

ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION

The High-level Committee (HLC) on One Nation, One Election submitted its report to President Droupadi Murmu. The report said that simultaneous elections would lead to a fundamental transformation in the electoral process and overall governance.

The HLC, popularly known as the Kovind panel after its chairman, former President Ram Nath Kovind, was constituted in September 2023.

Simultaneous elections in India: Meaning

- The concept of "One Nation, One Election" envisions a system in which all state and Lok Sabha elections must be held simultaneously.
- This will entail restructuring the Indian election cycle so that elections to the states and the centre coincide.
- This would imply that voters will vote for members of the LS and state assemblies on the same day and at the same time (or in a phased manner as the case may be).

History of Elections in India

- **Era of simultaneous elections**
 - The first general elections of free India held simultaneously to the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies of the States in 1951.
 - The **next three cycles of elections** also witnessed concurrent Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly elections barring a few stray cases.
 - The last occasion when we had **near-simultaneous elections was in 1967**.
- **Beginning of the end of simultaneous elections**
 - The fourth Lok Sabha constituted in 1967 was dissolved prematurely in 1971. This was the beginning of the end of simultaneous elections.
 - Extension of the term of Lok Sabha during the National Emergency declared in 1975 and the dissolution of Assemblies of some States after the 1977 Lok Sabha election further disturbed the cycle of concurrent elections.

- **Current status**
 - In 2019, only 4 States had their assembly elections, along with the Lok Sabha.
 - We now have **at least two rounds of Assembly general elections every year.**

Key recommendations of the HLC

- **Simultaneous election by 2029**
 - The panel recommended amending the Constitution so elections for the Lok Sabha, all state assemblies and local bodies can be held by 2029.
- **Amending the Constitution (two steps)**
 - In all, 18 amendments to the Constitution and other statutes have been suggested.
 - **In the first step**, simultaneous elections will be held to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
 - **In the second step**, elections to municipalities and the panchayats will be synchronised with elections to Lok Sabha and state Assemblies.
- **Single electoral roll and election ID**
 - To make single electoral roll and electoral photo identity cards for use in elections to all the three tiers of government, the committee recommended that **Article 325** of the Constitution be amended.
- **In case of hung house**
 - In the event of a hung House, a no-confidence motion, or any such event, fresh elections should be held to constitute the new Lok Sabha or state Assembly for the unexpired term of the House.
- **Meeting logistics requirement**
 - The committee suggests that the Election Commission of India should plan ahead with State Election Commissions for things like manpower, polling staff, security forces, and voting machines to ensure fair elections across all levels of government at the same time.

WHAT IS SAGAR PARIKRAMA?

The Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying will release a book and video on “Sagar Parikrama”.



Sagar Parikrama is an outreach program intended to reach out fishermen community across the entire coastal belt of the country through a predetermined sea route.

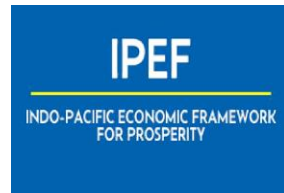
- The initiative has been launched to **understand the issues**, experiences, and **aspirations of fishermen** and also to **create awareness of various schemes** and programs of the Government available to fishermen in coastal areas.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- The Sagar Parikrama Yatra **spanned over 12 captivating phases in just 44 days**. The Yatra meticulously navigated the diverse coastal tapestry of India, covering an impressive coastal length of 7,986 Kilometres out of 8,118 Kilometres, touching 3,071 fishing villages in 80 coastal districts of all the Coastal States/UTs.
- During the Sagar Parikrama events, **certificates and sanctions related to the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and Kisan Credit Card (KCC) were awarded** to progressive fishermen, fish farmers, and young fishery entrepreneurs.
- **Literature on various schemes**, including PMMSY, KCC and others, was **disseminated** through print media, electronic media, videos, and digital campaigns to raise awareness among fishers.

Key Facts about India’s Fisheries Sector:

- India has a **coastline of 8,118km**, covering **nine maritime states and four UTs** and provides livelihood support to 2.8 million coastal fishermen.
- The country contributes **8% of the global share of fish production** and is ranked **third-largest fish producer** in the world.
- The total fish production of India is 162.48 lakh tonnes (2021-22), of which 121.21 lakh tonnes are from inland and 41.27 lakh tonnes from marine, with exports of over Rs 57,586 crore contributing to about **17% of agriculture exports**.

INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR PROSPERITY

Recently, the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry joined the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Virtual Ministerial Meeting.



Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity is a regional **arrangement** to build cooperation and economic integration in the **Indo-Pacific region**. It was launched in May 2022.

- It is intended to advance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness and competitiveness for member economies.
- It will seek to complement and build on existing regional architecture and support the global rules-based trading system.
- **Member countries:** It has **14 regional partners** – Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam.
- The economic framework broadly **rests on four pillars:** Trade, Supply chain resilience, Clean Energy, Decarbonization, and Infrastructure Taxes and anti-corruption measures
- The IPEF is **not a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**, but it allows members to negotiate the parts they want to.
- **India and IPEF:**
 - India has been actively participating in the IPEF, but not in all pillars.
 - India has decided to opt out of the trade pillar of the IPEF as most issues promoted by the IPEF do not align with India's trade policies.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR EDIBLE OILS - OIL PALM (NMEO-OP):



Prime Minister recently inaugurated the first Oil Palm Processing Mill under Mission Palm Oil in Arunachal Pradesh.

About National Mission for Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP):

- Launched by the Government of India in August 2021, NMEO-OP **targets a substantial increase in oil palm cultivation and crude palm oil production.**
- It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** with a special focus on the North east region and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, with a focus on increasing the area and productivity of oilseeds and Oil Palm.
- **Targets:**
 - To **increase the area of oil palm to 10 lakh hectares** from 3.5 lakh ha during 2019-20 by 2025-26 (an additional 6.50 lakh ha).
 - To **increase the Crude Palm Oil production** from 0.27 lakh tonnes during 2019-20 to 11.20 lakh tonnes by 2025-26.
 - **Increase consumer awareness to maintain a consumption level** of 19.00 kg/person/annum till 2025-26.
- **Features:** The salient features of NMEO-OP include assistance for planting material, inputs for intercropping upto gestation period of 4 years and for maintenance, establishment of seed gardens, nurseries, micro irrigation, bore well/pumpset/water harvesting structure, vermi compost units, solar pumps, harvesting tools, custom hiring centre cum harvester Groups, farmers and officers training, and for replanting of old oil palm gardens etc.

Oil Palm Production in India:

- Oil Palm (*Elaeis guineensis*), originated in West Africa is comparatively a new crop in **India** and has the **highest vegetable oil yielding capability per ha.**
- It produces two distinct oils, i.e., **palm oil and palm kernel oil**, which are used for culinary as well as industrial purposes.
- **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Kerala are major Oil palm-growing States** and account for 98% of total production.
- Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Gujarat, and Mizoram also have sizable area under Oil palm cultivation.

WHAT IS WORLD GOLD COUNCIL (WGC)?

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) bought 8.7 tonne of gold in January, making it the largest purchase by the central bank since July 2022, according to World Gold Council data.



About World Gold Council (WGC):

- It is the **market development organisation** for the gold industry. It is a **nonprofit association** formed in 1987 whose members comprise the world's leading and most forward-thinking gold mining companies.
- It was established to **promote the use of and demand for gold** through marketing, research, and lobbying. It is also the **global authority on gold**, and they offer comprehensive analyses of the industry.
- **Headquartered in London**, with operations in India, China, Singapore, and the USA, the WGC covers the markets which comprise about three-quarters of the world's annual gold consumption.
- It is an **advocate for gold consumption**. The WGC aims to maximize the industry's potential growth by monitoring and defending existing gold consumption.
 - It achieves this by **setting up gold standards, proposing policies, ensuring fairness** and sustainability in the gold mining industry and promoting the usage and demand for gold for individuals, industries, and institutions.
- It also **co-sponsors research in the development of new uses for gold**, or of new products containing gold.
- WGC was the **creator of the first gold exchange-traded fund**.

CRIMINAL CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation virtually inaugurated a unique digital Criminal Case Management System (CCMS) and also launches a mobile app 'Sankalan'.

