

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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## CONCERNS OF RISING OF '1 PERSON, 1 FAMILY' CULTURE: SC

### Context

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India has expressed deep concern over the erosion of traditional family values, highlighting the emergence of a **'1 person, 1 family' culture, a stark contrast to India's cultural philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—'the world is one family'.**

### What is Family?

- A family is a social group characterized by **common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction**. It serves as the primary unit of socialization, deeply influencing an individual's behavior, identity, and values.
- In Indian society, the family has traditionally held a central place—not just as a unit of kinship, but also as a **moral, emotional, and economic anchor**. It has shaped interpersonal dynamics, offering emotional security, **generational wisdom, and social discipline**.

### Emergence of the '1 Person, 1 Family' Culture

- India, traditionally known for its strong joint family system, is witnessing a dramatic transformation in family structures.
- In '1 Person, 1 Family' culture, **individuals prefer living alone or in nuclear setups**, reflecting changing social dynamics, economic aspirations, and shifting personal priorities.
- It is particularly noticeable in urban areas, where young professionals, entrepreneurs, and even elderly individuals are choosing solitude or micro-family structures over large, interdependent households.

### Key Reasons For the Shift

- Rapid Urbanization and Economic Independence:** India's metropolitan cities evolving into global economic hubs; professionals migrated into urban hubs often preferring to live independently.
  - Data** suggests that metros like Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Delhi are witnessing the **highest surge in single-person living**.
- Changing Aspirations and Individualism:** In modern times, youth prioritize personal growth, career ambitions, and self-development; the rise of individualism has shifted priorities from family duty to personal fulfillment.
  - Traditional hierarchical family structures are being challenged.

- Delayed Marriages and Changing Relationship Norms:** Many urban Indians are delaying marriages, and trends like live-in relationships, single parenting, and choosing to remain unmarried are becoming more acceptable in society.
  - Total fertility rate (TFR) has fallen to 2.0 (below the replacement level)**, reflecting changing family structures.
- Economic Pressures:** Rising cost of living and the demanding pace of modern life often make joint family living impractical.
- Influence of Western Lifestyles:** Social media, education, and employment abroad has influenced lifestyle choices in India.
- Decline in Moral and Ethical Values:** Increasing individualism and materialism has led to reduced emphasis on virtues like empathy, respect, honesty, and sacrifice—essential for harmonious family life.

### Challenges of the '1 Person, 1 Family' Trend

- Mental Health Concerns:** Loneliness and isolation can impact individuals, particularly older adults and professionals working remotely.
- Financial Pressure:** Managing rent, utilities, and daily expenses alone can be expensive.
- Declining Family Bonds:** The shift may lead to weaker intergenerational relationships and a fading sense of collective responsibility.

### Conclusion

- The Supreme Court's concerns about the '1 person, 1 family' culture serve as a wake-up call for society to reflect on the values that underpin familial relationships.
- While legal frameworks can address specific disputes, fostering a culture of empathy, respect, and unity within families is essential for preserving the social fabric of the nation.

Source: ET

## DARK SIDE OF DIGITAL GAMBLING IN INDIA

### In Context (A Case Study)

- Online gambling is claiming young lives across India, with devastating stories like that of 21-year-old Sai Kiran, who died by suicide after being overwhelmed by debts incurred through online gambling.

### Rise in Online Gambling: Alarming Trends

- India's online skill-gaming market is **estimated at \$3 billion**, but the illegal offshore betting market

ranges **between \$20–30 billion annually**. Some estimates even peg it at \$100 billion.

- **UNICEF reports** that children in India spend over \$1,000 daily on online gambling.
  - ♦ A study in South India found that 19.5% of college students gamble, with 7.4% showing signs of addiction.
- During popular sporting events like the IPL, illegal betting surges dramatically, with multiple suicide cases linked to rising debts and gambling losses.

