

### TRANSNATIONAL POWER GRID PROJECT GETS A HIGH-VOLTAGE BOOST: WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

#### Why in news?

- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India got encouraging responses from neighbouring countries to its proposal to jointly build a transnational electricity grid to enhance regional energy security.
- This was revealed by PM Modi while addressing G20 group energy ministers in Goa.
- The proposal for establishing grid interconnectivity for the trading of power with Southeast Asian countries through Myanmar and Thailand is part of a BIMSTEC initiative.

#### News Summary: Transnational power grid project gets a high-voltage boost

##### Current status

- India already exports some electricity to Nepal and Bangladesh, and imports hydropower from Bhutan.
- An exchange at a small-scale is also being done with Myanmar.

##### The interconnection proposal

- The plan to build a 3,000-kilometre-long power grid, mostly by way of interconnections of existing national or regional grids, is being pushed by New Delhi.
- This is being pushed both as an energy security initiative and a diplomatic tool that aims to leverage India's growing domestic renewables capacity to boost regional engagement.
- The BIMSTEC plan overlaps with a larger proposal being formulated by India to establish a global solar grid connecting over 100 nations.
  - This global solar grid plan was unveiled on the sidelines of the United Nations climate conference, (COP26) in November 2021.
  - The proposal entails the **first international network of globally interconnected solar electricity grids** that seeks to integrate large-scale solar power plants, wind farms, and grids with rooftop solar supplies.

- This is being done to ensure a constant, dependable, and reasonably priced electricity supply across national boundaries.
- As part of its "One Sun One World One Grid and Green Grids" initiative, efforts have been initiated by New Delhi to commence trading of power with West Asian countries such as the United Arab of Emirates and Oman.

## Transnational Power Grid: Benefits

- **Strategic move**
  - Going beyond the goal of ensuring energy security, the move is also strategic.
  - New Delhi is hoping to push the grid interconnection proposal as an effective counter to China's growing diplomatic influence in the South Asia and the West Asia regions.
- **Better capacity utilisation**
  - The grid connectivity plan would ensure better capacity utilisation of energy infrastructure by complementing member country's demand and supply situation.
- **Benefits to consumers**
  - Consumers across these countries could potentially benefit as the **price of electricity could see some rationalisation**, especially peaking tariffs and they could get access to uninterrupted electricity supply.

## Challenges

- While energy deficit countries such as Bangladesh or Myanmar would be keen to come on board, energy surplus countries are sometimes less invested in the idea of joining a transnational grid arrangement.

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## WHAT IS BRAIN FOG?



Researchers recently suggested the “brain fog” symptom associated with long Covid is equivalent to ageing 10 years.

About Brain Fog:

- Brain fog itself is **not a medical condition** but instead a **symptom of other medical conditions**.
- It is a term used to **describe a variety of symptoms that can affect your ability to think clearly**.
- Brain fog is **characterized by confusion, forgetfulness, and a lack of focus** and mental clarity.

**Some examples of things a person might do** because of brain fog include:

- **forgetting about a task** they had to complete;
- **taking much longer than usual to complete** simple tasks;
- feeling frequently **distracted**;
- **feeling tired** when working;

**Causes:** Brain fog is **typically rooted in a lifestyle that promotes hormonal imbalances**.

- **Electromagnetic radiation** – from computer, mobile phone, tablets
- **Stress** – reduce blood flow to the brain causing poor memory
- **Lack of sleep**, no exercise
- **Diet:** food allergies or sensitivities
- **Toxins, pollution, chemical substances**, and insecticides
- **Medications**
- **Treatment:** Treatment **depends on the cause**. For example, if you're anaemic, iron supplements may increase your production of red blood cells and reduce your brain fog.

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## WHAT HAS TO BE DONE TO GET TO ZERO HUNGER?

### Why in News?

- The Global Report on the Food Crises (GRFC) 2023, prepared by the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC), released recently estimated that between 691 million and 783 million people in the world suffered from hunger in 2022.

### What is Food Security?

- Food security means availability, accessibility and affordability of food to all people at all times.
  - **Availability** of food means food production within the country, food imports and the previous years' stock stored in government granaries.
  - **Accessibility** means food is within reach of every person.
  - **Affordability** implies that an individual has enough money to buy sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet one's dietary needs.

### **About Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC):**

- The GNAFC was founded by the European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Food Programme in 2016.
- It is an alliance of humanitarian and development actors working together to prevent, prepare for and respond to food crises and support the Sustainable Development Goal to End Hunger (SDG 2).
- The Global Report on Food Crises is the flagship publication of the Global Network and is facilitated by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN).
- The Report is the result of a consensus-based and multi-partner analytical process involving 17 international humanitarian and development partners.

### **What are the Key Drivers of Food Insecurity?**

- The report notes the following reasons as being responsible –
  - Slowing down, thanks to lockdowns, economic downturns, and other pandemic-related disruptions in 2020 that led to job losses and reduced incomes for many people;
  - the Ukraine war;
  - Governmental policies that may not be entirely favourable; and
  - Increasing urbanisation that drives changes through the agri-food systems.
- The report's comparison of food insecurity among rural, peri-urban and urban populations reveals that **global food insecurity is lower in urban areas.**

### **What are the Solutions Ahead?**

- The report helps “identify vulnerable population groups, contributing to evidence to inform decision-making and effective action through the appropriate targeting and design of policies and programmes.”
- As per the report, sound nutrition is fundamental to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and must be central in government policy and supported by civil society and the private sector.
  - Some of its recommendations include supporting healthier food outlets as key for enabling access to healthy diets.
- Policy incentives are necessary to encourage shops to sell greater amounts of fresh and minimally processed foods.
- Another key input is on street foods, which an estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide consume every day, thanks to the convenience and cost factor.
- The report calls for **addressing multiple infrastructure and regulatory gaps to improve nutritional safety and quality of street food.**
- The GRFC also suggests building rural infrastructure, including quality rural and feeder roads to connect remote farms and enterprises to main road networks.
- Other public investments to support linkages between (mainly small) farms and small and medium enterprises could include warehousing, cold storage, dependable electrification, access to digital tools and water supply.

