# NEWS TODAY
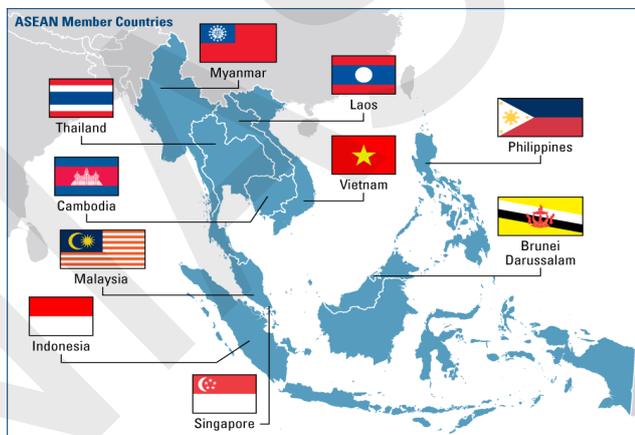
## PRIME MINISTER ATTENDED 20TH ASEAN-INDIA SUMMIT AND 18TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT (EAS) IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA

- **Key highlights of the Summits**
  - India presented a **12-point proposal** for strengthening India-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) cooperation, which includes:
    - Establishing multi-modal connectivity and economic corridor **linking South-East Asia-India-West Asia-Europe.**
    - Sharing **India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack** with ASEAN Partners.
    - **ASEAN-India Fund for Digital Future** focusing on cooperation in digital transformation and financial connectivity.
    - Invitation to ASEAN countries to join the **Global Centre for Traditional Medicine and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.**
    - Renewal of **support to the Economic and Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)** to act as a knowledge partner
    - Called for **enhanced cooperation on maritime safety, security and domain awareness.**
  - ASEAN was established in 1967 with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration.
    - ASEAN is **central to India's Act East policy,** which focuses on the extended neighbourhood in the Asia-Pacific region.
- EAS is a forum of **18 countries of the Asia-Pacific region formed to further the objectives of regional peace, security and prosperity.**
  - EAS consists of **ten ASEAN Member States and Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the USA.**



ASEAN Member Countries: Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Singapore

## G20 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADVANCING FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND PRODUCTIVITY GAINS THROUGH DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE (DPI) REPORT

- The report has been prepared by the **World Bank** as an implementing partner of the **Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI)** under the G20 India Presidency.
- DPIs are generally understood as **interoperable, open, and accessible infrastructure** supported by technology to provide essential, society-wide, public and private services digitally such as identification, payments, and data exchange.
- **Role of DPIs in advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains:**
  - **Sharing** of data **empowering** users to access tailored products
  - **Enabling access** to credit and new markets
  - Provide opportunities for innovation and **improved competitiveness**
- **Risks for DPIs:**
  - **Operational risks** such as cybersecurity risks and spillover effects
  - **Insolvency risks** in case of financial unsustainability of DPI providers
  - **Exclusion risk** in case of poor design
  - **Privacy risk** such as unauthorized retention, use or sharing of data
- **Policy Recommendations:**
  - Enabling and fostering the **use of DPIs in accelerating financial inclusion;**
  - **Develop well-designed DPIs** and the broader enabling environment through a widely accepted set of good practices.
  - **Encourage appropriate risk-based regulation, supervision, and oversight arrangements** for financial sector use of DPIs.
  - Promote **sound internal governance arrangements.**

> GPFI is an inclusive platform for **all G20 countries, interested non-G20 countries and relevant stakeholders** to carry forward work on **financial inclusion,** including implementation of the **G20 Financial Inclusion Action Plan,** endorsed at the G20 Summit in Seoul in 2010.