### Major Reasons for the Rise in Online Gambling

- **Smartphone Penetration & Digital Payments:** Over 600 million Indians use smartphones, and with seamless UPI transactions, access to gambling platforms has become incredibly easy.
- **Aggressive Digital Marketing:** Betting apps spend up to 50% of their revenue on influencer promotions and digital ads. Celebrities and influencers endorse these apps, often disguised as fantasy sports or game reviews, luring unsuspecting users.
- **Instant Loans with No Checks:** Platforms and associated loan apps offer no-documentation, instant credit, encouraging users to borrow and bet without understanding the consequences.
- **Psychological Triggers:** Online gambling taps into reward-seeking behavior. It offers quick gratification, near-miss illusions, and an adrenaline rush, making it highly addictive, especially for youth raised in a fast-reward digital culture.
- **Weak Enforcement & Offshore Operations:** Most illegal betting platforms operate from offshore jurisdictions like Curaçao, Cyprus, China, and Dubai. They exploit tax loopholes, avoid KYC norms, and are almost impossible to track.

### Implications of Online Gambling

- **Mental Health Crisis:** Gambling addiction leads to anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, and substance abuse. Many victims suffer in silence, and some, like Sai Kiran in Telangana, tragically end their lives due to mounting debts.
- **Financial Destruction:** Users often borrow from family or loan sharks, sell valuables, or default on digital loans. Families lose life savings, and intergenerational debt becomes a real threat.
- **Cybercrime & Money Laundering:** Illegal platforms use UPI, crypto wallets, and mule accounts to process over 2,500 crore in illicit transactions monthly, according to RBI data.
- **Youth Vulnerability:** The illusion of “quick money” appeals strongly to young adults under pressure to earn, maintain social status, or purchase gadgets — making them ideal targets.

### Current Regulations

- The **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021** were amended in 2023 to regulate online gaming.
- **28% GST** is now levied on gaming firms, but offshore platforms bypass this tax.
- The **Telangana Gaming (Amendment) Act, 2017** banned online gambling in the state.
- The **GST Council in 2023** mandated that offshore betting companies should be registered with Indian tax authorities — most have ignored it.

### Why is Regulation Difficult?

- Offshore operations make jurisdictional control hard.
- Lack of clear legal distinction between “games of skill” (legal) and “games of chance” (illegal) creates a regulatory grey zone.
- Digital advertising is fragmented and decentralized, allowing disguised promotions to flourish.
- Influencer marketing loopholes mean even banned content is repackaged as “sports blogs” or “gaming reviews.”

### Way Ahead

- **Clear and Unified Legislation:** There is a pressing need for a centralised legal framework that clearly distinguishes legal skill gaming from illegal gambling, with stringent penalties for violations.
- **Strengthening Enforcement:** Empower agencies like I4C (Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre) to monitor, investigate, and take swift action against rogue apps and influencers.
- **International Collaboration:** Coordinate with global agencies and governments to block illegal offshore operators and crack down on cross-border financial crimes.
- **Tighter Digital Ad and Influencer Oversight:** Mandate strict KYC for digital advertisers, enforce real-time takedowns, and penalise celebrities and influencers endorsing illegal betting platforms.

Source: TH

## UNION CABINET APPROVED ELECTRONICS COMPONENT MANUFACTURING SCHEME

### Context

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM approved the **Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme** with a funding of Rs.22,919 crore to



make India Atmanirbhar in the electronics supply chain.

### About

#### Objectives:

- Develop a robust component ecosystem by attracting both global and domestic investments.
- Increase Domestic Value Addition (DVA) through capacity and capability development.
- Integrate Indian companies into Global Value Chains (GVCs).

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Attract an investment of Rs.59,350 crore.
- Result in production of Rs.4,56,500 crore.
- Generate 91,600 direct jobs and numerous indirect jobs.

- Duration:** Tenure of six years with a one-year gestation period.

