



# Yojna IAS

योजना है तो सफलता है

## JANUARY 2024

### WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**YOJNA IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS**  
**15/01/2024 TO 21/01/2024**

#### Delhi Office

706 Ground Floor Dr. Mukherjee Nagar  
Near Batra Cinema Delhi – 110009  
**Contact No. : +91 8595390705**

#### Noida Office

Basement C-32 Noida Sector-2  
Uttar Pradesh 201301  
**website : [www.yojnaias.com](http://www.yojnaias.com)**



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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

JANUARY 2024

## GLOBAL RISK REPORT

**This article covers 'Daily Current Affairs' and the topic details of " Global Risk Report 2024 ". This topic is relevant in the "International relations" section of the UPSC CSE exam.**

UPSC MAINS GS2 Syllabus : Important international institutions

### Why in the News?

The World Economic Forum (WEF) has published the Global Risk Report 2024, which highlights some of the most serious threats that the world may encounter in the coming ten years against the backdrop of conflict, rapid technological advancement, unstable economic conditions, and global warming. A survey of over 1,500 specialists, business executives, and legislators served as the basis for the research.

### What are the findings of Global Risk Report 2024?

- **Aggravating Global Outlook:** A number of worldwide occurrences in 2023, including deadly wars, extreme weather, and social unrest, have added to a largely dire picture.
- **Technological Advancements and Security Threats:** Over the next two years, interstate armed conflict is predicted to rise to the top of the risk rankings. Technological advancements, particularly in the field of artificial intelligence, provide security dangers due to their ability to provide non-state actors with disruptive capabilities, which may in turn fuel more conflict and criminal activity.
- **Governance Challenges and Geopolitical Shifts:** Increased polarisation among world powers, particularly between the Global North and South, could provide problems for international governance. Geopolitical tensions and the growing power of Global South governments could change security dynamics and have an impact on global threats.
- **Misinformation and Disinformation Driven by AI:** The most serious threats for the next two years are misinformation and disinformation, underscoring the speed at which technological

advancements are either causing new issues to arise or exacerbating preexisting ones. It is troubling that persons with specialised talents will no longer be able to create complex synthetic content that can be used to control groups of people, thanks to the rise in Generative AI chatbots like ChatGPT.

- **Environmental Risks at the Front:** Across all time periods, environmental risks—especially extreme weather—dominate the risk landscape. It is clear that there are issues related to climate change, biodiversity loss, and important changes to Earth systems, all of which could have permanent effects.
- **Economic Strains and Inequality:** In 2024, there will be a lot of anxiety about the cost of living crisis as well as economic dangers like inflation and a slump. Low- and middle-income nations will be disproportionately impacted by economic uncertainty, which could increase societal and environmental effects and result in digital isolation.

## Recommendations given by the Report?

- The impact of those unavoidable risks that we can plan for can be lessened by localised policies that leverage investment and regulation, and both the public and private sectors can play a crucial role in extending these advantages to everyone.
- A single breakthrough project can also contribute to making the world a safer place if it is developed via initiatives to put the future first and concentrate on research and development.
- Even if the combined efforts of individual people, businesses, and nations may not seem like much, when they reach a certain size, they can have a major impact on reducing global risk.
- Cross-border cooperation at scale is still essential for risks that are vital to human security and development, notwithstanding the world's growing fragmentation.

## About Global Risk

The probability of an event or circumstance that, if it materialises, would have a detrimental influence on a sizable amount of the world's population, gross domestic product, or natural resources is known as global risk. The "World Economic Forum" releases the Global Risks Report every year in advance of its yearly summit in Davos, Switzerland.

## About Global Economic Forum

The WEF is a Geneva, Switzerland-based nonprofit organisation that was founded in 1971. It acknowledged as the global hub for public-private collaboration by Swiss authorities. **Mission:** Dedicated to helping to transform the world a better place by influencing regional, national, and industry agendas with the help of intellectual, business, and political leaders.

## Important Reports published by World Economic Forum

Some of major reports published by WEF are:

Global Gender Gap Report.

Global IT Report.

Energy Transition Index.

Global Competitiveness Report

Global Travel and Tourism Report.

### **Prelims practice question**

**Q1) What is the main purpose of the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report?**

- 1) To predict future economic trends.
- 2) To assess and raise awareness about global risks.
- 3) To provide investment advice to member countries.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) 3 only
- D) 2 and 3

Answer: **B**

**Q2) What is the primary objective of the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report in terms of policy making?**

- 1) To provide specific policy recommendations.
- 2) To identify risks but not suggest policy solutions.
- 3) To solely focus on risks within the business sector.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) 3 only
- D) 1 and 2

Answer: **B**

### **Mains practice question**

Q1) Examine the role of the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report in shaping global policy

responses. How does the report contribute to international efforts in addressing emerging challenges and risks?

Q2) Discuss the key findings and implications of the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report for the current year and its potential impact on India's economic and geopolitical landscape.

## FOOD INFLATION : A CAUSE FOR CONCERN FOR INDIA

SOURCE – THE HINDU AND PIB.

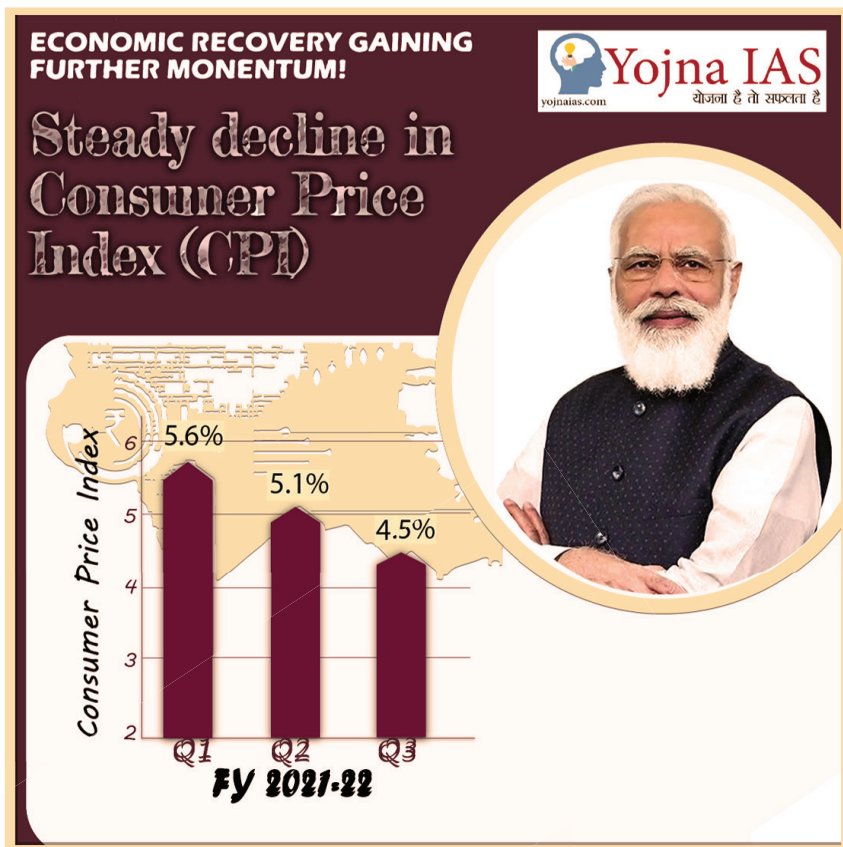
**GENERAL STUDIES – GROWTH OF INDIAN ECONOMY, INDIAN AGRICULTURE, CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE (MPC), PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (PDS), FOOD INFLATION IN INDIA, IMPACT OF RISING FOOD INFLATION ON FARMERS AND MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS OF THE COUNTRY, CONSUMER FOOD PRICE INFLATION (CFPI), MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE.**