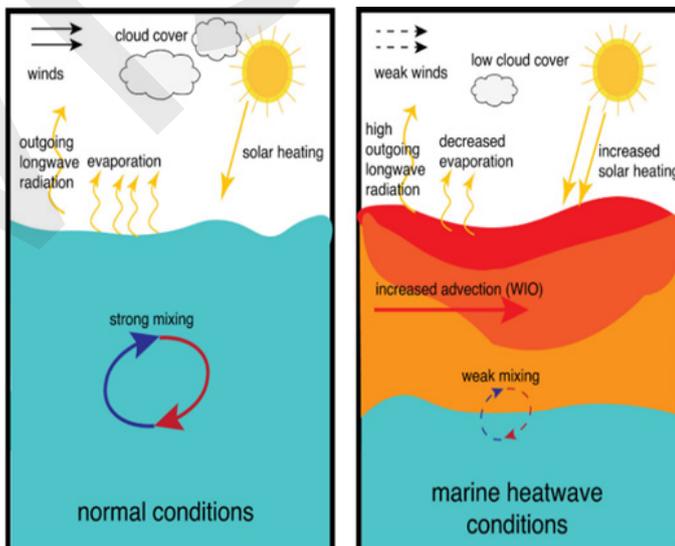# ASSETS WORTH OVER $1.8 BILLION RECOVERED UNDER FUGITIVE ECONOMIC OFFENDERS ACT

- **A Fugitive Economic Offender (FEO)** is a person against whom **an arrest warrant has been issued** for involvement in **economic offenses involving at least Rs. 100 crore** and the person **has left India to avoid criminal prosecution.**
- Presently, only 10 people have been declared as fugitive economic offenders.
- **FEO Act, 2018:**
  - **Scheduled Offences** are **counterfeiting government stamps** or currency, cheque dishonour, **transactions defrauding** creditors, **money laundering,** etc.
  - **Declaring an offender:** an application will be **filed in a Special Court designated under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002.**
  - **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** is the **apex agency** to implement the law.
  - **Empower authorities** to **confiscate assets even** when **no conviction has been obtained.**
  - **Rights and titles of the confiscated property** vest in the central government.
  - **Appeals** against the **orders of the special court** will lie before the **High Court.**
- **Priority areas to deal with FEO:**
  - Law **enforcement cooperation** via information sharing,
  - **Strengthening asset recovery** mechanisms,
  - Enhancing the integrity and effectiveness of **anti-corruption authorities.**
- **Challenges:** Lack of international cooperation on deportation, **complex legal structures** of different countries and jurisdictions, etc.

# WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION FORECASTS MARINE HEATWAVES (MHW) MAY EXTEND TILL 2024

- **MHW** is an **extreme weather** event. It occurs when the **surface temperature** of a particular region of the **sea rises to 3 or 4** degrees **Celsius above the average temperature for at least five days.**
- **Reasons for extended MHW**
  - **El Nino:** redistributing the upper ocean heat content **from west to east across the Pacific.**
  - **Negative phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)** can **impact surface winds** and **influence ocean temperatures** causing heating of North Atlantic.
  - **Excessive heat absorbed** by the ocean, due to **rising Global warming** induced by human activities.
- **Impacts**
  - **Biodiversity and habitat loss:** Causes **heat stress on marine species** including foundation species like seagrass, kelp, and corals.
  - **Weather patterns:** In the tropical Indian Ocean, it will lead to **rapidly intensifying cyclones and fluctuations in the monsoon rainfall.**
  - **Economic loss:** Through increased mortality of economically important species such as fish etc.
  - **Increased ocean stressors:** like acidification, and deoxygenation.
- **El Niño** refers to **unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.**
- **Negative NAO** is a phase when both the sub-polar low and the subtropic high are weaker than average.