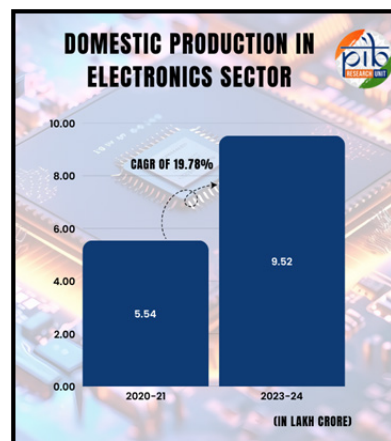


### Electronics Sector

- The electronics sector encompasses **the design, manufacturing, and marketing of electronic components and systems**.
- Electronics** is one of the highest-traded and fastest-growing industries globally and is expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the global economy.
  - Since electronics permeates all sectors of economy it has economic and strategic importance.

### India's Electronic Sector

- Domestic Production:** It has increased from Rs.1.90 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to Rs.9.52 lakh crore in FY 2023-24 at a CAGR of more than 17%.



- Exports:** The exports of electronic goods have also increased from Rs.0.38 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to Rs.2.41 lakh crore in FY 2023-24 at a CAGR of more than 20%.

- India is the **second largest mobile phone producer** in the world.

- India's semiconductor ecosystem** has gained significant momentum, with five landmark projects receiving approval with a total combined investment nearing Rs 1.52 lakh crores.

- Future Projections:** It indicates that India's electronics production will reach **USD 300 billion by 2026**.

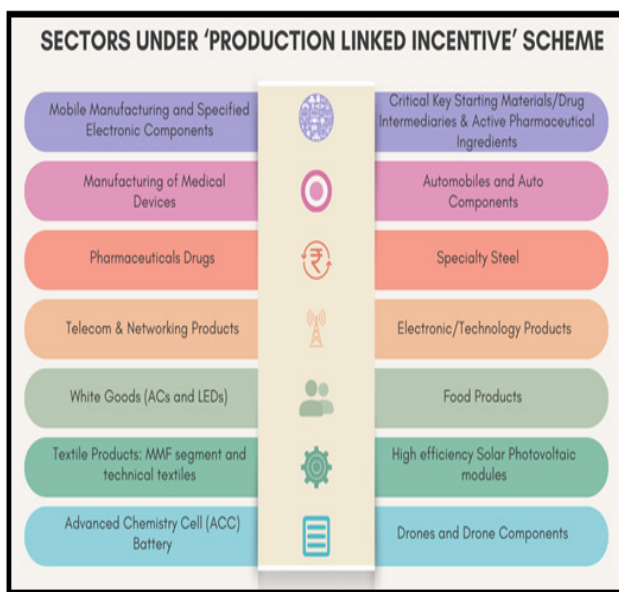
### Challenges

- Dependence on Imports:** High reliance on imported components, especially semiconductors, increases costs and supply chain vulnerabilities.
- Infrastructure Gaps:** Inadequate infrastructure for large-scale manufacturing and logistics hampers efficiency.
- Skilled Labor Shortage:** Limited availability of skilled workers for advanced manufacturing processes and R&D.
- High Capital Investment:** Significant investment required for setting up world-class manufacturing facilities, making entry challenging for new players.
- Technology Gaps:** Lack of cutting-edge technology and innovation in certain segments of the electronic value chain.
- Competition from Global Players:** Intense competition from established global electronics manufacturers and countries with lower production costs.

### Government schemes for the Electronics boom in India:

- Make in India: launched in 2014**, aimed at boosting India's manufacturing sector and economic growth.

- ♦ Transform India into a global hub for design and manufacturing.
- **Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP):** Launched in 2017, aimed to promote domestic value addition in mobile phones and their parts.
  - ♦ Increased investment and set up significant manufacturing capacities in India.
- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:** Introduced in 2020, aimed to boost domestic manufacturing in mobile phones, electronic components, and semiconductor packaging.
  - ♦ **Incentives:** 3% to 6% on incremental sales (over base year) for eligible companies.
  - ♦ **Duration:** 5 years.



