

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Recently, the United Nations World Food Programme has said it is temporarily suspending food aid to Ethiopia because its supplies are being diverted.



About World Food Programme:

- It is a branch of the United Nations that deals with hunger eradication and promotes food security in the world.
- It is a member of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- It is operating in more than 120 countries, which provides food assistance during emergencies and works with communities to enhance nutrition and generate resilience.
- It has been functioning in India since 1963.
- **Funding:** WFP is funded by voluntary donations from governments, corporates and private donors.
- Report released by the WFP is **Global Report on Food Crisis**
 - The Global Report on Food Crises describes the scale of acute hunger in the world.
 - It provides an analysis of the drivers that are contributing to food crises across the globe.
 - The report is produced by the Global Network against Food Crises, an international alliance working to address the root causes of extreme hunger.

INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY BOARD OF INDIA (IBBI)

Insolvency regulator, IBBI, proposes to stipulate mandatory audit of Insolvency Resolution Process Costs (IRPC) in resolution cases where the assets of the corporate debtor (CD) is in excess of ₹ 100 crore.



भारतीय दिवाला और शोधन अधिनियम बोर्ड

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

About Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI):

- It was established on 1st October 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.

- It is responsible for the implementation of the IBC. The IBC amends and consolidates the laws relating to insolvency resolution of individuals, partnership firms and corporate persons in a time-bound manner.
- **Functions:**
 - The IBBI regulates professionals as well as processes.
 - It has regulatory oversight over the insolvency professional agencies, insolvency professional entities, insolvency professionals and information utilities.
 - It enforces rules for processes of corporate insolvency resolution, individual insolvency resolution, corporate liquidation and individual bankruptcy under the IBC.
 - It specifies the minimum eligibility requirements for registration of insolvency professional agencies, insolvency professionals and information utilities and curriculum for the qualifying examination of the, insolvency professionals for their enrolment.
 - It collects and maintains records relating to insolvency and bankruptcy cases and disseminate information relating to such cases.
- **Constitution:** The Board consists of the following members who are appointed by the Central Government,
 - A Chairperson.
 - Three members from among the officers of the Central Government equivalent or not below the rank of a Joint Secretary. Out of the three members, each will represent the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Ministry of Law, ex-officio.
 - One member nominated by the RBI (Reserve Bank of India), ex-officio.
 - Five other members nominated by the Central Government, out of which at least three should be whole-time members.
 - The term of office of the Chairperson and members (other than ex-officio members) is five years or until they attain sixty-five years, whichever is earlier, and they are eligible for re-appointment.

[NATIONAL TRAINING CONCLAVE](#)

Prime Minister will inaugurate the first National Training Conclave at the International Exhibition and Convention Centre Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.



About National Training Conclave:

The conclave is part of the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) - 'Mission Karmayogi'.

- **Objective:** To foster collaboration among civil services training institutes and strengthen the training infrastructure for civil servants across the country.
- The Conclave is being hosted by the **Capacity Building Commission.**
- **More than one thousand 500** representatives from various training institutes, including Central Training Institutes, State Administrative Training Institutes, Regional and Zonal Training Institutes, and Research institutes, **will participate in the conclave.**
- **Civil Servants from the Central government departments, State governments, and local governments,** as well as experts from the private sector, will take part in the deliberations.
- The Conclave will have **eight-panel discussions,** each focusing on **key concerns related to Civil services training institutes** such as faculty development, training impact assessment, and content digitisation.

What is Mission Karmayogi?

- Mission Karmayogi, or National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB), **aims to prepare Civil Servants for the future by making them more creative, constructive & innovative** through transparency and technology.
- This unique programme will **help to lay the foundation for civil servants** in the country.
- There will be **more focus on 'on-site learning' in complementing 'off-site learning'.**
- **Executing Bodies:**
 - It will be **steered by four new bodies.**
 - The new entities will be a **Prime Minister's Public Human Resources Council, a Capacity Building Commission, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** that will own and operate the digital

assets and technological platform for online training, and a **Coordination Unit**, which will be headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

OPERATION AMANAT

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) recently conducted a successful operation named "Amanat," resulting in the retrieval of lost or left-behind luggage and valuable articles.



About Operation Amanat:

- Under the Operation Amanat initiative, the **Railway Protection Force** has taken a novel initiative to make it easier for the passengers to get back their lost luggage.
- It helps to track lost belongings of passengers.
- The details of lost luggage along with photos are uploaded by RPF personnel of the respective Divisions. The details are uploaded in the web portal <https://wr.indianrailways.gov.in/> in the tab of divisions under the link "Mission Amanat – RPF".
- Passengers can check whether their luggage which went missing or was lost in railway premises or trains is available at the Lost Property Office centres at stations.