### WHY IN THE NEWS ?

- Inflation, as measured by the ' **Consumer Price Index for India** ' in January 2024, has reached a four-month high in December 2023 and food price gains are rising at a relatively faster pace as inflation in cereals and pulses remains stable. While core retail inflation increased by 14 basis points to 5.69% from the November 2023 level. The price gain, measured by the Consumer Food Price Index, increased by 83 basis points from the previous month to 9.53% in December 2023. The surge in food prices was mainly driven by cereals – the largest component of the 'food and beverages' group – which recorded inflation of 9.93%. However the pace was slightly slower than the 10.3% in November 2023.
- The major food sub-groups including rice, wheat and coarse cereals continued to record month-on-month inflation rates, providing little comfort to the households of ordinary citizens of India.
- What is worrying is that in the case of jowar and millet, November month-on-month inflation rate witnessed the highest sequential price increase of 63 and 106 basis points respectively. These two millets are consumed most and widely in rural areas, especially by those who already face varying levels of precarity.
- Pulses, the main source of protein in India's vegetarian households, have also seen their price rise to a 43-month high of 20.7%. With sowing of pulses in the current Rabi season till January 12, 2024 being around 8% lower compared to the corresponding month/period of 2023, their price

outlook in the coming months is not reassuring.

- Year-on-year vegetable price inflation also rose by nearly 10 percentage points from November levels, reaching a five-month high of 27.6%.
- Tomato and onion, their prices have increased by more than 33% and 74% respectively from December 2022 levels. However, given seasonal volatility in vegetable prices, prices of both kitchen staples as well as broader sub-groups witnessed gradual deflation. While month-on-month deflation in overall vegetable prices was 5.3%, prices of potatoes, onions and tomatoes declined by 5.9%, 16% and 9.4% respectively from November.



- The average retail prices of most of the 23 food items monitored on a daily basis by the Department of Consumer Affairs remained higher than the levels a year ago as on January 14, 2024, underscoring the role of policymakers in controlling food prices. Reflects the challenge ahead in the area of food inflation.
- Households of ordinary citizens of India are likely to spend a larger share of their income on food as the cost of food continues to rise. There is a real and universal risk in India that the impact of already weak consumption could derail the broader growth momentum in the economy.
- The growing food crises in West Asia have created a new level of uncertainty over global trade and energy costs, posing a worrying aspect/question to policy makers. Therefore, the government needs to address the concerns of both producers and consumers alike. It is necessary to pay attention to the form.

## **CURRENT SITUATION OF FOOD PRICE INFLATION AND DEFLATION :**

### **INFLATION IN PULSES AND CEREALS :**

- **The latest Consumer Price Index for India data shows that food inflation led by prices of two commodities: cereals (11.9%) and pulses (13%) increased sharply in July and August respectively.**
- **The annual retail price growth of vegetables was even higher, at 37.4% and 26.1% respectively.**

- According to this data, the best indicator was tomatoes, whose retail inflation during this period stood at 202.1% and 180.3% respectively.

## **DEFLATION IN ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES AND THE STRATEGY OF GOVERNMENTS :**

- For political reasons, most governments naturally privilege consumers over producers. In the present scenario the government should give equal priority to both production and producers especially of the two agricultural/food commodities, apart from other problems. **The areas given priority by the governments are –**

## **NEED FOR GOVERNMENT PRIORITY IN THE FIELD OF VEGETABLE OIL PRODUCTION IN INDIA :**

- Soybean harvesting and marketing had begun in October, but the oilseed is already trading below the government's Minimum Support Price (MSP).
- As oil and meal, there has been a recent decline in demand for soybeans.
- One of the main reasons for the slowdown in Indian markets is India's import of edible oil from other countries. India's imports of vegetable oils are projected to reach a high of 17 million tonnes (mt) in 2022-23.

## **NEED FOR GOVERNMENT PRIORITY IN THE FIELD OF MILK PRODUCTION IN INDIA :**

- There has been a decline in the purchase of milk powder, butter or ghee in recent times in India. There is a decline in the purchase of milk products even after festivals (Dussehra-Diwali), usually in winter when milk production is at its peak.
- The alleged increase in adulteration of vegetable fat in the sale of adulterated ghee has also increased the problems of this industry and made it a matter of concern. The fall in prices of imported oils, especially palm oils, has further increased the adulteration of butter and ghee with cheap fats, which has begun to raise health concerns for consumers in India.

## **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO WHEAT AND RICE AS ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES :**

- In India, excess supply in the absence of effective distribution by government mechanisms or through the Public Distribution System (PDS) may lead to decline in market prices.

## **HIGHER PRODUCTION OF A PARTICULAR CROP BY FARMERS IN INDIA :**

- Generally, farmers in India often challenge the minimum support price (MSP) set by the government by increasing production of MSP-supported crops like wheat and rice. This overproduction could lead to a glut of these crops in the market, pushing their prices below the MSP.

