

NEWS TODAY

Cabinet approves Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between India and Japan on Semiconductor Supply Chain Partnership

- It was signed in July 2023 and shall remain in force for a period of five years.
- It intends to **strengthen cooperation between India and Japan towards**
 - ⊕ **Enhancement** of the semiconductor supply chain through **Government to Government and Business to Business Cooperation**.
 - ⊕ **Recognizing the importance** of semiconductors for the advancement of industries and digital technologies.
 - ⊕ Improving **employment opportunities** in the field of IT.
- **Significance of resilient semiconductor supply chain:** for Industrial Revolution 4.0., powering renewable energy systems, enabling green transportation, facilitating electronic device manufacturing, etc.
- **Challenges for the Semiconductor supply chain for India.**
 - ⊕ **Nascent stage:** India accounts for **1% of global trade in semiconductors** and **0.5% of global semiconductor sales**.
 - ⊕ **Lack of Manufacturing Clusters:** for building a successful semiconductor production ecosystem.
 - ⊕ **Concentrated manufacturing:** About 75% of global semiconductor manufacturing capacity is concentrated in China and East Asia.
 - ◆ 100% of the world's most advanced (below 10 nanometers) semiconductors are located in Taiwan and South Korea.
- **Way Forward**
 - ⊕ **Focus on market-based incentive programs** aimed at advancing India's semiconductor research, design, and production capabilities.
 - ⊕ **Focus on filling in key gaps and vulnerabilities** like design infrastructure, Patent protection, workforce development, etc.

Initiatives by the government for semiconductors

- **Program for Development of Semiconductor and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem in India** to ensure the development of a robust and sustainable semiconductor and display ecosystem.
- **India Semiconductor Mission under Digital India Corporation** to drive India's strategies for the development of the semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem.

Accelerated Ice Melt in West Antarctica Unstoppable, Research Suggests

- The researcher used a **high-resolution computer model of the Amundsen Sea**.
- **Ocean-driven melting of floating ice shelves** in the Amundsen Sea is the main process controlling sea-level rise.
 - ⊕ **The Amundsen Sea** is located off the coast of West Antarctica.
- **About Ocean-driven melting of floating ice:** It follows the following sequence
 - ⊕ **Melting causes the retreat of the grounding line** (i.e. the line where the ice first goes afloat).
 - ⊕ It **reduces the resistance to ice flowing** across the grounding line;
 - ⊕ faster flow near the grounding line causes **more horizontal stretching** leading to thinning.
 - ⊕ It creates **steeper surface slopes which increases the stress** that drives the ice forward,
 - ⊕ the faster flow inland causes thinning to propagate even further into the interior of the ice sheet, **increasing the contribution to sea level rise**.
- **Impact of the recent revelation**
 - ⊕ **Enormous impact on sea level:** West Antarctic ice sheet, if completely lost, could contribute to sea level rise of up to 5 meters.
 - ⊕ **Impact on coastal cities:** Over a third of the **global population resides within 100 kilometers** of the coast, making them vulnerable to sea level rise.



UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) launched its first-ever Data Dashboard

- It compiles national reporting figures from 126 countries, which shows that land degradation is advancing at an astonishing rate across all regions.
- Key findings**
 - Between 2015 - 2019, at least 100 million hectares of healthy and productive land were degraded every year.
 - India's 9.45 percent reported land area is degraded.
 - Between 2016 - 2019, 50.49 percent of global reported land area and 36.8 percent of India's land area is affected by drought.
 - Eastern and Central Asia, and Latin America and Caribbean regions experience the most severe degradation.
- Land degradation is the deterioration or loss of productive capacity of the soils for present and future.
 - 109 countries have set voluntary Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets for 2030.
 - LDN is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services to enhance food security remain stable, or increase, within specified ecosystems.
- India's Initiative for Land Degradation
 - India joined voluntary Bonn Challenge pledge to bring into restoration 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2030.
 - Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India (published by ISRO), for state-wise areas of degraded land.



UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)



Genesis: Established in 1994.

About: It is the **only legally binding framework** set up to address desertification and effects of drought.

Members: **197 Parties to Convention**, including 196 country Parties and European Union.

