

NEWS TODAY

“Economic Case for Investment in the Well-being of Adolescents in India” Report released

Report released by Ministry of Health & family welfare provides insights into interventions where investments on adolescents will yield high returns.

Key Highlights

- ▶ India has **largest adolescents (aged 10-19) population** (253 million) in world.
- ▶ **Adolescent mortality rate fell by >50%** & adolescent fertility rate declined by 83% (2000-2019).
- ▶ Young people **completing secondary school** has more than doubled from 22% (2005) to >50% (2020).
- ▶ **22.7% rise in fatal road accidents** for adolescents under 18 has been observed (2021- 2022).
- ▶ Suggested Interventions are expected to **boost Indian economy by 10.1% of annual GDP**.

Issues faced by Adolescents

- ▶ **Health:** Unplanned pregnancies, malnutrition, mental disorders (**depression and anxiety**).
- ▶ **Education and Employment:** Stagnant learning, Unemployment (due to emerging technologies e.g. AI).
- ▶ **Child marriage:** Although, girls getting married before 18 has declined by over half (2006-2024), **1 in 3 of world's child bride live in India**.
- ▶ **Violence and injury:** Prevalence of road accidents, self-harm & suicide.

Interventions required

- ▶ Schools in **underserved areas, improved pedagogy, and merit based scholarships** for better learning outcomes.
- ▶ Prevention of **cyber bullying, interpersonal violence** and prevention and treatment of **common mental disorders for improved adolescent health**.
- ▶ Impart **life skills and transfer payments to girls**, changes in cultural and social norms to curb child marriage.
- ▶ **Graduated licensed schemes** to curb injury to adolescents.

India's Initiative

- ▶ Rastriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram
- ▶ National education policy 2.0
- ▶ School Health and Wellness Program under Ayushman Bharat
- ▶ Motor Vehicle Amendment Act 2019 and National Road Safety Policy

Supreme Court's Constitution Bench says states have power to levy tax on mineral rights

Supreme Court in an **8:1 ruling** held that power of state legislatures to tax mining lands is not limited by Parliament's **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) or MMDRA, 1957**.

- ▶ One **dissenting judgment** cautioned about **adverse consequences of giving mineral taxation rights to states**.

Key Observations by Court

- ▶ Power to tax mineral rights is enumerated in **Entry 50 of List II (State List)** and **Parliament cannot use** its residuary power with respect to that subject matter.
 - ⊕ Parliament **can impose limitations on states' mineral taxation via laws**, but the **MMDRA** has no specific provision imposing such limitation.
 - ⊕ **Entry 54 of List I (Union list)**, pertaining to the Union's power over minerals, is regulatory and **does not include taxing authority**.
- ▶ Also, the **term "land" in Entry 49 of List II includes mineral-bearing lands**, granting states the competence to tax such lands.
- ▶ Court overruled its 1989 judgement and held that **royalty is not within the nature of a tax** and did **not come under MMDRA**.

About MMDRA 1957

- ▶ Regulates the mining sector in India and provides for **following types of licences**:
 - ⊕ Reconnaissance permit,
 - ⊕ Prospecting licence (for exploring and proving deposits),
 - ⊕ Mining lease (for mineral extraction) and
 - ⊕ Composite licence (both exploration and extraction).

2023 Amendments in MMDRA

- ▶ Amendment added **Exploration Licence for deep-seated and critical minerals**, which permits reconnaissance and prospecting operations.
- ▶ Empowers Central Government to exclusively **auction mining lease and composite licence for certain critical minerals**.
 - ⊕ Auction would be conducted by the Central government, but **mining lease or composite licence will be granted by State governments only**.
- ▶ **Removes certain minerals from the list of atomic minerals** such as lithium, beryllium, titanium, etc.

Union Budget 2024-25 proposes to set up ₹1000 crore venture capital fund for space economy

Proposed Venture Capital Fund envisions to **expand the space economy by 5 times** in the next 10 years.

- ▶ Venture Capital Fund invests in **early-age startups** with long term growth potential.

