

## Prelim Bits 30-11-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### IWIS and CITIS

Recently held 8th India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) & 1st Climate Investments and Technology Impact Summit (CITIS) were included in the G20 India events in 2023.

#### India Water Impact Summit (IWIS)

- **Launch** - Though started as a one-time event in **2012**, it evolved as an **annual event since 2<sup>nd</sup> summit in 2017**.
- **Objective** - To bring clarity to the scientific, technological, socio-cultural, legal, policy and governance issues **pertaining to river basin management in India**.
- **Organised by**
  - **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** - The implementation wing of National Ganga Council which was setup in 2016 under the River Ganga Authority order 2016 under the aegis of Ministry of Jal Shakti
  - **Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga)** - A think tank and a centre of excellence formed under the aegis of NMCG is headquartered at IIT Kanpur.
- **8<sup>th</sup> IWIS 2023** - Its aims to unite various stakeholders to address dynamic challenges and opportunities in India's water sector.
- **Theme** - Development vis-à-vis Land, Water and Rivers.
- **Focus** - Samarth Ganga on lines of productive land and lifestyle for rivers.

*Global Coalition for River Science and Management is a platform for hosting the best practices for monitoring and managing different aspects of river systems around the world.*

#### Climate Investments and Technology Impact Summit (CITIS)

- **Objectives** - To bind potential investors with technology providers.
- To review, test and implement new technologies that will significantly improve India's river and land management scenario.
- To adopt suitable financing mechanisms.
- To collaborate within multiple sectors that are intricately linked with climate, air, land, rivers and water management.

#### References

1. [PIB| Launch of 8<sup>th</sup> IWIS](#)
2. [IWIS| India Water India Summit](#)

## Fast Track Special Court (FTSCs)

*The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of Fast Track Special Court (FTSCs) till March 2026.*

- It is a dedicated court to strengthen the deterrence framework for sexual offenders and to ensure the swift disposal of cases related to rape and the POCSO Act.
- **Launch- 2019**
- **Mandate** - Exclusively handle pending cases of Rape and POCSO Act.
- **Implemented by** - Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice which has an online monitoring framework for monthly monitoring of case statistics.
- **Financing**- Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)
- **Coverage** - A total of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts will be set up all over the country
- **Members** - 1 Judicial Officer and 7 Staff Members in each court.
- FTSCs will be linked to [National Judicial Data Grid](#).
- **Evaluation** - The Scheme will be evaluated by an independent external agency.

*As on August 2023, 758 FTSCs including 411 exclusive POCSO Courts are functional in 29 States / UTs which have disposed of more than 1, 88,000 pending cases.*

## References

1. [PIB| Continuation of FTSCs](#)
2. [DOJ.GOI| Fast Track Special Court](#)

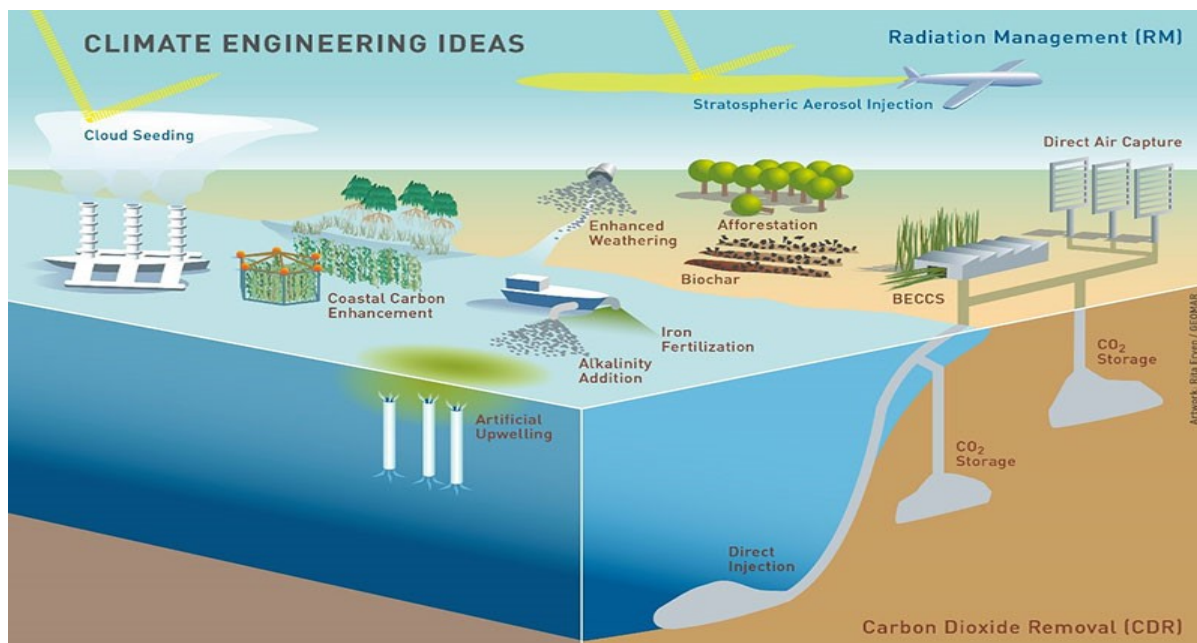
## Climate Engineering

*The UNESCO report has stressed for mandatory participation of the vulnerable, neglected and marginalised individuals in policy decisions related to climate engineering.*

