

Ministry of External Affairs Invites Comments on Draft Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2025

The Bill aims to **consolidate and amend the law regarding Indian citizens accessing the global workplace.**

- It establishes a **robust, transparent framework for safe, legal, orderly, and regular mobility** for overseas employment and stay abroad for work-related purposes.
- It will replace the **existing Emigration Act, 1983.**
- The legislation is **necessitated by deepening globalization**, which has created new opportunities, and the need to protect vulnerable citizens seeking overseas work.

Key Highlights of the Bill

- Overseas Mobility and Welfare Council** to be constituted to exercise powers and perform functions under the Act.
 - The Secretary to Ministry of External Affairs shall be the ex-officio Chairperson;
- Mobility Resource Centers** to be set up to provide emigrants with information, resources, and training.
- Integrated Information System** on mobility may be established to drive policy formulation and implementation.
- Policies and measures to counter irregular emigration** and human trafficking and irregular migration.
- Accreditation of Overseas Placement Agencies** and mandates procedures for certain categories of Foreign Employers.
- Penalties for Overseas Placement Agencies** contravening Competent Authority orders shall not be less than Rupees Five Lakh for each violation.

NITI Aayog releases a 'Roadmap for Job Creation in the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Economy'

India's tech sector faces potential job losses but also chance to **create 4 million new jobs** in next 5 years.

- This comprehensive roadmap using a Work-Worker-Workforce lens shows how India can **convert disruption into opportunity** and become **AI workforce capital of world.**

3 Critical challenges related to AI faced by India

- Massive Job Displacement Risk:** Over 60% of formal jobs in India are susceptible to automation by 2030.
- Gaps in Skills:** Indian graduates often lag behind in specialized, research-intensive AI courses and keeping curricula aligned with newer concepts like **Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG).**
- AI Talent Supply-Demand Gap:** Supply for AI talent is currently only about 50% of demand.

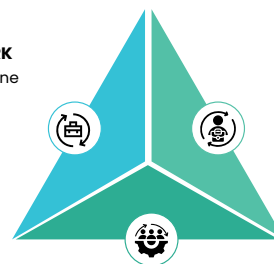
Recommendations for India by NITI Aayog

- India must establish an **India AI Talent Mission** to unify strategy and oversight, and execute the key recommendations that follow.
 - Integrate AI across all levels**, from schools to universities.
 - Launch national AI literacy programs** and provide flexible AI masters and doctoral programs for existing tech workforce.
 - Offering attractive grants and salaries** to retain top AI researchers, setting up autonomous AI CoEs, introducing a dedicated AI Talent Visa for fast-track residency, and offering startup relocation support.
- AI Talent Mission should work in collaboration with the IndiaAI Mission by:**
 - Establishing an India Open-Source AI Commons:** Create a central portal hosting high-quality datasets, models, and transparent benchmarks.
 - Operationalizing a **Federated National Compute and Innovation Grid.**

AI is fundamentally impacting how WORK is being done, which is changing the role of a WORKER and is ultimately impacting the entire WORKFORCE

Change in the WORK
 AI will automate routine tasks, increase productivity and enhance complex problem-solving capabilities

Change in WORKER
 AI will reshape roles by requiring new skillsets, phasing out some jobs, and creating entirely new ones



Change in WORKFORCE Workforce will become hybrid, with AI and humans integrated into cohesive teams

Foreign Minister of Afghanistan visited India

Key Highlights of the Visit

- India upgraded its **"technical mission" in Kabul to a full embassy.**
 - ⊖ India permitted the Taliban to appoint its diplomats at the Afghan embassy in New Delhi.
 - ⊖ India **closed its embassy in Kabul after the Taliban seized power in August 2021.**
 - In June 2022, India re-established its diplomatic presence in the Afghan capital by deploying a "technical team".
- Both sides agreed to coordinate efforts to **combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.**
 - ⊖ Foreign Minister of Afghanistan assures that **Afghanistan's soil would not be used against** any other country.
- Commencement of the **India-Afghanistan Air Freight Corridor.**
 - ⊖ Afghanistan invited Indian companies to **explore mining opportunities in Afghanistan.**

Reasons for recent Indian Engagement with Afghanistan

- **Advancing National Interest and Security Concerns** to check terror outfits operating from Afghanistan.
- **Countering Regional Influence** of countries like Pakistan and China.
- **Geopolitical Shifts and Real Politik** due to worsening Pakistan-Taliban Relations.
- **Building goodwill and trust** through capacity building and humanitarian initiatives.

