

Current Affairs - 17 May 2025

GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES, 2025

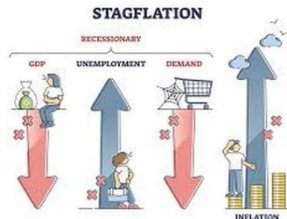


- The Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) is an **annual**, consensus-based technical report coordinated by the Food Security Information Network (**FSIN**) in support of the Global Network Against Food Crises (**GNAFC**).
- It is produced through a partnership of key UN agencies (including FAO, WFP, UNICEF), the European Union, and other international organisations and NGOs.
- The GRFC provides in-depth analysis of **acute food insecurity and malnutrition at global, regional, and country levels**, identifying immediate and underlying drivers, and guiding humanitarian and development interventions.

Key Findings of the 2025 GRFC

- **Record High Acute Hunger:** In 2024, 295.3 million people in 53 countries faced acute food insecurity, up from 281.6 million in 2023. This marks the **sixth consecutive annual increase** and the highest level since reporting began.
- **Crisis Severity:** Nearly a quarter of the population in the assessed countries suffered from acute hunger, with 1.9 million people facing famine conditions (IPC/CH Phase 5)- more than double the previous year.
- **Humanitarian Funding Crisis:** Humanitarian allocations to food sectors could fall by up to 45% in 2025, **threatening life-saving nutrition services** for at least 14 million children and disrupting aid in major crisis zones.
- **Children and Women:** Over 37 million children under five in 26 countries suffered from acute malnutrition in 2024, with more than 10.2 million experiencing **severe acute malnutrition**.

STAGFLATION



- Stagflation is an economic phenomenon where an economy experiences three adverse conditions simultaneously:
 - **High inflation** (rising prices)
 - **Stagnant or slow economic growth**
 - **High unemployment**
- The term was first used in the 1960s and became prominent during the 1970s oil crisis.
- Stagflation is particularly challenging because the usual economic tools to fight inflation or unemployment often worsen the other problem.
 - For example, raising interest rates may control inflation but further slow growth and increase joblessness.
- **Causes of Stagflation:**
 - **Supply Shocks:** Sudden spikes in the cost of essential resources (like oil) increase production costs, leading to both inflation and reduced output.
 - **Policy Errors:** Poorly coordinated fiscal and monetary policies, such as excessive government spending or delayed interest rate hikes, can fuel inflation while failing to stimulate growth.
 - **Tariff Increases:** Recent U.S. tariffs have raised input costs, potentially triggering stagflation by increasing prices and reducing demand.

Impact of Stagflation

- **Diminished Purchasing Power:** Inflation erodes household incomes, reducing consumption.
- **Higher Unemployment:** Companies facing higher costs and weaker demand cut jobs.
- **Reduced Investment:** Economic uncertainty discourages businesses from investing, further hampering growth.

LOK ADALAT



Lok Adalat

- Lok Adalats (“People’s Courts”) are statutory **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)** forums established under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- They provide an **accessible, informal, and expeditious** mechanism to settle disputes either pending in courts or at the pre-litigation stage, through mutual compromise and conciliation.
- **Statutory Status:** Constituted under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, they have legal backing and their awards are enforceable as civil court decrees.
- Lok Adalats can be organized at the district, state, and national levels.
 - The State/District Legal Services Authority or the Supreme Court/High Court/Taluk Legal Services Committee may organise Lok Adalat at such intervals and places and for exercising such jurisdiction and in such areas as it thinks fit.
- **Nature of Cases:** Civil, compoundable criminal, family, property, and pre-litigation disputes. Non-compoundable criminal cases are excluded.
- **No Court Fees:** There is no fee for cases referred to Lok Adalats. If a case pending in court is settled, the court fee paid is refunded.
- **Voluntary and Non-Coercive:** Settlements are based on **mutual agreement**; no party is compelled to accept a decision.
- **Binding Awards:** Decisions are final, binding, and **equivalent to civil court decrees**, with very limited scope for challenge (mainly on grounds of fraud or coercion).
- If the parties are not satisfied with the award of the Lok Adalat though there is **no provision for an appeal** against such an award, they are free to initiate litigation by approaching the court of appropriate jurisdiction by filing a case by following the required procedure, in exercise of their right to litigate.

