

# NEWS TODAY

## “India’s Blue Economy: Strategy for Deep-Sea and off shore Fisheries” report by NITI Aayog

The strategy is critical as the blue economy is recognized as a core growth area aiming for a US\$100 billion blue economy by 2030.

### Key Findings of Report

- **Current Status:** The overall potential is estimated at **7.16 million tonnes** of fisheries resources. However, this potential remains largely unexploited.
- **Key Challenges:**
  - ⊕ **Infrastructure and Technological Gaps:** Only 90 fishing harbours are adequately equipped to handle larger deep-sea vessels.
    - **Harvesting deep-sea resources efficiently** also remains a technological challenge.
  - ⊕ **Regulatory Gaps:** India currently lacks specific regulatory laws for fishing activities within the Exclusive Economic Zone, contributing to Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing concerns.

### Key Initiatives

- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY):** It is a five-year scheme (FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25) with ₹20,050 crore investment.
  - ⊕ Under PMMSY, the government provides **financial support, including up to 60% financial assistance to traditional fishermen** for converting or acquiring deep-sea and offshore fishing vessels.
- **Others:** Fisheries And Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), **National Fisheries Policy 2020**, etc.

### Conclusion

The report proposes multi-phase roadmap including policy overhauls and fleet modernization. Also, the report recommends that all subsidies should be kept to a minimum and phased out as soon as possible.

## Economics Nobel Prize 2025

It has been awarded to **Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion, and Peter Howitt** “for explaining innovation-driven economic growth”.

- One half of the prize will go to **Joel Mokyr** “for identifying the prerequisites for sustained growth through technological progress.”
- The other half will be shared jointly by **Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt** “for the theory of sustained growth through creative destruction.”
- They observed that, for the first time in history, the **past two centuries** have witnessed sustained global economic growth.

### Their Contributions

- **Joel Mokyr :**
  - ⊕ He described the mechanisms that **enable scientific breakthroughs** and **practical applications** to enhance each other and create a **self-generating process**.
  - ⊕ He identified the **factors necessary** for sustained growth. It includes
    - **Continual Flow of Useful Knowledge**, consists of **propositional knowledge** (demonstrates why something works) and **prescriptive knowledge** (describes what is necessary for something to work).
    - **Commercial knowledge** (transforming ideas into commercial products).
    - **Societal Openness to Change**.
- **Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt:**
  - ⊕ They formulated a **mathematical model** to explain **Creative Destruction**.
  - ⊕ As per **Creative Destruction**, the arrival of new and better products in the market causes companies offering older versions to lose their competitiveness or exit the market.
    - It is called creative because it builds upon **innovation**, but it is also **destructive** because **older products** become **obsolete** and lose **their commercial value**.

## First IUCN Green Status of Species assessment for the Tiger Released

The assessment classified the **Tiger** as '**Critically Depleted**,' reflecting the severe historical and ongoing threats.

- Threats include habitat loss, prey depletion, poaching, and regional extinctions.

### Key Findings

- Population Trend:** Decreasing (Current estimate (mature individual)- 2608-3905).

- Tigers are now extinct in 9 of the 24 areas evaluated and are threatened in all spatial units where they still persist.

- Status of Conservation Legacy and Recovery Potential:** High and Medium, respectively.

### About IUCN Green Status of Species

- Launched in 2012, it builds upon the **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species**.

- In 2020, it became an optional part of Red List assessments.

- Provides a **tool for assessing the recovery of species' populations and conservation** impact alongside extinction risk.

- Categories:** It includes Largely Depleted, Moderately Depleted, Slightly Depleted, Fully Recovered, etc.

### How Green Status defines Species Recovery?

- A species is fully recovered if :

- It is present in **all parts of its historical range** (including areas lost due to human impact).

- It is **viable** (not at risk of extinction) across its range.

- It performs its **ecological functions** in all parts of its range.

- These factors together give a "**Green Score**" (0–100%), indicating how close a species is to full recovery.

### About Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)

- The tiger is the **largest wild cat** in the world.

- India has almost **75%** of the world's wild tiger population.

- Range Countries:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, etc.

- Habitat:** Forest, Savanna, Shrubland, Grassland, Wetlands (inland), etc.

- Conservation Status:** Endangered (IUCN Red List); Schedule I (Wildlife Protection Act, 1972); CITES Appendix I.



## Several initiatives unveiled to strengthen India's infrastructure planning and development ecosystem

Initiatives have been launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry during the commemoration of **four years** of the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP)**.

### Key Initiatives

- PM GatiShakti Public:** It opened the PM GatiShakti NMP platform to the private sector.

- It is developed by **Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N)** and powered by the **National Geospatial Data Registry (NGDR)**.

- It will enable wider access to geospatial data and advanced analytics.

