

11 June, 2024

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Context: In today's Cabinet meeting, it was decided to provide assistance to an additional 30 million rural and urban households for house construction to meet housing needs.

➤ Completion of the Scheme

- As the current Union government completes two terms, one of its flagship programs, Housing For All (HfA) by 2022, was planned under the PMAY (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana) scheme in 2015, targeting both urban and rural areas.
- The PMAY is a centrally sponsored scheme with financial contributions from both the Union and State governments.
- Despite the original 2022 deadline, HfA remains a distant reality.
- In 2022, the government extended PMAY-Urban (PMAY-U) until December 31, 2024.

➤ Objectives

- Rehabilitation of slum dwellers with private developers' participation.
- Promotion of affordable housing for weaker sections through Credit Linked Subsidy Schemes (CLSS).
- Affordable housing in partnership with public and private sectors.
- Subsidy for Beneficiary-led Construction (BLC).

➤ Slum Redevelopment

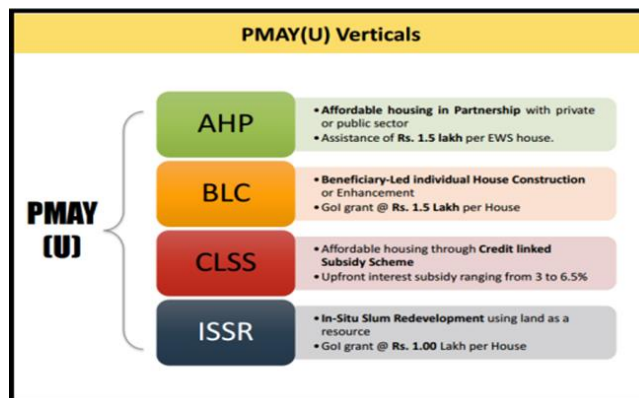
- The scheme encourages private sector participation to bridge gaps in public investment in social housing.
- Estimates suggest around 40% (World Bank: 49%) of urban residents live in designated and informal slums.
- The success of PMAY depends significantly on addressing housing issues in slums.

➤ Issues in Slum Redevelopment

- Private sector-led projects often result in vertical growth, creating additional problems for residents.
- Multi-storey buildings incur high recurring costs for utilities, often unaffordable for residents.
- Poorly designed buildings with limited space deter occupancy.
- Land registered under airports, railways, and forests is unsuitable for In-situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR).
- ISSR plans are often made by consultants without community input.
- A disconnect exists between city master plans and PMAY-U, with consultants favoring capital-intensive solutions over social housing.

➤ Contributions

- The Centre contributes about 25% of the total investment, or ₹2.03 lakh crore.
- Beneficiary households provide 60%, or ₹4.95 lakh crore.
- State governments and Urban Local Bodies contribute ₹1.33 lakh crore.
- The PMAY structure does not effectively address the needs of the landless and poor.
- About 62% of houses sanctioned are under BLC, where the government only shares costs with beneficiaries.
- CLSS accounts for 21%, with the government providing interest subsidies and beneficiaries owning the land.
- Only 2.5% of total beneficiaries are slum-dwelling families rehabilitated under ISSR.



Oath-taking Ceremony

Context: The report, "Raising ambition, accelerating action: Towards enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions for forests," highlighted major gaps in forest protection, management, and restoration within Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

➤ Emissions from Deforestation

- Emissions from deforestation have increased since the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use in 2021, which aims to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while promoting sustainable development.
- The increase in global deforestation emissions was primarily attributed to Latin America and the Caribbean between 2019 and 2022, with Brazil as an exception, showing a 22% annual decline in deforestation.

➤ NDC Pledges

- NDC pledges made between 2017 and 2023 did not meet the global goals to halve and reverse deforestation by 2030.

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- Only eight of the 20 countries with the most tropical deforestation have set targets to reduce tree cover loss in their NDCs.
- Mexico included an adaptation target to achieve net zero deforestation by 2030, aiming for the area reforested to match or exceed the deforested area.
- Bolivia has a target to reduce deforestation by 80% by 2030, with over half of this reduction conditional on international support.
- Côte d'Ivoire has an unconditional target to reduce deforestation by 70% from 2015 levels by 2030.
- Colombia aims to reduce deforestation to 50,000 hectares per year by 2030 and use cooperative approaches under the 2015 Paris Agreement to achieve net zero deforestation.

➤ Lack of Clarity in Pledges

- The report noted a lack of clarity in the pledges, with different countries using varying types of targets, such as area-based targets (hectares), emissions-based targets (tonnes of CO2 equivalent), or both.
- Some countries provided detailed action plans, like Liberia's 14 'Mitigation Actions and Policy Measures' for forest targets, while others, like Mexico, did not provide further details.
- Brazil's updated NDC lacks forest-related targets but includes a multi-agency Action Plan to end deforestation by 2030.
- Indonesia's NDC does not have specific forest commitments but aims to achieve net zero emissions in forest and land use sectors by 2030 through its FOLU Net Sink 2030 Operational Plan.