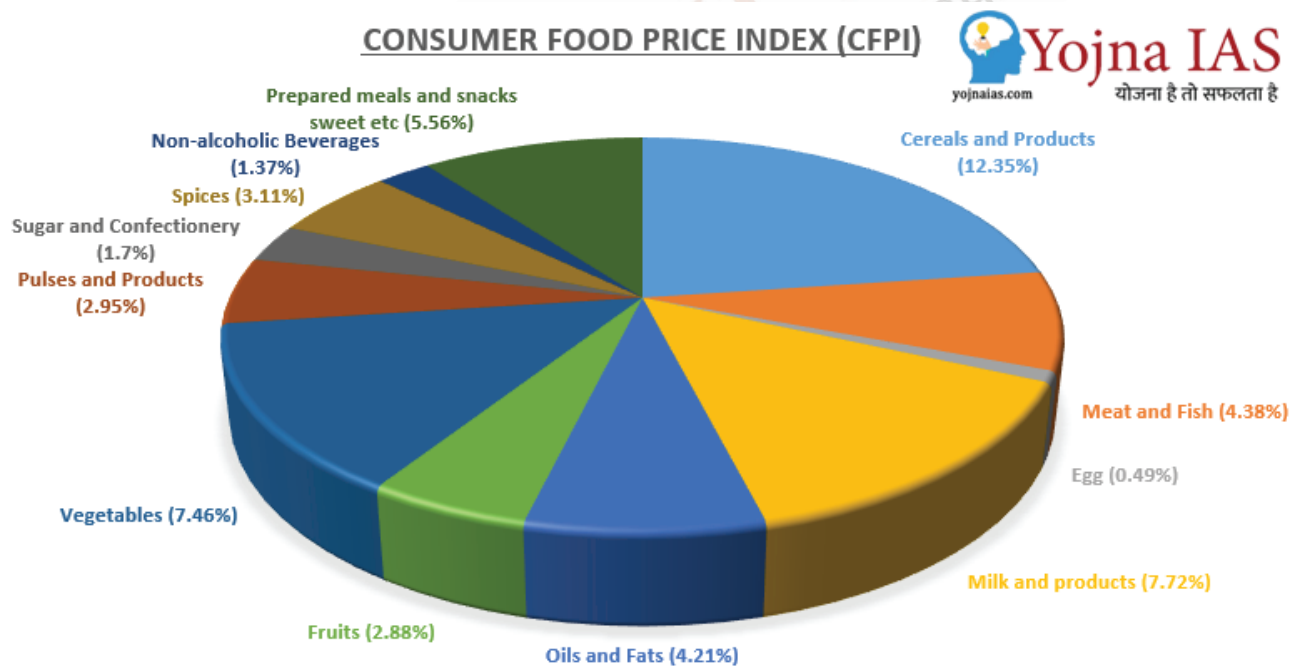


## INADEQUATE PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL :

- In India, the government sets the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and purchases crops from farmers through its own mechanisms, however the procurement infrastructure and distribution system may be inefficient, leading to delays in procurement and inadequate distribution of grains to consumers.

## CONSUMER FOOD PRICE INFLATION (CFPI) :

- A specific measure of inflation is Consumer Food Price Inflation (CFPI), which focuses specifically on price changes in consumer goods and services including food items.
- It measures the rate at which the prices of food products consumed by a typical household are increasing or showing signs of increasing over time.
- CFPI is a sub-component of the broader Consumer Price Index (CPI), where the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) uses the CPI-Composite (CPI-C) to calculate the rate.
- The CFPI monitors price changes of specific food items that are commonly consumed by households. For example – grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat and other foods.



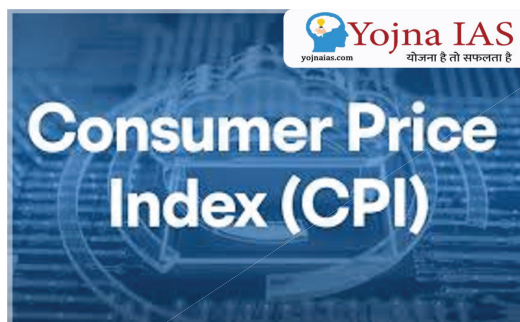
## CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) :

- Retail inflation, also known as CPI inflation, defines the rate at which the prices of goods and services purchased by consumers for personal use rise over time.
- It measures changes in the costs of purchasing commonly used household goods and services, including food, clothing, housing, transportation, and medical care.

There are four types of CPI. Which are of the following types –

1. **CPI for Agricultural Laborers (AL)**
2. **CPI for Rural Laborers (RL)**
3. **CPI for Industrial Workers (IW)**
4. **CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME).**

Data for the first three of these are compiled by the **Labor Bureau of the Ministry of Labor and Employment**, while the fourth type of CPI, **CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME – CPI)**, is compiled by the Department of Statistics. It is compiled by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** under the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation.



### **REASONS FOR FOOD PRICE INFLATION :**

### **SITUATION OF IMBALANCE IN DEMAND AND SUPPLY :**

- When there is an imbalance between the demand and supply of food items in any country or its economy, then the prices of food items start increasing.
- Factors such as natural disasters or extreme weather events, low crop yields or pest infestation of crops by insects can reduce the supply of agricultural products, thereby increasing their prices.
- Sometimes, due to increase in demand, increase in population or change in consumer's food preferences, if the supply of food items is not maintained continuously, then in such a situation the prices may also increase.

### **INCREASE IN COST OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION FOR FARMERS :**

- Sometimes food prices may also increase due to increase in agricultural production costs for farmers. It also includes expenses like increase in price of fuel, fertilizers and labor costs.

### **INCREASE IN ENERGY PRICES :**

- Rising costs of energy used in agricultural operations, or sometimes especially fuel prices such as diesel or petrol, are a significant factor in the food supply chain. Increases in diesel, gasoline or oil prices may increase transportation costs to get food products from farms to stores, resulting in higher food prices for consumers.

## **CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE :**

- Sometimes fluctuations in currency exchange rates can affect food prices, especially for countries that rely heavily on imported foods. A weak domestic currency can make imported food or food-stuffs more expensive, leading to an increase in inflation.

## **BUSINESS POLICIES :**

- Trade policies and tariffs set at the national or international levels can affect the prices of imported and domestically produced food. Restrictions on the import of any food item may also limit the variety of food products available and potentially increase prices.

## **GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN THE FORM OF PRICE CONTROLS OR REGULATIONS :**

- Government intervention in the form of subsidies, price controls or regulations given to citizens in the case of food items can affect the prices of food items. On one hand, subsidies given by governments can reduce the cost/price of production of food items, on the other hand, price controls by governments can limit price rise.

## **LONG-TERM CHANGES IN CLIMATE PATTERNS :**

- Long-term changes in climate patterns may impact agricultural products or food production. More severe and extreme weather events, such as drought or floods, can damage crops and reduce agricultural yields, which can also increase food prices.

## **NEED FOR INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY :**

- In the agricultural sector, there is a need to invest in agricultural research and technology to increase the yield potential of crops and productivity of livestock, reduce production costs and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

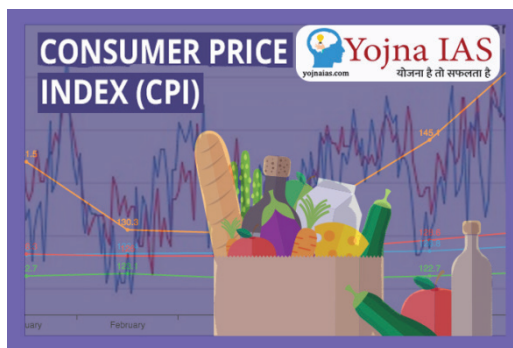
## **NEED TO STRENGTHEN FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS :**

- There is a pressing need to invest in transportation and storage infrastructure to reduce food spoilage and wastage.
- There is an urgent need to improve the distribution network to ensure that food reaches the intended consumers efficiently and prevent wastage of food items.

