

## Prelim Bits 10-05-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Share of Religious Minorities (1950-2015)

A recent working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) pointed out that India witnessed a reduction in the share of the majority religious denomination by 7.82%.

- **About** - The paper is a cross-country descriptive analysis of the ***status of minorities around the world*** measured in terms of their changing share in a country's population over 65 years ***between 1950 and 2015***.
- **Baseline year** - For the 167 countries analysed, the average value for the share of the majority religious denomination in the baseline year of **1950** is 75%.

### Key findings

Religion	% of population in 1950	% of population in 2015	Changes
Hindus	84.68%	78.06%	<b>Decrease</b> in population
Jains	0.45%	0.36%	<b>Decrease</b> in population
Parsis	0.03%	0.004%	<b>Decrease</b> in population
Muslims	9.84%	14.09%	<b>Increase</b> in population
Christians	2.24%	2.36%	<b>Increase</b> in population
Sikhs	1.24%	1.85%	<b>Increase</b> in population

- **Global trends** - In keeping with the global trends of declining majority, India too has witnessed a **reduction** in the share of the majority religious denomination by 7.82%.
- **Trends in South Asian Countries** - The share of the **majority religious denomination has increased** and minority populations have **shrunk** alarmingly across countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Afghanistan.

Majority Religion	Country	Majority religion share		Change in share (as %)
		1950	2015	
Hindu	India	84.68	78.06	-7.82
Hindu	Nepal	84.30	81.26	-3.61
Muslim	Maldives	99.83	98.36	-1.47
Muslim	Afghanistan	88.75	89.01	0.29
Muslim	Pakistan	77.45	80.36	3.75
Muslim	Bangladesh	74.24	88.02	18.55
Buddhism	Myanmar	78.53	70.8	-9.84
Buddhism	Sri Lanka	64.28	67.65	5.25
Buddhism	Bhutan	71.44	84.07	17.67

## Reference

[The Hindu | Share of Religious Minorities: A Cross-Country Analysis \(1950-2015\)](#)

## The Dietary Guidelines for Indians

*Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) released 17 dietary guidelines to meet the requirements of essential nutrients and prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as obesity and diabetes.*

- **Issued by** - **National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad**, which works under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- The guidelines has been drafted by a multi-disciplinary committee of experts led by **Dr Hemalatha R** (Director of ICMR-NIN).
- 17 guidelines have been listed in the DGI.
- **Balanced diet** - A balanced diet should provide not more than 45% calories from cereals and millets and up to 15% of calories from pulses, beans and meat.
- Rest of the calories should come from nuts, vegetables, fruits and milk.



## ICMR DIETARY GUIDELINES



**GUIDELINE 1** Eat a variety of foods to ensure a balanced diet



**GUIDELINE 2** Ensure provision of extra food and healthcare during pregnancy and lactation



**GUIDELINE 3** Ensure exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continue breastfeeding till two years and beyond



**GUIDELINE 4** Start feeding homemade semi-solid complementary foods to the infant soon after six months of age



**GUIDELINE 5** Ensure adequate and appropriate diets for children and adolescents both in health and sickness



**GUIDELINE 6** Eat plenty of vegetables and legumes



**GUIDELINE 7** Use oils/fats in moderation; choose a variety of oil seeds, nuts, nutriceals and legumes to meet daily needs of fats and essential fatty acids (EFA)



**GUIDELINE 8** Obtain good quality proteins and essential amino acids (EAA) through appropriate combination of foods and avoid protein supplements to build muscle mass



**GUIDELINE 9** Adopt a healthy lifestyle to prevent abdominal obesity, overweight and overall obesity



**GUIDELINE 10** Be physically active and exercise regularly to maintain good health



**GUIDELINE 11** Restrict salt intake



**GUIDELINE 12** Consume safe and clean foods



**GUIDELINE 13** Adopt appropriate pre-cooking and cooking methods



**GUIDELINE 14** Drink adequate quantity of water



**GUIDELINE 15** Minimize the consumption of high fat, sugar, salt (HFSS) and ultra-processed foods (UPFs)



**GUIDELINE 16** Include nutrient-rich foods in the diets of the elderly for health and wellness



**GUIDELINE 17** Read information on food labels to make informed and healthy food choices

## Disease burden in India

- Estimates show that 56.4% of the total disease burden in India is due to unhealthy diets.
- Healthy diets and physical activity can reduce a substantial proportion of coronary heart disease (CHD) and hypertension (HTN) and prevent up to 80% of type 2 diabetes.

