

1. Extreme Poverty Dipped in India

Topic: Indian Economy

In News: According to a recent World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Extreme poverty in India is estimated to have declined 12.3 percentage points between 2011 to 2019.

More on the Topic:

- The World Bank defines 'living in extreme poverty' in India as living on \$1.9 or less in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms.
- The decline in the rural areas was much higher than in urban areas.
- In the first half of the decade, **extreme poverty declined to 19.1%**. The remaining 9.1% drop was achieved in the later years, between 2015 and 2019.
- Extreme poverty dropped by 3.2% points between 2017 and 2018 alone, which was the fastest rate in over two decades.
- Poverty has marginally increased for a brief period at least twice in the last decade. This was around the demonetisation of the Indian currency in 2016 and the economic slowdown after that.
- Recently The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has mentioned that **India has almost eradicated extreme poverty** and has brought down its consumption inequality to its lowest level in the last four decades.
- These consumption inequalities were dealt with **state-provided food handouts**.
- The IMF report highlighted that **less than 1% of the Indian population is living under extreme poverty**.
- **Food ration schemes were "instrumental"** in ensuring that extreme poverty did not rise during the pandemic and remain steady.



Anti-Poverty Programmes: India

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 2005:**
- It was launched on February 2, 2005. The Act provides 100 days assured employment every year to every rural household. One-third of the proposed jobs would be reserved for women.
- **National Rural Livelihood Mission: Aajeevika**
- It is the skill and placement initiative of Ministry of Rural development.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna:**
- The cabinet on March 21, 2015 cleared the scheme to provide skill training to 1.4 million youth with an overall outlay of Rs. 1120 crore. This plan is implemented with the help of

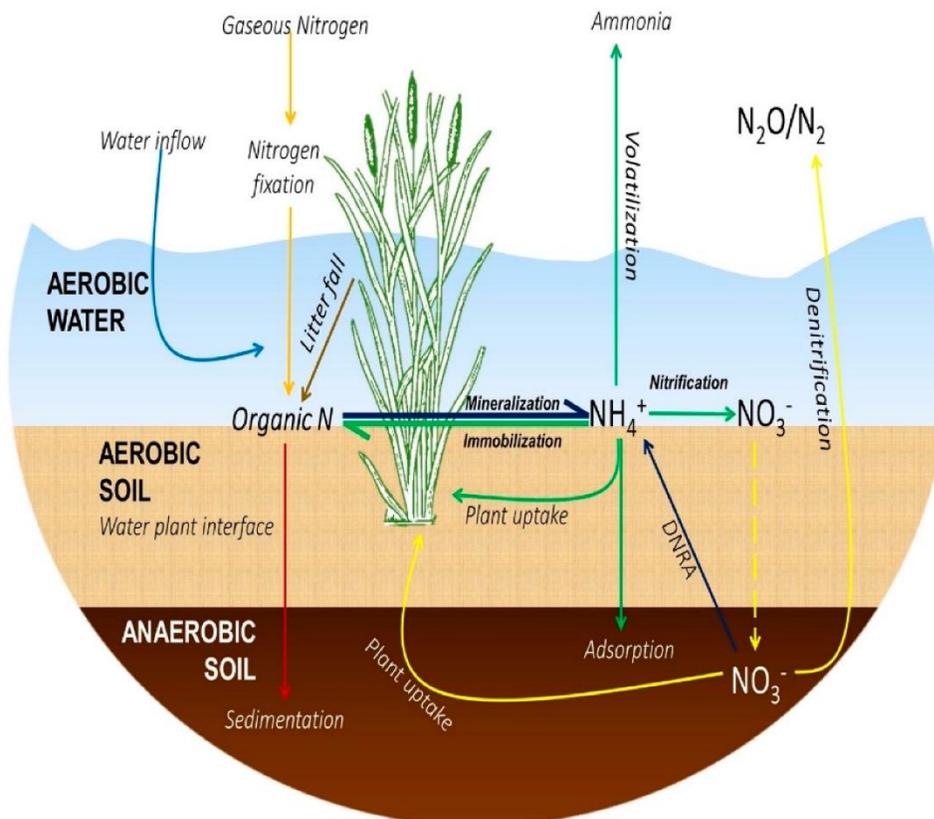
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the National Skill Development Corporation.

- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana: Financial inclusion**
- **Pradhan Manti Garib Kalyan Yojana: Ration provision started during covid 19 outbreak related economic crisis.**

Source: Indian Express

2. Nitrogen levels on a decline in 'nitrogen-rich world'

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: An imbalance in nitrogen availability has been reported across the globe, with some places having an excess and others a shortage of the element.

