

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL CRIME RECORDS BUREAU (NCRB)?



About the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB):

- It was established in 1986 to act as a **repository of information on crime and criminals.**
- It comes **under the Ministry of Home Affairs(MHA)**, Government of India.
- It was set up based on the **recommendations of the Tandon Committee, the National Police Commission (1977-1981)** and the Task Force of the Home Ministry.
- It is responsible for **collecting and analysing crime data** as well as serving as a **repository of such information to aid investigators in tracing crimes and criminals.**
- **Headquarters: New Delhi**
- In 2009, the NCRB was entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring, coordination, and **implementing the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and System (CCTNS) project.** This project connects about 15,000 police stations and 6,000 high offices in the country.
- In 2017, the NCRB **launched the National Digital Police Portal**, which allows **police officers to look for a criminal or suspect on the CCTNS database** and gives **citizens with services such as online complaint filing**, etc.
- The Bureau has also been entrusted to **maintain the National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO)** and **share it with the States/UTs** on a regular basis.
- The **Central Finger Print Bureau under the NCRB** is a national **repository of all fingerprints** in the country.
- NCRB also **compiles and publishes National Crime Statistics i.e. Crime in India, Accidental Deaths & Suicides**, and also **Prison Statistics.**
- NCRB also assists various States in capacity building in the areas of Information Technology, CCTNS, Finger Prints, Network security, and Digital Forensics through its **training centres in Delhi and Kolkata.**

COP28 CLIMATE MEETING: THE FOSSIL FUEL QUESTION

Context

- Despite decades of climate change conferences, **none of the decisions made during these gatherings has officially acknowledged the role of fossil fuels** in global warming or the necessity to eliminate their use.
- **Fossil fuels have been the real issues** which has often been overlooked and avoided in official discussions.

The COP Climate Meeting

- The term ‘COP’ stands for **Conference of the Parties**, and it refers to the annual meetings held under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
 - **These conferences bring together representatives from countries around the world** to discuss and negotiate international efforts to address climate change.
- The UNFCCC **was established in 1992** with the goal of addressing the global challenge of climate change and its impacts.
- **The COP meetings serve as the main decision-making body of the UNFCCC**, providing a platform for countries to negotiate and make decisions on issues related to climate change.
- **The most well-known COP meeting is the Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/KP)**.
 - **The Kyoto Protocol (1997) resulted in an international treaty that set binding targets for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.**
- Subsequent COP meetings have led to important agreements, **including the Paris Agreement in 2015, which aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.**

Fossil Fuel Debate and Challenges in Climate Negotiations

- **Dominance of Fossil Fuels in Emissions**

- Fossil fuels, including oil, gas, coal, and their derivatives, contribute to at least 80% of all greenhouse gas emissions.
- The central argument is that substantial reductions in emissions cannot be achieved without significantly reducing the use of fossil fuels.
- **Unsuccessful Climate Negotiations**
 - Influential countries in climate negotiations have been attempting to cut emissions without directly addressing the use of fossil fuels.
 - The debate centres around the challenge of reducing emissions without fundamentally altering the reliance on fossil fuels.
- **Focus on Relative Consumption and Efficiency**
 - Previous efforts to cut emissions primarily concentrated on reducing relative energy consumption and enhancing energy efficiency.
 - Despite these efforts, global production of fossil fuels continues to rise, contributing to the difficulty in achieving climate targets.
- **Unachieved Climate Targets**
 - None of the climate targets set in previous negotiations have been achieved.
 - Current targets also appear to be significantly challenging, with the latest projections indicating that ongoing actions by countries will only reduce annual emissions by 2% by 2030.

Conclusion

- The invitation for countries to submit proposals on fossil fuel phase-out indicates a proactive approach.
- While a mention of the need to phase down fossil fuels is expected in the final decisions, determining specific measures and schedules is challenging and will require prolonged negotiations.
- This potential inclusion marks a radical departure from the historical neglect of fossil fuels in climate discussions and underscores the evolving dynamics of global climate action.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION

Recently, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) bagged the "International Social Security Association's ISSA Vision Zero 2023" Award in the recently held 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia.



About the International Social Security Association:

- It is the principal international institution bringing together social security agencies and organisations of the world.
- **Aim:** To promote dynamic social security as the social dimension in a globalising world by supporting excellence in social security administration.
- It was **founded in 1927** under the **auspices of the International Labour Organization**
- It has over 320 member institutions from over 160 countries.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva (at the International Labour Office)
- It provides access to information, expert advice, business standards, practical guidelines and platforms for members to build and promote dynamic social security systems worldwide.
- The vision of dynamic social security provides a framework for the ISSA's actions.

Key facts about the Employees' State Insurance Corporation

- It is a statutory corporate body set up under the ESI Act 1948.
- It is responsible for the administration of the ESI Scheme.
- **Headquarter:** New Delhi
- **Composition**
 - Chairman: The Union Minister of Labour
 - The Central Government appoints a **Director General** as the **Chief Executive Officer of ESIC**.
 - The ESIC comprises members representing crucial interest groups, including employers, employees, the Central and State Governments, representatives of the Parliament and the medical profession.

ADVOCATES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

Why in the News?

- During a debate on the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023 in the Lok Sabha, Law Minister **Arjun Ram Meghwal** said that the central government is open to a policy on transfer of high court judges.
- The Bill has been passed by the Lok Sabha.

About Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023:

- The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in August, 2023.
- It amends the **Advocates Act, 1961**. The Bill repeals certain sections related to touts under the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879.
- The 1961 Act consolidates the law related to legal practitioners and constitutes Bar Councils and the All-India Bar.
- The Bill, which was already passed in the Rajya Sabha during the Monsoon Session, aims at regulating the legal profession by a single act and seeks to target touts.

What is the Process of Appointment of High Court Judges?

- Under **Article 217** of the Constitution of India, the **President appoints High Court judges**.
- The Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the Governor of the state concerned.
- For appointment of other judges, the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court is also consulted.
- This consultation process has been interpreted by the Supreme Court in the **Third Judges case (1998)** in the following manner:
 - The CJI has to consult a collegium of two senior-most judges of the Supreme Court.
 - After consultation, the CJI recommends names to the President for appointment.

- The President, in case of objection, can send the recommended names back to the collegium, to reconsider, with reasons in writing.
 - After reconsideration, if the collegium reiterates its recommendations, the President has to appoint the recommended names as Judges.
 - **Transfer of Judges:**
 - Currently, the President can transfer a judge from one High Court to another, after consulting the Chief Justice of India.
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CYCLONE MICHAUNG INTENSIFIES INTO 'SEVERE' CYCLONIC STORM

Why in news?

- According to the Indian Meteorological Department, Cyclone Michaung intensified into a severe cyclonic storm.
- It is likely to make landfall between Nellore and Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh on December 5.

How are Cyclones Classified?

- Cyclones are classified **on the basis of wind speed** by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD):
 - **Depression:** Wind speeds of between 31–49 km/h
 - **Deep Depression:** Between 50-61 km/h
 - **Cyclonic Storm:** Between 62–88 km/h
 - **Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 89-117 Km/h
 - **Very Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 118-166 Km/h
 - **Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 167-221 Km/h
 - **Super Cyclonic Storm:** Above 222 Km/h

What is landfall of a cyclone?

- Landfall is the event of a tropical cyclone coming onto land after being over water.

- During landfall, the outer bands of the storm may have already reached the coast, bringing strong winds, heavy rain, and storm surge.
- Landfall marks the moment when the cyclone officially reaches the land.
 - A landfall should not be confused with a ‘direct hit’, which refers to a situation where the core of high winds (or eyewall) comes onshore but the centre of the storm may stay remain offshore.

How long does a landfall last?

- Landfalls can last for a few hours, with their exact duration depending on the speed of the winds and the size of the storm system.
- **Cyclones lose their intensity once they move over land** because of sharp reduction of moisture supply and increase in surface friction.
- This means that while landfalls are often the most devastating moments of cyclones, they also mark the beginning of its end.

THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE 2023

Why in News?

- The State of Food and Agriculture 2023 - a report from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), has revealed the massive hidden costs of the global agrifood systems, which exceed an astounding \$10 trillion.
- In middle-income countries like India, these costs constitute nearly 11% of the GDP, which manifests as higher poverty, environmental harm and health-related impact (undernourishment, unhealthy dietary patterns, etc).

What are Agri-Food Systems?

- Agrifood systems have three main components:
 - **Primary production:** It includes food from agricultural and non-agricultural origins.

- **Food distribution:** It links production to consumption through food supply chains and domestic food transport networks.
- **Household consumption:** It is the downstream outcome of functioning agrifood systems, subject to varying degrees of demand shocks.

About the State of Food and Agriculture 2023 Report:

- **This edition of the report** introduces the concept of the hidden costs and benefits of agrifood systems and provides a framework through which these can be assessed.
- **The report aims to initiate a process** that will better prepare decision-makers for actions to steer agrifood systems towards environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Highlights of the State of Food and Agriculture 2023:

- The report highlights massive hidden costs of the global agrifood systems, exceeding an astounding \$10 trillion.
- **The report blames unsustainable business-as-usual activities** and practices for these escalating costs, pointing to a need to transform agrifood systems.
- One way to do so is **to shift to multi-cropping systems** that have the potential to protect farmers' well-being, improve nutritional outcomes for the communities, and positively impact ecological health.

Improvements in Agricultural Productivity in India and its Adverse Impacts:

- This has been achieved over the last five decades by mainstreaming monocropping systems and chemical-intensive farming practices.
- **The Green Revolution** focused credit on inputs and marketing of high-yielding varieties of paddy and wheat on agricultural lands, which now constitute more than 70% of India's agricultural production.
- **However, the infusion of seeds** purchased from multinational corporations and fertilisers undermined seed sovereignty and dismantled Indigenous knowledge systems.

- **This trend also compromised the nutritional needs** of households and resulted in adverse ecological consequences including soil fertility and excessive extraction of groundwater.
- **This privatisation and deregulation of agricultural inputs** also increased indebtedness among agrarian households.
 - **In 2013**, the debt to asset ratio of a farmer household in India was 630% higher than in 1992.

What can be Done to Help Farmers in India?

- **A systemic shift in food regimes**, from local to global value chains, is essential.
- **Diversified multi-cropping systems**, rooted in agroecology principles, could be a viable solution to revitalise degraded land and soil.
 - Practices known by various names locally, like ‘**akkadisaalu**’ in Karnataka, involve intercropping with a combination of legumes, pulses, oilseeds, trees, shrubs, and livestock.
- **Alternative farming systems** may increase farmer’s income and improve the environment.
 - **For example**, millets, whose yield per hectare is comparable to those of rice and wheat, are more nutritious and grow in semi-arid conditions without burdening groundwater tables.
- **By redirecting subsidies**, currently accruing to corporations, farmers can be paid for their contribution to sustaining natural capital, instead of incentivising them to deplete it.