Key Concerns in Relations

- **Taliban's autocratic regime** with scant regard for human rights, particularly those of women.
- **Lack of diplomatic recognition** for the Taliban government.

Government notifies first Greenhouse Gas Emission Intensity (GEI) Target Rules

First legally binding GEI Target Rules, 2025 target four high-emission sectors i.e. aluminium, cement, pulp & paper, and chlor-alkali.

- QGEI is the **amount of GHGs** that are **emitted per unit of product output**. For instance, the gases released in the production of a tonne of product, such as cement or aluminum.

What are the rules?

Issued under: compliance mechanism of **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), 2023.**

- **Compliance Enforced by:** Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
- **Objective:** To reduce **greenhouse gas emissions** per unit of output (tCO₂e per tonne of product) in **carbon-intensive sectors** and **facilitate carbon credit trading.**

Mechanism

- **Compliant entities** reducing emissions below target earn tradable **carbon credit certificates.**
 - ⊖ The BEE will issue the **carbon credits certificate.**
- **Non-compliant entities** must buy additional certificates or **pay an environmental compensation**, which equals **twice the average carbon credit price** for that compliance year.

Significance

- **Market-based compliance:** Earned carbon credits can be traded on the domestic carbon market.
 - ⊖ Rules will help **operationalize the country's domestic carbon market** under the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), 2023.
- **Transparency:** Registration and documentation under **Indian Carbon Market portal.**
- **Revenue for sustainability:** Environmental compensation funds **support carbon market infrastructure.**
- **Supports India's climate goals:** supports **commitments under the Paris Agreement.**

About CCTS, 2023

- **Purpose:** Develop India's first domestic carbon market to drive GHG emission intensity reduction in line with India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- **Notified under :** Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- **Establishes Indian Carbon Market under two mechanisms:**
 - ⊖ **Compliance mechanism:** Mandatory program for the energy-intensive industries where the Government will set GHG emission intensity targets.
 - ⊖ **Offset mechanism:** A voluntary project-based mechanism for entities not covered under compliance mechanism.

Sa-Dhan releases Quarterly Microfinance Report, part of Annual Bharat Microfinance Report

It reveals a sharp rise in **loan delinquencies** across microfinance sector in FY 2024–25, **stressing microfinance repayment cycles**, likely due to **rural distress**, weather shocks, limited financial literacy etc.

Microfinance Sector in India

- **Definition:** Microfinance refers to banking services designed to provide financial access to low-income individuals or groups who are typically excluded from traditional banking systems.
- **Significance:**
 - ⊕ **Financial Inclusion:** Brings marginalized populations into the formal financial system.
 - ⊕ **Rural Penetration:** High rural client proportion (71%) highlights effectiveness of micro lending institutions (MLIs) in reaching **underserved rural populations**.
 - ⊕ **Empowerment of Women:** Women-led SHGs have been instrumental in improving socio-economic conditions, with 88% of SHGs linked to banks being women-led.
- **Challenges:**
 - ⊕ **Asset Quality Deterioration:** Portfolio at Risk (PAR) worsened across all buckets compared to the previous year, indicating elevated credit risks.
 - ⊕ **State Delinquency:** Bihar performed the worst, not only accounting for the highest amounts of loans outstanding, but also the highest rates of default on these loans.
 - ⊕ **Operational and Financial Headwinds:**
 - **Staff and Client Retention Challenges:** The sector is experiencing difficulties in client retention. Furthermore, MLIs are seeing a decline in their workforce.
 - **Rising Funding Costs:** The Cost of Funds (weighted average) for the sector increased to **11.33%** (small MLIs faced the highest).
 - **Declining Profitability:** MLIs reporting **Return on Equity (RoE) below 1% has increased significantly**.

Initiatives taken by government for strengthening microfinance

- **SHG-Bank Linkage Program:** To increase the loan volume of the SHGs, and modify their money lending pattern from non-income generating activities to production-based activities.
- **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana:** To allow small businesses to borrow micro credit without collateral.
- **Refinance Support to MFIs by NABARD:** It has been providing financial assistance to MFIs under its Long-Term Refinance facility.

Long-term growth of microfinance industry is expected to hinge on improved customer underwriting, digital adoption, policy interventions and focus on responsible lending and improved collection practices.

