

NEWS TODAY

Prime Minister launched 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' Initiative in Surat, Gujarat

This initiative seeks to **conserve water with a strong emphasis on community partnership and ownership**, and is driven by a **whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach**.

➤ It aims to **construct around 24,800 rainwater harvesting structures through community participation**, ensuring long-term water sustainability across state.

➤ It aligns with ongoing **Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign**.

Role of Community Participation in Water Conservation

➤ **Sharing of invaluable local knowledge and insights** about water sources, consumption patterns, and environmental dynamics. E.g. Nagaland's Zabo Water Conservation Method etc.

➤ **Renovation of traditional water sources**. E.g. Tamilnadu **revived kudimaramathu**, centuries-old practice of building and maintaining ponds/tanks with community involvement.

➤ **Rejuvenating and revitalizing** through de-silting and feeder channels through community participation E.g. Neeru-chuttu (Andhra Pradesh).

➤ **Ensures that water management strategies are inclusive**, catering to the needs of diverse socio-economic groups. E.g. Zing, small tanks in Ladakh that collect melting glacier water.

➤ **Encourage adoption of water-efficient practices**. E.g. Jal Jeevan Hariyali (Bihar)

Prime Minister emphasised **adoption of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recharge, and Recycle' mantra** to secure nation's water future. He also highlighted that **water conservation is not just a policy, it is an effort and a virtue too**. Also, water conservation is not just a matter of policies but social commitment.

Other initiatives for Community Participation to Conserve Water

➤ **Atal Bhujal Yojana** demonstrates community-led sustainable groundwater management.

➤ **Jal Jeevan Mission** ensures active involvement of women in paani samitis, who often bear primary responsibility for water collection and usage in rural households.

➤ **Ek Ped Maa ke Naam** encourages community for groundwater replenishment through afforestation.

➤ **Namami Gange Initiative** had become an emotional resolution for citizens where people gave up old traditions to ensure cleanliness of rivers.

WHO Launches First Global Framework For Understanding the Origins Of New Or Re-Emerging Pathogens

About framework

➤ **Developed by: SAGO** (Scientific Advisory Group for the Origins of Novel Pathogens).

⊕ SAGO, **established by WHO in 2021**, constitutes independent experts from around the world.

➤ **Key Principles:** Framework aligns with the **International Health Regulations (IHR) and One Health approach**.

⊕ IHR adopted by WHO in 2005 is an overarching **legally binding framework to provide a public health response to the international spread of disease**.

⊕ **One Health** is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to **sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems**.

➤ **Significance of framework**

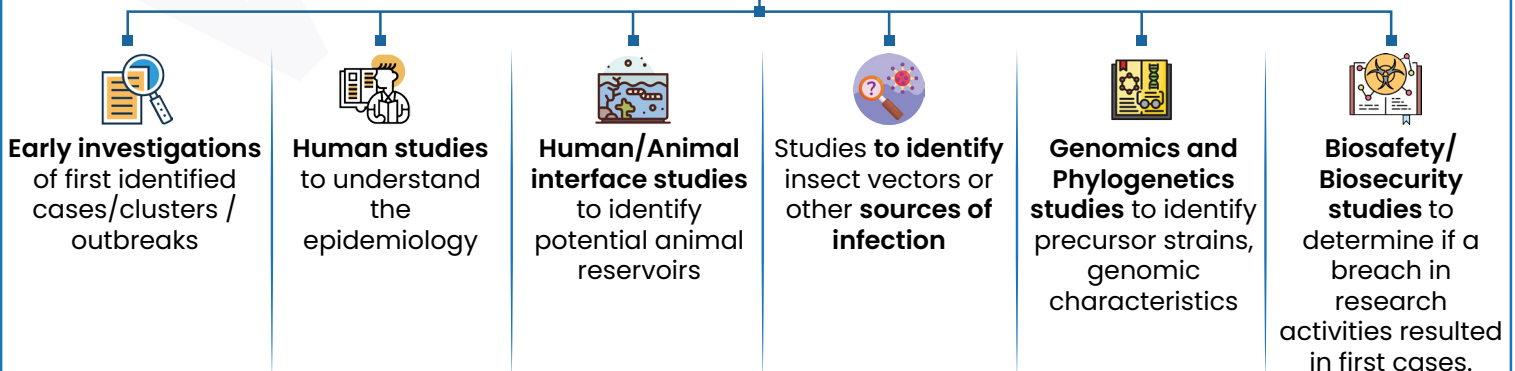
⊕ **Curtailing rising risk of the emergence of known** (such as Ebola, Nipah) and **novel pathogens** with epidemic and pandemic potential (such as novel influenza, SARS-CoV-1).

◆ **Timely and comprehensive investigations into pathogens' origins** are critical for **preventing and containing global health crises**

⊕ They can also **confirm or exclude** the possibility of an **unintentional breach in laboratory biosafety and biosecurity**.

◆ If this system had existed during COVID-19, finding its origin might have been less controversial and more successful (WHO).

Framework outlines scientific investigations for 6 technical elements



Average household spending on food falls below half since 1947: EAC-PM Paper

It was highlighted by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) in paper titled "Changes in India's Food Consumption and Policy Implications: A Comprehensive Analysis of Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2022-23 and 2011-12".

Other Key Highlights

- **Regional Variations:** Household spending has increased across India, though the extent varies by state and region. E.g. West Bengal saw a 151% rise and Tamil Nadu 214%, between 2011-12 and 2022-23.
- **Rural vs. Urban Spending:** Consumption expenditure growth for rural households (164%) was higher than that for urban households (146%).
- **Nutrients and Dietary Diversity:** Shift from cereal-based consumption towards a diet that includes fruits, milk & milk products, eggs, fish & meat.
- **Processed Foods:** Household spending on served and packaged processed foods has increased across all income groups. But it's most noticeable among top 20% of households and is significantly higher in urban areas.

Policy Implications due to changing consumption patterns

- Government should focus on policies promoting production of diverse food items, mainly fruits, vegetables, and animal-source foods etc.
- Policy addressing micronutrient deficiency must be well-targeted due to variation in micronutrient intake across region.
- Agricultural policies should focus beyond cereals, as their consumption is dropping. Support measures like MSP, which target cereals, will only have limited benefits for farmers.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare approves new treatment regimen for Multi-Drug Resistant- Tuberculosis (MDR- TB)

New BPaLM regimen consisting of four drugs – Bedaquiline, Pretomanid, Linezolid and Moxifloxacin – has proven to be a safe, more effective and quicker treatment option than previous procedures.

- Earlier, Pretomanid has been approved & licensed for use in India by CDSCO.
- It brings down treatment time to 6 months from earlier duration of 20 months.
- BPaLM regimen was introduced under National TB Elimination Programme and expected to boost the country's progress to achieve its national goal of ending TB in India by 2025.

About Tuberculosis

- An infectious disease that most often affects lungs and is caused by bacillus Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria.
- Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine provides immunity against TB.
- As per India TB Report 2024, there were 25.52 lakh notified TB patients in 2023.

Challenges in Tuberculosis Eradication

- Social Stigma leads to delayed diagnosis; High Treatment Costs, Comorbidities with HIV, diabetes; Lack of diagnostics facility in rural areas etc.

Other Initiatives taken for Tuberculosis Eradication

- Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan provides additional patient support, augment community involvement.
- Ni-kshay Mitra ensures additional diagnostic, nutritional, support to those on TB treatment.
- Nikshay Poshan Yojana provides financial support to TB patients for their nutrition.

Types of Drug - Resistant TB



Multidrug Resistance TB (MDR)

Resistant to at least Isoniazid and Rifampicin



Extensively drug Resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB)

Resistant to Isoniazid and Rifampin, plus any fluoroquinolone and at least one of three injectable second-line drugs (amikacin, kanamycin, or capreomycin).



Totally drug-resistant tuberculosis (TDR-TB)

Resistant to all first- and second-line TB drugs.

Multiple leaders of South Asia have called for revival of SAARC

Last SAARC biennial summit was hosted by Nepal in 2014.

- The 2016 summit (to be hosted by Pakistan) was stalled following the terror attack in Pulwama.

Reasons for SAARC's failures

- **Pakistan's fixation:** Pakistan's collaboration with China on CPEC (disregarding India's territorial sovereignty), its state-sponsored terrorism, etc.
- **Big Brother perception:** Fear of India's hegemony in political and economic sphere of SAARC.
- **Structural issues:**
 - ⊖ Bilateral and contentious issues are excluded and there is no arrangement for resolving disputes or mediating conflicts.
 - ⊖ Unanimous decisions making (posing a difficulty in decision making).

Why SAARC need revival?

- **Dealing with Common issues:** Major issues include climate change, food and energy security, poverty, etc.
 - ⊖ South Asia is highly vulnerable regions to climate shocks while also being home to world's large population living in relative poverty (World Bank).
- **Huge untapped interregional trade potential:** Intraregional trade in South Asia is just 5% of its total trade, compared to 25% in ASEAN.
- **Past Success:** These include South Asia Free Trade Agreement, SAARC Development Fund, SAARC regional centres on agriculture, energy, etc.

While India continues to support SAARC with launch of South Asian Satellite, establishment of South Asian University etc., it has also been focusing on interregional cooperation initiatives including BIMSTEC and 'Act East Policy'.

About South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

- **Genesis:** Established through the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985.
- **Objectives:** Promote the welfare of people and to improve their quality of life through accelerated social progress and economic development in the region.
- **8 Member States:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- **Secretariat:** Kathmandu (Nepal)

5th India-Maldives Defence Cooperation Dialogue held in New Delhi at the level of top officials

The dialogue touched on bilateral military exercises and was the first defence dialogue after India-Maldives relations witnessed strained ties earlier.

- Maldives President in pursuance of his "India Out" campaign had **Indian military personnel withdraw** from Maldives while also pursuing pro-China policies.
- However, recent deepening cooperation is **in line with India's External Affairs Minister's recent visit to Maldives** and Maldives President's attendance at India's Prime Minister's oath ceremony.

Importance of India for Maldives

- India is seen as a **Net Security Provider** in Indian Ocean Region (IOR)
- India has been the **first responder in crises in Maldives** (Operation Neer in 2014 during water crisis, **Vaccine Maitri** during COVID-19 Pandemic).
- **Maldives wants to reinstate India among the top three tourist markets** (tourism is key to the Maldives economy).
 - ⊕ Recently, Maldives faced decline in tourist footfall from India.

Significance of Maldives for India

- **India's Neighbourhood First Policy (NFP)**: Maldives is one of the cornerstones of NFP, Vision SAGAR, India's commitment to the Global South.
- **Strategic location**: It is located between major Indian Ocean chokepoints (Gulf of Aden, Strait of Hormuz and Strait of Malacca).
- **First line of defence**: Maldives serves as the first line of defence against various maritime threats such as terrorism, and piracy.
- **Reducing the influence of China in the IOR.**

NOTE: For more on India-Maldives relation please refer News Today document of 12th August 2024 and 6th March 2024.

India's Initiatives to Strengthen relation with Maldives

- India is building a new Coast Guard base at **Uthuru Thilafalhu (UTF) atoll.**
- India provides **grant** to Maldives for **High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs).**
- **Greater Male Connectivity Project** being developed by India is the Maldives' largest infrastructure project.
- Both the countries have an **open skies arrangement** and **visa-free entry for tourism, medical and business purposes.**

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Also in News



Agni Missiles

Agni-4, an **Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile**, was successfully launched from Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha.

About Agni Missiles

- Conceived under **Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP)** which was started DRDO in 1980s
- They are **surface-to-surface ballistic missile.**
- They have **medium- to intercontinental-range.**
- **Fuelled by Solid propellant** and **mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability.**
- **Agni Prime is the latest missile** to be developed in the series.

Other missiles developed under IGMDP are

- Short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile **Prithvi**
- Short-range low-level surface-to-air missile **Trishul**
- Medium-range surface-to-air missile **Akash**
- Third generation anti-tank missile **Nag**



Collegiums system and Judicial Review

Supreme Court (SC) ruled that **High Court (HC) Chief Justice cannot Individually reconsider Judges' Appointment**, and it must be **collectively done by collegium.**

- SC also clarified that although 'content of consultation' is beyond **Judicial review** 'effective consultation' falls within its ambit.

About Collegium

- It is a system for making **recommendations for appointment of judges of SC and HC.**
 - ⊕ **Judges are appointed by President under Article 124 and 217** (respectively for SC and HC) of Constitution.
- **For appointment in SC:** Collegium consists of CJI and four other senior-most judges of the SC.
- **For appointment in HC**
 - ⊕ **Collegium at HC** consists of **Chief Justice of HC and two senior judges** of the concerned HC.
 - ⊕ **Collegium at SC** consists of **CJI and two seniormost Judges of the SC.**



India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

Minister of External Affairs, while addressing CII India Mediterranean Business Conclave, said that IMEC will be a cornerstone of global connectivity.

About IMEC

- **Announced** on the sidelines of the G20 summit, for integration of Asia, Europe and the Middle East.
 - ⊕ It will consist of railroad, ship-to-rail networks and road transport routes.
- **Comprises of:**
 - ⊕ **East Corridor:** connecting India to Gulf and
 - ⊕ **Northern Corridor:** connecting the Gulf to Europe.
- **Members:** India, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, UAE and US.



Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Food Price Index (FFPI)

Recently, the benchmark for world food commodity prices declined marginally in August 2024.

About FFPI

- **Introduced in 1996** as a public good to help in monitoring developments in global agricultural commodity markets.
- It is a **measure of monthly change in international prices** of a basket of food commodities.
- It **consists of average of five commodity group price indices** weighted by average export shares of each of groups over 2014-2016.
 - ⊕ **5 commodities** are Meat, Dairy products, Cereals, Vegetables oil, and Sugar.



National Initiative For Developing And Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI)

8 new NIDHI i-TBIs inaugurated across India.

About NIDHI

- Umbrella programme developed by **Department of Science & Technology (DST)** in 2016.
- **Objective:** To nurture ideas and innovations (knowledge-based and technology-driven) into successful startups.
- **Implementation:** National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB) under DST is funding agency.
 - ⊕ All NIDHI-Startup funds and offerings are disbursed to eligible startups only through eligible NSTEDB associated incubators across India.
 - ⊕ NIDHI Programmes are **implemented through Technology Business Incubators (TBIs)**.
- **NIDHI - iTBI (Inclusive- TBI)** for converting Innovations to startups is one of the key components of NIDHI.



Digi- Yatra

Union Minister for Civil Aviation inaugurated the Digi Yatra facility for nine airports, bringing the total number of Digi Yatra-enabled airports to 24.

About Digi- Yatra

- Launched in 2022 by **Ministry of Civil Aviation**.
- **Digital initiative to enhance the passenger experience with seamless, contactless, and paperless boarding at airports based on Facial Recognition Technology.**
- **Pillars:** Connected Passengers, Connected Airports, Connected Flying and Connected Systems.
- **Benefit:** Lower cost operations by removing redundancies at checkpoints and enhancing resource utilization.
- **No central storage of passengers' Personally Identifiable Information.**
 - ⊕ All passenger data is encrypted and stored securely in their smartphones, shared only temporarily with origin airport, and destroyed within 24 hours of departure.



Light pollution and Alzheimer's risk

Night time light pollution is linked to increased Alzheimer's risk.

About Light Pollution

- Light pollution is **excessive or inappropriate use of outdoor artificial light.**
 - ⊕ It adversely affects our ability to observe stars and other celestial objects, human health and wildlife behavior.
- The study noted that **night time light pollution disrupts natural circadian rhythms** and hampers sleep, making individuals more susceptible to Alzheimer's disease (AD).

About AD

- AD (a common type of dementia) causes a **progressive decline in memory, thinking, learning and organizing skills.**
- **Factors responsible:** genetics and medical conditions, environmental stresses.



Hepatitis A vaccine

Indian Immunologicals Limited launched pediatric (for children) dose of India's first indigenous Hepatitis A vaccine, Havisure.

About Hepatitis

- An **inflammation of liver.**
- Caused **infectious viruses** as well as **non-infectious agents.**
- **Five main strains:** Types A, B, C, D and E.
 - ⊕ Types B and C together are most common cause of liver cirrhosis, liver cancer and viral hepatitis-related deaths.
 - ⊕ Vaccine not available for type C.
- **National Viral Hepatitis Control Program 2019** seeks to **eliminate Hepatitis C in India by 2030**, achieve significant reduction in infected population with Hepatitis B and C, and reduce risk due to Hepatitis A and E.
- **Mission Indradhanush** provides vaccination against Hepatitis B along with 7 other infections

Personality in news



Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (5 September 1888- April 17, 1975)

- He was a **renowned Indian philosopher** born in Tiruttani, Tamil Nadu.
- Became **India's first Vice-President (1952 to 1962) and second President (1962- 1967)**. Since 1962, his birth anniversary has been celebrated as **National Teachers' Day**.
- Emphasized **moral and ethical role of education** and believed that **teachers are backbone of a nation's progress.**
- **Books Authored by him:** The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, The Philosophy of the Upanishads, etc.
- **Awards:** Bharat Ratna (1954), Peace Prize in German Book Trade in 1961.
- **Values:** Leadership, Perseverance etc.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI