

Redrawing Welfare Architecture through Universal Basic Income (UBI)

The relevance of UBI, first proposed by the **Economic Survey 2016–17** as an alternative to fragmented welfare schemes, has grown sharper today due to a convergence of socio-economic pressures that traditional models can no longer address such as:-

- **Rising Wealth Inequality:** The widening rich–poor gap has reached levels comparable to the pre-independence era.
- **Technology-Led Job Displacement:** Automation and AI threaten large segments of India’s informal and semi-skilled workforce.
- **Growing Economic Insecurity:** Gig and platform-based work has increased income volatility and reduced social protection.
- **Intensifying Socio-Environmental Stress:** Climate-related displacement and **rising mental health burdens** are straining household stability.

Concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI)

- **Definition:** Periodic, **unconditional cash transfer** to all citizens, regardless of income or employment.

Core principles:

- ⊕ **Universality:** Covers all citizens.
- ⊕ **Unconditionality:** No link to employment or income status.
- ⊕ **Agency:** Empowers individuals to make economic choices.

- **Global trials:** Finland, Kenya, improved health, food security, and mental well-being.

Arguments For and Against Universal Basic Income (UBI)(Economic Survey 2017-18)

Arguments For and Against Universal Basic Income (UBI) (Economic Survey 2017-18)	
 Arguments in Favour of UBI	 Arguments Against UBI
Poverty Reduction: Reduces poverty and vulnerability in one step.	Conspicuous Spending: Risk of wasteful consumption, especially by male members.
Agency & Choice: Empowers beneficiaries to decide their own welfare spending.	Moral Hazard: May reduce labour supply and encourage dependency.
Zero Exclusion Error: Universal coverage ensures no poor person is left out.	Gender Disparity: Men may control cash; women may get less say in spending.
Shock Protection: Provides a safety net against income, health, and livelihood shocks.	Implementation Burden: Stress on banking system due to financial access gaps.
Financial Inclusion: Encourages bank usage; boosts BC viability; eases credit constraints.	Fiscal Risk: Hard to withdraw once started; high long-term costs.
Psychological Security: Reduces daily stress of securing basic needs.	Universality Concerns: Opposition due to benefits flowing to the rich.
Administrative Efficiency: Replaces multiple schemes; reduces leakages and administrative burden.	Market Risk Exposure: Cash loses purchasing power during price fluctuations (unlike food subsidies).

Failure to supply Written Grounds of Arrest Renders the Arrest Illegal: Supreme Court (SC)

In **Mihir Rajesh Shah vs. State of Maharashtra & Anr**, SC held that failure to furnish such an information would be **violative** of the **Fundamental Rights under Article 21**.

Key Highlights of the Judgement

- **Right to be Informed of the Grounds of Arrest:** It is a fundamental and mandatory safeguard under **Article 22(1)** of the Constitution and **applies to all offences** including those under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**.
 - ⊕ Hence, the ruling expands the constitutional safeguards to all statutes ending the perception of such protection being limited to only special laws like **Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA)** or **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**.
- **Exceptional Circumstances:** In cases, when it is not possible to supply written grounds immediately, the ground could be **conveyed orally**.
 - ⊕ However, **written grounds must be furnished within two hours** before producing the accused to the magistrate for remand proceedings.
 - ◆ This would ensure a **judicious balance** between safeguarding the arrestee’s **constitutional rights under Article 22(1)** and **preserving the operational continuity of criminal investigations**.
- **Mode of Communication:** Must be in writing and in a **language understandable** by the arrestee.

Associated Articles

- **Article 21:** No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to **procedure established by law**.
- **Article 22 (1):** Arrested person should be **informed of the grounds for arrest** (as soon as possible) and be provided with the **right to consult, and to be defended** by, a legal practitioner of his choice.

Wildlife Institute of India (WII) releases its 1st Pan-India Assessment and Monitoring of Endangered Species (Vultures)

This first nationwide assessment estimated breeding adult populations focusing on **four Critically Endangered species** i.e., the **White-rumped, Indian, Slender-billed, and Red-headed vultures**.

