

113 mn people of 53 countries faced severe hunger in 2018, as per Global Report on Food Crises 2019

In accordance with the annual 2019 Global Report on Food Crises, around 113 million people across 53 countries faced severe hunger in 2018. In comparison to the figures of 2017, the number is reduced from 124 million but it requires urgent humanitarian assistance.



i. The report prepared by 15 leading global and regional organizations was led by UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). It was released by Food Security Information Network (FSIN).

ii. The report examined 53 countries that are vulnerable to food crises and provided the causes of severe food insecurity for 27 countries which were mainly persistent conflict and adverse weather events.

iii. The two-thirds of the total number of people facing acute food insecurity are in 8 countries viz. Yemen, Congo, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Syria, Sudan, South Sudan and Northern Nigeria.

iv. The report mentioned the short-term forecast of food insecurity in the year 2019 also, stating the above mentioned countries, will remain among the world's most severe food crises.

Related Points :

◆ Establishment : 1961 ◆ Headquarters : Rome, Italy ◆ Head: David Beasley ◆ Parent organization: United Nations General Assembly

The Reserve Bank of India has set the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) to Rs. 75000 crore for the first half of the financial year 2019-20.

As and when the government of India utilises 75% of the WMA limit, the central bank would activate fresh floatation of market loans.

The rate of interest issued on the Ways and Means Advances (WMA) will be Repo Rate while the overdraft will exceed the Repo Rate by flat 2%.

Based on an objective framework, the RBI retains the flexibility to alter the WMA limit in future after consultation with the Indian Government.

What is Ways and Means advances (WMA)?

Ways and Means advances, guided under Section 17(5) of the RBI Act, 1934 are temporary loan facilities or overdrafts that are extended to the government (both central and the state) by the central bank of India.

i. The WMA helps the government to sail through times of temporary discrepancies in the cash flow of the expenditure and receipts.

ii. The WMA scheme was introduced in 1977.

iii. There are 2 types of WMA. The RBI has limits for WMA for each individual state. This limit is in multiples of the minimum balance that the RBI needs to maintain with that state. The 2 types of WMA are listed as follows:

Normal WMA: Normal WMA are clean advances.

Special WMA: Special WMA are secured advances that are provided against the collateral of the central government's securities held by the state government.

What is Repo Rate?

Repo Rate is the rate that the RBI sets for lending money to commercial banks during the shortage of funds or cash crunch. It is used by the Reserve Bank of India to keep a check on inflation.

Fitch kept India's rating unchanged at BBB- with Stable outlook

On 4th April 2019, Fitch Rating affirms India's Rating sovereign rating unchanged at the lowest investment grade of BBB- with a stable outlook. The growth rate of India forecasted by Fitch Is 6.8% in financial year 2019-20 and 7.1% in FY 2020-21.

About Fitch Rating

- ◆ Fitch Ratings is a subsidiary of Hearst Corporation.◆ Headquarters: New York, USA
- ◆ CEO: Paul Taylor◆ President: Ian Linnell

Vipin Anand has been appointed as the new Managing Director of LIC

Vipin Anand has assumed the charge of Managing Director of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). In March 2019, he was appointed by Centre as the LIC MD.

Related Points LIC:

- ◆ Establishment – 1956 ◆ Headquarters – Mumbai ◆ Tagline – Zindagi ke Saath bhi, zindagi ke baad bhi.

Rakesh became next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cameroon

Shri Rakesh Malhotra, Who was a Consul General, Consulate General of India, Melbourne has appointed as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cameroon.

About Cameroon

- ◆ Capital : Yaounde ◆ Currency : Central African CFA franc (XAF)
- ◆ President: Paul Biya ◆ Prime Minister: Joseph Ngute

CCMB scientists discovered a new enzyme “Murein EndopeptidaseK” to break the bacteria cell wall

The Center for Cell and Molecular Biology (CCMB) scientists have discovered a new enzyme called “Murein EndopeptidaseK” which helps to cut bacterial cell walls, so it is possible for a new drug treatment that prevents bacterial resistance by existing antibiotics.

International Mine Awareness Day – 4th April

United Nations' **International Mine Awareness Day** is observed on 4th April every year to raise awareness about landmines and the actions that need to be taken towards their eradication.

The Theme for International Mine Awareness Day 2019 is “**United nations promotes SDGs –Safe Ground –Safe Home**”. (SDG –Sustainable Development Goals)

Nepal-India Franchise Investment Summit to be held in Kathmandu in May

Nepal is set to organise the **Nepal-India Franchise Investment Summit**, starting from May 15. The two days **Franchise Investment Summit will be held in Kathmandu** in association with the **Embassy of India and Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry**.

Former Bollywood Actress, Mayoorkango has appointed the Industry Head of Google India

Ex-Bollywood actress and Managing Director of **Performics** (A Performance Marketing Agency), **Mayoorkango** has been appointed as the Industry head of **Google India**. She will lead Google engagement with Publicis (Parent Company of Performics) and DAN.