

# Factly Weekly

**Compilation**

2024

**For UPSC CSE Prelims  
Exam**

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## Subject: International Relations

### 2nd Employment Working Group (EWG)

#### Why in the News?

Recently, the 2nd Employment Working Group (EWG) Meeting held under the Brazilian Presidency in Brasilia.

#### About 2nd Employment Working Group (EWG)



Figure 1. Source: DDNEWS

1. It was held under the Brazilian Presidency in **Brasilia**.
2. India is **co-chairing the 2nd EWG meeting**, along with Brazil and South Africa.
3. The G20 EWG's mandate is **to address labour, employment and social issues for strong, sustainable, balanced and job-rich growth for all**.
4. The **focus areas** for the 2nd EWG meeting is on:
  - (i) creating quality employment and promoting decent labor
  - (ii) addressing a just transition amidst digital and energy transformations
  - (iii) leveraging technologies to enhance the quality of life for all
  - (iv) emphasis on gender equity and promoting diversity in the world of employment for inclusivity, driving innovation and growth.
5. The Indian delegation **emphasized the need for**:
  - (i) gender equality in the workplace and beyond
  - (ii) steps taken for migrant workers
  - (iii) promoting reemployment of senior citizens
  - (iv) participation in the work force of the differently abled and the marginalised.

## Subject: Indian Economy

### Difference between the current and capital account

#### Why in the News?

Recently, RBI stated that current account deficit narrows to 1.2 % of GDP at \$10.5 billion in Oct-Dec. In the second quarter of FY2024, the country CAD stood at \$11.4 billion, or 1.3 per cent GDP.

#### Difference between the current and capital account

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**About Current Account:**

- 1) It reflects the **net income of a country**.
- 2) It records transactions related to **trade in goods and services, investment income, and unilateral transfers**.
- 3) Its components include the **balance of trade (exports and imports of goods), services, net investment income, and net cash transfers**.
- 4) In case of Current account, a **negative balance** indicates **higher imports than exports**, while a **positive balance** shows **higher exports**.
- 5) **Current account deficit** is the difference between exports and imports of goods and services. It is a key indicator of the country's external sector.

**About Capital Account:**

- 1) It reflects the **net change in ownership of national assets**.
- 2) It deals with the sources and application of capital, such as **foreign direct investment, portfolio investment, and government loans**.
- 3) It records the **trading of foreign assets and liabilities, including investments, loans, and banking capital movements**.
- 4) In case of capital account, a **surplus indicates an inflow of money into the country**, while a **deficit indicates capital moving out of the country**.

**Meme coins**

**Why in the News?**

Recently, meme coins have gained significant popularity in the digital currency space.

**About Meme Coins**

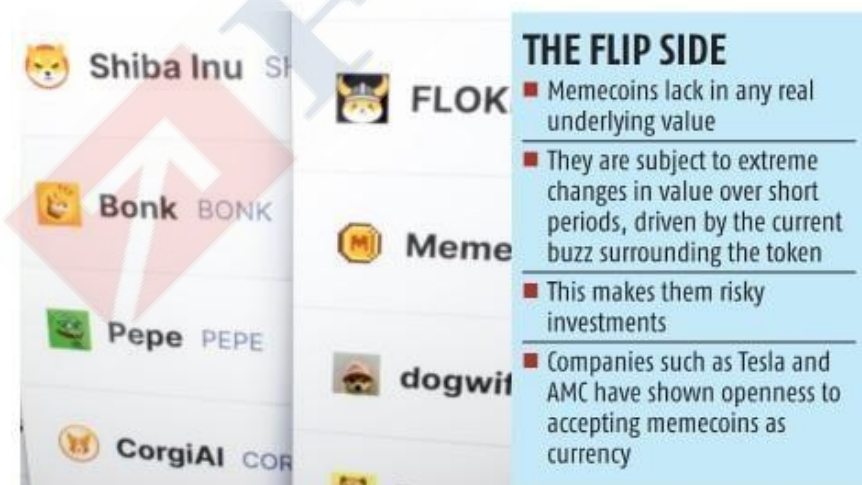


Figure 2. Source: BS

**1. About:** Meme coins are digital currencies created as a form of satire or humorous tribute to the internet culture. They are also known as **'memetic tokens'** or **'community coins'**.

**2. Features:**

a) Meme coins have branding and names inspired by internet memes, jokes, or phenomena. They are humorous and designed for virality, often featuring quirky logos to appeal

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to the widespread online community.

b) The nature of these coins are **highly volatile** as they are driven by the current buzz surrounding the token.

c) They typically have a massive or uncapped supply, leading to very low values per token.

d) These coins leverage blockchain technology, often utilising smart contracts on platforms like Ethereum and Solana.

e) It is easy to create a meme coin as compared to traditional cryptocurrencies. Virtually anyone can launch a meme coin with minimal technical expertise and resources.

