

## NABARD released Second All India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey (NAFIS) 2021-22

NAFIS was launched in 2016-17 as a national level survey that offers comprehensive overview of rural population in terms of their status of livelihoods and level of financial inclusion (including loans, insurance, pension etc.).

➤ Second NAFIS provides key insight into economic and financial indicators of rural development since 2016-17.

### Key highlights of survey

- Average monthly income of households increased by 57.6%.
- Share of food in consumption basket of households declined from 51% to 47%.
- Kisan Credit Card as a prominent instrument of financial inclusion in rural farm sector has been found to be very effective.
- Average size of landholding declined to 0.74 hectare from 1.08 hectare.
- Proportion of respondents indicating good financial literacy increased from 33.9% to 51.3%.
- Proportion of agricultural households that took loans from institutional sources increased from 60.5% to 75.5%.

### Reasons for rise in rural income

- **Government Support:** Example, under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, 5.6 crore households availed employment (January 2023), thus increasing their incomes and provides livelihood security.
- **Rise in Rural Female Labour Force Participation Rate:** From 19.7% in 2018-19 to 27.7% in 2020-21 (Economic Survey 2022-23).

### About NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)

- It was formed based on recommendation of B. Sivaraman Committee.
- It is India's apex development bank, established in 1982 under an Act of Parliament to promote sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural development.

### NAFINDEX: Measure of Financial Inclusion

- Based on field level data collected through NAFIS 2016-17, NAFINDEX has been constructed for different states of India.
- Three dimensions, **traditional banking products, modern banking products, and payment systems**, are considered for constructing the index.

## Cabinet Committee on Security clears deals for 31 MQ-9B drones from US and two Indigenous Nuclear Attack Submarines

Procurement of 31 MQ-9B drones and indigenous construction of two nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) will enhance India's military prowess.

### About MQ-9B Drones

- **Description:** High Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial vehicles designed for surveillance, reconnaissance, and precision strike missions.
- **Features:** Fly over horizon via satellite for upto 40 hours; hit targets on land, at sea, and in air.
- **Two variants:** SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian (maritime variant).
  - ⊕ Deal includes 16 Sky Guardian and 15 Sea Guardian variants (eight each for Indian Army and Air Force).
- **Significance of deal**
  - ⊕ Boosts India's surveillance and intelligence for monitoring sensitive areas like Line of Actual Control with China.
  - ⊕ Part of broader defence modernization strategy aimed at enhancing India's military posture in Indo-Pacific region, further improves operational readiness with advanced technologies.
  - ⊕ Deepens defense partnership between India- U.S.

### About SSNs

- **Description:** Designed for anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface ship operations, and intelligence gathering.
- **Features:**
  - ⊕ Armed with torpedoes and sometimes cruise missiles but do not carry ballistic missiles.
  - ⊕ Faster, quieter, difficult to detect and can remain underwater for long periods of time.
- **Significance of deal**
  - ⊕ Strengthens India's deterrence and operational capabilities, boosting underwater combat effectiveness.
  - ⊕ Bolster indigenous defence manufacturing under Make in India initiative.



## Study indicates shale gas generation potential in eastern South Karanpura coalfield, Jharkhand

Study was conducted by scientists from **Birbal Sahni Institution of Palaeosciences, Lucknow**, an autonomous institution of the **Department of Science and Technology**.

- The potential for hydrocarbon generation within a source rock is largely determined by the **concentration of organic matter**.