### **Food Security in India:**

- Since the advent of the Green Revolution in the early-1970s, India has avoided famine even during adverse weather conditions.
- The availability of food grains (even in adverse weather conditions or otherwise) at the country level has further been ensured with a carefully designed food security system by the government.
- This system has two components: (a) buffer stock, and (b) public distribution system.
- **Buffer Stock:**
  - Buffer Stock is the stock of food grains, namely wheat and rice, procured by the government through the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

- The FCI purchases wheat and rice from the farmers in states where there is surplus production.
- The farmers are paid a pre-announced price for their crops. This price is called **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**.
- **Public Distribution System:**
  - The food procured by the FCI is distributed through government regulated ration shops among the poorer section of the society.
  - This is called the Public Distribution System (PDS).
  - Ration shops are now present in most localities, villages, towns and cities.

## OPEN NETWORK FOR DIGITAL COMMERCE (ONDC) ACADEMY



Recently, the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) introduced the ONDC Academy.

### About ONDC Academy:

- It is an **initiative of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** initiative to create a facilitative model to help small retailers take advantage of digital commerce.
- It was launched by **ONDC in collaboration with NSE Academy Ltd**, a subsidiary of the National Stock Exchange.
- It is **not an application, platform, intermediary, or software** but a set of specifications designed to foster open, unbundled, and interoperable open networks.

### Benefits

- The academy is a **repository of educational and informative textual** and video content programmes in multiple Indian languages.
- It will provide a curated learning experience providing guidance and best practices for a successful e-commerce journey.
- Anyone without any **knowledge of e-commerce** can learn how to make a seller app with a technology service provider to aggregate all sellers from a nearby marketplace to make these products available online.



- It would also enable **certification issued by NSE Academy** to individuals completing an assessment developed by the institute.

## Key Facts about ONDC

- It is a Section 8 company, under the initiative of DPIIT with a mission to democratize digital commerce.
- It develops and maintains the ONDC Protocol, an open technical standard similar to UPI, HTTP and SMTP.
- It **comprises of buyer-side apps where consumers can place orders**, seller-side apps that on board merchants and display their listings, and logistics platforms that handle deliveries.

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## ADJOURNMENT MOTION

### Why in news?

- Recently, MPs from prominent opposition party moved adjournment motions in the Lok Sabha, citing the need for urgent discussions on the ethnic violence in Manipur.

### What are the various motions raised in Indian Parliament?

- In both the houses of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, there are ways for Members of Parliament to draw the attention of the house to any relevant issue.
- There are four main procedures under which there could be a discussion in the **Lok Sabha**:
  - a debate without voting under Rule 193,
  - a motion (with a vote) under Rule 184,
  - an adjournment motion, or
  - a no-confidence motion.

### What is Rule 184, a motion with a vote?

- **About**
  - The procedure for taking up an issue under this Rule is similar to that of Rule 193, with one exception.

- The issue is raised in the form of a motion. After the Minister's reply, the House votes on the motion.
- Rule 184 allows MPs to move a motion in the Lok Sabha that involves voting on a specific issue.
- When a motion is brought under Rule 184, it is considered a matter of significant importance and is debated and decided upon by the members through a voting process.
- The Speaker can allow for such a matter to be raised at his own discretion.

## Features

- **Notice Requirement:** An MP who wishes to move a motion under Rule 184 must give prior notice to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.
- **Content of the Motion:** The motion should clearly state the issue or matter that the MP wants to bring to the attention of the House for a decision.
- **Voting Process:** After the motion is presented and debated, a voting process is held.
  - Members of the Lok Sabha vote either in favour of the motion or against it.
  - Passage of a motion would require the government to follow Parliament's decision on the issue.

## What is an adjournment motion?

- A motion for an adjournment of the business of the House is moved for discussing a **definite matter of urgent public importance**, with the Speaker's consent.
- The Rajya Sabha Rule Book does not provide for an adjournment motion.
- Over the years, Rajya Sabha MPs have used Rule 267 to suspend the pre-decided agenda of the House to raise urgent matters.
- Notice of an adjournment motion is required to be given before 10 am on the day on which the motion is proposed.
- If the adjournment motion is accepted, the House adjourns after voting.
- The adoption of an adjournment motion is seen as a **censure of the government**, although there is no compulsion on the government to resign.

## What is No Confidence Motion?





# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- A motion of no confidence can be moved against the Council of Ministers.
  - Notice for such a motion has to be given before 10 am on the day of sitting.
  - A no confidence motion is moved by an MP if according to him/her the government's activities have not been satisfactory and resignation of the government is demanded.
  - The Speaker will ask MPs who support the motion to rise at their seats, and will fix a time for a motion if at least 50 MPs do so.
  - At the end of such a debate the motion is put to vote. If the motion is adopted, the government has to resign.
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