- **Semicon India Program:** Launched in 2021 with a financial outlay of ₹76,000 crore, it is structured to promote the domestic semiconductor industry through incentives and strategic partnerships.
  - ♦ At Global Investors Summit 2025, it was announced that India's first indigenous semiconductor chip will be ready for production by 2025.
- **The Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS):** The scheme will provide financial incentive of 25% on capital expenditure for the identified list of electronic goods that comprise downstream value chain of electronic products.
- **Increased Budget:** Allocation for electronics manufacturing rose from ₹5,747 crore (2024-25) to ₹8,885 crore (2025-26), highlighting the government's commitment to industrial growth.

### Conclusion

- India's rapid transformation into a global electronics manufacturing hub is a testament to the success of the Make in India initiative.

- With numerous schemes to support the manufacturing processes in India, the country has significantly boosted local manufacturing, exports, and investment.
- India aims for USD 300 billion in electronics production by 2026 that will position it as a major hub in the electronics and semiconductor industries.

Source: PIB

## NEW STUDY DIFFERS FROM NCRB ON THE ISSUE OF CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA

### Context

- A study on child labour by Enfold and CivicDataLab, based on **judicial data from the e-Courts platform** differs from NCRB and revealed **more child labour cases in six states**.

### Key Findings

- **Discrepancy in Data:** Judicial data reveals **8 times more child labour** cases than reported by NCRB.
  - ♦ **NCRB reports 1,329 cases (2015-2022)** under the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.
  - ♦ **e-Courts data shows 9,193 trials** in the same period, a significant increase.
  - ♦ **10,800 child labour cases were analyzed across six states:** Maharashtra, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.
- **Issues with NCRB Data:** NCRB follows the **"Principal Offence Rule"**, counting only the most serious crime in cases with multiple offences.
  - ♦ Minor crimes, like child labour, may not be reflected if they are part of a larger criminal case.
- **Importance of Data:** Data is key for understanding crime trends and addressing issues like child labour.
  - ♦ Helps researchers and academics create better solutions and policies.

### Issue of Child Labour in India

- Child Labour continues to be a significant issue in India, despite government efforts.
- **Root causes:** Poverty and illiteracy, requiring societal involvement for effective solutions.
- **Statistics on Child Labour**
  - ♦ **Census 2001:** 1.26 crore working children (age 5-14) out of 25.2 crore total child population.

- ♦ **Census 2011:** India had approximately 10.1 million child labourers aged 5-14 years, representing 3.9% of the total child population in this age group.
- **Gurupadswamy Committee:** It was formed in **1979**, to study child labour and propose measures.
  - ♦ Found that poverty was a key barrier to eliminating child labour.
  - ♦ Recommended banning child labour in hazardous sectors and regulating other areas.
  - ♦ Advocated for a multiple policy approach.

### Impact of Child Labour on Society

- **Hindered Economic Growth:** Child labour leads to a loss of productivity in the long term as children miss out on education and skill development.
- **Perpetuation of Poverty:** Children working instead of studying contribute to the continuation of the poverty cycle, as they are less likely to secure well-paying jobs as adults.
- **Lack of Skilled Workforce:** Children involved in labour miss out on education, leading to a lack of skilled workers in the future economy.
- **Social Inequality:** Child labour exacerbates social inequality, as marginalized and economically disadvantaged children are more likely to be exploited.
- **Weakens Social Progress:** Widespread child labour limits the progress of society, as it hinders efforts to improve education, health, and overall quality of life.

### Challenges in Preventing Child Labour in India:

- **Poverty:** Families often rely on children's income for survival, making it difficult to eliminate child labour.
- **Lack of Access to Education:** Poor infrastructure and limited schools, especially in rural areas, prevent children from receiving education.
- **Cultural Acceptance:** In some regions, child labour is normalized and seen as part of family tradition or livelihood.
- **Limited Awareness:** Lack of awareness among families, employers, and communities about the harmful effects of child labour.
- **Economic Exploitation:** Demand for cheap labour in industries like textiles, agriculture, and construction continues to exploit children.
- **Migration:** Migrant families in urban areas often push children into work due to instability and lack of access to education.

### Constitutional Provisions:

- **Fundamental Rights:**
  - ♦ **Article 21A:** The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years.
  - ♦ **Article 24:** Prohibits child labour below 14 years in hazardous employment.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy:**
  - ♦ **Article 39(e):** Protects children from exploitation and abuse.
  - ♦ **Article 39(f):** Ensures children's development in conditions of dignity and freedom.

### Legislative Actions

- **Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986:** Prohibited child labour in hazardous occupations and regulated work in other sectors.
  - ♦ **Amendment (2016):** Prohibited child employment below 14 years in all occupations.
    - Extended prohibition to adolescents (14-18 years) in hazardous jobs.
- **National Policy on Child Labour (1987):** Focused on a gradual and sequential approach.
  - ♦ Prioritized the rehabilitation of children and adolescents.
- **National Child Labour Project (NCLP):** Provides education, vocational training, and rehabilitation for children rescued from labour in high-concentration areas.
- **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009:** Ensures free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14, aiming to keep them out of the workforce.
- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme:** Encourages school attendance by providing free meals, reducing the incentive for children to work.
- **Labour Inspections and Raids:** State governments conduct regular inspections and raids to identify and prevent child labour in industries.
- **Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS):** Provides support and rehabilitation for children at risk of exploitation and abuse, including child labour.

Source: IE

## NATIONAL GENE BANK

### In News

- The central government has announced the establishment of a **second National Gene Bank (NGB)** as a part of the Union Budget 2025-26 under the theme **"Investing in Innovations"**.

**What is Gene Bank?**

- A Gene Bank is a bio-repository that **preserves genetic material of plants, animals, and microbes, particularly seeds, tissues, and DNA.**
- In the case of crops, this involves the **storage of germplasm (viable plant material such as seeds)** under controlled conditions to ensure their long-term viability.

| Type of Bank           | What it Stores                                                                      | Example                        |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Seed Bank</b>       | Seeds under controlled conditions                                                   | ICAR-NBPGR, New Delhi          |
| <b>Field Gene Bank</b> | Live plants maintained in the field                                                 | For perennial crops like mango |
| <b>Cryobank</b>        | Genetic material stored at ultra-low temperatures (e.g., -196°C in liquid nitrogen) | DNA, pollen, embryos           |
| <b>DNA Bank</b>        | Purified DNA samples                                                                | Used for genetic research      |
| <b>In Vitro Bank</b>   | Plant tissues stored in nutrient mediums                                            | Tissue culture                 |

**Need**

- The goal of the new NGB is to **conserve 10 lakh crop germplasm.**
- These genetic resources are used for **crop improvement and genetic resource management.**
- The new Gene Bank will have **state-of-the-art infrastructure and aims to expand India's conservation capacity.**
- It is important for preserving genetic diversity and promoting sustainable agricultural practices to ensure future food security.

**Do you Know?**

- The **first National Gene Bank** is located at the **ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) in New Delhi.**
- The first NGB is the second-largest gene bank in the world, holding 4,71,561 accessions from 2,157 species.

**Source: DD News****NEWS IN SHORT****RANA SANGA****Context**

- A recent statement by an MP labeling Rajput ruler Rana Sanga as a "traitor" has sparked controversy over historical interpretations of his role, particularly the claim that he invited Babur to invade India and defeat Ibrahim Lodi.