Major Findings

- **Geographic Scope:** The survey documented vulture presence at 216 sites across 17 states.
- **Contraction of Range:** It revealed **absence of nesting in nearly 70% of historical sites** previously known across the country.
- **Dependence on Protected Areas (PAs):** PAs hold **54% of all documented nests**.
- **Species specific findings:**
 - ⊕ **Indian Vulture (*Gyps indicus*):** Found mainly in Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan (largest at Mukundra Hills); reliant on secure cliff sites
 - ⊕ **White-rumped Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*):** Concentrated in Kangra Valley, Himachal Pradesh
 - ⊕ **Slender-billed Vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*):** Breeding mostly in Upper Assam
 - ⊕ **Red-headed Vulture (*Sarcogyps calvus*):** Found in Madhya Pradesh; depends on dense, undisturbed forests; population extremely low and fragmented.



Vultures

- Large carrion-eating birds, mainly found in tropics and subtropics; 9 species in India.
- **Significance:** Clean environment by consuming carcasses, controlling wildlife diseases.
- **Conservation Status:** Protected under **Schedule I, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- **Threats:** Habitat loss, food scarcity, diclofenac poisoning, electrocution.
- **Conservation Initiatives:** Ban on diclofenac, ketoprofen, aceclofenac; Action Plan for Vulture Conservation (2020–25).



Transforming Food System crucial for solving Climate, Health, Biodiversity and Justice Crises

Recent EAT-Lancet Commission report highlights that even if global energy transition away from fossil fuels occurs, food systems would cause the **breach of Paris target of limiting global temperatures to 1.5°C**.

- 'Food systems' refers to **all activities** involved in food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal, with their economic, health, social, and environmental impacts.

Key Highlights of the Report

- **Food drives Five Planetary Boundary transgressions:** It includes land system change, biosphere integrity, freshwater change, biogeochemical flows, and Green House Emissions (GHGs).
 - ⌚ Agricultural and food systems **release about 30% of total GHGs**.
- **Inequalities in Food systems:** Richest 30% of global population contribute to **more than 70% of environmental pressures** from food systems.
- **Case of India:** Despite the decline in its economic contribution, agriculture would remain a large source of GDP and employment by 2050 and hence restructuring food systems could be more challenging due to large labour force.

Key Recommendations to Transform Food Systems

- **Planetary Health Diet (PHD):** It would reduce environmental impacts and nutritional deficiencies of most current diets.
 - ⌚ PHD is a **diet rich in plants** including whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes with **only moderate or small amounts of fish, dairy, and meat**.
- **Conservation Agriculture:** It is the complementarity of sustainable and ecological intensification practices, with **reduced soil disturbance, continuous soil cover, and crop diversification** forming its basis.
- **Integration of Food Systems across Key Policy Goals:** Including Paris Agreement, Kunming– Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and nation- specific food-based dietary guidelines, etc.



Also In News



Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has granted in-principle approval for the creation of two new specialised cadres; **Central Revenue Audit (CRA) Cadre** and **Central Expenditure Audit (CEA)** for more centralisation.

About Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)

- **Nature:** **Constitutional Body** established under **Article 148** of the Constitution
- **Appointment:** By the President through a warrant under the President's hand and seal.
- **Term:** Six years or until he/she reaches age of 65 (whichever comes first).
- **Removal:** **By President** following the same procedure and on the same grounds as those applicable to a **Supreme Court judge**.
- **Conditions of Service:** The CAG's salary and service conditions are decided **by Parliament** and cannot be altered to his disadvantage after appointment.
- **Expenses:** Administrative costs, salaries, allowances, and pensions **charged to the Consolidated Fund of India**.



Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996

Supreme Court (SC) held that an Arbitral award could be **scrapped** if delay taints its **decision-making**.

- As per SC, even though delay **alone is not an independent ground** to strike down an award yet such delays can vitiate the award if it undermines its quality, reasoning or fairness.

About Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996

- It seeks to **consolidate and amend** the law relating to domestic arbitration, international commercial arbitration and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards.
- Based on **United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law** adopted in 1985.



GPS Spoofing

Airlines have reported a surge in GPS spoofing over Delhi, triggering government investigations into the unusual navigation disruptions.