## **TO PROMOTE COORDINATION BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND MARKETS :**

- There is an urgent need to remove trade barriers and related tariffs on any essential food items.
- There is a need to greatly facilitate international trade to ensure continuous and stable supply of

food items or food products, as well as to promote synergy between international trade and markets to ensure uninterrupted supply of food items or food products. There is a great need to give.



### **TO REDUCE HOARDING OR BLACK MARKETING OR MONOPOLY POWER AND TO PROMOTE MUTUAL COMPETITION :**

- It is extremely important to implement anti-monopoly law in the market to prevent the tendency of big agri-business establishments to establish monopoly rule over the market, hoarding or black marketing in the market and price manipulation.
- There is an urgent need to encourage competition in food sectors such as food items or food products to keep food prices competitive.
- Global natural and political events: Global events such as geopolitical conflicts, pandemics and trade disruptions can disrupt food supply chains and cause food prices to rise. For example – the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted food production and distribution in many parts of the world. Learning lessons from this pandemic, there is an urgent need to pave the way in this direction so that food supply chains are not disrupted in the future.

### **PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :**

**Q.1. Consider the following statements with reference to food inflation.**

1. When there is an imbalance between the demand and supply of food items in any country or its economy, then the prices of food items start increasing.
2. The CFPI monitors price changes of specific food items that are commonly consumed by households.
3. There are six types of CPI.
4. Long-term changes in climate patterns do not affect agricultural products or food production, but rather lead to higher yields in the agricultural sector.

**Which of the above statement /statements is correct?**

- (A) Only 1, 3 and 4
- (B) Only 2 and 4
- (C) Only 1 and 3

(D) Only 1 and 2

Answer - (D)

### **PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM:**

**Q.1. Discuss how the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) formed under State Acts in India have not only hindered the development of Indian agriculture but have also been a major cause of food inflation in India? Present a logical explanation.**

## **GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS REPORT**

**This article covers 'Daily Current Affairs' and the topic details of "Estimates of GDP growth by Global Economic Prospects Report ". This topic is relevant in the "Indian Economy and International Institutions" section of the UPSC CSE exam.**

**UPSC MAINS GS2,3 Syllabus :** Important International Institutions, growth and development

### **Why in the News?**

The World Bank (WB) recently published its Global Economic Prospects Report, which indicates that the global economy may perform poorly by the end of 2024, representing the worst half-decade of gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the last 30 years.

### **Important highlights of the published reports**

- **Better Outlook Than Last Year:** Due to the resilience of the US economy, there is less chance of a worldwide recession this year, which has improved the state of the world economy overall. But increasing global tensions could create fresh near-term threats for the world economy.
- **Global Growth:** From 2.6% in 2023 to 2.4% in 2024, it is predicted that the world's growth would slow for the third year in a row. The growth rate of developing economies is expected to be merely 3.9%, which is more than 1% less than the average for the preceding ten years. Lower than anticipated, low-income countries are likely to increase by 5.5%.
- **Medium-Term Prospects for Developing Economies are deteriorating:** Although the state of the world economy is stronger now than it was a year ago, many emerging economies' medium-term prospects have gotten worse. Slowing growth, weak global trade, and tight financial conditions are some of the contributing factors.

- **Slowest Half-Decade of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth in 30 Years:** With a growth rate of 2.4% in 2024, the world economy is expected to develop at its weakest pace in three decades.
- **Problems with International Trade and Borrowing Costs:** It is anticipated that trade will rise globally by just half as much in 2024 as it did in the ten years before the pandemic. It is anticipated that borrowing would continue to be expensive for developing economies, particularly those with poor credit ratings.
- **Low Growth in the Near future and High Debt:** Low growth in the near future is predicted, especially in developing nations, which will result in high debt levels and restricted access to food. That would hinder in the advancement of numerous international goals.

### Some of the suggestions given by the Report are :

- In order to prevent a missed opportunity in the present decade, immediate action is required to tighten fiscal policy frameworks and expedite investment.
- The report recommends that developing nations invest 'formidable' amounts, almost USD 2.4 trillion annually, to combat climate change and accomplish other important global development goals by 2030.
- The implementation of comprehensive policy packages, encompassing enhancements to fiscal and monetary frameworks, growth of cross-border trade and financial flows, amelioration of the investment climate, and reinforcement of institutional quality, is imperative for the developing economies.

### About World Bank

- It was founded in **1944** as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (**IBRD**), alongside the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IBRD evolved into the World Bank.
- The World Bank Group is a one-of-a-kind global cooperation of five organisations dedicated to reducing poverty and fostering equitable growth in developing nations.

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

# 61%

expect the **global economy to weaken** in the coming year

### Chief economists' expectations for the year ahead



93%

pace of interest rate rises will slow



90%

geopolitics will be a source of global economic volatility



86%

the worst of the global inflationary surge will have passed



85%

lending conditions for businesses will tighten



79%

domestic politics will be a source of global economic volatility



68%

labour market conditions will loosen in advanced economies



- The World Bank is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- Its **Five** Development Institutions are :
  1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
  2. International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).
  3. International Finance Corporation (IFC).
  4. Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
  5. International Development Association (IDA)

### **Prelims practice question**

**Q1) What is the primary purpose of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), a part of the World Bank Group?**

- 1) Providing financial assistance to developing countries for infrastructure projects.
- 2) Regulating international trade.
- 3) Facilitating cultural exchanges between member nations.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) 1 and 3
- D) 1 and 2

Answer: **A**

**Q2) What is the main objective of the International Development Association (IDA), a part of the World Bank Group?**

- 1) Providing short-term emergency loans to developing countries.
- 2) Offering grants and concessional loans to the world's poorest countries.
- 3) Regulating international trade agreements.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only

C) 1 and 3

D) 2 and 3

Answer: B

### Mains practice question

- Q1) Examine the effectiveness of the World Bank in promoting the sustainable development. What are the environmental and social concerns associated with some of the World Bank's projects, and how can these be addressed?
- Q2) Discuss the role of the World Bank in addressing global poverty and economic development. What are the key challenges the World Bank faces in achieving its objectives?

## HIMALAYAN WOLF

This article covers 'Daily Current Affairs' and the topic details of "Himalayan Wolf". This topic is relevant in the "Environment" section of the UPSC CSE exam.

UPSC Mains GS3 Syllabus : Conservation

### Why in the News?

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has evaluated the Himalayan Wolf (*Canis lupus chanco*), a notable lupine predator distributed throughout the Himalayas, for the first time and has categorised it as "vulnerable"

### About Himalayan Wolf

- The **Himalayan Wolf**, or **Canis lupus chanco**, is a well-known wolf predator that lives all across the Himalayas. It is also known as Tibetan wolves and are genetically different from grey wolves
- **Habitat:**
  1. The Himalayan wolf is found mostly in **alpine meadows, grasslands, and rough terrains of the trans-Himalayan region**. This species, which lives at heights ranging from 3,000 to 5,500 metres, has evolved specifically to meet the challenges of high-altitude existence.
  2. The Himalayan wolf ranges throughout numerous countries, namely **India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Tibetan Plateau in China**. Within these locations, they pass through a variety of scenery, including snow-covered plateaus and steep mountain slopes.