**First Battle of Panipat**

- Fought between Ibrahim Lodi, the last Sultan of the **Lodi dynasty, and Zahir-ud-din Babur**, a Timurid warlord from Central Asia.
- Despite being outnumbered (Babur had 12,000 troops vs Ibrahim's estimated 1 lakh), Babur's use of superior tactics and artillery led to his decisive victory.
- The battle marked the end of the **Delhi Sultanate's Lodi rule (founded by Bahlul Lodi in 1451) and the beginning of Mughal rule in India.**

**Rana Sanga (1482–1528)**

- Also known as **Maharana Sangram Singh**, he was the **Rajput king of Mewar** (ruled from 1508 to 1528) and is known for uniting various Rajput clans to resist the expanding influence of the **Delhi Sultanate.**
- His kingdom extended across present-day Rajasthan, Gujarat, and parts of Madhya Pradesh, with **Chittor as his capital.**
- He was a patron of the **arts and literature**, supported many artists and poets, including the famous poet **Malik Muhammad Jayasi**, who wrote the epic poem **Padmavat.**
- Military career:** His most notable battle was against Babur at **Khanwa in 1527**, where he aimed to expel the Mughals from India.
  - Despite suffering a defeat due to **Babur's superior artillery**, Rana Sanga remains a revered figure in Indian history for his courage and vision of a united Rajputana.

**Source: TH****WHY IS MYANMAR FREQUENTLY ROCKED BY EARTHQUAKES?****Context**

- A powerful earthquake of magnitude 7.7 and at least six aftershocks struck central Myanmar.



**About**

- It was the **strongest earthquake globally in the last 2 years**.
  - ♦ It was a **shallow earthquake**, with a depth of only 10 km.
  - ♦ The **epicenter was located 17.2 km from Mandalay**, a metropolis with a population of around 1.5 million people.
- **Affected Areas:** Thailand (Bangkok),
  - ♦ Northeast India - tremors felt, no reported casualties or significant damage.
- **Tectonic Plates Involved:** Indian Plate (west) and Eurasian Plate (east).
- **Cause of Earthquake:** Tectonic plates slipping past one another, releasing stored-up energy as seismic waves.
  - ♦ The Myanmar earthquake took place due to the **"strike slip faulting"** between the Indian and Eurasian plates, meaning these two plates rubbed sideways against each other.
- **Myanmar** experiences frequent earthquakes, especially along the **Sagaing Fault**.
  - ♦ It runs north to south through the centre of Myanmar, and is prone to earthquakes.
  - ♦ Since 1900, at least six quakes of magnitude greater than 7 have occurred near the Sagaing Fault.
- **Previous Significant Earthquakes in Myanmar:**
  - ♦ **1839:** Magnitude 8.3, estimated 300-400 deaths.
  - ♦ **1990:** Magnitude 7, 32 buildings collapsed.
  - ♦ **1912:** Magnitude 7.9, near the recent epicenter.
  - ♦ **2016:** Magnitude 6.9.

Source: IE

## LOK SABHA PASSES CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY SEA BILL

**In News**

- The Lok Sabha has passed the **Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024**, replacing the nearly century-old **Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925**.

**About**

- The Bill is part of India's larger ambition to strengthen its **maritime economy**, a critical pillar under initiatives like **PM Gati Shakti and Sagarmala**.
- It aligns India's maritime law with global standards like the **Hague-Visby Rules**, ensuring clarity on the responsibilities, rights, liabilities, and immunities of carriers.

- It simplifies complex legal jargon and provides certainty for international and domestic stakeholders.

Source: TH

## FIRST PERSON VIEW (FPV) DRONES

**In News**

- The Indian Army has achieved a milestone by developing and successfully testing an **indigenous First Person View (FPV) drone** equipped with an **anti-tank kamikaze payload**.

