens multilateral institutions by emphasizing collective problem-solving over unilateral approaches.

### Challenges Faced by BRICS

- **Diverse Economic Interests:** BRICS consists of countries with vastly different economies, ranging from advanced economies like China and India to resource-rich nations like Brazil and Russia.
  - ♦ These differences often lead to conflicting priorities on issues like trade policies, economic reforms, and foreign investments, which can complicate consensus-building within the group.
- **Political Differences:** While the members of BRICS share common goals, their political ideologies and alliances vary widely.
  - ♦ Tensions between member states (e.g., China and India over border disputes, Russia's geopolitical tensions with Western countries) can hinder the group's ability to present a unified stance on global issues.
- **Geopolitical Rivalries:** The geopolitical conflicts between China and India, and between Russia and Western nations, create challenges in BRICS working cohesively.
  - ♦ Competing alliances with countries outside BRICS, such as India's ties with the US and Russia's isolation from the West, may impact the group's collective influence.
- **Economic Dependence on Global Markets:** Many BRICS countries are still heavily dependent on global trade networks dominated by Western economies, which can limit their ability to shift entirely away from the US dollar or create an independent financial infrastructure.

Source: IE

## COMPLETION OF GENOME INDIA PROJECT

### Context

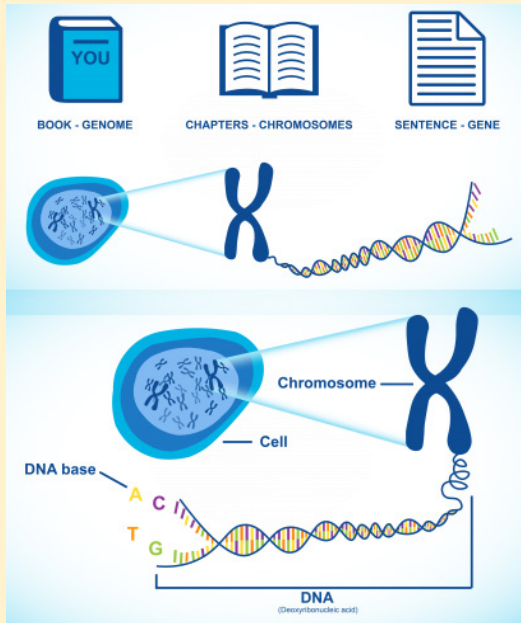
- Recently, the Prime Minister of India hailed the completion of the **Genome India Project**, calling it a 'historic step in the world of research' at **Genome India Data Conclave**, held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

### About the Genome India Project

- It was launched in **2020 by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** and coordinated by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

- It involved sequencing the genomes of individuals from 99 distinct populations across the country. It accounts for about 2% of India's 4600 population groups.

### Understanding Genomes



- A genome is the complete set of **deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)** in an organism, **containing all the genetic information** necessary for the **development, functioning, and reproduction** of that organism.
  - In living organisms, genetic information is stored in long molecules of DNA called **chromosomes**.
- In humans, the genome is composed of **approximately 3.05 billion base pairs** of DNA, which are **organized into 23 pairs of chromosomes**.

### Key Components of a Genome

- DNA:** The genome is made up of DNA, a double-stranded molecule consisting of four types of bases: Adenine (A), Cytosine (C), Guanine (G), and Thymine (T).

#### Do You Know?

- The **discovery that DNA is structured as a 'double helix'** by **James Watson and Francis Crick** in 1953, for which they won a **Nobel Prize in 1962**.

- These bases pair (A with T and C with G) to form the rungs of the DNA ladder.
- Genes:** Segments of DNA that code for proteins or functional RNA molecules.

- Genes are the functional units** of heredity and play a crucial role in determining an organism's traits.
- Non-coding Regions:** Parts of the genome that do not code for proteins but have regulatory functions, such as controlling gene expression.

### Genome Sequencing

- It is the process of determining the precise order of the base pairs in a DNA molecule.
- It allows scientists to decode the genetic information contained within an organism's genome.

### Key Achievements of Genome India Project

- Completion of Genome Sequencing:** The project has successfully sequenced the **genomes of 10,000 individuals (archived at the Indian Biological Data Centre Portals)**.
- Creation of a Biobank:** A biobank housing 20,000 blood samples has been established at the Centre for Brain Research, IISc.
  - This biobank aims to support future research endeavors.
- Phase 1 Analysis:** Detailed quality checks and joint genotyping of 5,750 samples have uncovered rare genetic variations unique to Indian populations.
- Data Availability:** The genome data is now available at the **Indian Biological Data Center (IBDC) in Faridabad, Haryana**.
  - Researchers worldwide can access this data for further investigations.