About GPS Spoofing

- It is a type of **cyberattack** that transmits false GPS (Global Positioning System) signals to **mislead navigation systems**.
- **Function:** It **exploits the weak signals of GPS satellites** by overpowering them with fake signals, making receivers show false locations.
- **Threats:** It can disrupt aviation, logistics, telecom, energy, and defense sectors.



Abraham Accords

Recently, USA President confirmed that **Kazakhstan** would be a part of Abraham Accords.

About Abraham Accords

- **Purpose:** Defuse tensions in the **Middle East** by normalizing relations between **Israel** and several so-called **moderate Arab states**, to ensure formal diplomatic, trade and security ties between these states with Israel.
 - ⊕ Named after the **biblical Abraham**, considered by both Jews and Arabs as their common ancestor and a symbol of brotherhood.
- **Genesis:** Initially signed in **2020**, between **Israel** with the **UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco**.



FAC Recommendations on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980

Union Environment Ministry's **Forest Advisory Committee (FAC)**, recommended rationalisation and uniformity in penal provisions over violation of **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980**.

Key Recommendations

- **Penal Compensatory Afforestation (CA):** Charged on an equal extent of the forest land involved in violation.
 - ⊕ Penal CA are **efforts** in addition to legally mandated **CA** for non-forestry use of forest for infrastructure projects.
- **Rationalise** the applicability of **Penal CA** with **penal NPV measures** under the Van Adhiniyam.
 - ⊕ NPV is the **quantification of environmental services** provided for the forest area diverted for non-forestry purposes.



State of the Climate Update for COP30

The State of the Climate Update for COP30 report has been released by the **World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)**.

Key Findings

- 2025 is likely to become the **2nd or 3rd warmest year ever recorded**.
 - ⊕ The last 11 years **including 2025** —are the warmest 11 years in history.
- This shows **we are not on track to meet the Paris Agreement's** climate goals.
- 2015–2025 will be the **warmest 11-year period in 176 years**.
- Atmospheric concentrations of **CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O** reached **record observed levels in 2024** and continue to rise in 2025.
- Renewable energy is **expanding** and **climate action plans** are **increasingly informed by** science-based climate services.



IBC and PMLA

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has issued new guidelines to address conflicts between **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** and the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**, to expedition resolution for distressed companies.

Key Highlights

- Insolvency professionals can now approach **special PMLA courts** and to seek **unfreezing** of assets attached by **Enforcement Directorate** rather than **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** dealing with bankruptcy cases.

IBC and PMLA

- While **IBC** deals with maximizing asset value and ensuring time-bound resolution, **PMLA** aims to deprive offenders of criminal proceeds.
- PMLA and IBC have **non-obstante clauses** (Section 71 under PMLA and Section 238 under IBC), i.e., conferring certain provisions with an **overriding effect** over conflicting statute.



Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) blacklists 178 training partners of PMKVY.

About Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- It is a flagship scheme for **skill certification**, being launched to **help Indian youth take up industry-relevant skill training to get better livelihoods**.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- **Launched:** 2015
- Presently, PMKVY is in its **fourth phase, PMKVY 4.0**.
- **Components:** It includes Short Term Training(National Skill Qualification Framework aligned Courses), Special Projects and **Recognition of Prior Learning**.
- **Geographical coverage :** Special attention to **aspirational, backward, border, tribal and Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts**



Place in News



Peru (Capital: Lima)

The 9th Round of India–Peru Trade Agreement negotiations was successfully concluded in Peru.

Political Features

- **Location:** Western South America
- **Borders:** **North:** Ecuador, Colombia; **East:** Brazil; **Southeast:** Bolivia; **South:** Chile
- **Bordering water body (West):** Pacific Ocean.

Geographical Features

- Peru is divided into **three longitudinal regions: Costa (Coastal Plain), Sierra (Andes Highlands) and Amazonia (Selva Region)**.
- **Highest Peak:** Mount Huascarán (6,768 m)
- **Lake Titicaca:** Shared with Bolivia; world's highest navigable lake (12,500 ft).

Economy (as per Confederation of Indian Industry)

- Peru has emerged as **India's 3rd largest trading partner in the Latin American and Caribbean region**.
- India is a key importer of **Peruvian gold and copper**.
- Peru is also actively engaged in regional blocs, being an observer of **SICA**, an associate member of **Mercosur**, and a full member of the **Pacific Alliance**.