Indian Space Economy

- ▶ **Present Indian space economy** values around **₹6,700 crore** and with a **2% share** in global space economy in 2021.
 - ⊕ This share is expected to **rise to 8% by 2030** and further to **15% by 2047**.
- ▶ **Space Start-ups** have increased to nearly **200 in 2024** from **1 in 2022**.
- ▶ **Investment in Indian Space Start-Ups** increased to **\$124.7 Million in 2023**.
- ▶ Implementation of **Indian Space Policy 2023** is expected to build **\$44 billion Indian space economy**.

Key initiatives for growth of Space Economy

- ▶ **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)** – a single window nodal agency to promote and authorize space activities.
- ▶ **Space sector reform 2020** which opened the sector for private sector participation.
- ▶ **Indian Space Policy and 100% FDI** in some sub-sectors of space.
- ▶ **Rising private sector participation** with startups such as Skyroot Aerospace (Vikram-S, Prarambh mission), Agnikul Cosmos (Dhanush - first private launchpad) etc.
- ▶ **Transfer of technology** to private players by ISRO, NSIL/IN-SPACe.
- ▶ **International collaborations** such as NISAR programme and Artemis Accords.

Challenges to Indian Space Economy

- ▶ **Increase in space debris** pose significant challenges in space operations and require technological sophistication to avoid collisions.
- ▶ **Growing militarisation** of space.
- ▶ **Disruption risks** in global technology **supply chains** due to geopolitical tensions and concentration of resources.
- ▶ **Absence of substantial domestic investor pool** interested in space ventures.

Discovery of Lithium Resources in Mandya and Yadgiri districts of Karnataka

Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research has established 1,600 tonnes of Lithium resources in Mandya district.

- ▶ **Lithium reserve discovery will lead to**
 - ⊕ Reduced **Import Dependence** (Currently India majorly depends on **China and Hong Kong**).
 - ⊕ **Self-sufficiency in energy storage needs & Green transition**.
 - ⊕ Industrial development E.g. **Vehicle and automobile industry development**.

About Lithium (white gold)

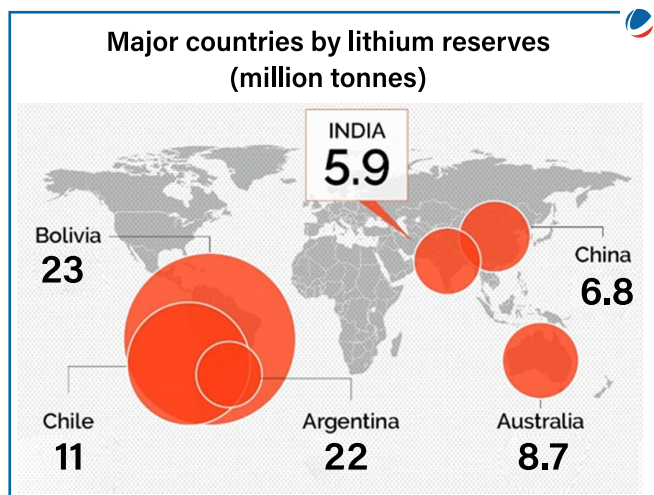
- ▶ Lithium is a soft, silvery-white alkali toxic metal and has the lowest density of all metals.
- ▶ It has been identified as **critical and strategic minerals** under Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) (Amendment) Act 2023.

Applications of Lithium

- ▶ **Batteries: Rechargeable Li-Ion batteries** for mobile phones, EVs etc. and non-rechargeable batteries for heart pacemakers, clocks etc.
- ▶ **Alloys:** Alloyed with aluminum and magnesium to improve strength and reduce weight e.g. **armor plating, aircraft, bicycle frames, and high-speed trains etc.**
- ▶ **Industrial Use:** Used in air conditioning, industrial drying systems and glass ceramics.

Steps Taken

- ▶ **KABIL** explores strategic minerals in overseas territories.
- ▶ **Australia India Critical Minerals Investment Partnership**.
- ▶ **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** is exploring Lithium reserves in India.
- ▶ Ministry of Mines joined **Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)** led by USA.



UNESCO released 'Sport and Gender Equality Game Plan'

Released just before the Olympic Games, it highlights **persistent gender gap in sports** and provides **guidance for gender-transformative sport policies** and programmes.

Key Observations

- **Sexual Abuse:** 21% of women athletes (and 11% of men) reported experiencing at least one form of sexual abuse as a child in sport.
- **High Dropout in Sports:** 49% of girls drop out of sports during adolescence – 6 times higher compared to boys.
 - ⊖ **Factors for high attrition** include lack of women role models, concerns around safety, lack of confidence and negative body image.
- **Inequality: Pay gap in professional sport** is evident from absence of women in the list of 50 highest paid athletes in the world.
- **Lack of women's leadership:** In 2023, only 30% of the world's largest sports federations were chaired by women.

Four Actions Suggested by Game Plan

- Harness the power of sports to **change attitudes** through sport media coverage and tackle root causes of gender inequalities.
- **Champion gender equality** in sport leadership, governance and decision-making.
- **Develop capacity and soft and hard infrastructure** through gender-responsive budgeting and closing funding gaps.
- Commit to ending all forms of **gender-based violence in sport**.

India's Initiatives to Promote Women in Sports

- **Khelo India Scheme:** Its "Sports for Women" component is specifically dedicated towards promotion of sports among women.
- **ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women through Action) Portal** giving identity to women athletes.
- **Khelo India Dus ka Dum:** Sports competition conducted on International Women's Day 2023.

Experts call for "Recognition of Aquatic Deoxygenation (AD) as a A New Planetary Boundary"

AD is overall decline in the oxygen content of oceanic and coastal waters (happens when oxygen consumption is greater than oxygen replenishment).

Status of AD

- **Ocean:** About 2% of oxygen content in ocean has been lost since 1960s.
 - ⊖ More than 500 low-oxygen sites have been identified in coastal waters.
- **Other water bodies: Lakes and reservoirs** have experienced oxygen losses of 5.5 and 18.6 % respectively since 1980.

Reasons underscoring AD

- **Global Warming caused by GHG:** Rise in temperatures decreases solubility of oxygen in water.
 - ⊖ **Also, warm surface layers in ocean** prevent oxygen from mixing deeper into ocean (leading to **low oxygen level in deep sea waters**).
- **Eutrophication:** Nutrient over enrichment from anthropogenic sources (e.g. agriculture) leads to **algal blooms** and increased **consumption of oxygen**.

Impact on Ecosystems

- **Occurrences of dead zones** and ocean hypoxia effect.
- **Habitat compression (reducing quality and quantity of suitable habitat) for fisheries** leads to reduced biomass, species loss.
- **Affects** regulation and modulation of Earth's climate (due to production of GHGs by microbiotic processes in such regions).
- **Changes in marine food web** due to increased risk of predation, and other factors e.g. **Ocean acidification**.

Planetary boundaries

- Planetary boundaries are a **framework to describe limits to impacts of human activities** on the Earth system.
 - ⊖ Beyond these limits, environment **may not be able to self-regulate** anymore.
- There are **nine recognized planetary boundaries** such as climate change, ocean acidification, land use change, biodiversity loss etc.

Also in News



Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF)

Azerbaijan Launches Climate Finance Action Fund in Package of Initiatives for **UN Climate Change Conference COP29**.

About CFAF

- **Headquarter: Baku, Azerbaijan.**
- Fund will support **climate projects in developing countries**, meeting next generation of **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** to keep 1.5 °C within reach, and addressing the **consequences of natural disasters**.
- CFAF will be capitalised with **contributions from fossil fuel producing countries and companies** across oil, gas and coal.
- CFAF will become **operational at the conclusion of the initial fundraising round (\$1 billion)**, and when **10 contributing countries Commit as shareholders**.



White Category Sectors

White category sectors will now **not require prior permission of the state pollution control boards** to establish and operate under the Air Act, 1981 and Water Act, 1974.