normal conditions / marine heatwave conditions

# SCIENTISTS CREATED A MODEL OF HUMAN EMBRYO WITHOUT EGGS OR SPERM

- Scientists used **mix of stem cells** to **assemble them into an embryo-like structure,** mimicking **molecular** characteristics of an early **embryo stage.**
  - **Stem cells** are **fundamental building blocks** of human body, capable of generating all other cells with specialized functions.
- **Process of creating an embryo model**
  - **Stem cells were reprogrammed** to become any type of tissue in body.
  - Chemicals were **then used to coax** stem cells into becoming four types of cells **found in earliest stages of human embryo, viz.**
    - **Epiblast cells,** which become the embryo proper (or foetus).
    - **Trophoblast cells,** which become the placenta.
    - **Hypoblast cells,** which become the supportive yolk sac.
    - **Extraembryonic** mesoderm cells.
- **Implantation** of this model embryo **is not allowed** and will be **used for research only.**
- **Significance**
  - Assist in the study of the **earliest moments of human lives which is presently difficult to study after the embryo gets implanted in the uterus.**
  - Better understanding of **genetic, epigenetic, and environmental effects** on a developing embryo.
  - **Other:** test effect of **drugs on pregnancies,** improve success rates of in vitro fertilization, and assist in study of **transplant tissues and organs,** etc.

# DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTION AND REGULATION OF DARK PATTERNS RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

- Dark patterns refer to **deceptive design patterns using UI/UX** (user interface/user experience) **interactions** on any platform.
  - It **mislead people into doing something they originally did not wish to do,** such as paying for items or services they did not intend to buy.
- **Key features of the draft guideline**
  - **Objective:** To **clearly identify and define tactics as dark patterns** so that the Ministry of Consumer Affairs **can act against platforms indulging in this under Section 18 of the Consumer Protection** Act, 2019.
  - **Applicable:** All platforms, systematically offering goods or services in India; Advertisers; Sellers.
  - **Prohibitions against engaging in dark patterns:** No person, including any platform, shall engage in any dark pattern.
  - Draft guidelines have **specified about 10 dark patterns**

| Dark Patterns | Example |
|---|---|
| **False urgency** | Describing a sale as an 'exclusive' sale for a limited time. |
| **Basket sneaking** | Automatically adding travel insurance while a user purchases a flight ticket. |
| **Confirm shaming** | A platform for booking flight tickets using the phrase "I will stay unsecured", when a user does not include insurance in their cart. |
| **Forced action** | Forcing a user to subscribe to a newsletter in order to purchase a product. |
| **Subscription trap** | Making the process of cancellation of a paid subscription impossible or complex. |
| **Interface interference** | An 'X' icon on the top-right corner of a pop-up screen leading to the opening-up of another ad rather than closing it. |
| **Bait and switch** | The seller advertises low-cost, high-quality products. Moments before purchase, claims unavailability, substitutes with similar but costlier alternatives. |
| **Drip pricing** | The practice whereby elements of prices are not revealed upfront or are revealed surreptitiously within the user experience. |
| **Disguised advertisement** | Practice of posing, masking advertisements as other types of content such as user generated content or new articles or false advertisements. |
| **Nagging** | Websites asking a user to download their app, again and again. |

# ALSO IN NEWS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan 2023 Rankings** | <ul><li>Swachh Vayu Survekshan is an **initiative by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC).**</li><li>It **ranks cities on the basis of the implementation of activities approved under city action plan** and air quality in 131 National Clean Air Programme cities.</li><li>Cities are required to do the self-assessment as per the framework provided on the **PRANA online portal.**</li><li>**Major Components of Assessment:** solid waste management, road dust management, etc.</li><li>**First ranked cities:** Indore(million plus population), Amravati(3-10 lakhs population) and Parwanoo (less than 3 lakhs population).</li></ul> |
| **Major security breach reported from Idukki Dam** | <ul><li>**Idukki dam**<ul><li>It is a **double-curvature Arch dam constructed** across the Periyar River in Kerala.</li><li>It is the **third-highest arch dam in India** after the Tehri Dam (Uttarakhand) and Bhakra Nangal Dam (Himachal Pradesh).</li><li>It supports a **780 MW hydroelectric power station.**</li></ul></li></ul> |
| **Nairobi declaration** | <ul><li>**The first Africa Climate Summit 2023** ends with the 'Nairobi Declaration'.</li><li>**Nairobi declaration** called for an **annual climate finance pledge of $100bn** and reforms to **multilateral financial systems.**</li></ul> |
| **Sanchi to soon be India's first 'solar city'** | <ul><li>**Sanchi town** lies in the Raisen District of Madhya Pradesh.</li><li>It is known for its **Buddhist Monuments (Stupa) which** is also a **UNESCO world heritage site.**</li><li>**Significance**<ul><li>sits near the **Tropic** of **Cancer** makes it ideal for harnessing solar power.</li><li>**Help in reducing emissions** of more than 14,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually.</li></ul></li></ul> |

