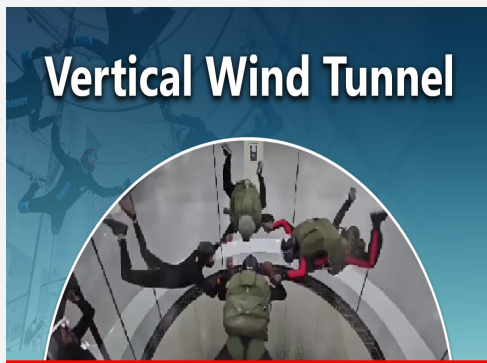




28 October 2023

National and International News

Army get vertical wind tunnel to train special forces



Context

- The Army has installed its **first vertical wind tunnel (VWT)** at the **Special Forces Training School (SFTS)** at **Bakloh in Himachal Pradesh**.
- This is done **to augment the training infrastructure of special forces** and combat free-fallers.

Key points

- The state-of-the-art wind tunnel is set to **refine the combat free fall (CFF) skills** of armed forces personnel
- Functioning as a freefall simulator, the VWT creates a column of air at specific velocities, orchestrating different CFF conditions.
- The system **offers a controlled environment**, enabling trainees to enhance their skills by simulating real-life freefall conditions.

India-Canada Relations facts



- According to the **Census of Canada 2021**, **Canada** is home to over 1.86 million people of Indian origin, i.e., about **5% of the country's 36.99 million population**, and **5.8% of the 32 million** strong global Indian diaspora.
- According to **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)** data, 225,940 or over 40% of 549,260 total study permits to international students were issued to Indians in 2022.
- In 2022, India was Canada's **10th largest bilateral trading partner** (exceeding \$13.7 billion).
- Canada was **India's ninth largest partner, with exports** up to \$5.3 billion.
- Similarly, visitors from India comprised Canada's fourth-largest international air travel market. Many of these traders and investors are members of the Indian diaspora in Canada.
- In 2021, Canadians visiting India spent **\$93 million**, and tourists from India exceeding 89,500, the highest from any single country, **spent \$3.4 billion** in Canada.

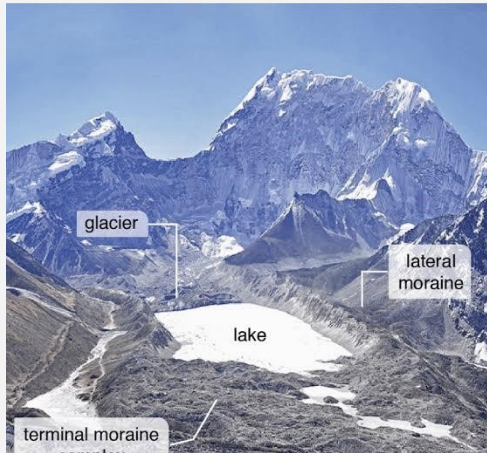
Mitigating tragedies in the Himalayan region

Key facts

- A study published in **Nature** indicates that **90 million people across 30 countries live in 1,089 basins** containing glacial lakes.
- Of these, **one-sixth** live within 50 km of a glacial lake



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and 1 km of potential GLOF runout channels.

### Issues

- The Himalayan Region is susceptible to a range of hydro-meteorological, tectonic, climate, and human-induced mountain hazards.
- The enormity of the challenge is seen in the **National Remote Sensing Centre's (NRSC) Glacial Lake Atlas of 2023**.
- Three major river basins, of the Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra, are host to 28,000 glacial lakes greater than 0.25 hectares in area, in five countries.
- Of these, 27% are in India, in six States and Union Territories.

### Multi-disciplinary effort for Mitigation

- **NRSC's atlases** has provided high-resolution data via remote sensing, which allows for monitoring spatial change.
- The **Central Water Commission** is conducting hydro-dynamic assessments of high-risk lakes, mapping water flow, height, and routing simulations using digital elevation models.
- The **NDMA's national guidelines (2020)** provide States with a technical overview of the hazard and risk zonation and suggest strategies for monitoring, risk reduction, and mitigation.

### Unhealthy urban India



### Context

- India's urban population is estimated to reach **675 million in 2035**, the second highest in the world.
- Although there is widespread recognition that cities have been fuelling India's rapid rise to economic superpower status, almost all are failing their inhabitants in terms of delivering on health, environmental, and equity targets.

### Issues

- India's urban inhabitants experience:-
  - **multi-scalar health risks** including the world's highest levels of air and noise pollution, limited greenery,
  - **lack of access to sidewalks and parks** that limit active lifestyles,
  - **archaic modes of transport** that contribute to air pollution,
  - pernicious **access to nutritionally dense unhealthy foods** and
  - **unprecedented exposure to toxic chemicals** and heavy metals.
- Unhealthy diets, reduced physical activity, and air



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pollution in cities in India pose a greater risk of morbidity and mortality than most other risk factors combined including drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and accidents.

Head coach of India women’s cricket



Context

- **Amol Muzumdar**, the domestic stalwart-turned-coach, has been appointed as the head coach of **India women’s cricket team**
- He was appointed by the **BCCI**.

About BCCI

- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** is the national governing body of Cricket in India.
- Its headquarters is situated at the **Cricket Centre in Churchgate, Mumbai**.
- The BCCI is the **wealthiest governing body of cricket in the world**.

The gender gap in earnings

Context

- The **Periodic Labour Force Surveys (PLFS)** have been monitoring the gender earnings gap across various forms of employment from **April-June 2019 to 2023**
- The gender gap in earnings is still a persistent phenomenon.