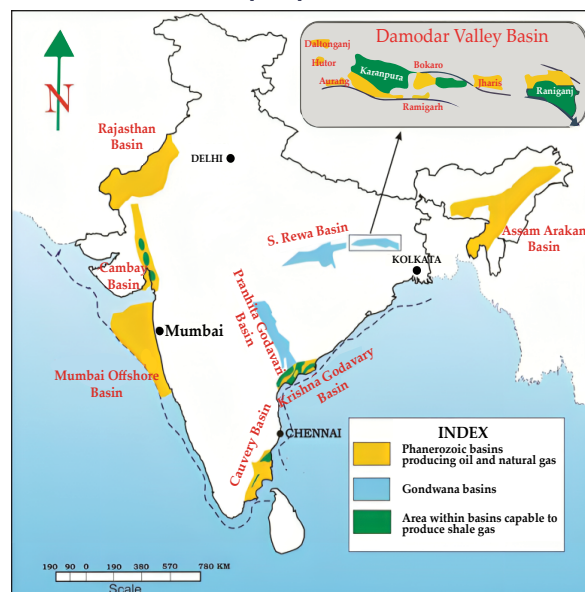
### About Shale gas

- Shale gas is a form of **natural gas (mostly methane)**, found underground in shale rock.
- The gas is extracted using a process called **hydraulic fracturing, or fracking**, which involves **injecting high-pressure water, sand, and chemicals into the shale formation** to crack it.
- ⊕ The **gum made from Cluster bean (Guar) seed** is used in the extraction of shale gas.
- ⊕ **Shale is a fine-grained, sedimentary rock** formed as a result of the compaction of clay, silt, mud and organic matter over time.
- ⊕ Shales were deposited in **ancient seas, river deltas, lakes and lagoons** and found at both the **Earth's surface and deep underground**.

### Measures taken by Government

- **Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) in 2016**, which allows for a uniform licensing regime covering conventional and unconventional resources, including shale gas.
- **PSUs like ONGC and Oil India Limited have been granted permission** to explore shale gas within their existing oil and gas blocks.
- **Guidelines for Environmental Management** during Shale Gas/Oil Exploration and Production.

Distribution of prospective shale basins



## India's textiles sector to grow to USD 350 Billion by 2030: India's Trade Data

India's textiles sector is set for expansion with **11% year-on-year growth in Ready-Made Garments** of all Textiles exports.

- **Factors for growth** of textile industry include end-to-end value chain capability; strong raw material base; large export footprint; and vibrant and rapidly expanding domestic market.

### Textile sector of India

- Domestic apparel and textile industry contributes approx. **2.3% to country's GDP, 13% to industrial production and 12% to exports**.
- India has a **4% share of global trade** in textiles and apparel.
- India is **3<sup>rd</sup> largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel** in world. (Ministry of Textiles Annual Report 2022-23)
- Textiles and apparel industry is **2<sup>nd</sup> largest employer in country** providing **direct employment to 45 million people and 100 million people in allied industries**.

### Challenges associated with Textile Sector

- **Competition from Low-Cost Countries** like China and Vietnam create pressure on Indian market.
- **Shortage of skilled workers**, particularly in areas like **design, technology, and management**.
- Small and medium-sized textile enterprises often face **difficulties in accessing affordable capital for investment**.
- **Inadequate logistics, power supply, and transportation** networks effects industry's efficiency.

### Measures taken for Textile Sector

- **Amended Technology Upgradation Funds Scheme:** Credit linked subsidy scheme for modernization and technology upgradation of textile industry.
- **National Handloom Development Programme:** Facilitate sustainable development of handloom weavers located in and outside identified handloom clusters.
- **100% FDI (automatic route) is allowed** in textile and apparel sector in India.
- **PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park**
- **National Technical Textiles Mission**

## Draft National Sports Governance Bill, 2024

The **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** has released the Draft National Sports Governance Bill, 2024 for public feedback.

### Aims of the bill

- Promote **sports development, welfare for athletes, and ethical practices** through good governance.
- **Establish institutional capacity and prudential standards** for the governance of sports federations.
- Establish measures for the **resolution of sports grievances** and sports disputes in a unified, equitable and effective manner.

### Features of the Bill

- **Sports Regulatory Board:** Central authority to recognize National Sports Federations (NSFs) and ensure governance and ethical compliance.
- **Ethical Standards:** Mandatory ethical governance with Ethics and Dispute Resolution Commissions, ensuring integrity and transparency.
- **Athletes Commissions:** Commissions to represent athletes, allowing concern raising and decision-making participation, with government funding.
- **Athlete Representation:** 10% of voting members in sports bodies must be top athletes elected by the Athletes Commission, including one male and one female on the Executive Committee.
- **Safe Sports Policy:** Protects athletes, especially minors and women, from harassment, adhering to the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment Act.
- **Anti-Doping Compliance:** Enforces strict anti-doping measures and international ethical standards.
- **Public Accountability:** Sports organizations subject to the Right to Information Act for transparency.
- **Gender Representation:** At least 30% of governing body members must be female.



## Prime Minister (PM) participated in the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Lao PDR

The PM with ASEAN leaders reviewed the progress of the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and charted the future direction of cooperation.

- Leaders agreed to create a new **ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2026-2030)** to realize the full potential of the ASEAN-India partnership and adopted **two joint statements**.
- PM announced a **10-point plan** aligning with summit theme-Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience.

### Joint statements

#### ➤ Joint Statement on Strengthening ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

- ⊖ Accelerate review of **ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA)** to enhance trade, simplify processes, and cooperation.
- ⊖ Welcome the launch of the **ASEAN-India Fund for Digital Future** to support joint activities.

#### ➤ Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation

- ⊖ **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**: To share best practices in DPI development, implement joint initiatives for regional integration, and address challenges in Health etc.
- ⊖ **Financial Technology**: Explore collaboration on cross-border payment systems through innovative digital solutions.
- ⊖ **Cybersecurity**: To enhance cybersecurity cooperation for the digital economy and welcomed the **ASEAN-India Track 1 Cyber Policy Dialogue**.

### Major points announced in 10-point plan

- Celebrating the year **2025 as ASEAN-India Year of Tourism** and celebrating decade of **Act East Policy** through several people centric programs.
- Review of **ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement by 2025**.

### About the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- It was established in 1967 in Bangkok with the signing of the **ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration)** by five members. Presently it has **10 members**.
- **Importance of ASEAN for INDIA**
  - ⊖ **Economic and Trade relations**: ASEAN accounts for **11% of India's global trade**.
  - ⊖ **Convergence with Indo-Pacific strategy**: ASEAN is a crucial component of India's "Act East" policy and its "Indo-Pacific" strategy
  - ⊖ **Connectivity with North East**: E.g., Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Project, India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.

## Also in News



### South Asian Development Update report

The World Bank released the **South Asian Development Update report**.

#### Key Highlights of the report

- **Output growth** in South Asia to remain higher than all other emerging market and developing economy (EMDE) regions.
- **Climate change** is increasingly exposing South Asia to extreme heat, floods, and other weather shocks.
  - ⊖ In **India**, smaller firms are more exposed to both heat and flooding.
- **Female Labor Force Participation**: Remains low at 32%, highlighting potential for income increases through gender equity.
  - ⊖ **Marriage penalty**: Marriage reduces women's labor force participation in South Asia.



### Caracal

Gujarat will establish a Caracal Breeding and Conservation Center in Kutch's Chadva Rakhil region.

#### About Caracal (Medium-sized wild cat)

- **Characteristics**: Secretive, **nocturnal animal** known for its **quickness and ability to catch flying birds**; Territorial, and lives mainly alone or in pairs.
- **Habitat**: Dry savannah and woodland areas, scrubland and rugged terrain in mountainous regions.
- **Distribution**: Africa, Middle East, Central Asia, arid areas of Pakistan and India (Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh).
- **Conservation Status**: **Least concern** (IUCN); **Schedule I** (WPA, 1972)
- **Conservation Efforts**: In 2021, National Board for Wildlife and MoEFCC listed caracal as critically endangered under Species recovery program.



### Congo Basin

According to a recent Study, **Cacao farming has surged in Congo Basin** due to rising chocolate demand leading to deforestation.

#### About Congo Basin

- It is located in the **western equatorial Africa** (See map).
- It has the world's **second-largest tropical forest** after the Amazon.
- Known as the "lungs of Africa", it is the **largest carbon sink in the world**.
- It is home to the world's **largest tropical peatlands**.
  - ⊖ Peatlands are terrestrial wetland ecosystems in which **waterlogged conditions** prevent plant material from **fully decomposing**.



### Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking across States (Tele MANAS)

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare celebrated **World Mental Health Day** and **two years of Tele MANAS**.

- **Theme of this year's World Mental Health Day**: "It is time to prioritize Mental Health at Workplace".

#### About Tele MANAS

- **Aim**: Provide **universal access to affordable, quality mental health care** through **24/7 tele-mental health services** as part of the **National Mental Health Programme** across all Indian states and UTs.
- **It operate as a two-tier system**:
  - ⊖ **Tier 1**: **State Tele MANAS cells** with trained counselors and mental health specialists.
  - ⊖ **Tier 2**: Specialists from **District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)** or **medical colleges** for physical and eSanjeevani audio-visual consultations.





### Measles and Rubella

South East Asia Region countries set a new target to eliminate measles and rubella from the region by 2026.

- The resolution was adopted at the 77th Regional Committee Session of the **World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Region**.

#### About Measles

- It is a **highly contagious, serious airborne disease caused by a virus**.
- It spreads easily when an infected **person breathes, coughs or sneezes**.

#### About Rubella

- It is a **contagious viral infection** transmitted by airborne droplets
- It occurs most often in **children and young adults**.



### Brahmi inscription

A Brahmi inscription found in Dharanikota village at Amaravathi mandal in Palnadu district, Andhra Pradesh.

- Script on the inscription is written in **Prakrit language and Brahmi characters of 2nd century C.E.**

#### About Brahmi Inscriptions

- Brahmi is **one of the oldest known Indian scripts**, dating back to **Mauryan Period**.
- Brahmi is the **originator of most of the present Indian scripts**, including Devanagari, Bengali, Tamil, and Malayalam etc.
- **Important Brahmi Inscriptions:** Ashokan Edicts, Hathigumpha Inscription, Nasik Cave Inscriptions etc.



### Nobel Prize

South Korean author **Han Kang** gets **Nobel Prize in Literature** for her **intense poetic prose** that confronts **historical traumas and exposes fragility of human life**.

#### About Nobel Prize

- Established by **Alfred Nobel in 1895**. First Nobel Prizes were **awarded in 1901** and they have been **awarded annually** since then.
- An international award **administered by Nobel Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden**.
- **6 Categories:** Peace, Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature and Economic Science.
  - ⌚ In 1968, **Sweden's central bank established Economic Sciences award** in Memory of Alfred Nobel.
- From 1974, Statutes of Nobel Foundation stipulate that **prize cannot be awarded posthumously, unless death has occurred** after announcement of Nobel Prize.



### TDP1- DNA repair enzyme

Scientists at Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata, have identified a **promising new target for cancer treatment by activating a DNA repair enzyme called TDP1**.

#### About TDP1 (Tyrosyl-DNA phosphodiesterase 1)

- It is an important **enzyme in humans** that plays a **crucial role in DNA repair by removing damaged DNA bases**.
- This breakthrough points to a **promising avenue for precision medicine in treating cancers**, especially those resistant to current therapies.

## Personality in News



### Shri Ratan Naval Tata (1937-2024)

Esteemed Indian industrialist and philanthropist, Shri Ratan Tata, has passed away.

#### Accomplishments under his Exemplary Leadership

- Tata Group's revenue surged from \$5 billion to over **\$100 billion**. It is one of the **largest employers** in India.
- **Launched Tata Nano** to provide affordable, safe transportation for millions, creating world's most economical car.
- **PETA India awarded Tata Motors Cow-Friendly Future Award for using vegan interiors** in its AVINYA Concept car, promoting animal and environmental protection.
- **Awards:** Padma Bhushan (2000), Padma Vibhushan (2008), Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of Year – Lifetime Achievement (2013) etc.

**Values:** Integrity, Compassion, Simplicity, Innovator.

