

NEWS TODAY

Eighth Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly Held in New Delhi

About ISA

- **Genesis:** It is a global intergovernmental organization launched in 2015 by India and France at COP21 in Paris.
 - ☉ It is the largest treaty-based intergovernmental organisation from the Global South.
- **Headquarters:** Gurugram, India. It is the first international intergovernmental organization headquartered in India.
- **Membership:** 124 Member and Signatory Countries.
 - ☉ Following a 2020 amendment to its Framework Agreement, all UN member states are now eligible to join the Alliance.
- **Aim:** To bring clean, reliable, and affordable energy to communities, driving sustainable growth and improving quality of life.
- **Mission:** To unlock \$1 trillion in solar investments by 2030 while reducing technology and financing costs.
- **Collaborative Initiatives:** SolarX Startup Challenge, STAR-C Initiative, Global Solar Facility, One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) etc.

Key highlights of the Session

- **Launch of SUNRISE (Solar Upcycling Network for Recycling, Innovation & Stakeholder Engagement):** A global initiative to promote solar waste recycling, green employment, and circular economy.
- **Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Procurement MoU:** 16 SIDS joined hands under an ISA-World Bank platform for coordinated solar procurement and capacity building.
- Released ISA's flagship reports: **Ease of Doing Solar 2025** and **Solar Trends 2025**.
- **Other:** **Global Capability Centre** was unveiled to create a **Silicon Valley for Solar** in India, **ISA Academy** (AI-based online learning platform) launched.

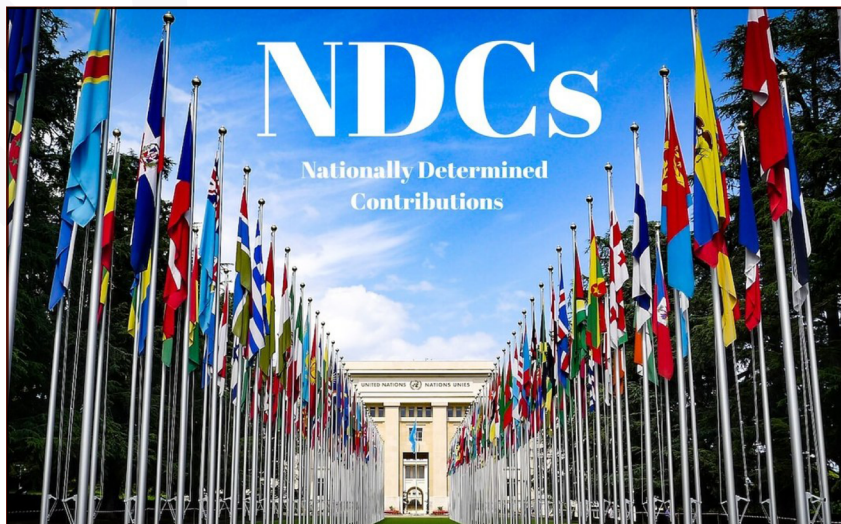
Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement Synthesis report by UNFCCC

NDCs embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change under **Article 4 of the Paris Agreement 2015**.

- The report finds that the **NDCs submitted by 64 Parties**, that account for 30% of global emissions in 2019, falls short of the **emission reductions** necessary to **limiting global warming to 1.5 °C**.
- To achieve this goal of 1.5 °C, the **required emissions cuts must be 60% by 2035**.
 - ☉ However, the NDCs are only estimated to **result in a 17% decline by 2035**.
- Additionally, according to **WMO Greenhouse Gas Bulletin**, the levels carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) in the atmosphere, **reached new records in 2024**.

Other Key highlights of the Synthesis Report

- **Emission Trajectories:** Implementation of new NDCs will result in a **peaking of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions**, followed by strong reductions until 2035.
- **Scope Progression:** New NDCs show **improved quality and credibility**, with 89% of Parties communicating economy-wide targets, compared with 81% previously.
- **Conditionality Gap:** Measures for critical mitigation options like **afforestation and reforestation and solar energy** have high **conditionality gaps**, indicating they depend significantly on external support.
- **Private Finance:** Difficulties persist in mobilizing **private finance due to low profitability**.



India's NDC:

- India submitted its **Updated First NDC in August 2022**, outlining **ambitious targets for 2030**.
- Reduce the Emissions Intensity of its GDP by **45 percent** from the 2005 level.
- Achieve about **50 percent** cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources.
- Create an additional carbon sink of **2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent** through increased forest and tree cover.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)'s Sustainable Food Systems report highlights India's soil health

The report finds severe nutrient deficiencies in Indian soils based on the Soil Health Card Scheme data.

Key Findings

Soil nutrient deficiencies:

- ⊕ **Nitrogen:** 64% of samples tested 'low' for Nitrogen (N).
- ⊕ **Organic Carbon (SOC) Deficit:** 48.5% of samples tested 'low' for SOC, a crucial indicator for soil structure and microbial abundance.
 - ◆ Over 43% of districts at 'very high' climate risk also showed low SOC levels.
- ⊕ **Micronutrient Shortages:** 55.4% of samples tested 'low' for Boron, and 35% for Zinc.