3. It can be found in northern India's Union Territory of **Ladakh** as well as the **Lahaul** and **Spiti** region in northeastern Himachal Pradesh.
- **Physical attributes:**
    1. **Unique Fur Coat:** The Himalayan wolf is distinguished by its thick, woolly fur coat, which it has evolved to protect it from the bitterly cold temperatures that are common in its natural habitat. The wolves' coats, which are frequently light earth tones, aid in their ability to blend in with the rocky and snowy surroundings.
    2. **Adaptations to High-Altitude Living:** A stocky physique and shorter legs help in navigating the difficult terrain and deep snow. At high elevations, when oxygen levels are lower, effective oxygen intake is made possible by a robust respiratory system.
  - **Population Status:** 2,275–3,792 adult individuals are estimated to be in the population, with each subpopulation spanning the Tibetan Plateau, India, and Nepal's Himalayan region. There are 227–378 mature people in the Indian sector, mostly in Ladakh and the Spiti Valley.

### Conservation status of Himalayan Wolf

1. **CITES:** Appendix I
2. **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I
3. **IUCN:** Vulnerable

### Ecological Importance:

- **Role in Ecosystem Balance:** The Himalayan wolf plays a vital role in maintaining ecological balance by regulating prey populations, preventing overgrazing, and supporting biodiversity. Their presence influences the behavior of herbivores, which, in turn, affects plant communities and landscape structure.
- **Indicator of Ecosystem Health:** Monitoring the Himalayan wolf population serves as an indicator of the overall health of the high-altitude ecosystems. Their decline could signal imbalances in the delicate ecological relationships within these remote and challenging environments.

### Reason behind declining Population of Himalayan Wolf Continuously.

- **Habitat Destruction:** The area, extent, and quality of Himalayan wolf habitat are continuously decreasing, according to the IUCN Red List Assessment.
- **Illegal Hunting:** The wolf is also unlawfully hunted in order to sell its fur and various body parts, such as heads, tongues, and paws. Nevertheless, not all of the states where these wolves are found allow hunting.
- **Depredation Conflict:** Given a seasonal or ongoing high livestock abundance in wolf habitats, which frequently form summer pasture land for livestock grazing, depredation conflict is a major conservation concern. These disputes lead to a bad perception of wolf conservation and frequently result in reprisal killings.

- **Hybridization with Dogs:** The study noted that interbreeding between domestic dogs and Himalayan wolves in Ladakh and Spiti is becoming an increasingly significant issue for the wolves. Because there are more feral canines in these locations, this is getting harder. Increased competition between wolves and wolf-dog hybrids for resources, like territory and prey, can be attributed to hybridization.

## **Actions which can be taken to preserve the Himalayan Wolves**

- **Controlling the Populations of Feral Dogs:** The biological balance in wolf habitats can be maintained by controlling the number of government dogs.
- **Safeguard and Restore:** preserving and replenishing natural prey populations and ecosystems, as well as allocating areas for wildlife habitat preservation.
- **Transboundary Efforts:** Through concerted study and monitoring programmes, this transboundary connection is maintained, allowing wolves to roam freely and preserving their natural behaviours.
- **Enhance Security methods:** Wolf conservation will be improved by employing sustainable livestock herding techniques, such as lowered livestock loads, adapted herding, and the development of innovative but historically grounded holistic management strategies. Other improvements to livestock guarding techniques include predator-proof corral cages.

## **Prelims practice questions**

**Q1) 'Invasive Species Specialist Group' (that develops Global Invasive Species Database) belongs to which one of the following organizations?(UPSC Prelims 2023)**

- (a) The International Union for Conservation of Nature
- (b) The United Nations Environment Programme
- (c) The United Nations World Commission for Environment and Development
- (d) The World Wide Fund for Nature

**Answer: A**

**Q2) Consider the following statements regarding IUCN**

- 1) Primary purpose of the IUCN Red List is to Identify endangered species
- 2) IUCN Red List get updated every 3 years

**Which of the following statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 2

d) None

Answer: A

### **Mains practice question**

- Q1) Discuss the significance of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) in the global context of biodiversity conservation. Highlight some of its key initiatives and contributions to the protection of endangered species.
- Q2) Assess the current state of biodiversity in India, considering factors such as habitat loss, species endangerment, and conservation efforts. What are the major challenges faced by India in preserving its rich biodiversity, and what strategies can be adopted to address these challenges?

## **POLICE REFORMS**

**This article covers 'Daily Current Affairs' and the topic details of "Police Reforms". This topic is relevant in the "Governance" section of the UPSC CSE exam.**

**UPSC Mains GS2 Syllabus :** Role of Civil Services in a democracy

### **Why in the News?**

The Prime Minister of India recently attended the 58th All-India Conference of Director Generals and Inspector Generals of Police in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The conference covered a wide range of policing and internal security topics, including cybercrime, technology in policing, counterterrorism challenges, left-wing extremism, and prison reform.

### **About 58th Conference of Directors General of Police / Inspectors General of Police**

- The three-day conference, held in a hybrid style in Jaipur, Rajasthan, held from January 5 to 7, 2023. The Conference was attended physically by approximately 100 invitees, including DGPs of states/UTs and Heads of Central Armed Police Forces and Central Police Organisations. The remaining invitees joined electronically from across the country.
- The conference is the result of intensive discussions among police and intelligence professionals

at the district, state, and national levels on specific issues. The Intelligence Bureau organised the event at the Rajasthan International Centre in Jhalana.

## Key Highlights of PM Modi's Speech

- **New Criminal laws:** The Prime Minister emphasised the importance of a justice system that prioritises citizen dignity, rights, and justice, shifting away from punitive measures and towards data-driven initiatives. He emphasised the significance of informing women and girls about their rights under the new rules, and urged the police to safeguard their safety and freedom to work fearlessly at any time and from any location.
- **Keep abreast of the modern world:** He aimed to transform the Indian police force into a contemporary, world-class force that aligns with the country's expanding worldwide profile and contributes to the goal of a developed India by 2047.
- **Image of Police:** The speaker emphasised the importance of improving residents' perceptions of the police and suggested using social media to spread good messages. Additionally, he recommended using social media for catastrophe notifications and relief efforts.
- **Bond between citizens and the police force:** He pushed for organising sporting events to build the relationship between civilians and the police force. He additionally urged government officials to maintain their positions in border villages to build stronger ties with the local population.

