

NEWS TODAY

KARNATAKA URGES CENTRE TO RE-EVALUATE DROUGHT DECLARATION NORMS

- Amid a **prolonged dry spell of monsoon** rainfall and **problems faced in various agro-climatic regions**, Karnataka has **urged the centre to:**
 - **Revaluate existing “one-size-fits-all approach”** and develop region-specific criteria to declare drought.
 - **Redefine and reduce time duration to declare dry spells** and consider factors such as type of soil, type of crop, temperature etc. to declare dry spells.
- **Ministry of Agriculture’s Manual for Drought Management 2016** (updated in 2020) **for declaration of drought** by States **suggests a three-step approach:**
 - **Based on mandatory indicators** — rainfall deviation, Standardized Precipitation Index and dry spell, manual specifies various situations that may be considered a drought trigger.
 - **Assessment of impact indicators** — agriculture, vegetation indices based on remote sensing, soil moisture, and hydrology.
 - **In last step**, which comes in after both previous steps triggers have been set off, states conduct **sample surveys for ground truthing** and for **judging the intensity of drought as ‘severe’ or ‘moderate’**.
- Once a drought is determined, **state government needs to issue a notification specifying the geographical extent and administrative units.**
 - Notification is **valid for six months** unless de-notified earlier.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE TABLED “ECOSYSTEM OF STARTUPS TO BENEFIT INDIA” REPORT

- India has become **3rd largest startup ecosystem globally** having **more than 98,119 Startups** (April 2023).
 - **Factors for India’s startup ecosystem growth:** Demographic dividend; increasing internet penetration and smartphone usage; availability of venture capital, angel investment, government initiatives etc.
 - **Challenges faced:** Limited access to funding, regulatory complexities, complex taxation issues, talent acquisition, lack of R&D support, market scalability etc.
- **Key highlights**
 - **47% of startups are from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.**
 - **India is home to 108 unicorns**, startups with a valuation of \$1 Billion.
 - **Startups spread across more than 56 diversified sectors** including IT services, healthcare and life sciences, education, agriculture and food & beverages.
 - **Around 47% of the recognised startups have at least one women director.**



- **Recommendations**
 - **Expand presence of agri-based startups** and encourage adoption of advanced technologies, such as data analytics, AI, and remote sensing in agriculture.
 - **Encourage greater involvement of women** through mentorship programmes and incubation support specifically designed for women entrepreneurs, funding support etc.
 - **Facilitate discussions among high-performing and under-performing States** to promote growth of startups on a broader scale.
 - **Ensures availability and timely release of funds** and facilitates quicker access to Government grants.

NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION (NMC) NOTIFIED THE NMC REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER (RMP) (PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2023

• Key highlights

- **Professional Conduct:** Each RMP shall display the **unique registration ID assigned** to them in prescriptions, certificates, and money receipts given to patients.
 - **Prohibitions:** for RMP like **fee splitting**, commission from **diagnostic services**, **endorsement of a product or person**, and **operating an open to all medical stores**, etc.
 - **Drugs:** prescribed drugs **using generic names written legibly** and avoid **unnecessary medications**.
 - **Duties toward patients:**
 - Communication **between RMP and patients shall be kept confidential** and they should neither **exaggerate nor minimize the gravity of a patient's condition**.
 - RMP is **free to choose whom they will serve**, except in case of a **life-threatening emergency**.
 - **Informed Consent process** should never be curtailed even if the patient is unable to understand it and patients have the **Right to Refuse Treatment**.
 - **Conduct on social media**, based on a **clear-cut distinction between telemedicine consultation and social media posts**, etc.
 - **Disciplinary action:** **five levels of disciplinary actions** ranging from **warning to permanent debar** from practice for RMP.
- **Significance:** Enhances patients' **rights to diagnose**, helps to **identify Quacks**, facilitates **affordable medicines**, and reduces **hidden costs in consultation**, etc.

Generic drug is defined as a "drug product that is comparable to brand/reference listed product in dosage form, strength, route of administration, quality and performance characteristics, and intended use"

SEVERAL STATES YET TO JOIN PRADHAN MANTRI UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (PM-USHA)

- To be **eligible under PM-USHA**, **State Governments must enter** into an MoU with the Department of Higher Education and undertake administrative, accreditation, and governance reforms as **detailed in the National Education Policy 2020**.

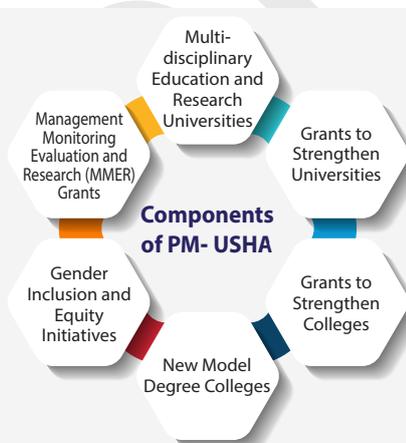
• About PM-USHA

- In 2023, the **Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)** was launched as, PM-USHA.
- It is a **centrally-sponsored scheme** to fund State/UTs institutions.
- **Aims to address:** graduate employability, promotion of **market-linked courses**, identification of critical skill gaps, etc.

• The scheme focuses on:

- **Equity, access, and inclusion:** promote inclusion of women, minorities, SCs/ STs/ OBCs, PwDs, etc.
- **Enhancing employability:** Collaboration between industry and academia, **rigorous tracking and monitoring of employability**, etc.
- **Developing quality training and learning processes:** support to **Multiple Entry & Exit Systems**, **Choice-based Credit Systems**, **Academic Bank of Credit**, etc.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Introducing **Open Distance Learning**, **smart classes**, virtual labs, etc.
- **Improving Accreditation:** handholding of non-accredited institutions, **enhancing accreditation from NAAC**, etc.

- **Issues in higher education:** **Severely fragmented** ecosystem, **rigid separation of disciplines** and narrow areas of study, **Limited access**, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, **Lesser emphasis on research**, sub-optimal governance.

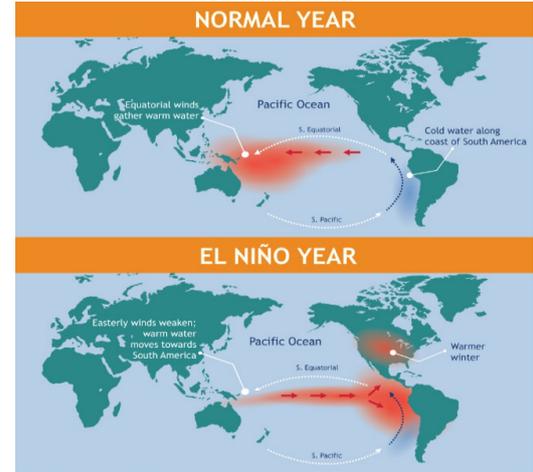


DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC VULNERABILITIES (FEVR) AND RISKS FROM PANDEMICS

- **On a request by G20 task force**, Framework has been prepared by WHO, World Bank, IMF, and European Investment Bank to **better understand health and economic vulnerabilities**, and their resulting risks, **caused by pandemics**.
 - COVID-19 pandemic **significantly altered growth trajectories**, and financial and **economic deprivation rates**, on top of the **human toll and social impact** it caused.
- **FEVR comprises 2 components** to help **identify systemic weaknesses and guide policy decisions** and investments:
 - **Key health, social and economic indicators** that are relevant to pandemics and are policy responsive, and therefore should be monitored to mitigate risks and shocks.
 - **Differential impact on health, social, and economic outcomes** of different policy and investment possibilities to inform decision making.
- **Significance of FEVR**
 - **A valuable tool to inform national and international strategies and investment priorities** for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response.
 - **A consistent framework for regular assessment** and understanding **changing global landscape** of health, social and economic vulnerabilities.
 - **Reference tool for various ministries for policy discussions** along with the trade-offs by highlighting the health, social, and economic vulnerabilities.
 - Support to **investment planning at the regional and country level**.

EL-NINO - MONSOON LINK WEAKENS OVER CENTRAL INDIA

- Study showed that the **El Nino-monsoon relationship** diminished in **Central India**, and became stronger in **North India** and there is **no considerable variation** over **South India**.
- **El Niño** is a **climate pattern associated** with the warming of the ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean,
 - It can significantly **influence weather patterns**, ocean conditions.
- Generally, El Nino occurs for an average of 2 to 7 years.
- It can lead to a **weakening of the monsoon circulation over the Indian subcontinent**.
- **How El Nino impacts Monsoon:**
 - It causes the **weakening of walker circulation**, which disrupts the normal flow of air and moisture.
 - Shift in **Jet Stream** that **influences the movement of weather systems** and moisture transport.
 - **Weakening of the pressure gradient** between the **Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean** and changes in wind patterns.
 - It leads to **atmospheric stability** that **inhibits the vertical movement** of air and suppresses the development of **convective clouds**.
- **Other impacts of El Nino: Impact marine fisheries worldwide.** Localized threats to food security, **drought situation**, **rise in the general price level**, etc.



ALSO IN NEWS



Remittances to India by NRIs

- As per the latest data from the **Ministry of Finance**, **remittances to India by NRIs grew by 26% in FY23**.
- India continues to be the **top recipient of remittances globally for the last several years**.
 - **Remittances** usually refer to **payments made from one person to another person**, with both **individuals located** in different countries.
- **Top sources of inward remittances** to India: US, UAE, UK, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia.
- **Significance:**
 - Major boost to the **current account**.
 - More **stable and tend to be counter-cyclical** to counter the financial crisis.



National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)

- Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MoSDE) launched Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in NAPS.
- **NAPS was launched** in 2016 (MoSDE) to **promote Apprenticeship** in the country **by providing financial incentives, technology and advocacy support**.
- **2 Components** of NAPS are:
 - **25% of prescribed stipend** (up to Rs. 1500/- pm) per apprentice is reimbursed to establishments (especially MSMEs).
 - Sharing of **basic training cost** up to **Rs. 7,500 per apprentice**.
- Note:** National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) is implemented by MoE.



National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC)

- **NCERT has established a 19-member NSTC** to shape the curriculum and educational materials for students in grades 3rd to 12th.
- **About NSTC**
 - It is tasked to ensure alignment of the school syllabus, textbooks, teaching, and learning materials with the **National Curriculum Framework (NCF)**.
 - It will be assisted by '**Curricular Area Groups**' (CAGs) **consisting of subject experts** to develop textbooks
- Earlier **NCF for School Education, 2023**, recommended **major restructuring of school education** viz.
 - board examination twice a year, semester system for class 12,
 - freedom for students to **choose interdisciplinary** subjects.

 <p>Metagenome sequencing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Metagenomic sequencing is a method of analyzing the genetic material of microbial communities directly from environmental or clinical samples.● Use<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ It can reveal microorganisms' diversity, interactions, and functions in their original habitats.➤ help detect pathogens and monitor viral outbreaks.➤ Assist in ruling out viral infections in some individuals and link their symptoms to pesticide poisoning instead.
 <p>National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● About NAFIS<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ It is a country-wide searchable database of crime- and criminal-related fingerprints.➤ It assigns a unique 10-digit National Fingerprint Number (NFN) to each person arrested for a crime.➤ Managed by the National Crime Record Bureau at the Central Fingerprint Bureau (New Delhi)➤ Used for the person's lifetime, and different recorded crimes will be linked to the same NFN.➤ Facilitates integrated palm print, fingerprint enrolment, and portrait capture, storage, and matching.
 <p>Manuscripts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ministry of Culture plans a law on protection of Indian manuscripts.● A manuscript is a handwritten composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least 75 years and has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts.● National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), by Ministry of Culture, seeks to preserve manuscripts in India.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ India possesses an estimated 10 million manuscripts in various ancient scripts like Brahmi, Kushan, Gaudi, Lepcha, and Maithili.➤ 75% of existing manuscripts are in Sanskrit, 25% are in regional languages.
 <p>Nagzira tiger reserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● About Nagzira Tiger Reserve<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Location: Bhandara and Gondia districts of Maharashtra.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is a part of Navegaon Nagzira National Park.➤ Flora: Dry deciduous, Moist deciduous and Bamboo forests. Teak, bamboo, tendu, and mahua (dominant tree species)➤ Fauna: Tigers, leopards, sloth bears, gaur (Indian bison), sambar deer, spotted deer, wild boar, and langur.➤ Water Bodies: Navegaon Lake, Nagzira Lake, and the Itiadoh Dam
 <p>Gwadar Port</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gwadar Port is situated in southwestern Balochistan province of Pakistan.➤ It is an important part of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).● Gwadar port is located on Arabian Sea, close to the entrance of the Persian Gulf. 
 <p>Personality in News</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sant Ravidas (1377 - 1540 CE)● He was a poet, philosopher, and social reformer during 15th century.● Contributions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Prominent saint of the North Indian Bhakti movement;➤ Begumpura City was envisioned by him as a city without any sorrow and full of peace and humanity.➤ He worked against the system of untouchability and also put forth his views about Hindu-Muslim unity.➤ His padas, devotional songs, and other writings are mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib.➤ Considered spiritual Guru of Meera Bai.● Ethical values: Compassion, Social justice, Egalitarianism, Humanism, etc.