

Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

❖ Context

- Recently, Data from the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)** shows that India's labour force participation rate (LFPR) has fallen to just 40% from an already low 47% in 2016.

❖ Key Highlights

• Implication of the data:

- More than half of India's population in the working-age group (15 years and older) is unemployed.
- This proportion of people is increasing.

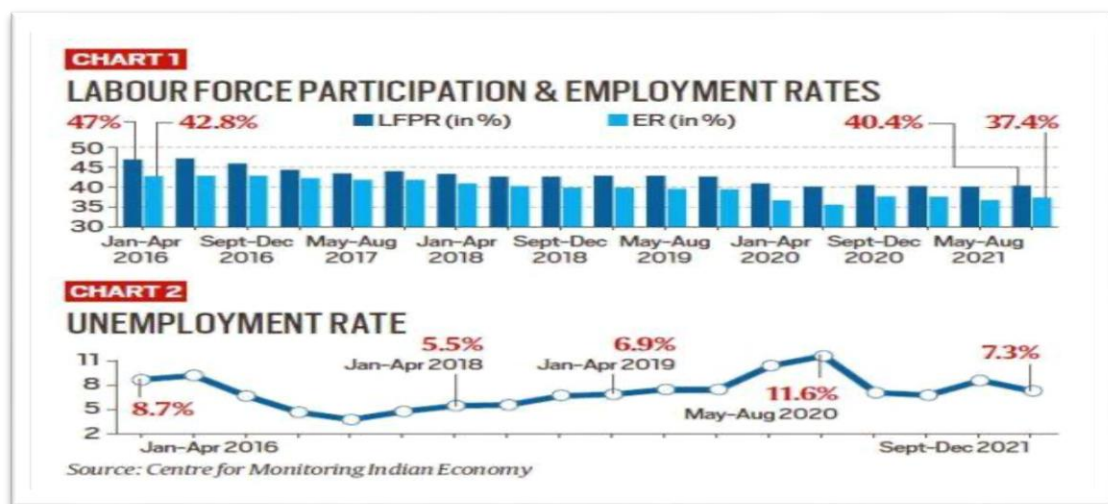
❖ LFPR

- Labour force participation rate is defined as the section of the working population in the age group of 16-64 in the economy currently employed or seeking employment.
- People who are still undergoing studies, housewives and persons above the age of 64 are not counted in the labour force.
- The Labour force participation rate helps to understand the unemployment rate in the economy.
- A higher labor force participation is a good sign for the economy whereas if it is on the lower side, it can also act as a warning sign for any economy.

$$\text{LFPR(\%)} = \frac{\text{Persons employed} + \text{persons unemployed}}{\text{Working-age population}} \times 100$$

• Trends In Labor Force Participation Rate:

- The world over, LFPR is around 60%.
- In India, it has been sliding over the last 10 years and has shrunk from 47% in 2016 to just 40% as of December 2021.
- The male LFPR was 67.4%, the female LFPR was as low as 9.4%.



❖ Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)

- CMIE is an independent private limited entity that serves both as an economic think-tank as well as a business information company.
- CMIE research group has built databases on the Indian economy and private companies.
- Headquarter- Mumbai.

Vertical Farming

❖ Context

- Recently, Experts said that all crops grown via vertical farming methods are usually over 95 percent water efficient, as compared to crops grown through traditional agricultural practices.

❖ Vertical Farming

• About:

- In 1915, **Gilbert Ellis Bailey** coined the term vertical farming.
- The modern concept was first proposed in 1999 by professor **Dickson Despommier**.
- Instead of horizontally on the ground like traditional farming, vertical farming grows crops in vertical, stacked layers.
- Vertical farming can be done without putting too much impact on land and water resources which are scarce.
- Vertical farming systems like **aeroponics** and **hydroponics** come under the broad umbrella ambit of 'protected cultivation'.
- One can control and regulate multiple variables like water, soil, temperature, humidity etc in protected cultivation.