- India is a signatory to UNCCD. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is nodal Ministry that oversees implementation of Convention in country.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released International Migration Outlook 2023

- This edition focuses on labour market integration of migrant mothers and on fertility patterns among migrant populations in OECD countries.
- Migration is movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State.
- Key findings**
 - India has emerged as top country of origin of new citizens in OECD countries in 2021 with 4 lakh new migrants (excluding students).
 - Permanent-type migration to OECD countries reached a record level (6 million) in 2022. This was driven by family migration followed by managed labour migration and free mobility.
 - Germany, Poland and U.S host highest number of refugees from Ukraine in absolute terms.
 - Immigrant mothers face disproportionate disadvantage, both compared with immigrant women without children and vis-à-vis their native-born peers.
 - While migrant women tend to have more children than their native-born peers, their total fertility rate is still below the replacement rate (2.1 children per woman) in most OECD countries.
 - Gap in employment rates between immigrant and native-born mothers is 20 percent.
 - Individual preferences and cultural factors are main barriers to maternal employment.
 - Migrant mothers are often trapped in inactivity due to childcare responsibilities.



Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



Genesis: Transformed into OECD in 1961, it was originally formed as Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) to administer American and Canadian aid under Marshall Plan.

About: It is an international organization which brings together Member countries and a range of partners that collaborate on key global issues at national, regional and local levels

Members: 38 countries including USA, Mexico, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, UK. (India is not a member).

Role: OECD countries and partners represent about 80% of world trade and investment.

Cabinet approves Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilisers for Rabi Season 2023-24

- Rs. 22,303 - crore subsidy on P&K fertilisers for Rabi Season is effective from October 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.
- Since 1st April 2010, subsidy on P&K fertilizers is **governed by NBS Scheme**, Central Sector Scheme under **Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers**.
 - ⊕ **Objective:** To improve agriculture productivity and encourage competition among fertilizer companies and to reduce the burden of subsidy.
 - ⊕ Centre provides a **fixed rate of subsidy (in Rs. Per Kg basis)** on nutrient namely Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P), Potash (K), and Sulphur (S) on annual basis.
 - ⊕ **Additional subsidy** for micronutrients namely Boron and Zinc is also provided.
 - ⊕ At present, 25 grades of P&K fertilizers and 18 grades of Nitrogen, Phosphate, Potash & Sulphur (NPKS) complex fertilizers are covered under this Scheme. **Urea does not come under NBS.**
- **Benefits of NBS**
 - ⊕ **Restore soil health** by addressing nutrient imbalances of NPK and lack of micronutrients through use of fertilisers on specific soil-moisture conditions and crop needs.
 - ⊕ Improve **growth of indigenous fertilizer industry.**
- **Rabi crops are sown in winter and harvested in spring. Some popular Rabi crops** include Wheat, Barley, Mustard, Cabbage, Cumin, Linseed, Sunflower, etc.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Approves Indigenous Charging Standards for Light Electric Vehicles (LEV)

- Approval is given to an indigenous AC and DC combined charging connector standard known as **IS17017 (Part 2/Sec 7): 2023**.
 - ⊕ It is the **world's first-ever combined AC and DC charging connector standard** for LEVs (2-wheelers, 3-wheelers, and microcars).
 - ⊕ It has been **developed through collaboration among NITI Aayog, the Department of Science and Technology, two-wheeler maker Ather**, and other government and industry stakeholders.
- **Significance of introducing a Standard Charger:**
 - ⊕ Creating an **open ecosystem with interoperability** that will foster better adoption of EVs.
 - ⊕ Ensures the **emergence of hybrid, cost-efficient infrastructure** for both fast and slow charging.
 - ⊕ **Reduces the cost of manufacturing** and brings down the cost of EVs
 - ⊕ Reduces range anxiety among customers.
- **Other Government initiatives for EV adoption**
 - ⊕ **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme:** to reduce dependency on fossil fuel.
 - ⊕ **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for the Automotive Sector:** to boost domestic manufacturing of advanced automotive technology (AAT).
 - ⊕ Capped the **maximum tariff for EV public charging.**
 - ⊕ **GST on EVs** has been reduced from 12% to 5%.
 - ⊕ **Waiver on road tax on EVs.**

Standardization in other countries:

- **Country: Standard**
- **China:** GB/T.
- **USA:** American Charging Standard (NACS) developed by Tesla.
- **Japan:** CHAdeMO.
- **Europe:** Combined Charging System (CCS)

Also in News



Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)



Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)



- Genesis:** Established in 1987 under the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984**.
- About:** National-level cooperative body under the administrative control of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Objective:** **Socio-economic development of tribal people** in the country by way of **marketing development** of tribal products.
- Scheme:** PM Van Dhan Yojana
- Function:** institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce and surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP) collected/ cultivated by tribals.



Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- ADB has approved a \$400 million policy-based loan to India for Sustainable Urban Development and Service Delivery Program which aims to improve access to basic urban services in India.



Asian Development Bank (ADB)



- Established in 1966** after a resolution was passed at first Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation held by UN Economic Commission for Asia and Far East in 1963.
- Genesis:**
- About:** It envisions a **prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and Pacific**, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty in region.
- Members:** **68 members** (49 are from within Asia and Pacific). **India is a member.**
 - ◆ ADB's highest policy-making body is **Board of Governors**.
 - ◆ ADB's **five largest shareholders** are Japan, United States, People's Republic of China, India, and Australia.
- Other Key Information**



Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR)

- New Zealand criticized India's demand for 41 Canadian diplomats to leave referring to VCDR.
- The Convention was signed in 1961 and currently has 193 parties to it.
 - ⊖ India ratified the convention in 1965.
- Aim: to ensure the 'development of friendly relations among nations'.
- It puts forth a framework for diplomatic interactions between nations.
- Key provisions:
 - ⊖ It specifies the functions of diplomatic missions.
 - ⊖ Lists Special rules on immunities and privileges accorded to diplomats and their missions.
 - ⊖ Guarantees free communication between a mission and its sending State.



Summit of the Three Basins

- It is held in Brazzaville (the Capital of Congo).
- Three basins are
 - ⊖ Congo basin: Spans across Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon.
 - ⊖ Amazon Basin - It extends over 9 countries in South America.
 - ⊖ Borneo-Mekong-Southeast Asia Basin.
- These 3 global ecosystems account for 80% of the world's tropical forests and 2/3 of the earth's biodiversity.



Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI)

- PM chaired the 43rd PRAGATI meeting recently
- It is a multi-purpose and interactive ICT platform launched in 2015
- Aim: starting a culture of Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.
- Objective: to address grievances, and simultaneously monitor and review important programs and projects of the Government.
- The system has been designed in-house by the PMO team with the help of the National Informatics Center (NIC).
- It consists of a three-tier system involving PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and State Chief Secretaries.



Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana-Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (PMKSY-AIBP)

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the inclusion of Jamrani Dam Multipurpose Project of Uttarakhand under PMKSY-AIBP.
 - ⊖ It envisages construction of a dam across river Gaula (tributary of river Ramganga).
- PMKSY, launched in 2015-16, is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
 - ⊖ Objective: To expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve on-farm water use efficiency, etc.
- PMKSY Components
 - ⊖ AIBP component (Ministry of Jal Shakti) provides central assistance to major/ medium irrigation projects.
 - ⊖ Har Khet ko Pani (Ministry of Jal Shakti).
 - ⊖ Per Drop More Crop (Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare).
 - ⊖ Integrated Watershed Management Programme (Ministry of Rural Development).



25 by 25 Target

- According to an analysis by Indian Council of Medical Research, India will likely miss reaching the 25 by 25 target.
- 25 by 25 target was set by World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations in 2013.
 - ⊖ It targets a 25% reduction in premature mortality for four Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) by 2025, compared to 2010.
 - ⊖ These four major NCDs are Cancer, Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), Chronic Respiratory Diseases (CRD), and Diabetes.
 - ⊖ Premature mortality for these four NCDs is projected to decrease by 13.9 percent from 2010 to 2025 in India.



International Competition Network (ICN)

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) became a member of the steering group of the ICN for the first time.
- CCI membership will be for two years.
- The ICN is a specialized yet informal network of 140 competition authorities agencies.
- The ICN's mission is to advocate the adoption of superior standards and procedures in competition policy around the world.
- It is guided by its apex body- the Steering Group of 18 members.

Places in News



Iceland (Capital: Reykjavik)

- Prime Minister of Iceland joined the women on strike over equal pay.
- Political Boundaries
 - ⊖ Island country in North Atlantic Ocean located between Greenland and Norway.
 - ⊖ Iceland is a member of NATO.
 - ⊖ Its coastline meets Greenland Sea (north), Norwegian Sea (east), Atlantic Ocean (south and west), and Denmark Strait (separates it from Greenland on northwest).
- Geographical features
 - ⊖ Highest point: Hvannadal's Peak.
 - ⊖ Longest River: The Þjórsá River.
 - ⊖ Climate: Affected by confluence of two ocean currents i.e. Gulf Stream from near Equator, and East Greenland Current.



AHMEDABAD



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI



SIKAR