3. Some of the famous meme coins are **Dogecoin, Shiba inu, Retik Finance**.

### 4. Risks associated with meme coins:

a) The prices of meme coins can experience rapid fluctuations, making them risky investments.

b) These coins are primarily driven by speculation and community engagement, lacking fundamental value or unique use cases.

## India Employment Report 2024

### Why in the News?

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Institute of Human Development (IHD) have jointly published a report titled "India Employment Report 2024".

### About India Employment Report 2024

1. **Prepared by** – the **Institute for Human Development in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO)**.

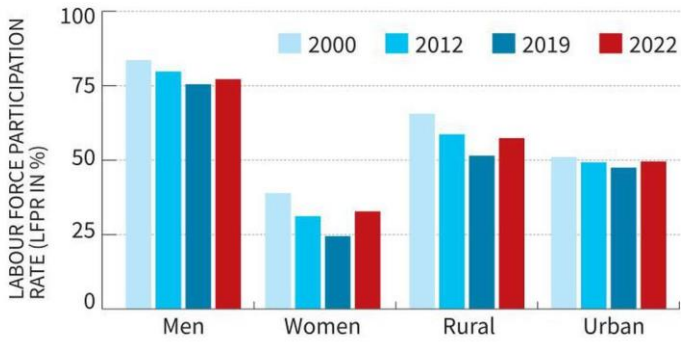
2. It highlights the challenges of youth employment within India's evolving economic, labor market, educational, and skills landscapes.

3. This report has used the data analysis from the National Sample Surveys and the Periodic Labour Force Surveys between 2000 and 2022.

### Key Findings of the report:

## Employment blues

Labour participation for various sections increased slightly in 2022 (compared to 2019) but was still low vis-a-vis 2000



SOURCE: THE HINDU

- There has been an **increase in female labor market participation rates** since 2019, especially in rural areas.
- There has been also a **gradual shift in the workforce from agricultural to non-farm sectors**.
- There has been **predominance of self-employment and casual employment**, with nearly 82% of workers in the informal sector.
- A modest **rise in the wages of casual laborers** between 2012 and 2022 has been observed while real wages for regular workers have stagnated or declined.
- India is expected to have a **migration rate of around 40 per cent in 2030** and will have an **urban population of around 607 million**.

### Challenges highlighted by the report:

- Almost 90% of workers remain engaged in informal work.
- There has been a rise in contractualisation. There is only a small percentage of regular workers covered by long-term contracts. The share of regular work increased steadily after 2000 which declined after 2018.
- There are widespread livelihood insecurities with only a small percentage being covered with social protection measures, precisely in the non-agriculture, organized sector.
- India's large young workforce is a demographic dividend, but they don't appear to have the skills to deliver with 75% of youth unable to send emails with attachments, 60% unable to copy and paste files, and 90% unable to put a mathematical formula into a spreadsheet.

### Measures to address these challenges:

- Promoting job creation.
- Enhancing employment quality.
- Tackling labor market inequalities.
- Strengthening skills and active labor market policies.
- Bridging knowledge gaps regarding labor market trends and youth employment.



## Subject: Science & Technology

### WHO launches CoViNet

#### Why in the news?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently launched a new network for coronaviruses, CoViNet.

#### About CoViNet

**Description-**It is a network of global laboratories with expertise in human, animal and environmental coronavirus surveillance.

**Objective-**To identify and monitor potentially novel coronaviruses that could emerge shortly.

#### Features-

- 1) It currently comprises 36 laboratories from 21 countries in all six WHO regions.
- 2) There will be 3 Indian laboratories namely; the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology in Pune, and the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute in this network.

#### What is the significance of CoViNet?

- 1) It will have animal health and environmental surveillance. This will ensure timely risk assessment to feed WHO policies and support protective measures.
- 2) It will support the building of more laboratories to monitor MERS-CoV and novel coronaviruses of public health importance in low- and middle-income countries.
- 3) Data that will be generated through this network will guide the work of WHO's Technical Advisory Groups on Viral Evolution (TAG-VE) and Vaccine Composition (TAG-CO-VAC) and others. This will ensure that global health policies and tools are based on the latest scientific information.

### H5N1 bird flu

#### Why in news?

It has been observed that since 2020 H5N1 has been spreading across the globe posing an existential threat to birds and wildlife.

#### H5N1 bird flu

1. **About:** Bird flu, also known as avian flu, refers to an infectious viral illness that mainly infects and spreads among poultry and some wild birds.
2. **Origin:** The virus was first reported in geese in China in 1996. Since then, outbreaks have been reported periodically across the world. India reported the presence of the virus in Nandurbar, Maharashtra, in 2006.

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3. **Factor behind outbreak:** The exact factors behind the large outbreaks of the bird flu are still largely unknown. Some scientists, however, suggest that one reason could be climate change.

4. **Origin of new version of virus:** The new version of H5N1 first emerged in Europe in 2020 and then rapidly reached Europe, Africa, and Asia. The currently circulating type of H5N1 is one such highly pathogenic flu virus.

By late 2021, it had spread to North America and in the fall of 2022, it appeared in South America. In February 2024, the virus stormed through mainland Antarctica.