**About First Person View (FPV) Drones**

- **Definition:** FPV drones are remotely piloted aircraft that transmit real-time video feed from an onboard camera to the operator's goggles or screen, providing a first-person view of the drone's perspective.
- **Purpose:** Offers precise navigation and control, especially for tactical or combat missions, racing, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

**Significance**

- These drones offer a cost-effective means to neutralize high-value enemy assets, such as tanks, thereby enhancing the Army's combat effectiveness.
- The prominence of FPV drones in recent conflicts, notably in Ukraine, has demonstrated their capability to alter battlefield dynamics by effectively neutralizing substantial and costly military assets.

Source: TH

## INDIA'S COFFEE PRODUCTION

**In News**

- India's coffee production for the crop year ending in March 2025 is expected to be 3.52 lakh metric tonnes, with a higher yield anticipated due to adequate blossom showers aiding berry setting.

**Coffee production**

- India's coffee journey began in the 1600s when the holy saint **Baba Budan** brought seven Mocha seeds to Karnataka's Baba Budan Giri, unknowingly sparking the rise of India as a major coffee producer.
- Over the centuries, coffee cultivation evolved into a thriving industry, and today, **India is the seventh-largest coffee producer in the world**.



- ♦ In FY 2023-24, coffee exports reached \$1.29 billion, nearly double the \$719.42 million in 2020-21.
- **Coffee in India is primarily grown** in the biodiverse Western and Eastern Ghats, with Karnataka being the largest producer, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- **Coffee consumption in India** is rising, driven by cafe culture, higher disposable incomes, and a shift towards coffee over tea.
  - ♦ Domestic consumption increased from 84,000 tonnes in 2012 to 91,000 tonnes in 2023.

#### India's coffee exports

- They have surged due to increasing global demand, with over 9,300 tonnes exported in January 2025.
- **Top buyers include Italy, Belgium, and Russia.**
  - ♦ Most of India's coffee production (around three-fourths) consists of Arabica and Robusta beans, which are primarily exported as unroasted beans.
- There's also growing demand for value-added products like roasted and instant coffee.
- The Coffee Board's Integrated Coffee Development Project (ICDP) focuses on improving yields, expanding cultivation in non-traditional regions, and ensuring sustainability.

Source :TH

## CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT (CAD)

#### In News

- **India's current account deficit (CAD)** widened to \$11.5 billion in Q3 FY25 from \$10.4 billion in the same quarter last year, primarily due to an increase in the merchandise trade deficit.
  - ♦ However, CAD remained stable at 1.1% of GDP.

#### The Current Account Deficit (CAD)

- It occurs when a country's imports of goods and services exceed its exports.
  - ♦ The current account is part of a country's balance of payments (BOP), alongside the capital account.
- To reduce a current account deficit, a country can increase exports, reduce imports through tariffs or quotas, or implement policies to boost domestic competitiveness.
  - ♦ Currency devaluation can also help by making exports cheaper.

Source :TH

## INDIA FELL BEHIND IN THE COTTON RACE

#### In News

- India, once the world's leading cotton producer and a major exporter, has now become a net importer of cotton.
  - ♦ This shift highlights a deeper crisis rooted in **policy paralysis, regulatory inefficiencies, and the slow adoption of modern agricultural technologies.**

#### Cotton Production growth

- India's cotton production nearly tripled from 13.6 million bales in 2002-03 to 39.8 million bales in 2013-14.
- India became the world's top cotton producer in 2015-16 and a major exporter by 2011-12.

#### Contributing Factors

- The increase in production was driven by technological advances, such as the development of cotton hybrids like H-4 and Varalaxmi.
- Introduction of genetically modified (GM) Bt cotton in 2002-03 significantly boosted yields.
  - ♦ Bt cotton covered 95% of India's cotton area by 2013-14, raising lint yields to 566 kg per hectare.