➤ Emissions from Top 20 Countries

- Commitments within the NDCs from the 20 countries with the highest emissions from tree cover loss are insufficient to meet the goal.
- An average of 5.6 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent was emitted from tropical deforestation per year between 2019 and 2023 in the top twenty countries, over four and a half times the collective emissions from international aviation and shipping.

➤ Key Recommendations

- Forests are essential for ecosystem services, carbon sinks, and mitigating climate change.
- Major causes of deforestation include agriculture driven by demand for commodities like oil palm, soybean, and beef.
- Strengthening, enhancing, and aligning forest-based measures in NDCs and national policies is crucial.
- Developed and forest countries must work together to achieve international goals.
- The report recommends increasing forest carbon prices by \$30-50 per tonne of CO2 emissions in the carbon market.

- Participation of local communities and indigenous people, and recognition of their forest land and carbon rights, are vital for effective forest protection.
- Improved enforcement of existing laws through intensified actions on illegal activities has contributed to the reduction in deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon in 2023.

➤ COP30 and Future Commitments

- The 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Brazil next year is a milestone for forest protection ambition.
- As countries prepare for the next round of NDC submissions for COP30, the report urges them to include concrete, measurable targets on forests in their revised NDCs, extending to 2035.

Aditya-L1

Context: ISRO announced on Monday that its Aditya-L1 spacecraft's two onboard remote sensing instruments have captured recent solar activity.

- The Solar Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) and the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) captured dynamic solar activities in May 2024.
- Several X-class and M-class flares, along with Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs), leading to significant geomagnetic storms, were recorded.
- Active region AR13664 erupted several X-class and M-class flares between May 8-15, with CMEs on May 8 and 9.
- A major geomagnetic storm occurred on May 11.

➤ Aditya-L1 Mission

- India's first space-based mission to study the Sun.
- Conceptualized in January 2008 by the Advisory Committee for Space Research.
- Will be placed in a halo orbit around Lagrange point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system, about 1.5 million km from Earth.
- L1 location allows continuous observation of the Sun without occultation/eclipses.
- The mission will take about 109 Earth days to reach the halo orbit around L1.
- - Carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere, and the corona using electromagnetic, particle, and magnetic field detectors.

➤ Instruments and Observations

- Instruments are tuned to observe the solar atmosphere, mainly the chromosphere and corona.
- In-situ instruments will observe the local environment at L1.
- Four payloads will directly view the Sun, and three will carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at L1.

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➤ Payloads

1. **Visible Line Emission Coronagraph (VLEC):** For corona imaging and spectroscopy.
2. **Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT):** For photosphere and chromosphere imaging in narrow and broadband.
3. **Solar Low Energy X-ray Spectrometer (SoLEXS):** For soft X-ray spectrometry and Sun-as-a-star observation.
4. **Aditya Solar wind Particle Experiment (ASPEX):** Analyzes solar wind particles, including protons and heavier ions.
5. **High Energy L1 Orbiting X-ray Spectrometer (HEL1OS):** For hard X-ray spectrometry and Sun-as-a-star observation.
6. **Plasma Analyser Package for Aditya (PAPA):** Analyzes solar wind particles, including electrons and heavier ions.
7. **Advanced Tri-axial High-Resolution Digital Magnetometers:** Measures in-situ magnetic fields (Bx, By, Bz).

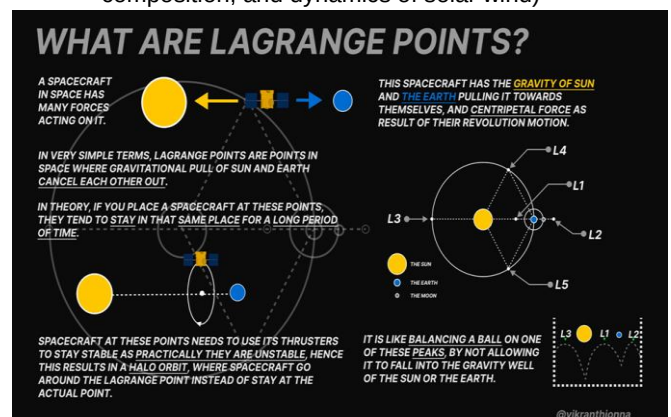
➤ Scientific Goals

- Understand coronal heating.
- Study coronal mass ejections (CME).
- Examine pre-flare and flare activities and their characteristics.
- Investigate space weather dynamics.
- Analyze particle and field propagation.

➤ Objectives of Aditya-L1

- Study dynamics of the solar upper atmosphere (chromosphere and corona).

- Investigate chromospheric and coronal heating, partially ionized plasma physics, and initiation of CMEs and flares.
- Observe in-situ particle and plasma environment for studying particle dynamics from the Sun.
- Analyze physics of solar corona and its heating mechanism.
- Diagnose coronal and coronal loops plasma: temperature, velocity, and density.
- Examine development, dynamics, and origin of CMEs.
- Identify processes across multiple layers (chromosphere, base, and extended corona) leading to solar eruptive events.
- Measure magnetic field topology and magnetic fields in the solar corona.
- Understand drivers for space weather (origin, composition, and dynamics of solar wind)



NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Nano-Fertilizers



Recently, Agri-solutions provider Coromandel International has forayed into new-generation fertilizers by commissioning a ₹50 crore nano-fertilizers plant at its Kakinada complex in Andhra Pradesh.