| | |
|---|---|
| **SLIM and XRISM** | • Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched an H-2A rocket carrying the **SLIM moon lander and the XRISM space telescope.**<br>• SLIM (Smart Lander for Investigating Moon) will attempt to pull off **Japan's first-ever soft lunar landing at Shioli Crater** in early 2024.<br>➤ It aims to demonstrate **pinpoint-landing technology** which can enable landing anywhere on the Moon.<br>• XRISM (X-Ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission) is a **collaboration involving JAXA, NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA).**<br>➤ It will **study the universe in high energy X-ray light** from the Earth's orbit. |
| **MQ 9 UAV** | • India requested the acquisition of 31 top-grade MQ-9B Reaper or Predator-B drones from the United States.<br>• **Features of MQ9 UAV**<br>➤ Endurance of over 27 hours.<br>➤ Speeds of 240 KTAS (Knots true airspeed)<br>➤ Can operate up to 50,000 feet, and has a 3,850 pound (1746 kilogram) payload capacity.<br>• Drones are capable of a variety of roles, including **maritime surveillance, anti-submarine warfare, over-the-horizon targeting,** airborne early warning, electronic warfare. |
| **Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV)** | • GSV is a Central University in **Vadodara (Gujarat),** established through an **Act of Parliament in 2022.**<br>• It is **India's first University** in the **Transportation** and **Logistics** sectors.<br>• It subsumes the previously-existing **National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI).**<br>• **Sponsored** by the **Ministry of Railways.**<br>• **Mandate:** applied education, training, skilling, and research in logistic sector. |
| **Cheriyal Scroll painting** | • **Cheriyal Scroll paintings** are unique to **Telangana,** having Geographical Indication (GI) status.<br>➤ It is a **popular and modified version of Nakashi art,** highly rich in local motifs.<br>➤ Features:<br>▪ **painted in narrative format** and depict stories from **Indian mythology** as well as shorter stories related to the **Puranas and Epics.**<br>▪ Use in story-telling by the balladeer community called **Kaki Padagollu.**<br>▪ painted in **mostly primary colors,** showing a predominance of red color in the background. |
| **Military Exercise BRIGHT STAR- 23** | • **Bright Star 23 is a multilateral U.S. Central Command exercise held in Egypt. India** participated in this exercise for the first time. |
| **Places in News** | **Mexico (Capital: Mexico City)**<br>• Mexico's Supreme Court ruled that state laws prohibiting abortion are unconstitutional and violate women's rights.<br>• **Political Boundaries:**<br>➤ Bordered with **USA (North), Pacific Ocean (West and South), Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea (East) and Guatemala and Belize (Southeast).**<br>➤ It shares **Yucatan Peninsula,** which separates Gulf of Mexico from Caribbean Sea, with Belize and Guatemala.<br>• **Geographical Features:**<br>➤ **Major Rivers:** Rio Grande, Colorado<br>➤ **Major Mountain Ranges:** Sierra Madre<br>➤ **Highest Mountain:** Pico de Orizaba (Active Volcano)<br>➤ One of the countries along the **Ring of Fire.** |