- PM GatiShakti – Offshore:** Dedicated digital platform for **integrated planning** and management of **offshore development** across multiple sectors.

- It will strengthen India's Blue Economy.

- Enables data-driven decision-making for offshore projects: wind farms, marine resources, coastal infrastructure.

- PMGS District Master Plan (DMP) for 112 Aspirational Districts:** It will strengthen data-driven local infrastructure development and holistic regional growth.

- It supports area-based planning across key sectors including health care, education, logistics, industrial development, environmental management, etc.

- Logistics Excellence, Advancement and Performance Shield (LEAPS) 2025:** It will recognize outstanding leadership and innovation across logistics sectors.

- It is a flagship initiative of the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.

- It is aligned with the vision of the National Logistics Policy (NLP), 2022 and PM GatiShakti.

- It will also emphasize on **sustainability, ESG** (Environmental, Social, and Governance) practices, and Green Logistics, etc.

- PMGS NMP Dashboard:** A comprehensive multi-sector reporting system for monitoring progress and deriving actionable insights.

### PM GatiShakti NMP, 2021

- It has revolutionized infrastructure planning and implementation in India by **integrating geospatial data** from more than 57 Central Ministries, Departments, and States/UTs.

- Seven Engines of NMP** : Railways, Roads, Ports, Waterways, Airports, Mass Transport and Logistics Infrastructure.

### Key Achievements of PM GatiShakti NMP



**Over 600 projects** have been planned and mapped on the PM GatiShakti portal.



**Network Planning Group (NPG)** has evaluated **over 300 major** infrastructure projects.



All 36 States/UTs have developed **State Master Plan (SMP) portals** aligned with the National Master Plan.

## Vital Statistics of India based on Civil Registration System (CRS) report (2023) released

The report is compiled by the Registrar General of India (RGI), Ministry of Home Affairs.

### Key highlights of the report

- **Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB):** (excluding Sikkim) was 928 females per 1000 males.
  - ⊕ **Highest** - Arunachal Pradesh (1,085).
  - ⊕ **Lowest** - Jharkhand (899).
- **Share of institutional Deaths and Births** (excluding Sikkim)- 74.7% and 24%.
- **Births:** Number of registered births decreased by 0.9% from 2022.
  - ⊕ **Level of Registration of Births (LoR)** - 98.4%
  - ⊕ Births registered in **urban areas** was higher than in rural areas.
- **Deaths:** Number of registered deaths increased by 0.1% from 2022.
  - ⊕ **Level of Registration of Deaths (LoR)** - 97.2%
  - ⊕ Deaths registered in **rural areas** was higher in urban areas.
- **Infant deaths increased** from 2022.
- **21 and 19 States/UTs** have achieved 100% level of registration of births and deaths respectively.
  - ⊕ **Birth and death registrations for males** was higher than females in both rural and urban areas.



### About CRS

- It is a **unified process for recording of vital events** eg. births, deaths, and still births **but not marriages and divorce**.
- Under the **Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969** it is **compulsory** to report births and deaths to Registrar.
  - ⊕ **2023 Amendment** enabled **digital registration**, creation of **national and state databases**, etc.

## Also In News



### Israel - Gaza Peace Deal

The **Release of 48 hostages** and the **withdrawal of Israeli forces** from Gaza City to a designated "yellow line" took place recently.

- The war lasted over **two years (since Oct 7, 2023)**.
- About Israel- Hamas Ceasefire and Peace deal**
- **Based on US President 20-point plan**, including ceasefire, Israeli withdrawal to agreed lines and release of all hostages.
- **Mediated by** : USA, Egypt, Qatar, Turkey.
- **India's stand:**
  - ⊕ India welcomed **peace efforts** for regional peace and stability, supporting **multilateral diplomacy**.
  - ⊕ Reinforces India's **balanced West Asia policy**, maintaining ties with **Israel, Palestine, and Arab nations**.



### Inflation

India's **Retail Inflation (CPI-based)** has cooled **lowest since June 2017**.

This is primarily due to **base effects** and **falling food prices**; however, **core inflation** rose sharply to a **two-year high**, driven by surging **gold and silver prices**.

### About Inflation

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI):** Measures the monthly change in price for a basket of goods and services.
  - ⊕ **Released by:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Core inflation** is an inflationary measure that leaves out energy and food, focusing only on items that have fairly predictable price movements.
- **RBI's tolerance band** for CPI inflation rate is 4% ±2%.



### Port Pasni

Recently, Pakistan has offered the US the opportunity to develop and operate Port Pasni, as per reports.

- The port is envisioned as the gateway for US to Pakistan's critical minerals.



### About Pasni Port

- **Location:** Gwadar district in **Balochistan** province, along the **Arabian Sea**.
- **Strategic Significance:**
  - ⊕ It is located close to 70 miles from the **China-operated Gwadar Port** and 178 miles from **Iran's Chabahar Port**.
  - ⊕ Its location makes it an ideal hub for trade routes linking **South, West and Central Asia**.