### Impact on Biotechnology and Healthcare

- Empowering Global Research:** The launch of the **IBDC Portals** and the **Framework for Exchange of Data Protocols (FeED)** ensures seamless access to valuable genetic information.
  - It is set to position India as a leader in genomics, enabling the development of genomic chips tailored to the Indian demographic.
  - Such advancements will enhance the precision of genetic studies and contribute to innovations in areas such as mRNA-based vaccines, protein manufacturing, and genetic disorder treatments.
- Boost Public Healthcare:** By providing a genetic basis for disease prevention and treatment, the project will significantly improve public healthcare systems.
- Promote Innovation:** The data will facilitate the development of genomic chips tailored to the Indian demographic, enhancing the precision of genetic studies.

- **Support Policy Making:** The genetic information will assist policymakers in planning and implementing health strategies tailored to the unique needs of India's diverse population.
- **Boosting Bioeconomy:** India's bioeconomy has seen impressive growth, surging from **\$10 billion in 2014** to over \$130 billion in 2024, with **projections to hit \$300 billion by 2030**.
  - ♦ This growth is a testament to the country's increasing capabilities and contributions to the global scientific community.

### Key Concerns

- **Genetic Modification Risks:** If genomic data is used for more controversial purposes, such as gene editing, it could lead to **ethical dilemmas** regarding designer babies or unintended consequences.
- **Data & Storage:** Ensuring anonymity of genetic data and addressing its possible misuse is crucial.
  - ♦ Storing data on cloud platforms raises ownership and security concerns.
  - ♦ India lacks a comprehensive **Data Privacy Bill**, creating risks for the Genome India Project.
- **Social Issues:** Genetic studies could reinforce stereotypes and fuel divisive politics, particularly around racial purity and heredity.
  - ♦ In India, debates over 'indigenous' populations could take a genetic turn.
  - ♦ Historical controversies around eugenics and 'selective breeding' highlight the sensitive nature of this subject.

### Steps to Overcome Above Challenges

- **Ethical and Secure Data Sharing:** The **Biotech-PRIDE Guidelines**, introduced in 2021, underscore India's commitment to ethical and secure data sharing.
  - ♦ The launch of the **FeED Protocols** under these guidelines ensures that high-quality, nation-specific data will be shared transparently, fairly, and responsibly.
- **Data Privacy and Security:** Given the sensitivity of genetic data, the Department of Biotechnology has implemented stringent measures to ensure privacy and security.
  - ♦ The data is anonymized and encoded before being uploaded to the central database.
  - ♦ Researchers wishing to access the data must collaborate with the department and adhere to strict protocols.

Source: TOI

## STAMPEDE IN TIRUPATI

### Context

- Stampede in Tirupati caused the loss of life during the Vaikunthadwara Darshan.

### About Stampede

- Stampede is an **impulsive mass movement** of a crowd that often results in injuries and deaths.
  - ♦ When panic spreads, people push forward, causing a domino effect where individuals fall and get trampled.
- Although lakhs of devotees visit Tirupati everyday, stampedes have been rare.
- **79% of all stampedes** in India from 1954-2012 took place in religious mass gatherings.

### Causes of Stampede

- Lack of light;
- Crowd flow not being divided for different crowds;
- Collapse of barriers, buildings;
- Blocked exits, evacuation route;
- Poor infrastructure design (such as having a revolving door at the entrance); and
- Fire hazards.

### Why Stampede Mostly Occur at Religious Places?

- **Huge Gatherings:** Religious gatherings often attract millions of devotees, far exceeding the venue's capacity.
- **Ancient Structures:** These ancient structures are ill-equipped to handle large crowds due to their narrow pathways, limited exits, and posed challenges in managing massive gatherings in confined spaces.
- **Other Causes:** Poor crowd management, lack of proper security measures, and insufficient emergency protocols further exacerbate the situation.
- **Reasons for Casualties:**
  - ♦ Primary cause of death in stampedes is **trauma**, often resulting from blunt force injuries.
  - ♦ Many casualties are caused by **traumatic asphyxia** — there is partial or complete cessation of respiration.
  - ♦ **Other reasons include** heart attack, direct crushing injury to internal organs, head injuries, and neck compression.

### Preventive Measures

- **Better Design:** Many stampedes can be prevented simply through better design of spaces where mass gatherings take place.