Key facts

- Men earn more than women across all forms of work, the gap is greatest for the self-employed.
- In 2023, male self-employed workers earned **2.8 times** that of women.
- In contrast, male regular wage workers earned **24% more** than women and male casual workers earned **48% more**.
- The gender gap has increased for self-employed workers while falling for regular wage workers.
- Male regular wage workers earned **34% more than women from 2019 to 2022**, with the gap falling to **24% in 2023**.



# Income gap

Women tend to work fewer hours per week than men, influenced by various factors, including social expectations and personal choices, although these factors aren't always easily separable

Table 1: Male-Female ratio of weekly earnings

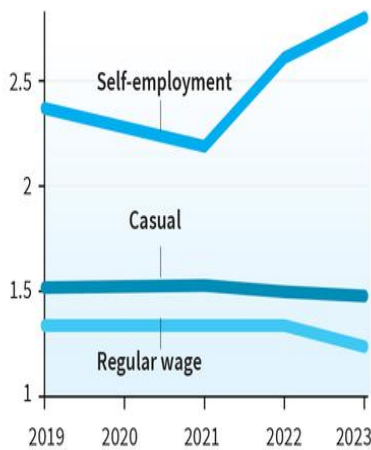


Table 2: Male-Female ratio of hours worked

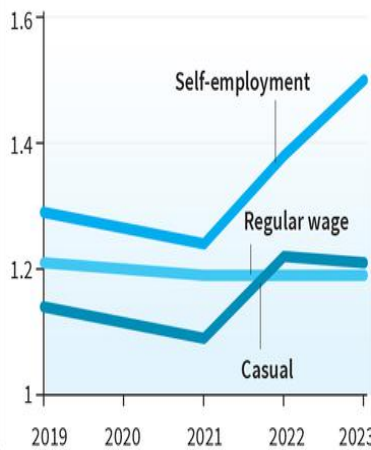
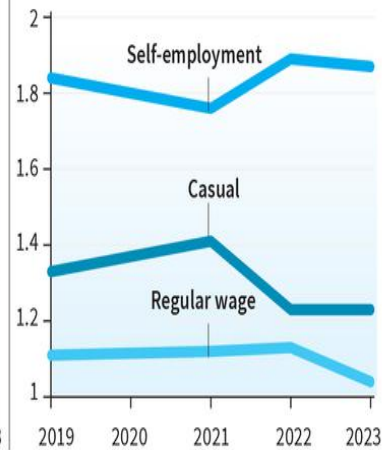


Table 3: Male-Female ratio of hourly earnings



## Kerala Regional News

<p><b>AIIMS hospital to be set up in Balussery</b></p>	<p><b>In News:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerala Health Minister Veena George confirmed that the first AIIMS allotted for the state will be set up in <b>Kinaloor estate in Balussery</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment of an AIIMS hospital in Balussery will be a major boost to the <b>healthcare sector in Kerala</b>.</li> <li>• It will provide people in the region with access to world-class medical facilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Chengannur-Pamba link to be developed as semi-high speed railway track</b></p>	<p><b>In News:</b> The railways have decided to develop the proposed Chengannur-Pamba railway link as a <b>semi-high speed railway track</b>.</p> <p><b>Key Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services will run on the double-tracked transit system only <b>during the Sabarimala season</b>.</li> <li>• By traveling on the 60 km stretch, one would be able to reach Pamba from Chengannur in just 45 minutes.</li> </ul>



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- **Vande Bharat trains** will be used for running the service.

### About Vande Bharat trains:

- Vande Bharat Express is a semi-high-speed train service operated by Indian Railways.
- The trains are **indigenously developed and manufactured by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai, India.**
- Vande Bharat Express trains are equipped with state-of-the-art amenities, including comfortable seating, automatic doors, air conditioning, and Wi-Fi.

### Person in News: V S Achuthanandan



### Context:

- V S Achuthanandan, the veteran Communist leader who completed 100 years has several records to his name. Here are a few of them:
  - He holds the record of being the **eldest member ever in the history of the Kerala Legislative Assembly** (97 years, six months, and 13 days old (35,625 days) )
  - He is the eldest person ever to become the **Chief Minister of Kerala.**
  - He has served as the Opposition leader of Kerala for the longest period ever.

### Retail inflation in Kerala eases to 4.72% in Sept

#### Inflation fluctuation

Month	Kerala	India
September	4.72	5.02
August	6.26	6.83
July	6.43	7.44
June	5.25	4.81
May	4.48	4.25
April	5.63	4.70
March	5.76	5.66
February	6.27	6.44
January	6.45	6.52

### In News: Retail inflation in Kerala eases to 4.72% in Sept

- Indicating a cooling down of prices, the **retail inflation in Kerala eased to 4.72% in September from 6.26%** in the previous month.

### Key Points:

- The national average also eased down to **5.02%** well within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) tolerance band of **2-6%**.
- While Kerala's retail inflation surpassed the national average from March to June this year, July marked a significant peak at 6.43%, majorly influenced by a surge in **vegetable prices.**
- Kerala's category-wise **consumer price indices (CPI)** for September reveal that the drop was due to the sequential fall in food prices.
- The CPI for food basket dropped from 198.1 in July to 197.2 in August and 193.5 in July.

### Key Facts:

- **Retail inflation** is the rate at which the prices of goods and services consumed by households are rising.



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- It is measured by the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, which is a basket of goods and services that are commonly purchased by households.

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