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Permanent Lok Adalats

- **Establishment and Purpose:** Permanent Lok Adalats were introduced under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 (amended in 2002), to resolve disputes related to public utility services such as transport, postal, and telegraph.
- **Composition and Jurisdiction:** These are permanent bodies comprising a Chairman and two members, with jurisdiction to resolve disputes involving amounts up to ₹1 crore. However, they cannot adjudicate cases involving non-compoundable offences.

EXERCISE TEESTA PRAHAR



- It was a large-scale **integrated field exercise** conducted by the **Indian Army**.
- **Venue:** It was carried out at the **Teesta field firing range** in **West Bengal**, near the strategic **Siliguri corridor**, often referred to as “**Chicken’s Neck**”, the land that connects India’s northeast region with the rest of the country.
- It showcased the Army’s **operational readiness** and **coordination among combat and support arms in riverine terrain**.
- The exercise witnessed active **participation from** key combat and support arms, including the **Infantry, Artillery, Armoured Corps, Mechanised Infantry, Para Special Forces, Army Aviation, Engineers, and Signals**.
- A key highlight of the drill was the deployment and **validation of newly inducted next-generation weapon systems**, military platforms, and advanced battlefield technologies, as a part of the Indian Army’s emphasis on modernisation.
- In addition, the exercise emphasised jointness, synergy, and seamless coordination, reinforcing the Army’s ability to operate swiftly and effectively across varied terrain and adverse weather conditions.
- It featured **tactical drills, battle rehearsals, and adaptive manoeuvres** aimed at refining responses to dynamic combat scenarios.

TANOT MATA TEMPLE



The historic Tanot Mata Temple, a 1,200-year-old sacred site near the India-Pakistan border in Jaisalmer, is set to reopen for visitors as border tensions subside.

- It is an **ancient Hindu temple** situated in the **Jaisalmer** district of **Rajasthan**.
- It is **dedicated to Tanot Rai**, a manifestation of the Hindu goddess Hinglaj Mata.
- According to local legends, the temple was **established by a group of local tribes** who worshipped the goddess Tanot Rai.
- Over time, the temple grew in popularity and became a significant religious site for devotees.

In 1965 and 1971, during the Indo-Pakistan War, Tanot Mata Temple gained widespread recognition when it **survived heavy bombardment unharmed**, which further strengthened the belief in the protective powers of the deity among locals and soldiers.

- **Despite the shelling of thousands of bombs** from the Pakistan border, **not one exploded in the vicinity of the temple**.
- The **unexploded bombs** are, till date, **treasured in the Tanot Museum** within the temple premises.
- **After the 1971 war**, the temple was handed over to the **Border Security Force of India**, who **continues to manage the Temple**.
- The **Indian army built a Vijay Sthamba** within the temple premises, and every year on **December 16**, a **celebration** takes place to **commemorate the victory of India over Pakistan**.

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

Institute of Research Based Learning & Competition

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KOLKATA-NORTHEAST SEA ROUTE TO BYPASS BANGLADESH

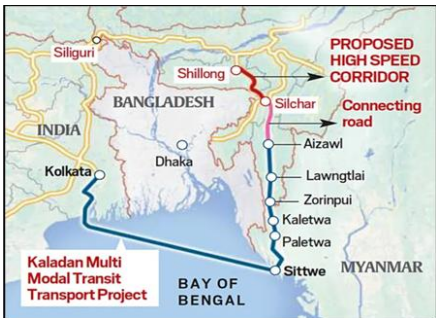
Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP)

- The KMTTP is a strategic infrastructure initiative undertaken by India, aimed at enhancing connectivity between the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata and the landlocked North-Eastern states via Myanmar, bypassing Bangladesh. The project is jointly developed by India and Myanmar and is a key component of India's Act East Policy.
- **Different Legs of the Project**
 - **Sea Leg**
 - From Kolkata Port (India) to Sittwe Port (Myanmar) via the Bay of Bengal.
 - Distance: ~539 km by sea.
 - Sittwe Port has been constructed by India.
 - **Inland Waterway Leg**
 - From Sittwe to Paletwa via the Kaladan River in Myanmar.
 - Distance: ~158 km.
 - **Road Leg**
 - From Paletwa to Zorinpui (on the India-Myanmar border in Mizoram).
 - Distance: ~110 km.
 - **Indian Leg (Planned Extension)**
 - From Zorinpui to Lawngtlai, and further to Aizawl in Mizoram.
 - To be connected to India's highway network.
- **Benefits**
 - **Bypasses Bangladesh:** Reduces dependency on access through Bangladesh for North-East connectivity.
 - **Improves Connectivity:** Offers an alternative route to the Siliguri Corridor (Chicken's Neck), the narrow strip that connects North-East India with the rest of the country.