Also In News



Nobel Peace Prize 2025

Nobel Peace Prize for 2025 is awarded to **Maria Corina Machado**.

- It is awarded for her struggle to achieve a just and **peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy' in Venezuela**.

Nobel Peace Prize

- Since WW-II, The Peace Prize (started in 1901) has been awarded to honour efforts in four main areas:
 - ⊕ **arms control and disarmament.**
 - ⊕ **peace negotiation.**
 - ⊕ **democracy and human rights.**
 - ⊕ **work aimed at creating a better organized and more peaceful world.**
- **Indian citizen who won Nobel peace prize**
 - ⊕ Mother Teresa (1979)
 - ⊕ Kailash Satyarthi (2014)



National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has formally recognised **three major ports** as **Green Hydrogen Hubs under NGHM**.

- The three ports are **Deendayal Port Authority (Gujarat)**, **V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (Tamil Nadu)**, and **Paradip Port Authority (Odisha)**.
- The recognition of these ports is **expected to catalyse industrial participation, attract green investments, and promote innovation in clean fuel technologies.**

About NGHM

- **Announced:** In January 2023
- **Objective:** Make India a **Global Hub** for production, **usage and export of Green Hydrogen** and its derivatives.
- **Target:** Production of **5 MMT per annum of Green Hydrogen by 2030**.





Sawalkote hydroelectric project

Apex committee of the Environment Ministry has accorded environmental clearance to the Sawalkote hydroelectric project.

About Sawalkote hydroelectric Project

- It is a **1,856 MW run-of-the-river** hydroelectric project located on the **Chenab River** in district **Ramban & Udhampur** of **UT Jammu & Kashmir**.
 - The Run-of-the-River project uses the natural flow of the river with little or no water storage.
- It is the first major hydropower project on the Indus rivers to be accorded environmental clearance following **India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)**.



Quantum Random Number Generation

Researchers from Raman Research Institute have developed new quantum techniques to generate and certify truly random numbers.

What are random numbers?

- They are essential for **digital encryption, authentication systems, and cybersecurity**.
- Current systems use **pseudorandom numbers, generated algorithmically** thus **predictable with the use of quantum computers**.

What are true random numbers?

- True randomness is observed in **some natural or physical processes that are inherently random**, not from any algorithm.
 - Radioactivity and weather events are a few examples of random processes in nature.
- It enables creation of **truly unpredictable encryption keys, potentially making digital systems unhackable**.

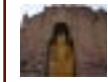


Siddi tribal community

Siddi tribal community, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, has achieved a literacy rate of over 72 per cent.

About Siddi tribal community

- Also known as **Habshi or Badsha**, are an **Afro-Indian tribal community** believed to have migrated from East Africa.
- Location:** India's western coast i.e., Gujarat, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.
- Occupation:** Traditionally hunters and gatherers, now mostly agricultural labourers and daily-wage workers.
- It is believed that they first came to India in the 7th century with Arab merchants and in the 16th century with the Portuguese and British, largely as slaves.
- Currently recognised as a **Scheduled Tribe** by union government.



Bamiyan Buddhas

Bamiyan Buddhas were in the news recently.

About Bamiyan Buddhas

- Buddhas of Bamiyan were **two monumental size statues**, standing at 115 and 174 feet tall.
- Location:** sandstone cliffs of the Bamiyan valley in central Afghanistan.
- Period:** Built in the 6th century.
- Artistic Significance:** Exemplified Gandharan Buddhist art.
 - Closely connected with spread of Buddhism across Central Asia.
- Destruction:** Destroyed by the Taliban in 2001
- UNESCO Recognition:** Bamiyan Valley declared a World Heritage Site in 2003.

Place in News



Barbados (Capital: Bridgetown)

Lok Sabha Speaker led an Indian Parliamentary Delegation (IPD) to National Assembly of Barbados on the sidelines of the 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.

Political Features

- Location:** Island country in the southeastern Caribbean Sea (North Atlantic Ocean), northeast of Venezuela, located near Lesser Antilles.
 - Lesser Antilles** is a long arc of small islands in the Caribbean Sea extending in a north-south direction from the Virgin Islands to Grenada.
- Barbados is member of **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)** and **Commonwealth of Nations**.

Geographical Features

- Highest point:** Mount Hillaby
- Formed from **sedimentary and coral deposits**.
- Surrounded by **coral reefs**, No major rivers or lakes.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI