NEWS TODAY

THE STATE OF THE GLOBAL CLIMATE 2022 REPORT RELEASED BY WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO)

- Annual report **give details of climate indicators** such as temperatures, ocean heat, sea level rise, extreme weather etc. It **complements the IPCC Sixth Assessment report.**
  - ➤ WMO is a **specialized agency of UN** with 193 Member States and Territories **(including India).**
- **Key Findings**
  - ➤ **Global mean temperature in 2022** was 1.15°C above the 1850–1900 average. **Years 2015 to 2022 were eight warmest** on record **despite cooling impact of a La Niña event** for past three years.
  - ➤ **Concentrations of three main greenhouse gases** – carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide **– reached record highs in 2021.**
  - ➤ Overall, **58% of ocean surface** experienced **at least one marine heatwaves** during 2022.
  - ➤ **Rate of global mean sea level rise has doubled** between 1993-2002 (2.27 mm·yr-) and 2013-2022 (4.62 mm·yr).
  - ➤ **Socio-economic and environmental impacts**
    - ■ **Heatwaves in 2022 pre-monsoon season in India** and Pakistan caused a **decline in crop yields.**
    - ■ **Recent assessment around Tibetan Plateau,** largest storehouse of snow and ice outside Arctic and Antarctic, found that **global warming is causing temperate zone to expand.**
    - ■ **In East Africa, rainfall** has been **below average in five consecutive wet seasons,** longest such sequence in 40 years.

2023 GLOBAL FOOD POLICY REPORT RELEASED BY INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IFPRI)

- Established in 1975, **IFPRI provides research-based policy solutions** to sustainably **reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition** in developing countries.
- **Key highlights of report**
  - ➤ **Food insecurity raised** during 2020-2022 **due to multiple crises** such as COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, natural disasters along with civil unrest and political instability.
  - ➤ **With climate change,** as many as **72 million more people will be undernourished** by 2050.
- **Report provides several responses** to reduce impacts of **food crises including:**

Areas	Measures
Risk Monitoring	● **Revise protocol for declaration of a famine** to ensure it is **operational in conflict-affected locations.** ● **Strengthen analysis of factors driving crises** — including global supply and price shocks.
Humanitarian Response	● **Develop anticipatory action frameworks** that pre-identify vulnerabilities and funding triggers. ● **Support interventions** that reflect **humanitarian–development– peace nexus,** such as nutrition-sensitive programming, use of local procurement etc.
Building resilient food systems	● **Tailor crisis response to type of shock,** particular context and value chain. ● **Invest in improved and innovative technologies** and tools that build resilience, such as **climate-smart agriculture and index-based insurance.**
Adaptive safety nets for crisis recovery	● **Invest in incorporating shock-responsive designs into social protection** programming such as investment in monitoring and in predictive early warning systems. ● Improve **coordination between emergency humanitarian aid** and **pre-existing social protection programs.**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT APPROVED MARKETS IN CRYPTO ACT (MiCA)

- MiCA **forms part of** European Union's (EU) broader **digital financial package,** which includes **Digital Operational Resilience Act and Pilot Regime on Distributed Ledger Technology.**
  - ➤ It aims to embrace **innovation and new financial technologies while ensuring consumer protection** and financial stability across EU.
- **Key Features of MiCA**
  - ➤ **Impose requirements** on crypto platforms, token issuers, and traders **around transparency, disclosure, authorization, and supervision of transactions.**
  - ➤ **Platforms** to inform **consumers about risks associated with their operations,** while sales of **new tokens will also come under regulation.**
  - ➤ **Stablecoins** like Tether **will be required to maintain ample reserves** to meet redemption requests in the event of mass withdrawals.
  - ➤ **European Securities and Markets Authority** to step in and ban or **restrict crypto platforms** if they do not protect investors properly.
  - ➤ **Imposed international travel rule** on crypto asset.
    - ■ Travel rule **requires financial companies** to screen, record and communicate **information on both sender and recipient,** to help **combat money laundering.**
  - ➤ **Addresses environmental concerns surrounding crypto,** with firms forced to **disclose their energy consumption** as well as the **impact of digital assets on environment.**
- Presently, **Crypto assets are not regulated in India.**

OTHER GLOBAL EFFORTS TO REGULATE CRYPTO ASSETS
IMF released **Nine-Point Crypto Assets Action Plan.**
OECD has Approved Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) for reporting of tax information on transactions in Crypto-Assets in a standardized manner.
Financial Action Task Force (FATF) issued binding standards to prevent misuse of virtual assets for money laundering and terrorist financing.

MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION LAUNCHES REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY SCHEME (RCS)- UDAN (UDE DESH KA AAM NAGRIK) 5.0

- RCS-UDAN, a **market-driven scheme,** aims **to enhance regional air connectivity** from unserved and underserved airports and **making air travel affordable.**
  - ➤ It was formulated **based on the review of National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP)-2016.**
- **Key features of UDAN 5.0**
  - ➤ Focuses on **Category-2 (20-80 seats) and Category-3 (>80 seats).**
  - ➤ Length **cap of 600 km is waived off.**
  - ➤ **No predetermined routes** would be offered.
  - ➤ **Viability gap funding (VGF) increased to 600 km from 500 km earlier.**
- Over the years, **depending upon priorities of government** as well as **market response,** there have been **several additions / modifications in UDAN scheme.**
  - ➤ **Under UDAN 2,** enhanced **focus on hilly areas, and North Eastern Region (NER) and island states.**
  - ➤ **Under UDAN 3,** seaplanes operations and **concept of tourism routes** were introduced.
  - ➤ **Under UDAN 4, enhancement of VGF support** for smaller aircraft, **inclusion of State routes and focus on shorter routes** for development of regional hubs.
  - ➤ **Lifeline UDAN** for transportation of **medical cargo during pandemic.**
  - ➤ **Krishi UDAN for value realization of agriculture products** especially in NER and tribal districts.
  - ➤ **International UDAN** routes for NER to explore International Connectivity from / to Guwahati and Imphal.

KEY FEATURES OF UDAN

- **Limited government support:** Objectives were to be achieved via monetary (VGF) and non-monetary benefits provided to the airline operators.
- **Cooperative Federalism:** State-level coordination committees to extend benefits to airline operators.
- **Capped airfares, Technology enabled processes and Transparent, competitive bidding.**

GLOBAL BUDDHIST SUMMIT 2023 CONCLUDED WITH NEW DELHI DECLARATION

- **Summit was organised by Ministry of culture,** in collaboration with Delhi-based **International Buddhist Confederation,** to **engage global Buddhist dhamma leadership** and scholars **on matters of Buddhist and universal concerns.**
- **Key highlights of New Delhi Declaration**
  - ➤ In the present world scenario, **texts, doctrines and philosophy of Buddha Dhamma** are best guide for **inter-faith dialogue, harmony and universal peace.**
  - ➤ Recognize **significance of Buddhist pilgrimage** as a living heritage.
- Summit highlighted the **rising role of Buddhism in India's soft power strategy.**
  - ➤ Soft power enables a **change of behaviour in others,** without competition or conflict, **by using persuasion and attraction.**
- **Other initiatives taken towards Buddhist diplomacy**
  - ➤ **PM makes Buddhism a regular feature of his diplomatic visits** and also emphasises shared Buddhist heritage.
  - ➤ **Presence of Dalai Lama and Tibetan government-in-exile** in Dharamshala has **bolstered India's image** in global Buddhist community.
  - ➤ **India hosted Buddhist pilgrims** from South Korea.
  - ➤ **Creation of specialized Buddhist tourist** circuits that cross international borders.
  - ➤ **Restoration of Nalanda University** etc.

Significance of promotion of Buddhist diplomacy
Pan-Asian presence of the religion and its **importance for national identities** in the region.
Deepening ties with Asian nations on basis of Buddhism could potentially **help with, 'Neighbourhood First' policy, 'Act East' policy etc.**

FSSAI SAYS IT KEEPS ACTING AGAINST FOOD BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN MISLEADING CLAIMS

- Statement comes in the wake of **allegations of high sugar content in Bournvita** made by a social media influencer.
- **Regulation of Food advertisement in India**
  - ➤ **Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006 prescribe punishment for** selling **misbranded food** and also for **misleading advertisements.**
  - ➤ **FSSAI has notified Food Safety and Standards (Advertisements & Claims) Regulations,** 2018 under which **deceptive claims or advertisements** are prohibited and are punishable offences.
  - ➤ **FSSAI has set up a dedicated advertisement monitoring committee** which periodically scrutinises advertisements and claims being made by **Food Business Operators (FBOs)** on various channels.
  - ➤ Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has drafted and implemented a **Code for Self-Regulation in Advertising (ASCI Code).**
  - ➤ **FSSAI** has been designated as **the nodal point for liaison with the Codex,** international food standards body.

fssai **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**

🏢 **HQ**
New Delhi, India

ℹ️ **About:** Established, under administration **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare,** for laying down **science based standards for articles of food** to ensure safe food for human consumption.

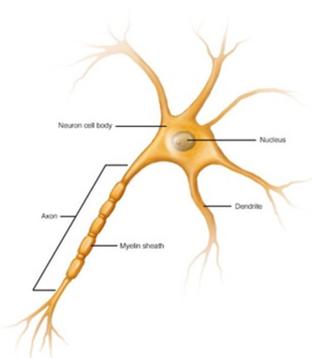**Concerned Law:** Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Mandate:
- ▸ Laying down **mechanisms and guidelines for accreditation** of certification bodies.
- ▸ **Provide scientific advice and technical support** to Central Government and State Governments.
- ▸ **Collect data regarding food consumption,** incidence and prevalence of biological risk, identification of emerging risks and introduction of rapid alert system.
- ▸ **Contribute to the development of international technical standards** for food, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.