More on the Topic:

- There is both too much nitrogen and too little nitrogen on Earth at the same time.
- This has been hurting aquatic and terrestrial life that feed on it and after several years.
- **Nitrogen Deficiency:** Without nitrogen, an essential nutrient, plants grow slowly and produce smaller flowers and fruits. Their leaves turn yellowish and are less nutritious to insects, birds and animals.

- Plants grow quickly when exposed to high carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations. Thus, their demand for nitrogen also goes up.
- High CO₂ levels dilute plant nitrogen, **triggering a cascade of effects that lower the availability of nitrogen**. Other factors contributing to nitrogen decline include warming and disturbances, including wildfire.
- Plants with low nitrogen levels can **encourage swarming in some species of locusts**.
- **Low nitrogen availability could limit plants' ability to capture CO₂ from the atmosphere**.
- **Nitrogen Excess:** Sprinkling nitrogen fertilisers in regions facing a shortage of nitrogen supply may not be the answer.
- Human production of nitrogen is now five times higher than it was 60 years, according to a 2017 study.
- When excessive nitrogen accumulates in the streams, inland lakes and coastal bodies of water, it could sometimes result in **eutrophication, leading to harmful algal blooms, dead zones and fish kills**.
- In humans, high levels of nitrogen in the groundwater are linked to **intestinal cancers and miscarriages and can be fatal for infants**.

Nitrogen Cycle:

- Nitrogen is a chief constituent of the bodies of living organisms as the Nitrogen atoms are found in all proteins and DNA
- It is a common limiting nutrient in nature and agriculture. It exists in the atmosphere as N₂. Usually, nitrogen is usable only after it is fixed.
- The nitrogen cycle is the biogeochemical cycle.
- The major source of free nitrogen is the action of soil micro-organisms and associated plant roots on atmospheric nitrogen found in pore spaces of the soil.
- **Fixation is the primary step** in the process of converting nitrogen, usable by plants. Normally, bacteria change nitrogen into ammonium.
- **Nitrification** is the process by which ammonium converted into nitrates by bacteria. The plants absorb these Nitrates.
- Through assimilation plants get nitrogen. Nitrogen gets used in chlorophyll, nucleic acids, and amino acids.
- **Ammonification is a part of the decaying process**. When a plant or animal expires, decomposers such that bacteria and fungi turn the nitrogen back into ammonium so it can go back into the nitrogen cycle.
- Through De-nitrification surplus nitrogen in the soil gets put back out into the air.
- There are special bacteria that execute this job as well.

Source: Indian Express

3. Line of Actual Control

Topic: International Relations



Source: defence.gov.au and financial times

In News: China continues to expand its unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) network and usage in areas close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

More on the Topic:

- As the standoff continues, satellite imagery showed the deployment of the UAVs and fighter jets by the Chinese Air Force at around 200 km from the Pangong Lake.
- China is promoting the use of an indigenously built **Tiantong satellite communication** system to reduce its dependence on foreign origin sat phone communications.
- To counter it, the Army and the Air Force too are ramping up their own UAV fleets and upgrading the existing ones in inventory.

About LAC:

- **LAC stands for the Line of Actual Control. It is the frontier between India and China.** In a bilateral agreement in 1993, the idea of an 'Line of Actual Control' (LAC) came into being, although there was no clear settlement of land positions between these two countries.
- The LAC divides territories under Indian rule from territories under Chinese control. It is a large empty area and the armies of India and China maintain a gap of nearly 50 to 100 km.

- The Chinese government believes that the LAC is about 2,000 km, while India believes that the LAC is 3,488 km long.
- **LAC is divided into three regions:** Ladakh's western sector, Uttarakhand's middle sector, and Himachal Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim's eastern sector.
- Regarding LAC -the two nations do not agree on it, nor is it delineated on a map or demarcated on the land.
- Relations between India and China have come under “severe stress” time and again in the last decade due to multiple border stand-offs along the Line of Actual Control.
- **China claims about 90,000 sq km of India’s territory in the northeast, including Arunachal,** while India says 38,000 sq km of land in China-occupied Aksai Chin should be a part of Ladakh.
- There are several disputed areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), including in **Himachal, Uttarakhand and Sikkim.**

Source: Hindu

3. E-DAR (e-Detailed Accident Report) Portal

Topic: Government Schemes

In News: The Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has developed the portal named ‘e-DAR’ (e-Detailed Accident Report) to accelerate accident compensation claims.