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- **Boosts Trade & Commerce:** Enhances trade flow between India and South-East Asia.
- **Strategic Significance:** Strengthens India's presence in the Bay of Bengal and deepens ties with Myanmar.
- **Economic Development:** Spurs infrastructure development and economic activities in India's underdeveloped North-Eastern region.
- **Part of Act East Policy:** A critical step in India's efforts to improve connectivity with ASEAN countries.

Strategic Highway to Transform North-East Connectivity

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 - A 166.8-km four-lane high-speed highway is being constructed from Mawlyngkhung (near Shillong) to Panchgram (near Silchar) along NH-6.
 - It is the first high-speed corridor in the North-East and the first such project in a hilly region, to be completed by 2030.
- The project is implemented by NHIDCL for MoRTH and was approved by the Union Cabinet at a cost of Rs 22,864 crore.
- **Key National and Strategic Significance**
 - The highway will reduce travel time between Shillong and Silchar from **8.5 hours to 5 hours**.
 - It will connect Silchar — a key entry point to **Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur**, and the **Barak Valley** — and act as a major regional link.
 - It supports **India's Act East Policy** by enhancing connectivity to Myanmar and beyond.
 - The project is expected to **reduce dependence on the Siliguri Corridor (Chicken's Neck)** and **bypass Bangladesh**, offering an alternative route via the **Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project**.

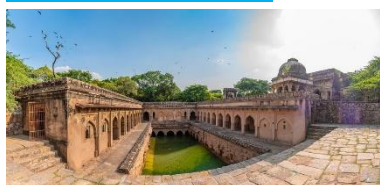
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WHAT IS THE 'CAMPUS CALLING' PROGRAMME?



- It is an **initiative of the National Commission for Women (NCW)** that aims to **enhance gender sensitivity**, raise awareness on the **prevention of sexual harassment**, and address **cybercrimes impacting students**.
- The programme has been launched in **collaboration with 'Yuvamanthan'**, a **youth development platform**.
- The programme **aims to reach over 1,000 universities and colleges across the country**, making it one of the most extensive youth-centric initiatives undertaken by the NCW.
- It seeks to **equip students with the knowledge and skills** to combat gender-based discrimination, harassment, and cybercrimes effectively.
- It will identify and **appoint two male and two female campus ambassadors from each participating institution**.
 - These ambassadors will play a **pivotal role in spearheading gender sensitization initiatives** in their campuses, fostering a culture of safety, equality, and respect among their peers.
 - They will act as key representatives, driving positive change and encouraging youth involvement in building inclusive and secure educational spaces.

RAJON KI BAOLI



Archaeological Park.

- Rajon ki Baoli, also known as Rajon ki Bain, is a significant historical **stepwell** located in **south Delhi's Mehrauli**

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- It was **built in 1506 CE** by **Daulat Khan** during the **reign of Sikander Lodi**, of the Lodi dynasty, which was the **last pre-Mughal dynasty in India**.
- It stands as a testament to Lodi-era architecture and traditional water engineering.
- It was used in its time as a **water reservoir and a retreat** during summers.
- The stepwell's name, **Rajon ki Baoli**, **translates to 'Baoli of the Masons,'** reflecting its **historical use by masons** for drinking and cooking purposes.

Features:

- The stepwell is **primarily subterranean**, with **only the topmost storey visible** above ground.
 - Its structure is **built in four levels**, each narrowing down as one approaches the well in the bottom.
 - Spanning across an area of 1,610 square metres, this baoli descends to a depth of 13.4 metres, with the main tank measuring 23 by 10 metres at its base.
 - It is a fine example of **Indo-Islamic architecture**, featuring intricate stone carvings, ornate arches, and a functional design that provided a natural respite from the heat.
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