

INDIA LOOKS AT DEVISING OWN STANDARDS TO ASSESS SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRESS

- A working paper by **Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** stated that **global standards often present a misleading picture of India's performance** on various development indicators.
- **Paper investigated following development indicators:**

Indicator	By	Issues Highlighted
Childhood Stunting (low height for age)	National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) based on WHO growth standards.	• Blanket use of global benchmark (one-size-fits-all approach) overstates India's child malnutrition problem.
Life Expectancy at Birth	United Nations Population Division	• Lack of availability of local data and improper adjustments using modelling procedures end up skewing data for India.
Female Labour Force Participation Rate	International Labour Organisation (ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India's Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) does not capture economically productive work done by women (ironically against ILO standards followed internationally) like poultry farming, milking of cows, etc. as part of their domestic duties. • It pushes a significant proportion of women in active labour force into 'out of labour force' category.

• Recommendations

- **Revisit data on local anthropometric measurements** and simultaneously **release data based on our own benchmarks** derived from indigenous characteristics which are better suited to gauge malnutrition in India.
- **India's data gathering agencies** (such as Registrar General of India) **need to provide timely and quality data.**

COUNTRY'S FIRST DIMETHYL ETHER (DME) FUELLED TRACTOR USHERS A NEW ERA OF CLEAN FUEL APPLICATIONS

- **Researchers at IIT Kanpur developed a 100% DME-fuelled engine** with a mechanical fuel injection system.
 - Research was **supported by Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**, under Department of Science and Technology (DST), and **aligned with NITI Ayog's 'Methanol Economy' program.**
- **About DME**
 - It is a **colourless, highly flammable gas** at ambient conditions, but **can be handled as a liquid** when lightly pressurized.
 - DME is **primarily produced by converting natural gas, organic waste or biomass to synthesis gas (syngas).**
 - Syngas is a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen.
 - **Properties similar to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). It is used as an alternative to diesel, in chemical industry, and as an aerosol propellant.**
- **Benefits of DME**
 - Exhibit **higher brake thermal efficiency.** Also, has a very **high cetane number.**
 - **Produce negligible soot** while significantly **reducing hydrocarbon, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide emissions.**
 - **It is renewable** and can help in **reducing India's oil import bill.**
 - **Can virtually eliminate particulate emissions as it lack carbon-to-carbon bonds.**
- **Challenges:** It has low energy density, lower calorific value, poor anti-knock performance, needs engine modification etc.

IN SOUTHERN AND NORTH-EAST REGION, MORE WOMEN AVAILED LOAN UNDER PM-SVANIDHI (PM STREET VENDORS' ATMANIRBHAR NIDHI)

- According to **data from Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA):**
 - **About 41% of beneficiaries** of PM-SVANidhi **are women.**
 - **Andhra Pradesh (70%), Telangana (66%), Tamil Nadu (64%), Manipur (94%), Nagaland (88%), Meghalaya (77%) stand out for their high women share.**
- PM-SVANidhi, a **Central Sector Scheme** (of MoHUA) was launched **to facilitate street vendors to access affordable working capital loan** for resuming their livelihoods activities, after easing of lockdown.
- **Salient features**
 - **Eligibility:** Street vendors/ hawkers vending in urban areas, as on or before March 24, 2020, including vendors of surrounding peri-urban and rural areas.
 - **Initial working capital** of up to **Rs 10,000 for one year.**
 - **Interest subsidy** on timely/ early repayment @ **7%.**
 - **Monthly cash-back incentive** on digital transactions
- **'SVANidhi se Samridhi', an additional program of PM-SVANidhi** was launched in 2021 **to provide social security benefits to street vendors.**
 - Under this, **socio-economic profiling** of PM-SVANidhi beneficiaries and their families is conducted **to assess their eligibility for several welfare schemes** including **PM Suraksha Bima Yojana, PM Jeevan Jyoti Yojana etc.**
 - **Implementing partner:** Quality Council of India.



ALERT SOUNDED AS CYCLONE BIPARJOY CHANGES ITS PATH, HEADS TO GUJARAT COAST

- Cyclone Biparjoy, **earlier headed towards Pakistan coastline**, is now **predicted to move towards northern Gujarat coast**, with a landfall expected on June 15.
 - Cyclones in Arabian Sea **usually do not move towards Indian coast**.
 - **Most of them**, more than 75%, **move northwards or north-westwards** with trajectory directed **towards Pakistan, Iran or Oman**.
- According to a recent study, there is a **52% increase in the frequency of cyclonic storms (CS) during 2001–2019 in the Arabian Sea** making India's west coast more vulnerable.
- **CS are increasing in Arabian sea because of**
 - **Warming of both the sea surface temperature and deeper waters in Arabian Sea**.
 - **Warm conditions** are very much **favourable for the rapid intensification of cyclones** so it has potential to **sustain the strength for a longer period**.
 - **Increasing frequency of El Nino Modoki phenomenon** which makes conditions conducive for cyclone formation over Arabian Sea.
 - El Nino Modoki causes **warm moist conditions in Central Pacific and dry cold conditions in Eastern and western pacific**.