• Advantages:

- The land requirement is quite low.
- Water consumption is 80 percent less.
- The water is recycled and saved.
- It is pesticide-free.
- In cases of high-tech farms there is no real dependency on the weather.

• Limitation:

- Initial capital cost involved in vertical farming is usually higher.
- There are costs of erecting the structures along with its automation like computerized and monitoring systems, remote control systems, climate control systems, etc.

• Hydroponics:

- It is a method of growing food in water using mineral nutrient solutions without soil. The basic advantages of this method is that it reduces soil-related cultivation problems like soil borne insects, pests and diseases.

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Aeroponics:

- NASA motivated the initiative of aeroponics to find an efficient way to grow plants in space in the 1990s.
- In aeroponics, there is **no growing medium** and hence, no containers for growing crops.
- In aeroponics, **mist or nutrient solutions are used instead of water.**
- As the plants are tied to a support and roots are sprayed with nutrient solution, it **requires very less space, very less water and no soil.**

Aquaponics:

- The term **combines fish farming and hydroponics.**
- The **nutrient-rich waste from fish tanks serves as a fertilizer** for the hydroponic plants.



National Curriculum Framework

❖ **Context**

- The Ministry of Education is in discussion with the 12 member steering committee on suggestions received during inter-ministerial consultation on revising the country's school curriculum.

❖ **About The Framework**

- As per the National Education Policy, 2020, following four NCFs will be developed:
 - National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCFECE).**
 - National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE).**
 - National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE).**
 - National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE).**
- It serves as a **guideline for designing syllabus, textbooks, and informs teaching practices** in the country.
- India is currently following the **fourth National Curriculum Framework** which was published by the National Council for Educational Research and training (NCERT) in **2005.**

❖ **Formulation Of Framework**

- Ministry of Education and NCERT jointly worked out a strategy to form the framework.

❖ **State Level**

- All states/UTs will first prepare their **State Curriculum Frameworks (SCFs)** passing through the process of district level consultations, mobile app survey and development of position papers by the **State Focus Groups** in 25 areas/themes identified as per the NEP, 2020. These draft SCFs will provide inputs to the development of NCFs.

❖ **National Level**

- NCERT will conduct a survey on MyGov Portal conduct 2-3 district level consultation in each of the states/Uts.
- Analysing inputs received from the district level consultations, states and national level survey on MyGov portal, National Focus Groups will prepare 25 position papers in the identified areas.
- Drawing insights from these position papers and draft SCFs, four NCFs will be prepared.

❖ **National Steering Committee**

- The Ministry of Education had formed the National Steering Committee for the development of National Curriculum Frameworks on Sep-21.
- The Committee will **finalise National Curriculum Frameworks** after incorporating suggestions received from various stakeholders, i.e states/UTs and also in the meetings of the Executive Committee (EC) and General Body (GB) of the NCERT and Central Advisory Board on Education(CABE). The Committee will **discuss the position papers finalised by the National Focus Groups** on different aspects of all the above four areas.

News in Between the Lines

Farmers Distress Index

❖ **Context**

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is planning to formulate a farmer distress index (FDI) to track, identify and support the real needy and distressed farmers.

❖ **Background**

- There were complaints about **wealthy farmers getting the benefits of farm loan waivers** announced by various state governments in the last couple of years.

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- According to a **study jointly conducted by NABARD and Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS)**, a farmers producers' organisation, in Punjab, **more than 60 per cent of the 'very high' and 'high' distress small and marginal farmers (SMFs) did not receive farm loan waiver (FLW) benefits.**
- The exclusion rate was also **60 % for the medium distress category SMFs.**
- **In the three states together (Maharashtra, Punjab & UP), more than 40 % of the 'very high distress' farmers did not receive any FLW benefits.**
- While the **distress of a farmer is usually measured by the extent of his crop damage**, this leaves way too many distressed farmers in other areas out of the beneficiary ambit.

❖ How Will The Index Help

- The index can **integrate the available high-frequency data on key agricultural variables** like:
 - Deviation of monsoon rains, excessive rainfall, drought and dry spells, depth of underground water, unusual frost.
 - Variations in temperature and soil moisture.
 - Yield of major crops in the district, proportion of area under irrigation.
 - Marketing opportunities available to the farmer that may include the proportion of wheat, paddy, chana, tur, groundnut, soybean etc. produced and procured at MSP.
- This **index won't be uniform** across the country as it changes from place to place depending on the stress levels.
- **Depending on the level of distress**, the government and the financial institutions can decide on an **appropriate package of support** instead of the current practice of doling out distress package to all the farmers across the board.
- Further, depending on the **kind and severity** of distress, the support can be given as a **combination of unconditional grants, loan restructuring and/or a complete debt waiver.**
- The assistance to individual farmers can be based on a **combination of district index and individual farmers' distress.**

Atal New India Challenge 2.0



❖ Context

- **Atal Innovation Mission** launched the phase 1 of the 2nd edition of the Atal New India Challenge (ANIC 2.0).

❖ Key Highlights

- Atal New India Challenge is a **flagship program of Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog.**
- The program aims to seek, select, support and nurture **technology-based innovations** that solve **sectoral challenges of national importance and societal relevance.**
- One of the primary goals of the ANIC program is to support innovations in areas critical to India's development and growth – **Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, Agriculture, Food Processing, Housing, Energy, Mobility, Space Application etc.**
- The Atal New India Challenge aims to address the **Commercialization Valley of Death** - supporting innovators scale over the **risks associated with access to resources for testing, piloting and market creation.**
- ANIC solicits innovations from start-ups and MSMEs in the prototype stage and after a **competitive process of selection** supports them through to the commercialization stage **over a course of 12 – 18 months** with a **funding of up to INR 1 crore** along with other associated support from the AIM's innovation ecosystem.

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National Behaviour Change Communication Framework



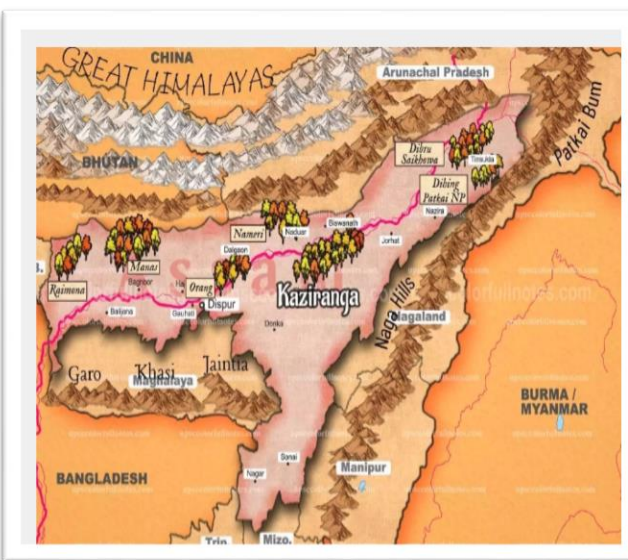
❖ Context

- **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0**, under the aegis of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, has launched the '**National Behaviour Change Communication Framework for Garbage Free Cities**' to strengthen the ongoing jan andolan for '**Garbage Free Cities**'.

❖ Key Highlights

- It will serve as a **guiding document and blueprint for States and Cities to undertake large scale multimedia campaigns** along with **intensive and focused inter-personal communication campaigns**.
- The framework focuses on intensifying messaging around the **key focus areas of source segregation, collection, transportation, and processing of waste, plastic waste management, and remediation of legacy dumpsites** to truly transform the urban landscape of India.

Kaziranga National Park



❖ Context

- Recently, A **Supreme Court panel has prodded the Assam government** for laxity in checking illegal construction activities on the animal corridors of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.

❖ Key Highlights

- The illegal activities are in violation of an order (April 12, 2019) by the Supreme Court.
- The order prohibited **new construction on private lands within the corridors** that the animals of Kaziranga use to move in and out of the flood-prone Park.
- The order was based on a petition filed by Assam-based environment activist Rohit Choudhury.

❖ Kaziranga National Park

- **Location:**
 - It is **situated in the Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon districts** of the state of Assam, India.
 - The entire area of Kaziranga - **formed by alluvial deposits from the Brahmaputra and its tributaries** - is centered on the river.
 - The **Diphlu River passes through the Kaziranga National Park**.
- **International Status:** The sanctuary, which hosts two-thirds of the world's great one-horned rhinoceroses, **is a World Heritage Site**.
- **Legal Status:**
 - It was declared as a **National Park in 1974** by Govt of India.
 - Kaziranga is home to the **highest density of tigers** among protected areas in the world, and was **declared a Tiger Reserve in 2006** (now the **highest tiger density is in Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand**).
- **Flora:**
 - **Alluvial inundated grasslands, alluvial savanna woodlands, tropical moist mixed deciduous forests, and tropical semi-evergreen forests** can be found here.
 - **Kumbhi, Indian gooseberry, cotton tree, and elephant apple** are just a few of the park's well-known trees.
 - A wide **variety of aquatic flora can also be found in lakes, ponds, and along riverbanks**.
- **Fauna:**
 - **Indian Rhinoceros**.
 - It is famous for the charismatic '**BIGFIVE**' **Great Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros, Asiatic Wild Buffalo, Asiatic Elephant, Swamp Deer, and Royal Bengal Tiger** are among them.
 - It also has many species of birds and is **designated as an 'Important Bird Area'** by Birdlife International.



Export Credit Guarantee Corporation Of India (ECGC)



(A Government of India Enterprise)

You focus on exports. We cover the risks

❖ Context

- ECGC Ltd. is in the process of **approaching the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to authorize it to deal with foreign currency** for the benefit of exporters.

❖ About ECGC

- It is an Indian enterprise that is **administered by the Government of India through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.**
- **Wholly owned** by the Indian Government.
- **Set up in 1957.**
- ECGC Ltd. is the **seventh largest credit insurer of the world** in terms of coverage of national exports.
- **Aim:** To **promote exports by offering credit risk insurance** and allied services to the exporters.
- **Functions:**
 - Provides a range of **credit risk insurance covers to exporters against loss in export of goods and services as well.**
 - **Offers guarantees to banks and financial institutions** to enable exporters to obtain better facilities from them.
 - Provides **Overseas Investment Insurance** to Indian companies investing in joint ventures abroad in the form of equity or loan and advances.

Global Security Initiative



❖ Context

- Recently, a new **Global Security Initiative** was put forward by **Chinese President Xi Jinping.**

❖ Key Highlights

- Conceived as a global public good, the initiative **seeks to promote world peace and stability by fostering equity and justice among nations.**
- It **aims to stay committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security.**
- It would **“oppose unilateralism and say no to group politics and bloc confrontation.**
- It will **look to counter the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy and the Quad** – the India, U.S., Australia, Japan grouping.
- The **members of the Quad have rejected** the notion that it is an Asian NATO or a military alliance, and pointed to its broad-based cooperation, including on vaccines and technology.

Parvatmala Yojana



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❖ Context

- An MoU was signed between **NHLML (National Highways Logistics Management Limited)** and the state Government of **Himachal Pradesh** for construction of 7 ropeway projects of length 57.1km at cost of Rs 3,232 Crore in Himachal Pradesh under the ambitious Parvatmala Yojana.

❖ About The Programme

- Union Finance Minister announced in Union Budget for 2022-23 that **National Ropeways Development Programme – “Parvatmala”** - will be taken up on **PPP mode.**
- In February 2021, the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 was amended, which enables the **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** to also look after the development of **Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions.**
- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism. This may also cover congested urban areas, where conventional mass transit systems are not feasible.
- The scheme is being presently started in regions like Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states.

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