## Issues Regarding Police Forces

- **Custodial Deaths:** Custodial deaths occur when a person dies while being detained by law enforcement. As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of such custody deaths decreased over three years, from 146 in 2017-18 to 100 in 2020-21, but then increased sharply to 175 in 2021-22.
- **Using Inappropriate Force:** Excessive force by police has been documented, resulting in injuries and fatalities. Lack of sufficient training and oversight contributes to the use of force in some circumstances. A policeman is a public servant and is therefore expected to treat its inhabitants lawfully.

### Directives of Supreme Court in Prakash Singh Case

Yojna IAS  
शिक्षा & विकास

- 1 ➤ **Constitute a State Security Commission**
- 2 ➤ **Fixed two-year tenure for DGP**
- 3 ➤ **Two-year term for SPs & SHOs**
- 4 ➤ **Separate Investigation and L&O functions**
- 5 ➤ **Set up Police Establishment Board**
- 6 ➤ **Set up Police Complaints Authorities at State & Dist levels**
- 7 ➤ **Set up National Security Commission at Centre level**



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- **Colonial Legacy:** Following the uprising in 1857, the British passed the Police Act of 1861 to modernise the nation's police system and put an end to any more uprisings. This implied that the police had to always submit to those in authority.
- **Operational Freedom vs. Accountability to the Political Executives:** The 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) has observed that the political executive has previously abused its power to improperly influence police personnel and force them to serve personal or political agendas.
- **Corruption:** The public's faith is weakened by police corruption, which includes bribery and other types of misbehaviour. There have been instances where senior police officers have been exposed for corrupt activities, and there have also been instances where lower-level police officers have been exposed for receiving bribes.
- **Overburdened Force:** There are 137 police officers, compared to the approved 181 officers per lakh population. When compared to the United Nations' recommended requirement of 222 police per lakh population, this is far too low. Furthermore, an already-existing issue of overworked police officers is made worse by a large percentage of open positions in the police departments.

## Various recommendations for Police Reforms

- **Supreme court's directives in Prakash singh case:**
- **Recommendations of the National Police Commission:** The National Police Commission (1977-1981) in India provided reform proposals for the police, highlighting the importance of accountability and functional autonomy.
- **Ribeiro Committee:** The Ribeiro Committee was established in 1998 at the Supreme Court's request to examine police reform initiatives and offer suggestions on how to put the Commission's findings into practice. With some changes, the Ribeiro Committee adopted the National Police Commission (1978-82) main recommendations.
- **Malimath Committee:** The establishment of a central law enforcement agency was one of the 158 proposals given by the V.S. Malimath-led Malimath Committee on Reforms in the Criminal Justice System, which was established in 2000.
- **Model Police Act:** The Model Police Act, 2006 mandates that every state form an authority composed of civil society members, retired police officers, retired High Court judges, and public officials from another state. It emphasised the police agency's functional autonomy, promoted professionalism, and emphasised the need of accountability for both behaviour and performance.
- **SMART policing:** The Prime Minister introduced the idea of SMART Policing at the 2014 DGP/IGP Conference in Guwahati. In general, smart policing refers to interventions that apply data-driven and evidence-based policing techniques, methods, and tactics to prevent and control. **SMART policing means –**
  1. Strict and sensitive,
  2. Modern and mobile,

3. Alert and accountable,
4. Reliable and responsive,
5. Techno-savvy and trained

## Conclusion:

The constraints of the political and social structure in India are manifested in the problems with the police. Therefore, it is necessary to implement police reforms and provide incentives for police agencies to implement best practices. In addition, it is imperative that an atmosphere be created as soon as possible that allows the police to serve the public as a tool.

## Mains practice question

- Q1) Analyze the role of political interference in the functioning of the police in India. Discuss the key recommendations made by the Prakash Singh Committee and their impact on the police structure and functioning.
- Q2) Assess the significance of introducing technology, such as body-worn cameras, in police reforms. How can technological advancements enhance accountability and transparency in law enforcement, and what potential concerns should be addressed in implementing such measures?

## ASER 2023

**THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF 'ASER 2023.' THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "GOVERNANCE" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.**

**UPSC MAINS GS2 SYLLABUS: ISSUES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023, themed 'Beyond Basics', was recently issued. It was based on a study conducted in 28 districts across 26 states, with a total of 34,745 youngsters aged 14 to 18.

### ABOUT ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT

- ASER is a comprehensive survey conducted annually in India by Pratham, a non-profit organi-

zation. It provides a detailed understanding of the educational landscape, focusing on learning outcomes and infrastructure at the grassroots level. ASER primarily focuses on rural areas, covering children aged 3 to 16.

- The report uses rigorous methodology, including extensive fieldwork, to gather data on various aspects of education. It emphasizes assessing foundational skills like reading and arithmetic at the grassroots level, providing insights into children's learning levels.
- ASER findings often reveal disparities in learning outcomes among different states and regions. The report serves as a tool for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to identify areas needing attention and allocate resources.
- It also includes information on school infrastructure, teacher attendance, and other factors influencing the learning environment. ASER has played a pivotal role in creating awareness about the state of education in India and promoting reforms.

## **FINDINGS OF THE ASER 2023**

### **• Status of Youth Activities**

Across all enrolment groups, more females than boys were conducting home labour on a daily basis. Overall, the gap is almost 20 percentage points. The majority of youth engage in non-household activities, whether male and female, labour on family farms. It was observed that more males (40.3%) than females (28%) had worked outside of the home for more than 15 days. Approximately 30% of youth labour for their parents.

### **• ASPIRATIONS**

According to the poll, the two most popular options among teenage boys/young men in the sample are army (13.8%) and police (13.6%).

### **• ENROLLMENT GAP**

In general, 86.8% of 14-18-year-olds have been enrolled in a school or college. Although the gender discrepancies in enrollment are minimal, there are significant differences by age. The rate of unenrolled children is 3.9% for 14-year-olds and 32.6% for 18-year-olds.

### **• STREAM SELECTION**

The majority of individuals in this age bracket choose to study Arts/Humanities. More than half of Class XI or higher students are enrolled in the Arts/Humanities stream (55.7%), whereas girls are less likely than males to be enrolled in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) stream (28.1%).

### **• EVALUATION OF BASIC SKILLS AND LITERACY LEVELS**

Approximately 25% of this age group is unable to read a standard II-level text proficiently in their regional language. Across enrollment groups, girls (76%) outperform males (70.9%) when reading a Std II level text in the participant's regional language.