### YOUNG & UNHEALTHY

	1-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-19 yrs
<b>DISEASES OF OVERNUTRITION (%)</b>			
Overweight		3.7	4.9
Obesity		1.3	1.1
Pre-diabetes		10.3	10.4
Diabetes		1.2	0.6
Hypertension			4.9
High total cholesterol		3.2	3.7
<b>DISEASES OF UNDERNUTRITION (%)</b>			
Anaemia	40.6	23.5	28.4
<b>MICRONUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES (%)</b>			
Iron	32.1	17.0	21.5
Vitamin D	13.7	18.2	23.9
Vitamin A	17.5	21.5	15.6
Vitamin B12	13.8	17.2	30.9
Zinc	19.0	16.8	31.7

Source: ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition  
Report on Dietary Guidelines for Indians

## References

1. [The Hindu | ICMR releases 17 dietary guidelines](#)
2. [ICMR | Dietary Guidelines](#)

## Trichoderma asperellum

Punjab Agricultural University has developed a biocontrol agent *Trichoderma asperellum* to manage 'foot rot' disease, in Basmati rice crops.

- **Biocontrol agent**- Ludhiana Punjab Agricultural University has developed *Trichoderma asperellum* and registered it with the Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee (CIBRC).
- **Purpose**- To manage *foot rot disease* in Basmati rice crops.
- **Foot rot disease**- It is caused by *Fusarium verticillioides*, a soil-seed borne pathogen which spreads the infection through the root of the plant, and eventually leads to the colonisation of the stem base.
- **Occurrence**- It affects basmati rice at the seedling stage and can lead to crop rejection. The infected seedlings first turn pale yellow, then elongate and dry up, and eventually (usually) die.
- **Eco-friendly**- The new agent offers a *non-chemical alternative* to pesticides, reducing environmental harm and avoiding toxic residues.
- **Trichoderma asperellum**- It is a *species of fungus* that belongs to the genus *Trichoderma*, which is well-known for its biocontrol properties against plant pathogens.
- **ACC deaminase enzyme**- *ACC deaminase enzyme* produced by *Trichoderma asperellum* influences plant defense mechanisms and development.

## Quick facts

### Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee

- **About**-It is an Indian regulatory authority responsible for the registration and regulation of insecticides in the country.
- **Administration**- Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- **Governance**- Insecticide Act, 1968
- **Objective**- To ensure the safety and efficacy of insecticides used in agriculture, public health, and other sectors, while also promoting the sustainable use of these chemicals.

## Reference

1. [Indian Express- A new biocontrol agent](#)
2. [Science Direct- Trichoderma asperellum](#)

## FLiRT

*New COVID-19 strains KP.2 and KP1.1 known as FLiRT variants causing a surge in cases in the U.S., U.K., South Korea and New Zealand.*

- **FLiRT group of variants**- KP.2 and KP1.1 are recent descendants of the JN.1 variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. These mutations confer greater invasive properties to the virus.
- **Symptoms**- It is similar to other Omicron subvariants, including sore throat, cough, nausea, congestion, fatigue, headache, muscle or body ache, loss of taste or smell.'
- **KP.2**- It is considered the 'great-grandson' of JN.1 and is more prevalent across countries which accounts for about 25% of new cases in the U.S. and U.K.

- **JN.1-** It is a descendant of the Pirola variant (BA.2.86), which itself stems from the Omicron sub-variant. It was classified as Variant of Interest.
- **Immunity evasion-** Research indicates that the FLiRT variants, especially KP.2, can evade immunity from vaccines and previous infections, posing challenges for COVID-19 management.
- **India's status-** INSACOG has detected cases of FLiRT variants in India with a rise in COVID-19 cases, emphasizing the need for updated vaccinations and continued precautions.

*INSACOG is an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium, a network of genomic laboratories.*

- **Cyclical disease-** COVID-19 is described as a cyclical disease with periodic spikes, rather than an endemic one, necessitating sustained surveillance and universal protection measures.

## Reference

[Indian Express- All about FLiRT](#)