- It is the intentional large-scale intervention in the Earth's climate system to counter climate change.
- It is also known as geoengineering which involves 2 techniques.
- **Carbon dioxide removal (CDR)** - It **removes and stores the emitted carbon dioxide** from the atmosphere. It includes
  - Direct air capture
  - Land-use management (afforestation / reforestation)
  - Sequestering carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
  - Increasing the uptake of CO<sub>2</sub> by the ocean
  - Enhancing natural weathering processes that remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere

According to a report in the journal *Nature*, so far, new CDR technologies have removed only about 0.1% of carbon that is around 2.3 million tonnes per year.

- **Solar Radiation Modification (SRM)** - It ***reflects sunlight back to space*** to reduce the amount reaching the Earth's surface and is also known as [solar geoengineering](#).
- Techniques to increase surface reflectivity of Earth includes
  - Painting structures with reflective paints
  - Planting crops with high reflectivity
  - Enhancing the reflectivity of [marine clouds](#)
  - Injecting aerosols into the lower stratosphere to mimic the cooling induced by volcanic eruptions
  - Placing reflectors or shields in space
  - Removing infrared-absorbing clouds from the atmosphere to reduce trapped heat
- **Challenges** - *CDR is expensive* and is being developed by only a very small group of countries, firms and academics.



## Reference

[Down To Earth| Ethics of Climate Engineering](#)

## Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF)

According to experts, if Global Biodiversity Framework Funds (GBFF) fails to find adequate money, countries will have to find more funds domestically.

- **Establishment** - It was launched at the [7th Assembly of the Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#) in Canada in **2023** where Canada and the United Kingdom made the initial contributions.

- **Objectives**

- To help countries *achieve the 23 targets set under the KMGBF* (the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)).
- To *receive funding from all sources* and quickly disburse through streamlined procedures.
- To *enhance the access* for indigenous peoples and local communities, according to their own priorities.

- **Finance** - Private, philanthropic and government investments unlike GEF, which relied on just 40 donors for finance.

- It has a *cumulative budget of 5.25 billion USD for 2022-26*, of which 36% is for biodiversity and the remaining is for projects on climate change, pollution, land and ocean health.

- **Managed by** - Global Environment Facility (GEF)

- **Trustee of the GBFF** - World Bank

- **GBFF Council** - More representations from developing countries than developed and decisions are to be taken by consensus.

- **Activities** - It will be used to approve projects until December 31, 2030, unless otherwise decided by the Council or the COP of UNFCCC.

## References

1. [Down To Earth| Climate financing](#)
2. [CBD| Global Biodiversity Framework Fund \(GBFF\)](#)

## Quarterly Bulletin of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)

According to the recent quarterly bulletin of Periodic Labour Force Survey, unemployment rate in urban areas has come down.

- **PLFS** - It is published by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) since 2017.
- **Objective** - To estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators (Worker Population Ratio, Labour Force Participation Rate, Unemployment Rate).

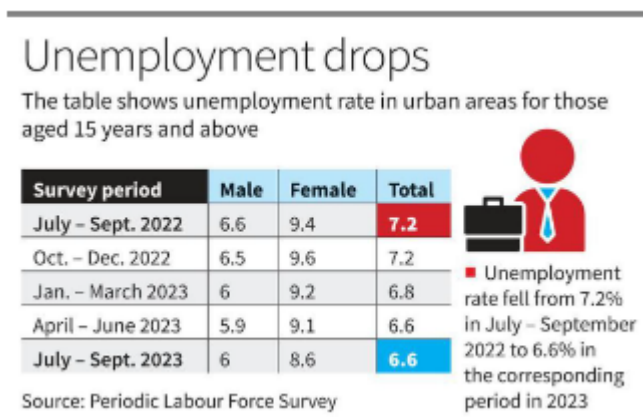
Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)		
	Quarterly Bulletin	Annual Report
<b>Launch Year</b>	2018	2017
<b>Latest Report</b>	For July- Sep, 2023	For 2022-2023
<b>Total Reports</b>	20	6
<b>Measurement</b>	Only current weekly status (CWS)	Both current weekly status (cws) and usual status (us)
<b>Coverage</b>	Urban areas	Rural and Urban areas

**Current Weekly Status (CWS)** is the activity status determined on the basis of a reference period of last 7 days preceding the date of survey is known as the current weekly status (CWS) of the person.