Related News
- FSSAI to **translate its web-based application Food Safety and Compliance System (FOSCOS) in Hindi,** followed by all the regional languages.
  - ➤ FOSCOS is a **comprehensive online compliance platform** for **registration and licensing for FBOs.** It is a one-point stop for FBOs for their interface with FSSAI.
  - ➤ FoSCoS is an **enhanced version of Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS).**

ALSO IN NEWS

Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM)	• **4th India-CARICOM ministerial meeting** held. • CARICOM is a **grouping of twenty countries:** fifteen Member States and five Associate Members, **most of which are Small Island Developing States.** ➤ Member countries include **Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica** etc. • **CARICOM came into being in 1973** with the **signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas.**
India, Iran, Armenia forms trilateral grouping	• In a first, India, Iran and Armenia **agreed to hold future meetings in a trilateral format.** • Trilateral **would boost International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** as well as another corridor that will connect Russia with Europe via Armenia. ➤ Earlier reports also suggested that **Armenia has proposed the Persian Gulf–Black Sea corridor** via Iran parallel to INSTC **to connect Indian traders with Russia and Europe.** • Three sides **discussed economic projects and regional communication channels,** outlined the prospects of **deepening cultural and people-to-people contacts etc.**
Myelin Basic Protein (MBP)	• Scientists from **Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology, Guwahati,** an autonomous institute under Department of Science and Technology, fabricated MBP. • **MBP is a major protein component of myelin sheath.** ➤ Myelin sheath is a **protective membrane that wraps around the axon of nerve cells** and acts as a model protein **in studying diseases like multiple sclerosis.** • MBP is **responsible for adhesion of the cytosolic surfaces** (liquids found inside cells) of myelin. • Fabrication of MBP **will help in studying different chemical and physical properties** in the **vicinity of protein environment.**

Logistic Performance Index (LPI) 2023	• **India improved its rank to 38** (from 44 in 2018) in **World Bank's LPI 2023.**
	  ➤ **Significant investments in** both soft and hard **infrastructure as well as technology** has led to an **improvement in India's port performance.**
	  ➤ **Singapore topped** the index.
	• LPI is a **benchmarking tool** created to help **countries identify challenges and opportunities** they face in their performance **on trade logistics.**
	• LPI 2023 ranks countries on six dimensions of trade - including customs performance, infrastructure quality, and timeliness of shipments

Draft Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2023	• It will **amend the Electricity Rules, 2005,** framed under Electricity Act, 2003.
	• **Key Provisions:**
	  ➤ **Quarterly report** should be submitted **by state electricity regulatory commissions (SERCs) for DISCOMS** in their jurisdiction.
	  ➤ **SERCs can levy penalty on DISCOMS** in case their subsidy accounting, the raising of bills for subsidy and the payment are not in accordance with the Act or Rules.
	• **Amendments are in line with Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS),** which aims to reduce **Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C)** losses to pan-India levels of 12-15%.

Factories (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Bill, 2023	• **Tamil Nadu Assembly passed** the Factories (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Bill, 2023.
	  ➤ **Bill amended the Factories Act, 1948** by introducing a **new section.**
	  ➤ **Section 127 of central code** (for labour) enables the **state government by notification to provide,** among other things, **flexible working hours.**
	• It has a **provision to extend daily working shifts** of factory workers **to 12 hours,** from existing 8 hours, **in case they opt for four-day working weeks.**

Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration	• **Awards in various categories** was **conferred recently.** • Government has instituted a **scheme** (in 2006), **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration** - to acknowledge, recognize and reward extraordinary and innovative work done by District/ organizations of Central, State Governments. • **Scheme has been revamped in 2021** with the objective **to encourage** Constructive Competition, Innovation, Replication and Institutionalisation of **Best Practices.**

Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) in West Bengal	• **BHS** are areas that are **unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems** having rich biodiversity.
	• **West Bengal has notified four new BHS:**
	  ➤ **Char Balidanga and state Horticulture Research and Development Station** campus in Deypara.
	    ▪ **Char Balidanga** comprises **two islands on the Hooghly with tropical riverine vegetation** of tall grasses and swampy flat lands.
	  ➤ **Namthing Pokhar:** It is a **Himalayan natural wetland.**
	  ➤ **Amkhoi Fossil Park:** It has unique geological and paleo-botanical features and is the first wood fossil park in West Bengal.

Farming linked with global carbon credit market	• **Uttar Pradesh government** has launched an **agroforestry project to link farming with the global carbon credit market** and generate **additional rural income.**
	  ➤ Carbon markets are **trading models wherein carbon credits are sold and bought.**
	  ➤ It allows **investors and companies to simultaneously trade carbon credits** and carbon offsets.
	• **India is a significant exporter** of carbon credits.

VIM-GES-CRPA	• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **linked India-made eye drops to outbreak of rare strain- VIM-GES-CRPA-** in US.
	• VIM-GES-CRPA is a **rare strain of extensively drug-resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa.**
	  ➤ It is **associated with multiple types of infections,** including eye infections.
	  ➤ **Most patients** infected with VIM-GES-CRPA **report using artificial tears.**