- **Maintaining Crowd Density:** Crowd density (number of people per unit of area) should play a crucial role in determining how spaces for mass gatherings should be decided.
- **Crowd Management:** Ensure adequate space, clear signage, and designated entry/exit points.
- **Staff Training:** Train personnel to manage crowds and recognize risks.
- **Real-Time Monitoring:** Use sensors and cameras to monitor crowd density.
- **Public Communication:** Provide clear announcements and pre-event safety guidelines.
- **Emergency Exits:** Ensure multiple, well-marked emergency exits.
- **Staggered Entry:** Implement timed or staggered entry to avoid congestion.
- **Weather Preparedness:** Plan for weather impacts on crowd behavior.
- **Rapid Response:** Have medical teams and evacuation plans in place.
- **References:** It provides access to data and references from INTERPOL's 195 member countries, simplifying the process of seeking and offering international assistance.
- **Broadcast:** This module facilitates immediate sharing of crime-related information and alerts with international agencies.
- **Resources:** Designed for capacity-building, this module supports document exchange and management for effective crime control operations.

Source: IE

## NEWS IN SHORT

### BHARATPOL PORTAL

#### Context

- The Union Home Minister inaugurated the BHARATPOL portal developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in New Delhi.

#### BHARATPOL Portal

- BHARATPOL, or **Broadcast Hub for Assistance and Real-Time Action against Transnational Crimes**, is a technological platform created to facilitate real-time coordination between central and state agencies and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).
- It is designed to speed up investigations and improve crime control measures by providing a structured and secure interface for data sharing.

#### Key Modules

- **Connect:** This module allows all Indian law enforcement agencies to function as an extension of INTERPOL's National Central Bureau (NCB-New Delhi).
  - ♦ It ensures quick and secure transmission of investigation requests and data.
- **INTERPOL Notices:** The portal enables faster issuance and management of INTERPOL notices, such as Red Corner Notices, for locating criminals both domestically and globally.

#### What is Interpol?

- **Interpol** is an intergovernmental organization, which stands for International Criminal Police Organization.
- **Background:** It was founded in **1923** at the International Police Congress in Vienna as the **International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC)**.
  - ♦ In 1956, the ICPC adopted the name Interpol.
- **Members:** It has **196 member** countries, including **India**.
- **Headquarters:** Lyon, France
- **Mandate:** It connects police around the world – both technically and in person. It is the world's largest and only organization with the mandate and technical infrastructure to share police information globally.
- **National Central Bureau (NCB):** In each country, an Interpol NCB provides the central point of contact for the General Secretariat and other NCBs.

#### India's record

- **India joined** the Interpol in **1949**.
- **The CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation)** is the National Central Bureau for Interpol in India and coordinates all international police cooperation requirements of Indian law enforcement agencies via Interpol channels.

Source: PIB

### Z-MORH TUNNEL

#### In News

- The Z-Morh tunnel will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 13.

#### Z-Morh tunnel

- It is a key project for creating a year-round strategic corridor between Kashmir and Ladakh.



- **Location:** The tunnel is situated in Ganderbal district of Kashmir and will keep the tourist destination of Sonamarg accessible around the year, previously cut off in winter due to snow and avalanches.
- **Features:** It is built under the Thajiwas Glacier and the 6.5 km tunnel bypasses landslide- and avalanche-prone areas, featuring an intelligent traffic management system.
- **Significance:**
  - ♦ The tunnel is part of a **strategic route to Ladakh**.
  - ♦ The Z-Morh tunnel will **connect to the Zojila tunnel, Asia's longest, which** will reduce travel time from 3 hours to 20 minutes between Ganderbal and Kargil.
  - ♦ It is vital for moving goods and military resources.

Source :TH

## GULF OF MEXICO

### In News

- The proposal to **rename Gulf of Mexico to "Gulf of America"** has sparked debate over historical, political, and cultural implications.

### About Gulf of Mexico

- The Gulf of Mexico is a large body of water that borders the southeastern and southern United States, as well as Mexico and Cuba.
- Connected to the Atlantic Ocean via the Straits of Florida. Linked to the Caribbean Sea through the Yucatán Channel.
- The Gulf is shared by the United States, Mexico, and Cuba, with overlapping economic zones.
- **Major Draining Rivers:** Mississippi River, Rio Grande
- **Importance:** Rich in oil, natural gas, seafood and a large continental shelf.
  - ♦ Crucial for shipping routes and tourism industries.

Source: TH

## ANEMIAPHONE

### In News

- AnemiaPhone, developed by Cornell University, is a cost-effective, quick, and accurate technology designed to assess iron deficiency, a leading cause of anemia.
  - ♦ ICMR will integrate AnemiaPhone into its ongoing programs focused on anemia,

women's health, and maternal and child health across India.

### What is Anemia?

- Anemia is a condition where the number of red blood cells or the hemoglobin concentration in the blood is lower than normal.
- It can lead to fatigue, weakness, and a variety of other health problems if left untreated, impacting overall quality of life and economic productivity.