About the Nano-Fertilizers:

- Nano-fertilizers (NFs) are **highly efficient types of fertilizers** that can **improve soil quality** and **plant growth**.
- They are **made up of nanoparticles** that contain macro and micronutrients, such as **nitrogen (N)**, **phosphorus (P)**, **potassium (K)**, **iron (Fe)** and **manganese (Mn)** that are delivered to the plant in a controlled manner.
- These fertilizers can be **applied to the soil** or leaves of plants **as a powder or liquid**.
- They can improve plant growth and crop production by regulating nutrient availability, enhancing nutritional capacity and increasing the absorption efficiency of conventional mineral fertilizers.
- They are considered a promising alternative to conventional fertilizers which can have negative effects on the soil, environment and human health.
- They are also **eco-friendly** and **low-cost** and they can **help protect the environment from pollution** and **water contamination**.
- The Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (**IFFCO**) has patented **liquid nano-urea**, which is the **world's first nano-fertilizer**.

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BRICS



Recently, India welcomed Egypt, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia as new BRICS members during a key meeting hosted by Russia.

About BRICS:

- BRICS is an intergovernmental organization comprising **Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia** and the **United Arab Emirates**.
- In **2006**, Brazil, Russia, India and China **formed the "Bric" group**, with **South Africa** joining in **2010**, thus renaming it to **"Brics."**
- South Africa attended the **3rd BRICS Summit in Sanya, China on 14 April 2011**.
- Annual BRICS Summits are held**, where leaders discuss various global and regional issues.
- The first summit was held in Yekaterinburg, **Russia, in 2009**.
- The group was designed to bring together the world's most important developing countries, to **challenge the political and economic power** of the wealthier nations of North America and Western Europe.
- During the sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza (2014), the leaders signed the Agreement establishing the New Development Bank (**NDB**).
- The NDB became fully operational in **2016** with headquarters established in Shanghai.

Quality Council of India



Quality Council of India celebrated World Accreditation Day on recently across more than 20 cities in India.

About the Quality Council of India:

- The Quality Council of India (QCI) is an **autonomous, non-profit organization** that was established in **1997** to promote quality and improve the lives of Indian citizens:
- Its main objectives are to establish and operate a **national accreditation structure**, **monitor the National Quality Campaign** and promote quality **through third-party** assessments of products, services and processes.
- This organization was registered under the Societies **Registration Act XXI of 1860**.
- It works in many areas, including **education, healthcare, environment protection, governance, social sectors** and infrastructure.
- It is led by a **Chairperson** and **38 members** representing various sectors, including the **government, industry associations, quality professional bodies** and consumer organizations.
- It has launched the campaign '**Gunvatta Se Atmanirbharta: India's Quality Movement**' to celebrate India's quality hubs, raise awareness about the country's significant achievements.

Sticky Inflation



Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its latest monetary policy review, retained the repo rate for the eighth consecutive time due to concerns about sticky inflation.

About the Sticky Inflation:

- Sticky inflation refers to the situation where **inflation rates remain consistently high over a prolonged period**, resisting efforts to bring them down to target levels.
- This inflation is **caused by a wage-price spiral, supply chain disruptions** and **persistent expectations of high inflation** among businesses and consumers.
- It **erodes purchasing power, creates uncertainty in business planning** and may prompt central banks to **raise interest rates**, impacting borrowing costs and economic growth.
- Central banks may find it challenging to control sticky inflation through interest **rate adjustments due to policy lag**, which causes delays in seeing the effects of **monetary policy measures on inflation**.
- Examples of sticky inflation include the **1970s stagflation**, characterized by high **inflation alongside stagnant** economic growth and high unemployment, and recent trends where various global economies face prolonged inflationary pressures post-pandemic due to supply chain disruptions and heightened demand.

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Place in News

Mauritius

Recently, the Union Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar called on Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth in Delhi.

Mauritius (Capital: Port Louis)

Location: Mauritius is an island nation of Africa's southeast coast located in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar.

Significance:

- It is consistently ranked as the **most peaceful African country**.
- **Le Morne Brabant**, a 556-meter-high mountain in Mauritius' southwest, is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** symbolizing slavery resistance.
- Explored by Arabs in **975**, Mauritius later welcomed visits from **Portuguese** and **Dutch sailors**, contributing to its historical significance.
- Mauritius follows a **Westminster parliamentary system**, reflecting its governance model.
- Mauritius and India established diplomatic relations in **1948**, before **Mauritius became independent in 1968**.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Which ministry recently signed an MoU with CSC SPV to transform 10,000 FPOs into CSCs? – **Ministry of Agriculture**
- What is the theme for 'World Oceans Day 2024'? – **Awaken New Depth**
- In which field did A J T Johnsingh, who recently passed away, make his mark? – **Wildlife conservationist**
- Who recently won the gold medal in the men's 10m air pistol event at the 2024 ISSF World Cup in Munich, Germany?
– **Sarabjot Singh**
- In which country is Mongla Port, recently in the news, located? – **Bangladesh**

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