

NEWS TODAY

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Launched Food Waste Index (FWI) Report 2024

- Report co-authored with **WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme)** was published ahead of **International Day of Zero Waste** (observed annually on 30 March).
- FWI tracks **global and national generation of food** and inedible parts wasted at retail and consumer (household and food service) levels.
 - ⊕ It supports the goals of two indicators of SDG 12.3 which is to be achieved by 2030 i.e.
 - ◆ **SDG 12.3.1 (a), Food Loss Index (FLI)**, reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses. **Food and Agriculture Organization** is custodian of FLI.
 - ◆ **SDG 12.3.1 (b), FWI**, halve per-capita global food waste at retail and consumer levels. **UNEP is custodian** of FWI.
- **Key findings**
 - ⊕ Households across all continents **wasted over 1 billion meals a day in 2022**, while 783 million people were affected by hunger and a third of humanity faced food insecurity.
 - ⊕ Food Waste **generates an estimated 8–10% of global greenhouse gas emissions**.
 - ⊕ **Issues**
 - ◆ Due to **lack of robust cold chains**, hotter countries generate more food waste per capita in households.
 - ◆ **Insufficient Data for retail and food service sectors**, particularly in low and middle-income countries.
 - ◆ Fragmented food system.

About WRAP

- It is a **climate action NGO (established in UK in 2000)** working to tackle causes of climate crisis and give the planet a sustainable future.

Suggestions for reducing food waste through collaborative approach

- Systemic action through **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) model**. Example, Courtauld Commitment 2030 (UK), Australian Food Pact etc.
- Establish a roadmap or delivery plan, targeting priority areas or **"hotspots"** of waste.

IRENA releases "A World Energy Transitions Outlook Brief: Tracking CoP 28 outcomes" report

- Report tracks global progress towards the **energy transition commitment to triple renewables by 2030** as outlined in **COP 28 of UNFCCC (held in November 2023)**.
- **Key findings**
 - ⊕ **Benchmark yet insufficient progress**: 2023 added **473 GW** (73% contributed by Solar energy) **additional Renewable** to global energy mix.
 - ◆ However, annual addition must **reach almost 1100 GW** to meet tripling target.
 - ⊕ **Geographical disparities**: With a growth of 20.1%, **Asia was leader** in renewable deployment and its growth was driven by China.
 - ⊕ **Progress in electrification**: **Road transport** has **highest potential** for electrification.
 - ◆ **New EV models, financial incentives** and improving **charging infrastructure** are key drivers for this.
- **Challenges in achieving tripling target**:
 - ⊕ **Rising financing costs**
 - ⊕ **Supply chain issues** (bottlenecks for some technologies and market oversupply in others), etc.
- **Recommendations to achieve tripling target**
 - ⊕ Reforming **multilateral finance mechanisms**
 - ⊕ Supporting **infrastructure** (e.g., power grids, storage)
 - ⊕ Robust **policy frameworks**
 - ⊕ **International cooperation for**
 - ◆ Developing renewable supply chain.
 - ◆ Enhancing institutional and human capacity.
 - ◆ Scaling up and broadening access to low cost finance.



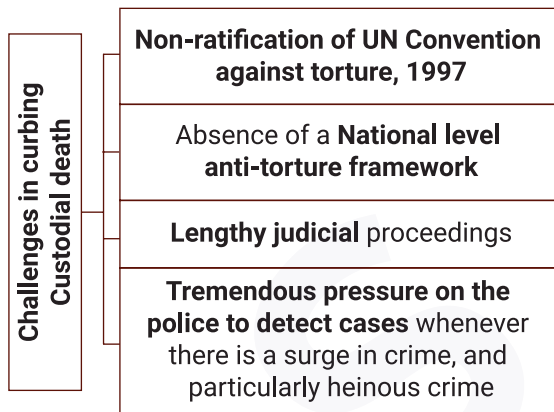
IRENA

HQ: Abu Dhabi (UAE)

- **Genesis**: Proposal for an international agency dedicated to renewable energy was made in **1981 at the UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, held in Nairobi, Kenya**.
 - ⊕ IRENA was founded in Bonn (Germany) in 2009 with 75 states signing the IRENA Statute at the time.
- **About**: It is a leading **global intergovernmental agency** for energy transformation.
- **Functions**: Serves as the **principal platform for international cooperation**, supports countries in their energy transitions, and provides state of the art data and analyses on technology, etc.
- **Members**: 168 countries and the EU (India is also a member).
- **Major reports by IRENA**
 - ⊕ World Energy Transition Outlook
 - ⊕ Renewable Energy Outlook for ASEAN
 - ⊕ Renewable Energy for Agriculture

Supreme Court (SC) calls for stricter approach in granting bail to police in custodial death cases

- ▶ While referring to its Judgment of **State of Jharkhand v Sandeep Kumar**, SC made an exception and invoked **Article 136** to set aside bail granted to Police officer by a High Court in a case of custodial death.
 - ⊖ **Article 136** gives discretionary power to SC to grant special leave to appeal from any judgement or order made by any court or tribunal India.
 - ◆ It is not applied to orders passed by any court or tribunal constituted by any law relating to Armed Forces.
- ▶ Custodial death is a manifestation of custodial violence which primarily refers to violence (including rape and torture) in police custody and judicial custody.
- ▶ **Safeguard against Custodial death**
 - ⊖ **Constitutional**
 - ◆ **Article 14** (Right to equality before law)
 - ◆ **Article 21** (Right to life)
 - ⊖ **Legal**
 - ◆ **Sec 330 & 331 of IPC** provides punishment for injury inflicted for extorting confession during custody
 - ◆ **Section 176 Cr.P.C**, calls for magisterial enquiry in case of custodial death.
 - ⊖ **Other**
 - ◆ **International Covenant On Civil And Political Rights** (India is Signatory)
 - ◆ **D.K Basu v. State of West Bengal, SC** gave specific guidelines for safeguarding of detainees.
 - ◆ **NHRC guideline** calls for reporting of custodial death or rape within 24 hrs of occurrence



External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India visited Malaysia

- ▶ EAM visit was aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas like trade, defence, culture and education etc. and enhancing strategic partnership between two countries.
- ▶ **India- Malaysia Bilateral Relations**
 - ⊖ India established diplomatic relations with Malaysia in 1957.
 - ⊖ **Strategic:** Malaysia is part of India's Act East policy and also a key partner for India in ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations).
 - ⊖ **Defence Cooperation:** Conducted Joint Exercise "Harimau Shakti" (Army) annually, Samudra Lakshman Maritime Exercise (Navy), **Udara Shakti** (Air force) and Royal Malaysian Navy Ship participates in Exercise MILAN.
 - ⊖ **Trade:** Both sides signed **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement**, a free trade agreement.
 - ◆ Bilateral trade touched **\$19.4 billion** during 2021-22.
 - ◆ Trade between both countries can be settled in **Indian Rupee** in addition to current modes of settlement in other currencies.
 - ◆ India imports palm oil mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia.
 - ⊖ **Cultural:** Indian Cultural Centre, Kuala Lumpur conducts classes in **Carnatic Vocal, Kathak dance, Yoga, Hindi language** by trained teachers from India and Malaysia.
 - ◆ Centre was renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Center (NSCBICC) in 2015.
 - ⊖ **Humanitarian Assistance:** More than 1 lakh Indians nationals repatriated from Malaysia under Vande Bharat Mission during Covid-19.



UNESCO endorsed the addition of 18 new Geoparks to the Global Geoparks Network (GGN)

- Latest addition raises the number of total Geoparks to 213 which are spread across 48 countries (no geopark in India).
- Some major geoparks added to GGN are:
 - ⊕ **Land of Extinct Volcanoes (Poland):** Features distinctive remnants of Paleozoic and Cenozoic volcanoes.
 - ⊕ **Impact Crater Lake (Finland):** Europe's largest impact crater lake formed through a collision with a meteorite 78 million years ago.
 - ⊕ **Uberaba (Brazil):** Its tag line 'Land of the Giants' refers to its rich palaeontological heritage.
- **UNESCO's Global Geopark (UGGPs)**
 - ⊕ **Genesis:** Geopark concept arose in the mid-1990's and UGGP was created in 2015
 - ⊕ **About:** UGGPs are single, unified geographical areas where landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of
 - ◆ Protection,
 - ◆ Education and
 - ◆ Sustainable development.
 - ⊕ **Management:** Managed by a body having a legal existence recognized under national legislation.
 - ⊕ **Designation is not permanent:** Designation is for four years after which it is reassessed.
 - ⊕ **Mandatory Networking:** Membership of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) is obligatory for UGGPs.
 - ⊕ **Significance**
 - ◆ UGGPs give local people a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with the area.
 - ◆ New sources of revenue are generated through geotourism.

Global Geoparks Network (GGN)

- It is a non-profit International Association officially established in 2014.
 - ⊕ GGN was founded as an international partnership developed under the umbrella of UNESCO.
- Networking and collaboration among Global Geoparks is an important component of the GGN.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) released Green and Social Bond Impact Report 2023

- IFC launched **Green Bond Program in 2010** to unlock investment for private sector eligible projects that seek to mitigate climate change and **Social Bond Program in 2017**.
- **Key Highlights**
 - ⊕ **\$2 billion raised through Green bond** is expected to **reduce 3.3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent** per year.
 - ⊕ **\$1.2 billion raised through Social bonds** will cater sectors like Agribusiness, Gender finance, Education, etc.
- **About Green Bonds**
 - ⊕ **Debt securities designated to finance environment-friendly projects** like Sustainable Water and Waste Management, Green Buildings, Pollution control etc.
 - ⊕ In 2022, **Ministry of Finance** approved **India's First Sovereign Green Bonds (SGBs) Framework** which excludes projects like nuclear power generation, landfill projects, hydropower plants larger than 25 Megawatt etc.
 - ⊕ India's **First Green Bond** was issued by **Yes Bank Ltd** in 2015.
 - ⊕ In 2023, India issued first tranche of its first SGBs worth Rs. 80 billion.
- **About Social bonds**
 - ⊕ **Financial instrument issued by governments; corporations to raise funds for projects** to address social issues like affordable housing, healthcare etc. to benefit vulnerable populations.
 - ⊕ In 2023, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) raises more than Rs. 1000 crore via social bonds.

International Finance Corporation

- **HQ:** Washington, DC (USA)
- Established in 1956, it is a **member of World Bank Group** and largest global development institution focused on private sector in developing countries.

Also in News



Initiatives for Prevention of Crimes against Peacekeepers

- India-led **Group of Friends (GOF)** launched a **new database designed to record crimes against Peacekeepers** & monitor progress in **holding perpetrators accountable**.
 - ⊕ The GOF was **launched by India in 2022** to promote **accountability for crimes against the Blue Helmets** during its presidency of the UN Security Council
- UN peacekeeping forces **are employed to maintain or re-establish peace in an area of armed conflict**. However, they sometimes face violence in deployed regions.
 - ⊕ These forces are also referred to as **Blue Helmets** as they are equipped in blue-coloured helmets.
 - ⊕ They won the **Nobel Peace Prize in 1988**.



Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI)

- Combined ICI increased by 6.7% (provisional) in February 2024 as compared to the Index of February 2023.
- **The ICI measures the combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries**
 - ⊕ **Eight core industries** are Fertilizers, Cement, Natural Gas, Crude Oil, Coal, Electricity, Steel, and Petroleum Refinery Products.
 - ◆ They comprise **40.27%** of the weight of items included in the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**.
 - ⊕ **ICI is released** by the **Office of the Economic Adviser**, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.



White Rabbit (WR) Technology

- CERN has launched the **White Rabbit Collaboration (WRC)** to foster the **uptake of White Rabbit technology by Industry**.
 - ⊕ The Collaboration aims to provide **dedicated support and training, facilitate R&D projects** in the technology.
- **WR technology**
 - ⊕ It was developed at CERN to provide **sub-nanosecond accuracy and picosecond precision of synchronisation** for the **Large Hadron Collider (LHC)** accelerator chain.
 - ◆ LHC is the world's **largest and most powerful particle accelerator**
 - ◆ It was **first used in 2012** and in 2020, it was included in the worldwide industry standard known as **Precision Time Protocol (PTP)**.



Coronavirus Network (CoViNet)

- World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched a new **CoViNet**.
- **About CoViNet**
 - ⊕ It is a network of **global laboratories** with expertise in human, animal and environmental coronavirus surveillance.
 - ⊕ It currently includes 36 laboratories from 21 countries (3 in India) in all 6 WHO regions.
 - ⊕ It aims to **facilitate and coordinate global expertise for early and accurate detection, monitoring and assessment of SARS-CoV-2, MERS-CoV and novel coronaviruses** of public health importance.



Kalam-250

- Skyroot Aerospace has successfully **test-fired Stage-2 of Vikram-1** space launch vehicle, called **Kalam-250**.
 - ⊕ Stage-2 is significant because it propels satellites from dense atmosphere of Earth to deep vacuum of outer space.
 - ⊕ **Vikram-1** is three-stage, **solid-fuel based rocket**.
- **About Kalam-250**
 - ⊕ It is a **high-strength carbon composite rocket motor**, which uses **solid fuel** and high-performance **Ethylene-Propylene-Diene terpolymers (EPDM) Thermal Protection System**.
 - ⊕ **Solid propellant** in Kalam-250 was **processed by Solar Industries** at Nagpur facility.
 - ⊕ Earlier, Skyroot had tested **Kalam-100, third stage of Vikram-1**, which was test-fired successfully in 2021.



International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) - South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC)

- ISARC will **develop rice varieties with low methane emissions and enhance productivity of premium quality nutritious rice**.
 - ⊕ To achieve this, ISARC is **promoting adoption of best agronomic and management practices** like Dry Seeded Rice and Alternate Wet and Drying.
- **About ISARC**
 - ⊕ Established in 2018 through MoU between India's Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and IRRI.
 - ⊕ Located at **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**.
 - ⊕ Dedicated to **strengthening rice-based agri-food system in South Asia region** by developing climate-resilient, bio-fortified rice varieties for farmers and consumers.
- **About IRRI (HQ: Los Banos, Philippines)**
 - ⊕ Dedicated to **reducing poverty and hunger through rice science**; etc.



Gyps Indicus (Indian Vulture)

- **Moyar valley** located in **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve** is the only region with largest nesting colony of Gyps vultures in wild.
- **About Gyps Indicus**
 - ⊕ **Characteristics**
 - ◆ Possess **whitish feathers on a dark head and neck**, and a pale collar.
 - ◆ **Colonial nesters** and often seen in flocks.
 - ◆ **Population is declining**.
 - ⊕ **Habitat**
 - ◆ **Habitat Specialization:** Open Grassland.
 - ◆ Found in **Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan**.
 - ⊕ **Protection Status**
 - ◆ IUCN: **Critically Endangered**
 - ◆ Wildlife Protection Act-1972: **Schedule I**
 - ⊕ **Conservation Measures**
 - ◆ **Banning of Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** like diclofenac, Ketoprofen for veterinary use.
 - ◆ **Vulture Action Plan 2020-25**.



Tiger Triumph 2024

- Harbour Phase of the exercise Tiger Triumph is being conducted at **Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh)**.
- Tiger Triumph is a **Bilateral Tri-Service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Amphibious Exercise** between India and the US.

Personality in news



Tama Dora

- **About Tama Dora**
 - ⊕ He was **born in Koya Community**.
- **Contributions**
 - ⊕ Under his leadership, tribal people of Malkangiri especially '**Koya tribe**' rose in revolt against unjust and oppressive policies of **Raja of Koraput and British**.
 - ⊕ He defeated British Police of Malkangiri.
 - ⊕ **Colonel Macquoid** of Hyderabad contingent marched with 100 men to protect but failed by severe attack of Koya Army.
- **Values:** Leadership, Courage, Empathy, etc.