### **• ENGLISH READING SKILLS**

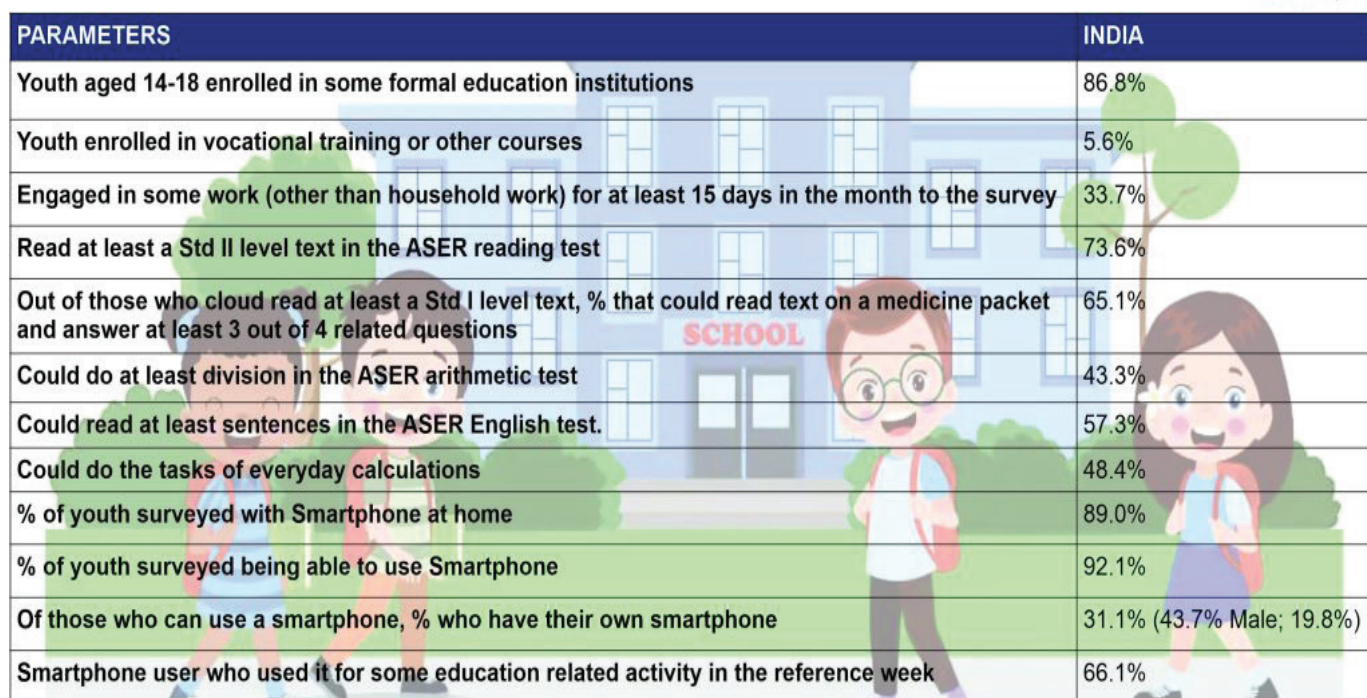
Approximately 57.3% are capable of reading English sentences. Almost three-quarters (73.5%) of people who are proficient in English can comprehend what the sentences imply.

- **DIVISION PROBLEMS**

More than half of 14-18-year-olds struggled with division (3-digit by 1-digit) problems, with just 43.3% able to solve them correctly. In 2017, 39.5% of kids could solve a basic (grade 3-4 level) division problem, but by 2023, this proportion had increased to 43.3%.

- **USE OF SMARTPHONES**

Around 89% of individuals polled owned a smartphone in their home, and 92% showed that they understood how to use one, indicating a trend that has gained traction in the epidemic years and beyond. Males, on the other hand, were more than twice as likely as females to acquire a smartphone, implying that they spent considerably longer using the device for a broader range of functions.



The table displays various parameters related to youth education and digital literacy in India, with corresponding percentages. The background features an illustration of a school building and children walking.

PARAMETERS	INDIA
Youth aged 14-18 enrolled in some formal education institutions	86.8%
Youth enrolled in vocational training or other courses	5.6%
Engaged in some work (other than household work) for at least 15 days in the month to the survey	33.7%
Read at least a Std II level text in the ASER reading test	73.6%
Out of those who could read at least a Std I level text, % that could read text on a medicine packet and answer at least 3 out of 4 related questions	65.1%
Could do at least division in the ASER arithmetic test	43.3%
Could read at least sentences in the ASER English test.	57.3%
Could do the tasks of everyday calculations	48.4%
% of youth surveyed with Smartphone at home	89.0%
% of youth surveyed being able to use Smartphone	92.1%
Of those who can use a smartphone, % who have their own smartphone	31.1% (43.7% Male; 19.8%)
Smartphone user who used it for some education related activity in the reference week	66.1%

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY ASER REPORT

- **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

Policymakers should reimagine vocational education as the NEP envisions, making it truly aspirational.

- **TAPPING DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND**

The ASER research provides valuable insights into how a country might use education to harness its demographic dividend, as it emphasises an age group that is essential for unlocking the demographic dividend.



- **DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITIES**

According to the research, there is a change from a curriculum-centered approach to one that focuses on the individual learner. ASER advises altering pedagogical practices to alleviate student stress. The usage of digital and other educational capacities by youth could provide cues to policymakers in adopting NEPs.

- **USING TECHNOLOGY**

Growing use of technology provides an opportunity to extend education, and construct classrooms which are flexible with time and schedules. However, planners will need to discover ways to encourage children and parents to use digital devices for learning.

- **INTEGRATION WITH ANGANWADI**

According to the research, there is an urgent need for integration between the Anganwadi and school systems to guarantee overall learning development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The recently published ASER study focuses on the concerns and challenges that the rural education sector faces. It argued that in order to enjoy the demographic dividend, India must implement judicious reforms to its technical and vocational education and training institutions.

## **PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS**

**Q1) Consider the following statements regarding ASER report:**

- 1) ASER primarily focuses on higher education
- 2) Pratham is responsible for conducting the ASER survey in India
- 3) Learning outcomes at the grassroots level is the primarily focus of ASER'S assessment

**How many statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) One statement
- b) Two statement
- c) Three statement
- d) None

**ANSWER: B**

**Q2) In the context of UN Sustainable Development Goals**

- 1) SDG 4 – Quality Education

- 2) SDG 5 – Zero Hunger
- 3) SDG 10 – No Poverty
- 4) SDG 8 – Reduce Inequality

which of the following pairs are correctly matched

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 3 and 4
- d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER : A

### MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q1) Analyze the role of education in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 in India. Discuss the challenges and potential strategies for ensuring inclusive and quality education for all, as outlined in the SDGs.
- Q2) Discuss the potential socio-economic implications of the ASER findings on learning outcomes. How can the information from the report be utilized to address educational disparities and enhance opportunities for all children in India?

## PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE (PLI) SCHEME

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The central government has granted Rs 4,415 crore in incentives through its flagship Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for up to eight industries. With an estimated investment of more than Rs 3 lakh crore, 746 applications have been approved thus far in **14 different sectors**. The PLI beneficiaries include over 176 MSMEs in industries like telecom and pharmaceuticals.

### ABOUT PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE

- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme was introduced in **March 2020** to stimulate Indian industry. As part of the Make in India strategy, it provides **five-year incentives** to qualified enterprises based on incremental sales growth. The initiative intends to lessen India's reliance on foreign countries such as China while increasing employment in labor-

intensive industries.