### Prevalence of Anemia

- Anemia remains a critical public health issue in India, with high rates of prevalence across various demographic groups:
  - ♦ 59% of adolescent girls
  - ♦ 57% of women (15-49 years)
  - ♦ 67% of children (6-59 months)
- These statistics reflect the NFHS-5 (National Family Health Survey) data, underscoring the widespread nature of the condition.

Source: TH

## COMMUNITY NOTES

### Context

- Meta will eliminate fact-checks posted by fact-checkers in the US, replacing them with a **'Community Notes' system**.

### About

- Nine years ago, Meta started **flagging fake news** with help **from outside fact-checkers**.
- So far, fact-checkers and experts certified by **International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN)** could **independently review and rate potential misinformation** on Meta's platforms.
- **Post Fact Checking:**
  - ♦ Meta would ensure that every piece of content rated as false by IFCN-certified fact-checkers would be less visible to users.
  - ♦ It would also attach a warning label below such content, linking to an article published by the fact-checker.

### Community Notes

- Community Notes was first piloted as a programme called **'Birdwatch' by Twitter in 2021**.
- It is a **crowdsourced fact-checking model that allows** users to add facts and context below a specific post.

- ◆ A Community Note shows up below a post **only if enough contributors vote that the context it provides is helpful.**
- ◆ As a result, the **model is said to become better** as more users participate.
- Currently, **anyone on X can become a contributor** and add Community Notes as long as they meet certain criteria such as having a six month-old account, verified phone number, and zero violations of X's rules.

Source: IE

## LINKAGE OF FARMER ID TO PM-KISAN

### In News

- The government has made it mandatory for new applicants to obtain a farmer ID for enrollment into the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme.

### About

- The farmer ID will be linked to the state's land records and provide details such as demographics, crops sown, and ownership information.
- This move aims to simplify the registration process by ensuring the applicant owns the land.

### About Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme (PM-KISAN)

- PM-KISAN is a **central sector scheme** launched on 24th February 2019 to supplement financial needs of land holding farmers, subject to exclusions.
- Under the scheme, financial benefit of Rs **6000/- per year** is transferred in **three equal four-monthly installments** into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country, through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.**
  - ◆ A Parliamentary panel has suggested doubling the annual payouts under PM-Kisan from Rs 6,000 to Rs 12,000.
- **Integration with Multiple Digital Platforms:** The PM-KISAN portal has been seamlessly integrated with key national platforms such as:
  - ◆ UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) for Aadhaar authentication,
  - ◆ PFMS (Public Financial Management System) for financial transfers,
  - ◆ NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India) for secure payments,

- ◆ Income Tax Department for income verification.

Source: IE

## HYSTERECTOMY

### In News

- There is growing concern over the potential excess of caesarean sections and unnecessary hysterectomies being performed.

### About Hysterectomy

- A hysterectomy is a surgical procedure to remove a woman's uterus, which means she will no longer have menstrual periods or be able to become pregnant.
  - ◆ The **uterus** is the place where a baby grows when a woman is pregnant.
- In some cases, the ovaries and fallopian tubes are also removed.
  - ◆ If both ovaries are taken out, the woman will enter menopause.
- **Common reasons** : Fibroids, Pelvic organ prolapse, Very heavy or painful periods, Endometriosis, Uterine, cervical, or ovarian cancer.
- **Health Impact:** Unnecessary hysterectomies cause severe physical, social, and mental health burdens.
  - ◆ Premature menopause, weight gain, and increased health risks like heart disease and diabetes are some of the consequences.
- **Supreme Court Intervention:** The Supreme Court has directed states to implement guidelines to monitor unnecessary hysterectomies, addressing issues in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan.

Source :TH

## EMPOWHER BIZ

### In News

- The **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** of NITI Aayog, launched **EmpowHER Biz – Sapno Ki Udaan** in partnership with New Shop, India's largest 24/7 convenience retail chain under its **Award to Reward (ATR) program.**

### Key Highlights of EmpowHER Biz

- **Objective:** Equip women with training in retail management, digital tools, financial literacy, and business development.
  - ◆ Create a robust ecosystem for women entrepreneurs to flourish.

- **Program Features:**

- ◆ **Mentorship and Comprehensive Training:** Focused on retail skills and entrepreneurial development.
- ◆ **Franchise Opportunities:** 50 participants (aged 18–35) selected via an online process.
  - Top 20 participants receive a 100% waiver on New Shop franchise fees, enabling them to own and operate retail outlets.
- ◆ **Target Regions:** Women from Delhi NCR, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat are eligible.

**About Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**

- **Established:** 2018 by NITI Aayog, transitioned to a public-private partnership in 2022.
- **Focus Areas:** Access to finance, market linkages, training, mentoring, compliance assistance, and business development.
- **ATR Initiative:** A plug-and-play framework for stakeholders to develop impactful programs, active since 2023.

Source: TH