#### Decline

- Post-2014, cotton production has declined, with projections for 2024-25 at 29.5 million bales, the lowest since 2008-09.
- Yields have dropped below 450 kg per hectare.
- The decline began with a moratorium on GM Bt brinjal and a growing opposition to GM crops under the UPA government.
- The government furthered this by halting GM crop trials and treating GM crops as "hazardous substances."
- Regulatory hurdles have delayed approval for new GM crops like hybrid mustard and improved cotton variants.
  - ♦ Issues like pink bollworm infestations have worsened due to the halt in GM crop technology advancements.

#### Global Implications

- India turning into a net importer benefits top cotton exporters like the US and Brazil.
- Pressure may rise for India to remove tariffs on cotton imports, as seen with GM soyabean meal imports in 2021.

**Do you know?**

- **Union Budget 2025-26 has announced a five year Cotton Mission** to address the challenges of stagnant cotton productivity and to increase cotton productivity especially extra-long staple varieties.

Source :IE

## KOSI MECHI INTRA-STATE LINK PROJECT

### Context

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by PM Modi approved the **Kosi Mechi Intra-State Link Project of Bihar under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (PMKSY-AIBP)**.

### About

- **Central Support:** Rs. 3,652.56 crore for project completion by March **2029**.
- **Objective:** Diversion of **surplus Kosi river water to extend irrigation to the Mahananda basin in Bihar**.
- **Project Details:**
  - ♦ Remodelling of Eastern Kosi Main Canal (EKMC).
  - ♦ Extending EKMC up to river Mechi.
  - ♦ Linking rivers Kosi and Mechi within Bihar.
- **Impact:**
  - ♦ Additional 2,10,516 hectares of irrigation in Kharif season.
  - ♦ Irrigation coverage in Araria, Purnea, Kishanganj, and Katihar districts.
  - ♦ Utilization of 2,050 million cubic meters of surplus Kosi water.
  - ♦ Restoration of a shortfall in 1.57 lakh hectares of EKMC's existing command.
- **PMKSY Overview:**
  - ♦ **Launched in 2015-16** for enhanced irrigation access and water conservation.
  - ♦ PMKSY (2021-26) has an outlay of Rs. 93,068.56 crore.
  - ♦ The AIBP component focuses on major irrigation projects.
  - ♦ **Progress:** 63 projects completed under PMKSY-AIBP, creating 26.11 lakh hectares of irrigation since 2016.

Source: PIB

## OVER 1,000 SPECIES OF FUNGI THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION: IUCN

### In News

- More than 1,000 species of fungi are threatened with extinction as per the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
  - ♦ Deforestation, agricultural expansion and urban development are driving these species to decline worldwide.

### About Fungi

- **Scientific Classification:**
  - ♦ **Kingdom:** Fungi (distinct from Plantae, Animalia, Protista)
  - ♦ **Cell type:** Eukaryotic (Cells contain membrane-bound organelles & nucleus)
  - ♦ **Cell wall:** Composed of chitin (not cellulose)
  - ♦ **Nutrition:** Heterotrophic (saprophytic, parasitic, symbiotic)
  - ♦ **Examples:** Mushrooms, Yeasts, Molds, Penicillium
- **Key Characteristics:**
  - ♦ **Reproduction:** Both asexual (spores, budding) and sexual
  - ♦ **Nutrition:** Absorptive heterotrophs (digest food externally and absorb nutrients)
  - ♦ **Habitat:** Moist, warm environments like soil, decaying matter.
  - ♦ **Symbiotic Relationships:** Lichens: Fungi + Algae/Cyanobacteria (pioneer species in ecological succession)
  - ♦ **Mycorrhiza:** Fungi + Plant roots (e.g., Glomus species improve nutrient uptake).
- **Economic & Ecological Importance:**
  - ♦ **Decomposers:** Recycle nutrients in ecosystems
  - ♦ **Medicinal:** Source of antibiotics like Penicillin
  - ♦ **Food Industry:** Yeast in baking and alcohol fermentation; edible mushrooms
  - ♦ **Biocontrol agents:** Trichoderma used in agriculture

Source: DTE