- The permissions officially known as '**consent to establish**' (CTE) and '**consent to operate**' (CTO) are granted to regulate industries that discharge effluents or emit pollutants into the environment.
- White category industries will have to inform SPCBs through **self-declarations**.

White Category Sectors

- Those industries which are **practically non-polluting** are categorised under the 'white category' by the **Central Pollution Control Board**.
- It includes Wind and solar power projects, assembly of air coolers, bicycle assembly etc.



Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)

Recently, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) has been converted into an attached office of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

- Earlier, I4C was established as a scheme under MHA's Cyber and Information Security (C&IS) division in 2018.

About I4C

- **Objective:** To act as a nodal point to curb Cybercrime, act as early warning system for cybercrime prevention and detection and facilitate easy complaint filing.
- **Verticals:** National Cybercrime Reporting Portal, National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit, National Cybercrime Research & Innovation Centre etc.



Government Litigation

Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J) shared data on pending government litigation as per Legal Information and Management Briefing System (LIMBS).

- LIMBS is an initiative of MoL&J and monitors the entire process of litigation from the Central Government's perspective.

Key Facts

- There are over **6.98 lakh pending court cases** in which the Union government is a litigant.
- **Highest cases pertain** to Ministries of Finance, Railways, and Defence – together **constituting over 57%** of pending court cases.
- Pendency was **highest in tribunals (2.75 lakh)**, followed by high courts and Supreme Court.



Methane

A study has demonstrated that **tree bark in forests absorbs methane**.

About Methane

- **Greenhouse gas** which contributes to about a third of climate warming.
- **Properties:** colorless and odorless gas, easily combustible with short atmospheric lifetime compared to CO₂.
- **Global warming potential:** Approx. 27 times more than CO₂.
- **Primary Sources of methane emission:** Agriculture, Wetlands, Energy Sector.
- **Applications:** Making chemicals, constituent of the fuel & natural gas.



Triput Class Frigates

Triput, the first of two **Advanced Frigates** under construction by **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)** for the Indian Navy was launched.

- These frigates are being **constructed indigenously** for the first time by an Indian shipyard.

Triput Class Frigates

- The ship is designed for **combat operations** against enemy surface ships, submarines and aircrafts.
- Triput class ships are equipped with **stealth features, advanced weapon & sensors** and platform management systems.
- The Triput class are follow on ships of the **Teg and Talwar class ships** acquired from Russia.



'Steel Import Monitoring System' 2.0 Portal

SIMS, introduced in 2019, has been revamped into **SIMS 2.0** by the **Ministry of Steel**.

About SIMS 2.0:

- **Objective:** **Monitoring steel imports** and promoting growth of domestic steel industry.
- **New features:** Provides API integration with **multiple government portals**, enhancing quality control and streamlining processes for improved efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Significance:**
 - ⊖ **Detailed data will enable Customs to conduct better analysis and risk management of steel imports.**
 - ⊖ Portal boasts a **robust data entry system** which promotes transparency and accountability.



EXERCISE KHAAN QUEST

Indian army will participate in the **21st edition of the Multinational military exercise**, which will be conducted at **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**.



Personality in news



Chandrashekhar Azad (1906-1931)

Recently, He was remembered on his birth anniversary.

About Chandra Sekhara Azad

- **Early Life:** Born in princely state of Alirajpur.

Key Contributions

- **Participation in Non-Cooperation Movement:** At age of 15
 - ⊖ He declared his title as "**Azad**" (**The Free**), his father's name as "**Swatantrata**" (**Independence**), and his abode as "**Jail**" when arrested.
- **Joined Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**
- To take revenge for Lala Lajpat Rai's murder, he participated in
 - ⊖ **Kakori Train Robbery in 1925,**
 - ⊖ **shooting of John P. Saunders in Lahore in 1928.**
 - ⊖ **Attempt to attack on Viceroy of India's train in 1929.**
- Reorganised HRA into **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association** in 1928.

Values

- **Courage, Nationalism, Leadership.**