Key facts about Railway Protection Force (RPF):

- RPF is a security force of India entrusted with protecting railway passengers, passenger area and railway property of the Indian Railways.
- It was established by the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957.
- This is only central armed police force (CAPF, commonly known as Para-Military force) which has power to arrest, investigate and prosecute criminals.
- It is under the authority of Ministry of Railways (India).
- All the officers of RPF are members of the Indian Railway Protection Force Service (IRPFS) and are recruited through UPSC Civil Services Examination.

- It is headed by the Director General (DG). However, the post of Director-General of RPF is held on deputation by a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.

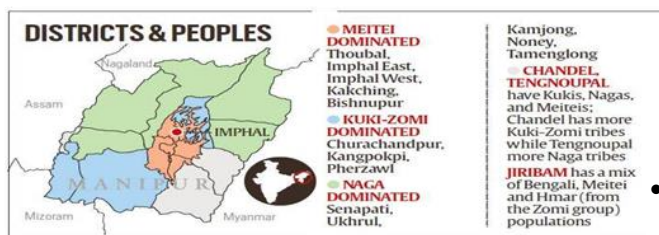
VIOLENT CLASHES IN MANIPUR: CENTRE SETS UP PEACE PANEL, TO INCLUDE 'ETHNIC GROUPS'

Why in News?

- With the violence continuing in Manipur for more than a month now, the Centre announced a **peace committee** to facilitate the peace-making process among various ethnic groups in the state.
- According to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the committee will include representatives of different ethnic groups like the **Kukis and Meiteis**.

Major Communities Residing in Manipur:

- The State is like a football stadium with the Imphal Valley representing the playfield at the centre and the surrounding hills the galleries.
- The valley, which comprises about 10% of Manipur's landmass, is **dominated by the non-tribal Meitei**. This area yields 40 of the State's 60 MLAs.
- The hills comprising 90% of the geographical area is inhabited by more than **35% recognised tribes**. This area sends only 20 MLAs to the Assembly.



What's Behind the Violence in Manipur?

- The recent protests were triggered by the Manipur HC's direction to the State to pursue a 10-year-old recommendation to **grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the non-tribal Meitei community**.
- The Court's order has brought the **historical tensions** between the valley-dwelling Meitei community and the state's hill tribes to a boil.

Why does the Meitei Community want ST Status?

- The demand for ST status arose from the **need to preserve the community**, and save the ancestral land, tradition, culture and language of the Meiteis.
- As per the arguments forwarded by the community in the court:
 - The community has been **victimised** without any constitutional safeguards to date and have been gradually marginalised in their ancestral land.
 - Constituting 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951 has now been **reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data**.

Why are Tribal groups against ST Status for Meiteis?

- The tribal groups say the Meiteis **have a demographic and political advantage besides being more advanced** academically and in other aspects.
- The Manipuri language of the Meiteis is included in the **Eighth Schedule** of the Constitution.
- Sections of the Meitei community - which is predominantly Hindu - are already classified under **Scheduled Castes (SC) or Other Backward Classes (OBC)**.
- Hence, the claim that Meiteis need ST status to protect their culture and identity is self-defeating.
- They feel the ST status to the Meiteis would lead to **loss of job opportunities** and allow them to acquire land in the hills and push the tribals out.

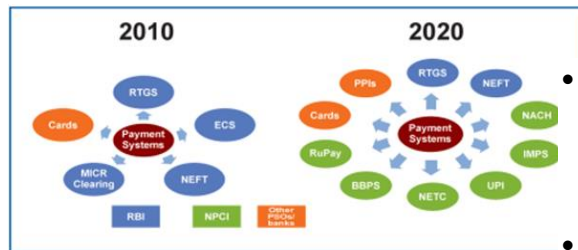
Is this the only Reason for the Conflict?

- Pro-government groups in Manipur claim that some tribal groups with vested interests are trying to scuttle the **CM's crusade against drugs**.
- The anti-drug drive began with **destroying poppy fields** and the theory that **illegal settlers from Myanmar** are behind clearing forests and government lands to grow opium and cannabis.
 - These settlers are ethnically related to the **Kuki-Zomi** people of Manipur.
- The first violent protest was against the **eviction of the residents of a Kuki village** allegedly in violation of **Article 371C**, which confers some administrative autonomy to the tribal-dominated hill areas of Manipur.