### Tipping point

**Warm-water coral reefs** have crossed their **thermal tipping point**, triggering **irreversible dieback**.

### About Tipping point

- **Definition:** These are critical thresholds in a system that, when exceeded, can lead to a significant change in the state of the system, often with an understanding that the change is irreversible, by IPCC.
- **Tipping points are interlinked**, meaning crossing one may accelerate collapse of others, creating a cascading effect threatening planetary stability.
- **Other Planetary Systems at Risk:** Amazon rainforest, Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), Sub-Polar Gyre (SPG), land permafrost, mountain glaciers, etc.



## Key Initiatives unveiled by RBI

Recently, RBI unveiled key initiatives like the **Unified Lending Interface (ULI)**, **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) retail sandbox**, pilot for **tokenisation of Certificates of Deposit (CDs)**.

### About Initiatives

- **ULI:** It is envisioned as a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).
  - ⊖ It aggregates data from multiple data sources which would be made available to lenders for better **credit assessment**.
  - ⊖ It aims to enhance the delivery of credit.
- **CBDC Retail sandbox :** For fintech firms to innovate and test solutions.
  - ⊖ CBDC is a digital version of **fiat currencies** issued by Central Banks.
- **Tokenisation of CDs:** Facilitates faster settlements, improves liquidity, enhances transparency, etc.
  - ⊖ **Tokenization** is the process of creating a **digital representation**, called a "token", of a **real-world asset like stocks** on a distributed ledger or blockchain.
  - ⊖ **CD** is a negotiable money market instrument and issued in dematerialised form or as a Promissory Note against **funds deposited at a bank** or other eligible financial institution.
  - ⊖ Its maturity period is up to one year (min- 7 days).



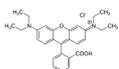
## Vishwas Scheme

Recently '**Vishwas Scheme**' was launched in 238th meeting of Central Board of Trustees (CBT), Employees' Provident Fund.

- CBT is a **tri-partite Board**, consisting of representatives of Government (Both Central and State), Employers, and Employees.
- CBT is assisted by the EPFO ( Employees' provident fund organisation)
- **Board operates 3 schemes:** Employees' Provident Funds Scheme 1952 Employees' Pension Scheme 1995 , Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme 1976

### About Vishwas scheme

- **Objective:** Reduce litigation through rationalised penal damages.
  - ⊖ One of the major reasons for litigations has been the imposition of high rate of penal damages for belated remittances of **Provident Fund** dues.
  - ⊖ PF is a retirement saving scheme in which both the employee and employer contribute a fixed % of the employee's salary every month.
- **Duration** - scheme shall be operational for 6 months and is extendable by another six months.



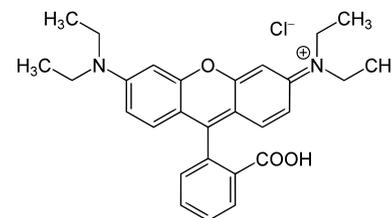
## Rhodamine B

Scientists have found an **effective and sensitive** method of detection of **toxic molecules** such as **Rhodamine B**, using **coffee-ring effect** and nanotechnology application.

- **Coffee-ring effect** is a spontaneous phenomenon where the capillary flow from the center to the edge of a droplet pushes all solute towards the droplet's edge.

### About Rhodamine B

- It is a water-soluble **fluorescent synthetic dye** known for its bright pink colour.
- **Applications:** Scientific research; industries like Textiles, paper, and leather.
- **Characteristics:**
  - ⊖ **Toxic:** May damage skin, eyes, and the respiratory system; **carcinogenic**.
  - ⊖ **Environmental contaminant:** Reported to persist in water.
- It is **banned** in products such as **food and cosmetics**.



## Place in News



## Madagascar (Capital: Antananarivo)

**Anti-government Gen Z protests** in Madagascar have led to the fall of the government.

### Political Features

- Located in the **Indian Ocean** off the southeast coast of Africa.
- **Maritime Boundaries:** Comoros, France (Mayotte and Réunion), Mauritius, Mozambique and Seychelles.

### Geographical Features

- It is the **fourth-largest island in the world**.
  - ⊖ **Three largest islands** are Greenland, New Guinea, Borneo.
- **High Endemism:** Approximately 90% of Madagascar's flora and fauna is **found nowhere else**.
  - ⊖ This is due to **Madagascar's isolation from Africa by ocean currents**.
- **Madagascar and the Indian Monsoon:** The South-West Monsoon cycle **starts** near Madagascar with the **Mascarene High** pushing **south-easterly winds**.
  - ⊖ After crossing the **equator**, these **winds deflect** to become **moisture-laden south-westerlies** heading toward India.