More on the Topic:

- **Digitalised Detailed Accident Reports (DAR)** will be uploaded on the portal for easy access. The web portal will be linked to the **Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD).**
- From iRAD, applications to more than 90% of the datasets would be pushed directly to the e-DAR.
- **Stakeholders like the police, road authorities, hospitals, etc., are required to enter very minimal information** for the e-DAR forms. Thus, e-DAR would be an extension and e-version of iRAD.
- **The portal would be linked to other government portals like Vaahan** and would get access to information on driving licence details and registration of vehicles.
- For the benefit of investigating officers, **the portal would provide geo tagging of the exact accident spot** along with the site map.



‘e-DAR’ (e-Detailed Accident Report) Portal

- This would notify the investigating officer on his distance from the spot of the incident in the event the portal is accessed from any other location.
- Details like photos, video of the accident spot, damaged vehicles, injured victims, eye-witnesses, etc., would be uploaded immediately on the portal.
- **Hotspots for accidents would also be identified** so as to obtain solutions to avoid accidents at these hotspots.

Source: Indian Express

4. Mugger Crocodiles

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: The Indian Railways has been delivering water to Pali district in western Rajasthan as the region's water bodies have dried up due to increased summer temperature. These trains now hold the key to survival not just of Pali's human residents but also Mugger crocodiles.



More on the Topic:

- Over 350 mugger crocodiles which are inhabitants of Jawai dam, are struggling to survive.
- The water in the reservoir is down to three feet. Crocodiles need at least 10 feet of water to survive.
- The crocodiles found in Jawai are muggers or marsh crocodiles which are freshwater species. They found all over south Asia like **India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh as well as south-eastern Iran.**
- Muggers measure six to 13 feet on average and live for 70-80 years. The species has been extirpated in many areas of its former range and **now survives largely in protected areas, mainly in India and Sri Lanka.**
- The mugger is found in **15 Indian states, with the largest populations in the middle Ganges (Bihar-Jharkhand) and Chambal (Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan) basins.**
- The main threats to mugger crocodiles are **habitat loss due to expansion of agriculture and industry, getting trapped in fishing nets, poaching of their eggs and illegal trade in their skin and meat.**

Source: Business Standard

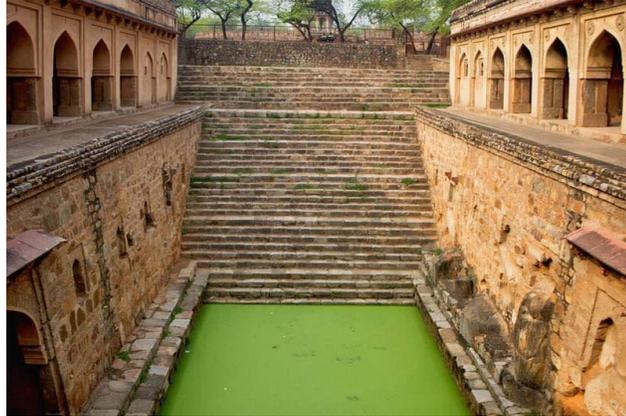
5. Baoli/Stepwell

Topic: Art and Culture

In News: Union Minister for Culture inaugurated the Photo exhibition on the Baolis of Delhi.

More on the Topic:

- As per climatic conditions ranging from aridity to availability of water the civilizations had adopted various techniques in the usage and storage of water; baolis/stepwells feature in one such technology.
- Baoli is **commonly used in Gujarat, Rajasthan and parts of North India.**
- The system of stepwells/baolis collapsed due to the pressure of decentralisation and agriculture intensification.
- A typical baoli usually consists of three elements, **the well in which the water is collected, the flight of steps to reach the ground water through several stories and interconnected pavilions.**
- Generally, the step wells are U – shaped but there are always exceptions in architecture and L – shaped rectangular or octagonal stepwells are also not uncommon.



Source: Hindu

6. Autonomous District Council

Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: The Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council has opposed the Meghalaya state's decision to hand over private land to resolve boundary dispute with Assam.

More on the Topic:





- **The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India** allows for the formation of autonomous administrative divisions which have been given **autonomy within their respective states**.
- Most of these autonomous district councils are located in North East India but two are in Ladakh, a region administered by India as a union territory.
- Presently, 10 Autonomous Councils in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura are formed by virtue of the Sixth Schedule with the rest being formed as a result of other legislation.

Source: PIB
