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30 July, 2024

# Oropouche Fever

***Context:*** *According to Brazil's health ministry, two individuals in the state of Bahia have become the first people in the country to die from Oropouche fever.*

➢ **Etiology**

- **Virus**: Oropouche virus (OROV), a member of the Bunyaviridae family, genus Orthobunyavirus.
- **Primary Vectors:** Biting midge (Culicoides paraensis); mosquitoes (Culex spp.) can also transmit the virus.
- **Reservoirs:** Sloths, non-human primates, and birds.

➢ **Transmission**

- **Vectors**: Spread through bites from infected midges (primarily Culicoides paraensis) and mosquitoes.
- **Geographic Spread:** Historically prevalent in Central and South America and the Caribbean; recent outbreaks in new regions, including Cuba (first reported on June 11, 2024).
- **Human-to-Human Transmission:** No evidence of direct human-to-human transmission.

**Clinical Features**

➢ **Symptoms**:

- Sudden onset of high fever
- Headache
- Muscle pain (myalgia)
- Joint pain (arthralgia)
- Chills
- Nausea and vomiting
- **Incubation Period:** Symptoms typically appear 4-8 days after the bite.
- **Duration:** Symptoms usually last about 7 days.
- **Complications:** Severe cases are rare but can include meningitis or encephalitis.

➢ **Treatment**

- **Supportive Care:** No specific antiviral treatment available.
- Rest
- Hydration
- Pain and fever management with acetaminophen or NSAIDs

➢ **Epidemiology and Climate Factors**

- **Disease Spread:** Oropouche fever has recently seen a sharp increase in cases, extending to regions not previously affected.
- **Climate Influence:** Primarily associated with tropical climates, though outbreaks have also occurred in non-tropical areas. Vegetation loss and deforestation may contribute to disease spread.
- **Research Status:** The disease is understudied, with limited data on its epidemic potential and spread.

➢ **Public Health Considerations**

- **New Regions:** The emergence of cases in new regions suggests high susceptibility and potential for further spread.
- **Prevention:** Currently, there is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment available. Control measures focus on vector management and supportive care.

# India Employment Report 2024

***Context****: India, a founding member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), is expected to file a complaint against the UN agency regarding its India Employment Report 2024.*

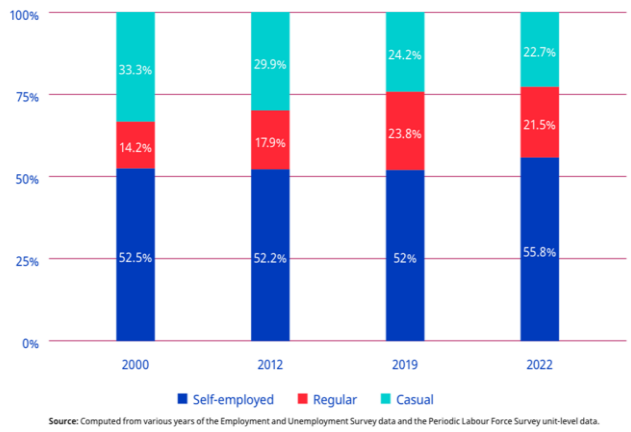
➢ **Employment Condition Index:**

- Improved from 2004-05 to 2021-22.
- States like Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh consistently ranked lower.
- States such as Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand, and Gujarat consistently ranked higher.

➢ **Indicators of the Employment Condition Index:**

- Based on the percentage of workers in regular formal employment.
- Includes the percentage of casual laborers and the proportion of self-employed workers below the poverty line.
- Measures work participation rate, average monthly earnings of casual laborers, unemployment rate among those with secondary education and above, and youth not engaged in employment, education, or training.

▶ Figure 2.7. Share of employment (UPSS, aged 15+), by work status, 2000, 2012, 2019 and 2022 (%)




Source: Computed from various years of the Employment and Unemployment Survey data and the Periodic Labour Force Survey unit-level data.

➢ **Concerns Highlighted in the Report:**

- Slow transition from farm to non-farm employment.
- Increase in self-employment and unpaid family work, particularly among women.
- Poor quality of youth employment compared to adult employment.
- Stagnant or declining wages and earnings.

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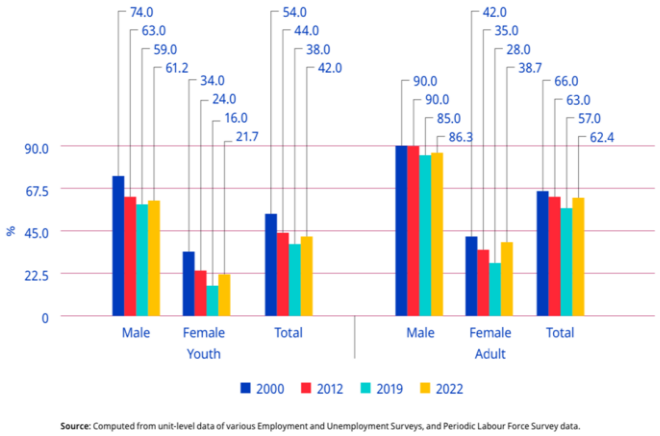
- **Employment Quality:**
  - Approximately 82% of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector.
  - Nearly 90% of workers are informally employed.
  - Increase in self-employment and unpaid family work, especially among women.
- **Participation of Women:**
  - Female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) declined by 14.4 percentage points from 2000 to 2019.
  - LFPR increased by 8.3 percentage points from 2019 to 2022.

▶ Figure 4.3. Labour force participation rate (UPSS) of youths and adults, by gender, 2000, 2012, 2019 and 2022




Source: Computed from unit-level data of various Employment and Unemployment Surveys, and Periodic Labour Force Survey data.

- **Structural Transformation:**
  - Share of agriculture in total employment fell from 60% in 2000 to 42% in 2019.
  - Employment in construction and services rose from 23% in 2000 to 32% in 2019.
- **Youth Employment:**
  - Youth employment increased, but quality remains a concern.
  - Youth made up 82.9% of the total unemployed population in 2022.
  - Youth unemployment rose from 5.7% in 2000 to 17.5% in 2019, then decreased to 12.1% in 2022.
  - Recovery post-lockdowns was accompanied by an increase in poor-quality jobs.
- **Report Highlights:**
  - Based on National Sample Surveys and Periodic Labour Force Surveys (2000-2022).
  - Female LFPR improved from 2019, particularly in rural areas.
  - Self-employment and casual work remain dominant.
  - Real wages for casual laborers modestly increased; wages for regular workers stagnated or declined.
  - Projected increases in urbanization and migration rates.
- **Youth Employment Challenges:**
  - India remains in the demographic dividend zone for another decade.
  - Youth population expected to decrease from 27% in 2021 to 23% by 2036.
  - Annual addition of 7-8 million youths to the labor force.
  - Post-lockdown recovery included poor-quality jobs.
- **Recommendations:**
  - Promote job creation.
  - Improve employment quality.
  - Address labor market inequalities.
  - Strengthen skills and active labor market policies.
  - Bridge gaps in understanding labor market patterns and youth employment.

# National Culture Fund

***Context:*** *There was an information dissemination about the National Culture Fund in the Parliament.*

- **Establishment and Purpose:**
  - Established by the Government of India under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890, through a Gazette Notification in 1996.
  - Created as a distinct funding mechanism to enable direct support for arts and culture through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).
  - Aims to mobilize additional resources for promoting, protecting, and preserving India's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

**Management Structure:**

- **Governing Council:**
  - Chaired by the Union Minister of Culture.
  - Comprises up to 24 members, including the Chairman and Member Secretary.
  - Includes representatives from corporate and public sectors, private foundations, and non-profit organizations to ensure non-governmental input in decision-making.
- **Executive Committee:**
  - Chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Culture.
  - Consists of up to 11 members responsible for executing policies set by the Governing Council.
- **Tax Benefits and Legal Framework:**
  - Donations to NCF are eligible for 100% tax benefit under Section 80G (ii) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
  - Activities covered under Schedule VII No. (v) of the Companies Act, 2013, allowing CSR contributions for the protection of national heritage, art, culture, and restoration projects.

**Roles and Functions:**

➢ **Administration and Application:**
- Manages the fund for conservation, maintenance, promotion, protection, and preservation of monuments.
- Supports the training and development of cultural specialists and administrators.
- Facilitates the creation of additional space in museums and the construction of new museums.
- Documents fading or extinct cultural expressions.

➢ **Project Implementation:**
- Forwards partnerships with corporates, NGOs, and others to implement heritage projects.
- Provides donors the flexibility to select projects, locations, and implementing agencies.
- Monitors project progress through regular meetings of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC), chaired by the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India for ASI projects, and NCF/Ministry of Culture officials for other projects.

➢ **Auditing and Compliance:**
- Annual accounts audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- Donors and sponsors must comply with the terms and conditions specified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for each project.

# NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

## Narmada Bachao Andolan

*Recently, a Delhi court suspended the sentence awarded to social activist Medha Patkar, known for the Narmada Bachao Andolan, in a criminal defamation case filed by Delhi Lieutenant-Governor.*

**About Narmada Bachao Andolan:**
- The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is **a social movement in India** that began in **1985** to oppose the construction of large **dams on the Narmada River**.
- The **movement was led by Medha Patkar**, an Indian social activist, along with native tribals, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists.
- The goals of this andolan were to stop construction on the dams, especially the **Sardar Sarovar Dam** and to demand transparency from the government and funding sources, particularly the **World Bank**.
- The movement argued that the dams would **displace thousands of people** and have a devastating impact on the environment.
- It was successful in delaying the construction of some of the dams and forced the World Bank to end its funding of the Sardar Sarovar Dam between **1985** and **1993**.
- The Supreme Court also ordered the World Bank to review the loan it had provided for the project.

## Ideas4LiFE

*Recently, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav launched Ideas4LiFE at IIT Delhi.*

**About Ideas4LiFE:**
- Ideas4LiFE is an **online portal** to invite ideas and **innovations for products** and services that can encourage environmentally friendly lifestyles.
- The initiative **aims to encourage** and **motivate students**, faculty and research scholars to contribute their innovative ideas to the global initiative of Mission LiFE.
- The winning ideas under each of the seven themes of **Mission LiFE** will be recognized and awarded with attractive prizes for individuals as well as for institutions.

## MQ-9B

*Recently, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister of India, approved amendments for procuring 31 MQ-9B HALE UAVs from General Atomics of the U.S.*

**About MQ-9B:**
- The MQ-9B, also known as the **Predator B or MQ-9 Reaper**, is a remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS) and **unmanned aerial vehicle** (UAV) **developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems**.
- It is a High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) drone that can fly for **over 40 hours** using a satellite and is designed for long-endurance missions.
- It can be used for a variety of purposes, including: **Offensive missions**, **Reconnaissance**, **Surveillance** and **Intelligence operations**.
- It is modular and can accommodate a variety of **payloads** and **munitions**, such as **missiles** and **bombs**.
- The drones will be **used by the Indian Navy**, **Army** and **Air Force for maritime** security, surveillance and reconnaissance patrols.

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## Amoebic Brain Infection

*Recently, an Amoebic brain infection has been confirmed in a four-year-old boy in Kerala.*

### About the Amoebic Brain Infection:

- Amoebic brain infection, also **known as primary amoebic meningoencephalitis** (PAM).
- It is a severe and **often fatal disease caused by the amoeba Naegleria fowleri**, also known as the "brain-eating amoeba".
- The amoeba **lives in warm freshwater environments**, such as **lakes**, **ponds**, **rivers** and poorly maintained **swimming pools**.
- It infects people **when contaminated water enters their nose** and **travels to the brain**, where it **destroys brain tissue** and **causes swelling**.
- Amoebic brain infection symptoms include **headache**, **fever**, **nausea** and vomiting.

## Place in News

## Iran

*Recently, Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized Pearl G, a Togo-flagged oil tanker, in the Gulf, arresting its nine Indian crew members for alleged fuel smuggling near the disputed Arash oil field between Iran and Kuwait.*

### Iran (Capital: Tehran)

**Location:** Iran also known as Persia and officially the Islamic Republic of Iran, is a country situated in **Western Asia.**

**Boundaries:** Iran shares its borders with **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan** (East), **Turkey** and **Iraq** (West), **Azerbaijan**, **Armenia**, **Turkmenistan** and the **Caspian Sea** (North) and **The Persian Gulf** and **the Gulf of Oman** (South).

### Physical Features:

- **Karun River** is the most significant river of Iran, flowing through the Zagros Mountains and supporting agricultural activities.
- **Mount Damavand is an active volcano**, considered a stratovolcano, situated in the Alborz mountain range.
- Iran holds substantial reserves of **oil and natural gas**.

### Membership:

Iran is a member of various international organizations including the **United Nations**, **Non-Aligned Movement**, **Organization of Islamic Cooperation**, **Economic Cooperation Organization**, **Shanghai Cooperation Organization**, **World Health Organization** and **International Atomic Energy Agency**.

## POINTS TO PONDER

- Where was the 14th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting recently held? **– Vientiane, Lao PDR**
- What does 'Greenium' refer to? **– The savings an issuer of a green bond realizes on the associated coupon payment**
- In which region of India were 'Magnetofossils' recently discovered? **– Ladakh**
- Which organization recently received $215.6 million from the Green Climate Fund for financing mitigation and adaptation projects? **– SIDBI**
- Where was the country's 500th Community Radio Station recently inaugurated? **– Aizawl**