[TOWARDS A CASHLESS ECONOMY: INDIA DOMINATING DIGITAL PAYMENT LANDSCAPE](#)

Why in News? According to government data, India with **89.5 million digital transactions** (46% of the global real-time payments) in the year 2022 has topped the list of 5 countries (followed by Brazil, China, Thailand and S. Korea) in digital payments.

India's Move towards a Cashless Economy:



- **Cashless economy** refers to the economy where transactions are done using digital payment methods instead of using cash.
- India's move towards a cashless economy **started**

nearly 3 decades ago with the introduction of online banking.

- However, the digital payments ecosystem received its first real boost when the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) set up the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in 2008**.
 - It was launched **to shape the payments infrastructure and enable innovations**.
- This led to the launch of **Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)** in 2010 followed by the RuPay payment network, **Aadhar Enabled Payment System (AEPS)**, Bharat QR, etc.
- **The 2016 launch of the Unified Payment Interface (UPI)**, that enabled instant real-time payment based on a unique handle linked to a mobile number, can be considered the **spark that ignited this journey**.
- Since then, the volume of digital payments in India has **grown by 50% annually** to \$1.5 trillion digital payment transactions as of December 2022.

Latest Developments in India's Digital Payment Landscape:

- The NPCI is now enabling **non-resident Indians (NRIs)** to leverage UPI in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Canada, Hong Kong, Qatar, the USA, etc.
- The Indian government is expanding UPI, RuPay, and the BHIM app's functionality in several countries **to simplify cross border payment processing and strengthen interoperability**.
- The RBI has also recently launched the **digital rupee (₹)**, India's **central bank digital currency (CBDC)**, categorised as a legal tender in digital form.

Challenges to India's Digital Payment Landscape:

- **Lack of adequate infrastructure:** In the current scenario, digital payment systems are heavily reliant on smartphones that are enabled with **data connections, NFC, bluetooth**, etc.
 - Out of India's 800 Mn mobile phone users, **only 200 Mn use smartphones**. Of these, only 6 Mn are NFC-enabled.
 - **Reach of digital penetration to last mile of customers:** There is a **digital divide** between rural and urban India.
 - **Prone of fraudulent transactions and cyber-attacks**, rise of transactional failures, etc.
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DIMETHYL ETHER (DME)

Recently, researchers at IIT Kanpur developed a **100% DME-fuelled engine with a mechanical fuel injection system**.



About Dimethyl Ether:

- It is a **synthetically produced alternative to diesel** for use in specially designed compression ignition diesel engines.
- It can be produced indigenously, and several countries, like Japan, USA, China, Sweden, Denmark, and Korea, are already using DME to power their vehicles.
- The DME-fuelled **engine emitted extremely low particulate and soot emissions** and almost no smoke without using expensive exhaust gas after-treatment devices and advanced engine technologies.
- It can be a **viable alternative fuel and engine technology** to adapt to conventional diesel engines used in India's economy's agricultural and transport sectors.

Properties of Dimethyl Ether

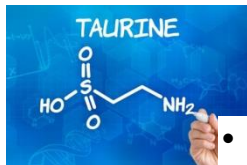
- It has a **very high cetane number**, which is a measure of the fuel's ignitibility in compression ignition engines.
- Under normal atmospheric conditions, **DME is a colorless gas**.

Application of Dimethyl Ether

- It is used extensively in the **chemical industry and as an aerosol propellant**.
 - It is used in chemical industries and also to produce dyes and plastics.
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WHAT IS TAURINE?

A recent study suggests that ageing mice, worms and monkeys can live longer or healthier lives when fed large amounts of taurine.



About Taurine:

- It is a naturally occurring sulfur-containing amino acid.
- It's particularly concentrated in your brain, eyes, heart, and muscles.
- **Sources:** Taurine occurs naturally in foods with protein, such as meat or fish.
- **Functions:**
 - The human body uses taurine for actions in cells. One example is that taurine is used for energy production.
 - Taurine also helps the body process bile acid and balance fluids, salts and minerals, among other actions.
 - It has important functions in the heart and brain. It helps support nerve growth.
 - It might also benefit people with heart failure by lowering blood pressure and calming the nervous system.
 - It is also used for obesity, athletic performance, fatigue, diabetes, and many other conditions.

What are Amino Acids?

- An amino acid is the fundamental molecule that serves as the building block for proteins.
- There are 20 different amino acids.
- Some amino acids can be synthesized in the body, but others (essential amino acids) cannot and must be obtained from a person's diet.