About Criminal Case Management System:

- It has been developed by **designed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA)**. It will enable the NIA personnel to better coordinate in terrorism and organized crime cases, thereby improving justice delivery.
- It is a user-friendly and easy-to-deploy, customizable, browser-based software to help the State Police forces in their investigations and prosecution.
- It would not only bring standardisation into investigations but also enable easy and streamlined compilation of terror-related data across the country.

What is Sankalan app?

- It has been designed **for navigating through new criminal laws** as a bridge between old and new criminal laws. This app will work as a comprehensive guide for all stakeholders.
- It will work in offline mode as well and its availability has been ensured in far-flung areas so that all stakeholders can have access to desired information around the clock.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

India has moved up a rank on the global Human Development Index (HDI), according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report ‘Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarised world’.

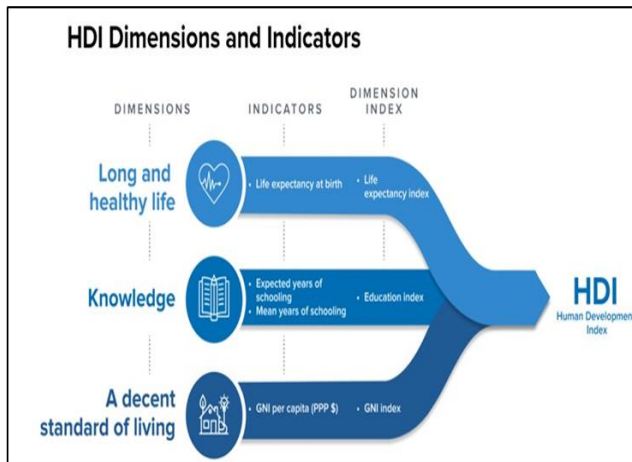


About Human Development Index:

- It is a summary composite measure of a country's average achievements in three basic aspects of human development: **health, knowledge and standard of living**.
- Since 1990, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has been publishing the Human Development Report every year.

The Human Development Index (HDI)

- It is a statistical composite (first published in 1990 by the UNDP) index, which measures average achievement of a country in 3 basic dimensions -



○ Along with HDI, HDR also presents:

- Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI),
- Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI),
- Gender Inequality Index (GII) since 2010 and

- Gender Development Index (GDI) since 2014.

- The HDI also embodies Amartya Sen’s “capabilities” approach to understand human well-being, which emphasizes the importance of ends (like a decent standard of living) over means (like income per capita).

Key Highlights of the HDR 2023/24 – India specific

- **Theme of the report**
 - Recently released 2023/24 Human Development Report (HDR) was titled as “**Breaking the Gridlock: Reimagining Cooperation in a Polarized World.**”
- **India’s ranking**
 - India ranked 135 in 2021. It had moved up to 134 in 2022.
- **India in the medium human development category**
 - Between 1990 and 2022, the country saw its HDI value increase by 48.4 percent, from 0.434 in 1990 to **644 in 2022.**
- **India’s performance on various indicators**
 - India’s life expectancy at birth has slightly improved from 67.2 years in 2021 to **67.7 years in 2022.**
 - There is an overall increase (5.88%) in expected years of schooling (EYS) from 11.9 years to 12.6 years, leading to an improvement of 18 places.
 - Gross National Income (GNI) per capita also improved from \$6,542 to \$6,951.

- **Performance of India's neighbourhood**
 - Sri Lanka has been ranked much ahead at 78, while China is ranked 75, both categorised under the High Human Development category.
 - Bhutan stands at 125 and Bangladesh at 129th position.
 - Nepal (146) and Pakistan (164) have been ranked lower than India.
- **India's progress in reducing gender inequality**
 - India has also shown progress in reducing gender inequality and **ranks 108 out of 166 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII) 2022.**
 - The GII measures gender inequalities in three key dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market.

Four areas for immediate action proposed by the report

- To break through the current deadlock & reignite a commitment to a shared future:
 - **planetary public goods** for climate stability as we confront the unprecedented challenges of the Anthropocene;
 - **digital global public goods** for greater equity in harnessing new technologies for equitable human development;
 - **new and expanded financial mechanisms**, including a novel track in international cooperation that complements humanitarian assistance and traditional development aid to low-income countries; and
 - **dialling down political polarization** through new governance approaches focused on enhancing people's voices in deliberation and tackling misinformation.