➤ **High Urea Consumption:** Fertilizer consumption is heavily skewed towards urea, which is about 68 per cent of total fertilizer consumption in 2023-24.

Implications of soil nutrient deficiencies

- Threat to **crop productivity, food security, farmer's income** and **sustainable agriculture**.
- Reduced capacity for **carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation**.

Recommendations

- **Expand Current Soil Monitoring under SHC** to include **physical** (texture, compaction) and **biological** (microbial activity) indicators.
- **Reform fertiliser subsidy policy** to incentivise balanced and efficient use.
- **Use biochar** to improve **fertility, moisture retention, and carbon storage**.

Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, 2015

- **Implemented by:** Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- **Purpose:** To assess soil fertility and provide **nutrient-based recommendations to farmers**.
- **Measures 12 Chemical Indicators:** Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Sulphur (Macronutrients); Zinc, Iron, Copper, Manganese, Boron (Micronutrients); and pH, Electrical Conductivity and Organic Carbon.

Soil Health Card scheme has been merged in **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) Cafeteria scheme** as one of its components under '**Soil Health & Fertility**' from the year 2022-23.

NITI Aayog released two reports on India's Services Sector

The reports are titled as **Insights from GVA trends and State-level dynamics** and **Insights from Employment trends and State-level dynamics**.

Key Highlights of the Reports

Services at the Core of India's Employment Transition

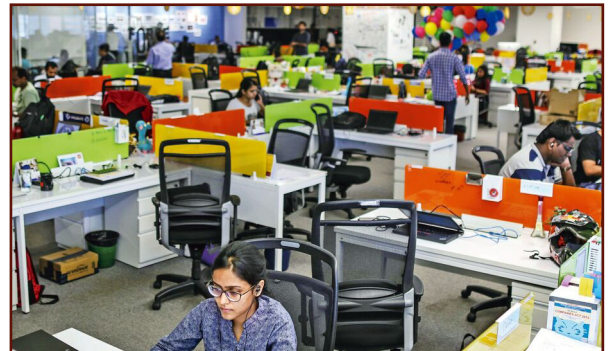
- It employed **188 million workers** in 2023-24, and is the second-largest employer.
- In 2024-25, the services sector contributed nearly **55% of Gross Value Added (GVA)**, while the primary and secondary sectors accounted for 16% and 29%, respectively.
 - ⊕ Despite a high **contribution to GVA, it provided less than one-third of total jobs** (mostly informal and low-paying).

Employment Landscape

- Added **~40 million jobs** in six years, second only to construction.
- Acts as a **labour shock absorber**, but is divided between:
 - ⊕ **High-value services** (IT, finance, healthcare, professional services), productive but limited employment.
 - ⊕ **Traditional services** (trade, transport), major employers, yet highly informal.
- **India's shift to services** remains **slower than its peers**.

Employment Profile

- **Spatial:** 60% of **urban workers**, as compared to less than 20% of **rural workers** in services.
- **Gender:** Only **10.5% of rural women** are in services as compared to **60% of urban women**; persistent wage gaps.
- **Age:** Dominated by **prime-age workers**; youth face instability.
- **Education:** Higher education improves job access, but informality persists.
- **Informality:** 87% lack social security; rural women earn less than 50% of men's wages.



Roadmap for Transformation

- **Formalisation and social protection** for informal, gig, and MSME workers.
- **Inclusive access** for women and rural youth via skilling and digital tools.
- **Tech-led skilling** for digital and green jobs.
- **Balanced regional growth** through Tier-2/3 service hubs and state clusters.

Moving Forest Dwellers from Tiger Reserves Must Be Voluntary: Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sent a brief titled “**Reconciling Conservation and Community Rights: A Policy Framework for Relocation and Co-existence in India’s Tiger Reserves**” to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Key Recommendations

- Relocation must be **voluntary**, based on **free, prior, and informed consent**, without pressure or inducement.
 - ⊕ Forest Right Act (FRA) provides safeguards against forced eviction.
 - ◆ According to FRA, **no member of a forest dwelling Scheduled Tribe or other traditional forest dwellers shall be evicted or removed** from the forest land under his occupation till the recognition and verification procedure is complete.
 - ◆ FRA is applicable in **National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Tiger Reserves**.
- Establish a **National Framework for Community-Centred Conservation and Relocation (NFCCR)** jointly by the **Environment and Tribal Affairs Ministries**.