- It promotes both global and domestic enterprises to establish or develop production facilities in India. The PLI initiative encourages foreign investment in cutting-edge technology, stimulates exports, and connects India to the global supply chain. To qualify for PLI benefits, interested enterprises must first meet certain eligibility requirements.

## GOALS OF PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE (PLI) SCHEME

- **Complying with WTO obligations** and promoting equitable treatment for both domestic sales and exports are the primary goals of the PLI system.
- It seeks to **increase exports**, draw in foreign capital into core industries and cutting-edge technology, and promote economic expansion.
- The PLI programme provides a number of advantages, such as tax breaks, reduced import and export taxes, accessible property acquisition, and assistance for anchor investors spearheading new ventures.
- The programme is accessible and successful since it promotes investments in labor-intensive industries and sustainable development.

## PERFORMANCE OF PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEMES

- **INCREASE IN EXPORTS:**

1. India is anticipated to have shipped mobile handsets worth Rs 90,000 crore in FY23, having doubled the value of such exports in FY22 to Rs 45,000 crore over FY21.
2. In the pharmaceutical sector, 35 active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), which we previously had to import from nations like China, are now produced in India. India's imports have decreased as a result.
3. Exports under these schemes have exceeded Rs 3.2 lakh crore, with telecom, electronics, pharmaceutical, and food processing industries making major contributions.

- **Decrease in Imports**

1. The PLI Scheme has resulted in a significant reduction in raw material imports for the pharmaceutical industry. India manufactures unique intermediate materials and bulk pharmaceuticals, such as Penicillin-G. The production of 39 medical devices has begun, including a CT-Scan, Rotational Cobalt Machine, Linear Accelerator (LINAC), C-Arm, MRI etc.
2. Import substitution of 60% has been accomplished in the telecom industry, with PLI beneficiary enterprises selling telecom and networking products in FY 2023-24. With a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 90.74%, the Drone sector has seen significant investment.

- **SLOW IMPLEMENTATION**

1. So far, the PLI plans have not been implemented very quickly. The government's incentive awards for the mobile handset, white goods (ACs and LEDs), and food processing industries together

were just Rs 10 crore in 2021–2022, which indicates a slight rise in production.

2. According to DPIIT, this amount increased to Rs 2,874 crore in 2022–2023.
3. Roughly 1.46 per cent of the Rs 1.97 lakh crore incentive spending was paid out in the first two years of the seven-year initiative. Either they haven't adopted the plan yet or they haven't started any significant operations under it.

### **LESS NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED:**

There have also been fewer employment generated as a result of the delayed start. Out of the 6 million additional employment expected over the course of seven years, only about 300,000 jobs (or 5% of the total) have been produced through the various PLIs between 2020 and early 2023.

### **BENEFITS OF PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE (PLI) SCHEME**

- **Stimulating Manufacturing Competitiveness:** Production Linked Scheme incentivize manufacturers to enhance their production capabilities, adopt advanced technologies, and improve overall efficiency. This increased competitiveness contributes to the growth of the manufacturing sector.
- **Enhancing Productivity:** Companies participating in PLI schemes are encouraged to adopt best practices and improve their production processes. This leads to increased productivity, which is essential for sustained economic growth.
- **Attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** By offering financial incentives to companies engaged in specific industries, PLI schemes make the domestic market more attractive to foreign investors. This influx of FDI not only boosts the particular sector but also strengthens the overall economy.
- **Technology Adoption and Innovation:** To qualify for incentives, companies often need to invest in and adopt cutting-edge technologies. This promotes innovation, research, and development, driving technological advancement within the targeted sectors.
- **Job Creation:** Increased production and growth in targeted industries lead to the creation of more job opportunities. PLI schemes, by fostering a conducive environment for manufacturing, contribute significantly to reducing unemployment and underemployment.
- **Export Promotion:** PLI schemes frequently have provisions that incentivize companies to focus on export-oriented production. This not only helps in balancing trade deficits but also positions the country as a competitive player in the global market.
- **Global Competitiveness:** The financial incentives provided by PLI schemes enhance the competitiveness of domestic industries globally. This not only attracts international investment but also allows domestic companies to compete more effectively in the international market.

### **ISSUES FACED BY PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME**

- **Administrative Challenges:** The implementation of PLI schemes often involves complex administrative processes. Managing the disbursement of incentives, verifying production targets, and ensuring compliance can be challenging, especially in sectors with numerous small and me-

dium enterprises.

- **Delayed Implementation:** Delays in announcing and implementing PLI schemes can hinder their impact. The time taken for the government to finalize the policy details, set benchmarks, and establish the necessary infrastructure can result in a slow start for the intended beneficiaries.
- **Sectoral Bias:** The focus of PLI schemes on specific sectors may create imbalances, favoring some industries over others. This could lead to neglect of potentially important sectors and hinder a more holistic approach to economic development.
- **Quality vs. Quantity Dilemma:** Some critics argue that Production linked incentive schemes, which often incentivize higher production volumes, may inadvertently compromise product quality. Manufacturers may prioritize quantity to meet targets and receive incentives, potentially overlooking product standards.
- **Global Trade Challenges:** In sectors aiming for export promotion through PLI schemes, global trade challenges such as trade barriers, geopolitical tensions, and fluctuations in demand can impact the effectiveness of the incentives in fostering international competitiveness.
- **Financial Constraints:** Governments may face financial constraints in funding PLI schemes, especially when dealing with large-scale industries. Ensuring a consistent and substantial budget for incentives is crucial for sustaining the impact of the scheme over time.
- **Bureaucratic Red Tape:** The bureaucratic processes involved in availing incentives can be cumbersome, discouraging businesses from participating. Streamlining administrative procedures is crucial to ensuring that the benefits of PLI schemes reach the intended recipients efficiently.

## CONCLUSION:

One important programme to increase domestic manufacturing, lessen reliance on imports, and promote economic growth is the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. Furthermore, the PLI scheme has enhanced India's export competitiveness and helped the country integrate into the global supply chain. Nevertheless, the programme has encountered difficulties, such as financing limitations, strict eligibility requirements, and implementation delays. It is imperative that these problems are continuously addressed in order to optimize the advantages of the PLI system.

## PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

**Q1) Consider the following statements regarding Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**

- 1) The maximum investment limit for a Small enterprise in the manufacturing sector is 10 crores.
- 2) The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is responsible for overseeing and implementing policies related to MSMEs in India.
- 3) Primary objective of the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises is to provide collateral-free credit to MSMEs

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- a) One
- b) Two
- c) Three
- d) None

**ANSWER: B**

### **MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS**

- Q1) Explore the concept of Industry 4.0 in the context of Indian manufacturing. How can the adoption of advanced technologies enhance efficiency and competitiveness?**
- Q2) Discuss the role of government support in fostering innovation and R&D in the manufacturing sector. What policy measures can further encourage technological advancements?**



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Yojna IAS  
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