ALSO IN NEWS

 <p>Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pakistan and Turkmenistan have signed a Joint Implementation Plan in a bid to expedite work on the TAPI gas pipeline project. • About TAPI project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It aims to export natural gas annually through pipeline from Turkmenistan (Galkynysh gas field) to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (Fazilka). ➤ Funding is done by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
 <p>SEBI Complaints Redress System (SCORES)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCORES disposed of complaints against companies and market intermediaries. • SCORES is an online platform designed to help investors to lodge their complaints with SEBI against listed companies and SEBI registered intermediaries. • SCORES can't deal with complaints against companies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unlisted/delisted, placed on Dissemination Board of Stock Exchange, ➤ A sick company or a company where a moratorium order is passed, ➤ Company is struck off from Registrar of Companies (RoC).
 <p>Cochin Port</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre rolled out renovation of Cochin Port. • Cochin, an all-weather natural Port, is a major port on the Arabian Sea – Laccadive Sea – Indian Ocean sea-route in Kochi, Kerala. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It lies on two islands in Lake of Kochi: Willingdon Island and Vallarpadam. ➤ International Container Transshipment Terminal, part of the Cochin Port, is the largest container transshipment facility in India. ➤ It is governed by Cochin Port Trust, a government of India establishment. • Cochin lies beyond the cyclone zone.
 <p>Protosterol Biota</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to a recent study Protosterol Biota inhabited the underwater world over 1.6 billion years ago (Proterozoic Eon). • These microscopic organisms belong to eukaryotes and are the source of the evolution of life on Earth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Eukaryotes are single-celled or multicellular organisms whose cells contain a nucleus and other membrane-bound organelles. ➤ Modern forms of eukaryotes include fungi, plants, animals and single-celled organisms such as amoebae.



 <p>Fruit fly (<i>Drosophila melanogaster</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just like mosquitoes, they belong to Diptera, the group of insects that have only two wings. • Fruit fly remains one of the most commonly used model organisms for biomedical science. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Their rapid reproduction (one generation in about ten days; about 100 eggs per female per day) makes research fast, cost-effective and extremely versatile. • Genomes of flies and humans showed astonishing similarities and processes discovered in flies often turned out to apply to more complex organisms. • Many plants (including the cacao) rely on Diptera as pollinators.
 <p>Anak Krakatau Volcano</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indonesia's Anak Krakatau volcano erupted. • Anak Krakatau is located in Indonesia's Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra islands. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A 2018 eruption of Anak Krakatau triggered an underwater landslide that set off a tsunami. • Anak Krakatau, which means "child of Krakatau," is the offspring of the famous Krakatau, whose monumental eruption in 1883 triggered a period of global cooling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Krakatau lies along convergence of Indian-Australian and Eurasian tectonic plates.
 <p>Captagon pills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captagon is a highly addictive amphetamine-type drug, which is produced mainly in Syria. • Captagon pills stimulate central nervous system, providing a boost of energy, enhance someone's focus, let someone stay awake for longer periods of time, and produce a feeling of euphoria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It was widely consumed by Islamic State and Syrian fighters. • It is actually a counterfeit version of a medicine with same brand name, first produced in 1960s and was banned in 1980s. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Original Captagon contained fenetylline, a synthetic drug of phenethylamine family to which amphetamine also belongs.
 <p>Diamond League</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian long jumper Murali Sreeshankar secured a third place in Paris Diamond League. • Diamond League is an annual series of top-tier track and field competitions organised by World Athletics, international governing body for athletics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It was started in 2010 as a replacement for previous IAAF Golden League and IAAF World Athletics Final events. • Number of meets in a particular season of Diamond League is generally 14. The meets are held in different cities across the globe. • Neeraj Chopra (also the first Indian to win a Diamond League meet) and discus thrower Vikas Gowda are other Indians to finish in the top-3 of a Diamond League meet.
 <p>ICC World Test Championship (WTC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia beats India to win the WTC title. • WTC comprises the top nine Test teams, all of whom played six series each – three at home and three away. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Top two teams competed in WTC Final, • Rather than each series being worth the same number of points like in the first edition, each match was worth the same number of points this time. • Teams qualified on a percentage of points won basis so as to standardise the imbalance in the number of matches played by teams.
 <p>Places In news</p>	<p>Colombia (Capital: Bogotá)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four siblings found alive after surviving Amazon plane crash and 40 days alone in jungle. • Political boundaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is a north-western South American country with a coastline on Atlantic Ocean as well as the Pacific Ocean. ➤ Bordered by Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador. • Geographical features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Andean cordillera, one of the world's great mountain ranges, dominates the landscape of the western part of the country. ➤ Highest Point: Pico Cristóbal Colón ➤ Important Rivers: Amazon, Caquetá, Negro, Orinoco, Putumayo, Magdalena. 