Key Challenges in relocation of forest dwellers

- **Rights vs protection models:** Traditional forest conservation treats local peoples as threats rather than partners, undermining FRA’s inclusive vision.
- **Livelihood disruption:** Restriction of customary forest access and relocation from protected areas cut off income for many Indigenous groups.
- **Uneven development & regional disparity:** Forest-dependent tribal regions often lag in infrastructure, skills and access compared to high-income states focused on modern services.
- **Sustainable Development Goals:** Creating a balance between **SDG-1 (No Poverty)** and **SDG-13 (Climate Action)**.

Path forward

- **Conservation by co-management:** Treat Indigenous peoples as stewards and co-managers, not adversaries.
- **In-situ development:** Prioritise provisioning of health, schooling, water, electrification, market access and mobility to enable sustainable co-existence.
- **Integrate Indigenous knowledge:** Document and apply traditional management practices within conservation plans.
- **Conditional fiscal incentives:** Link central/state transfers to measurable FRA implementation and co-management outcomes.

Also In News



Cyclone Montha

Cyclone Montha makes landfall on Bay of Bengal’s coast.

About Cyclone Montha

- **Meaning:** “Montha” means a fragrant flower in Thai.
- **Tropical cyclone:**
 - ⊕ These are **rapidly rotating storms** that are non-frontal **low-pressure systems** originating over tropical oceans.
 - ⊕ Also known as **Hurricanes** (Atlantic), **Typhoons** (Western Pacific and South China Sea) and **Willy-willies** (Western Australia).
- **Conditions required for tropical cyclone:**
 - ⊕ **Sea surface temperature** higher than 27° C.
 - ⊕ Presence of **Coriolis force**.
 - ⊕ A pre-existing **weak low-pressure area**.



Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)

To modernize and democratize rehabilitation education, the **Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)** has introduced reforms. **About Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)**

- **Establishment:** As registered society in 1986, became a **Statutory Body in 1993** under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Objectives:**
 - ⊕ To regulate the training policies and programmes in the field of **rehabilitation of persons with disabilities**
 - ⊕ To bring about **standardization of training courses for professionals** dealing with persons with disabilities.



AmazonFACE

Scientists in Brazil have launched the AmazonFACE (Free-Air CO₂ Enrichment) project near Manaus, to study how the Amazon rainforest will respond to future atmospheric CO₂ levels.

About AmazonFACE

- Seeks to simulate the atmosphere of the future and assess how tropical forests adapt to rising CO₂, temperature, and humidity.
 - ⊕ Understand carbon uptake capacity, photosynthesis, and forest resilience with Continuous monitoring (every 10 minutes) of CO₂ absorption.



East Asia Summit (EAS)

20th East Asia Summit adopts Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Peace and Stability

- The declaration aims to implement joint projects and activities under the EAS Plan of Action (2024–2028) aligned with ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future vision.

About East Asia Summit

- ⊕ **Overview:** A leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on strategic, political, and economic issues to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in East Asia.
- ⊕ **Genesis:** Established in 2005, with the first Summit held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- ⊕ **Nature:** An annual meeting of Heads of State or Government of participating countries.
- ⊕ **Members:** ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, The Republic of Korea, United States and Russia.



Eighth Central Pay Commission

Cabinet has approved Terms of Reference for 8th Central Pay Commission.

- Central Pay Commissions reviews and recommend changes in pay, pensions, and service conditions of Central Government employees.

About 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC)

- The Commission is a temporary body with a Chairperson, one Part-Time Member, and one Member-Secretary.
- It will submit recommendations within 18 months of its constitution.
- It will consider economic conditions, fiscal prudence, cost of non-contributory pension schemes, state finances, and public (CPSUs)-private pay structures.
- The 8th CPC's recommendations are expected to take effect from 1 January 2026.



Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

National Biodiversity Authority released money for **Red Sanders cultivators**, promoting the sustainable use of India's biological resources under ABS framework.

About Access and Benefit Sharing

- It is about how genetic resources are accessed and how the benefits from their use are fairly shared between users and providers.
- **Framework:** Covered under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
 - ⊕ **Bonn Guidelines and Nagoya Protocol** (2010) deal with the ABS.
- In India, it is governed by the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.

Place in News



Turkiye (Capital: Ankara)

- A 6.1 magnitude Earthquake hits Turkey's Balikesir Province.

Political Features

- ⊕ **Location:** It occupies a unique geographic position, lying partly in Asia and partly in Europe.
- ⊕ **Borders:** Georgia and Armenia (northeast), Greece and Bulgaria (northwest), Azerbaijan and Iran (east), and Iraq and Syria (southeast).
 - ◆ Surrounded by Black Sea (north), Mediterranean Sea (Southwest) and Aegean Sea (West).

Geographical Features

- ⊕ **Major Rivers:** Euphrates, Tigris etc.
- ⊕ **Highest Point:** Mount Ararat (5,165 Meters)
- ⊕ **Important Straits:** Bosphorus strait and Dardanelles strait.
 - ◆ Sea of Marmara: An inland sea, connects the Black Sea and Aegean Sea via the Bosphorus and Dardanelles strait.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



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LUCKNOW



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