- **Fieldwork** - Data collection through 1st visit and revisit and since 2020 revisit data collection was also done through telephone mode.
- **Sample Design** - It uses a rotational panel scheme for each selected household in urban areas.
  - First visit schedule - 4 times
  - Revisit schedule - 3 times periodically

### Findings of 20<sup>th</sup> quarterly PLFS bulletins (July- Sep, 2023)

- The ***unemployment rate in urban areas of the country decreased*** from 7.2% to 6.6% in 1 year time period.
  - For persons of age 15 years and above, the unemployment rate was 6.6% while it was 6% for male category.



- The ***labour force participation rate in urban areas increased*** from 47.9% to 49.3% for persons of age 15 years and above in 1 year period.

### References

1. [The Hindu| Unemployment rate drops in Quarterly PLFS](#)
2. [PIB| 20<sup>th</sup> Quarterly PLFS Bulletin](#)

### Other Important News

#### Nansen Award

- A former Somali refugee intent on bringing books and education to his compatriots in Kenya was recently received UN refugee agency's prestigious Nansen Award.
- The Nansen Refugee Award is a medal given annually by the ***United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)***.
- The award recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the cause of refugees, displaced, or stateless people.
- The award was established in 1954 to honor ***Fridtjof Nansen***, a Norwegian scientist, polar explorer, diplomat, and the first High Commissioner for Refugees for the League of Nations.

### **Muthassi Plavu**

- A recent study has found that the Muthassi Plavu at ***Thrikkodithanam, Kerala*** is 543 years old.
- Muthassi Plavu is a jackfruit tree stands tall near an ancient Mahavishnu temple.
- It has also ascertained the age of two other jackfruit trees located on the same property as 416 years and 396 years, respectively and temple advisory committee started efforts to secure a heritage status for the 3 trees.
- Thrikkodithanam temple, regarded as an important seat of the ***Tamil Vaishnavite movement***, dated back to 11 BC.

### **Perur Lake**

- Perur- Sundakamuthur Lake or Perur Lake located in the southwestern edges of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
- This Lake Stores the water from Noyaal River and distributes to the other lakes in the surrounding lakes of Coimbatore.
- The Perur Lake Forum has conducted a 6-year study on the decline of water birds in urban wetlands.

### **XPoSat**

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced that India is set to launch its 1<sup>st</sup> X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat).
- **Aim** - To investigate the polarisation of intense X-Ray sources.
- The satellite is planned to be launched on a Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). It is expected to have a mission life of at least 5 years.
- The satellite will carry 2 scientific payloads in a low Earth orbit - POLIX And XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing).

### **Volcanoes of Iceland**

<b>Skaftareldar</b>	It was erupted in 1783 near the Vatnajokull glacier. As a result, 25% of the country's population died at the time.
<b>Grimsvotn</b>	It is the most active volcano in Iceland. At the time of its eruption, it was the largest in Iceland. (eruptions - 1902, 2004, 2011).
<b>Vesuvian</b>	It is also known as Plinian eruption. These eruptions are distinguished by powerful bursts of gas, and volcanic material like rocks and hot gases shot up into the stratosphere.
<b>Eyjafjallajokull</b>	It is an icecap in in Iceland that witnessed 3 months of volcanic activity. The activity heated a nearby glacier river, called Krossa, by 6 degrees C.
<b>Herdubreid</b>	It is a rare example of a tuya volcano (active at the same time it had glacier cover). This one is located in Vatnajokull National Park.



### **Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) of EU**

- India and Indonesia were the top 2 beneficiaries of the European Union's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) schemes for exports in 2022.
- In 2023, however, the situation is expected to change significantly as some of the largest recipients of GSP benefits, including several sectors from India, graduated out of the scheme.
- Under the GSP scheme, the EU allows identified products originating in certain developing countries preferential access to its markets in the form of reduced or zero rates of customs duties.
- As the items become more competitive and reach a particular threshold, the GSP is withdrawn.

### **Kasturi Cotton**

- It is India's premium Cotton in the world cotton Trade.
- It is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Textiles, the Cotton Corporation of India, Trade Bodies & Industry.
- The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL) has been designated as the implementing agency for Traceability, Certification and Branding of "KASTURI Cotton India".
- India is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest cotton producer and the largest consumer of cotton in the world.

### **Jaguar (Panthera Onca)**

- It is the largest wild cats and the umbrella species found from northern Mexico southward to northern Argentina.
- Jaguars are the largest of South America's big cats and the third largest cats in the world.
- **Conservation Status**
  - IUCN - Near Threatened.
  - CITES - Endangered.
- International Jaguar Day, celebrated on **November 29** every year.

### **Red Planet Day**

- Red Planet Day is annually observed on **November 28** to mark the launch of Mariner 4, the first aircraft to land on Mars in 1964.
- Scientists explain that Mars, also known as the Red Planet, is cold and a sandy desert.
- It is the 4<sup>th</sup> planet from the sun, situated between the sun and from Earth.

### **Mabella Vaccine**

- Vaccine maker Indian Immunologicals (IIL) has recently launched measles and rubella vaccine **Mabella** for children.
- It was launched as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> celebrations of the IIL division Human Biologicals Institute (HBI) in Udthagamandalam (Ooty), Tamil Nadu.