6. **Spread among birds:** Along with affecting farm birds, the virus has also significantly harmed wild birds, particularly those species that are already facing the threat of extinction.

7. **Spread among mammals:** The spread of the virus among mammals, including foxes, pumas, skunks, and both black and brown bears in North America and farmed minks in Europe, raises concerns due to the potential for increased virulence and cross-species transmission in overcrowded conditions.

The marine mammals such as sea lions and dolphins' seals, elephant seals have also been killed due to virus.

9. **Spread among humans:** Human bird flu infections are rare. It typically occurs in individuals exposed to large numbers of infected birds at poultry farms, indicating a higher risk with increased viral exposure

## Subject: Environment

### Eturnagaram Wildlife sanctuary

#### Why in the News?

Telangana is currently grappling with forest fires in Tadvai region of Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary in Mulugu and Amrabad Tiger Reserve.

#### About Eturnagaram Wildlife sanctuary

Aspect	Details
Location	1. It is located near the border of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Telangana. 2. Eturnagaram is one of the oldest sanctuaries in Telangana.
Status	It was declared as a wildlife sanctuary in 1953.
River flowing through	The perennial river Dayyam Vagu flows through the sanctuary, separating the wildlife sanctuary into two parts. The river Godavari also passes through the sanctuary.
Vegetation	It has tropical dry deciduous type of vegetation.
Flora	The sanctuary is rich in the teak, bamboo and other trees like madhuca and terminalia. Climbers are the unique features which are found in abundance across the Sanctuary.



<b>Fauna</b>	<b>Indian gour and giant squirrel</b> are the keystone species in the sanctuary. It is home to <b>Tiger, Leopard, Jackals Sloth Bear, Panther, Wolf, Wild Dogs, Chousingha, Sambar.</b>
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## New cicada species found in Meghalaya

### Why in news?

Scientists have found a new cicada species known colloquially as “Butterfly Cicadas” from Meghalaya.

### About new species of cicada



Figure 3. Source: Eastmojo

1. A new species of cicada in the **Becquartina** genus has been found in **Meghalaya**. It is the **first-ever record of this genus in India**.
2. The cicada's **colourful wings** have earned it the nickname “**butterfly cicada**,” with the name “**bicolour**” reflecting its distinctive two-color pattern.
3. The cicada inhabits the **dense forests of the Garo Hills**, favoring areas with thick, native vegetation.
4. Its wings feature a deep saffron color on the lower third and a matte black on the upper two-thirds, highlighted by eye-catching saffron-colored square

spots.

### About cicada

1. Cicadas are insects known for their **ability to produce sound**.
2. They possess two sets of membranous wings, significant compound eyes, and three smaller eyes called ocelli.
3. Cicadas vary in size from medium to large, with their lengths ranging between 2 and 5 cm (0.8 to 2 inches), and there are over 3,000 known species.
4. These insects are predominantly found in **tropical climates, including deserts, grasslands, and forests**.
5. Male cicadas create loud sounds by vibrating the membranes (tymbals) located near their abdomen's base.

Meanwhile, female cicadas often deposit their eggs within the tissues of woody plants, and these eggs typically fall from the plant either when or shortly after hatching.

6. The cicada was first found in and around the plateau of Balpakram National Park of South Garo Hills District of Meghalaya state in the year 2017.

Later in 2020, the species was recorded from Nongkhrah community forest near Nongpoh in the Ri Bhoi district of Meghalaya.

## Subject: Reports & Indices

### Food Waste Index Report 2024

#### Why in news?

Food Waste Index Report 2024, was launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme).

#### Findings of the report

- 1) According to the Food Waste Index Report 2024, households across the globe wasted over one billion meals a day in 2022.
- 2) Whereas, 783 million people struggled with hunger and a third of humanity faced food insecurity.
- 3) In 2022, 1.05 billion tonnes of food waste generated (including inedible parts) which amounts to 132 kilograms per capita and almost one-fifth of all food available to consumers.
- 4) Out of the total food wasted in 2022, 60% happened at the household level, with food services responsible for 28%, and retail 12%.
- 5) Many low- and middle-income countries continue to lack adequate systems for tracking progress to meet Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 of halving food waste by 2030, particularly in retail and food services.
- 6) It was found that food waste is not a “rich country problem”. Difference between average levels of household food waste for high-income, upper-middle, and lower-middle-income countries, was just 7 kg per capita.
- 8) Hotter countries appear to generate more food waste per capita in households. It is potentially due to higher consumption of fresh foods with substantial inedible parts and a lack of robust cold chains.
- 9) The report found that food loss and waste generated “8%-10%” of annual global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (almost five times that of the aviation sector).

The cost of both food loss and waste for the global economy was at \$1 trillion.

- 10) As compared to urban areas, rural ones generally wasted less food, due to “greater diversion of food scraps to pets, livestock, and home composting”.

### India TB report 2024

#### Why in the News?

Recently, the Union Health Ministry released the India TB report 2024.

#### Findings of the report

- 1) Since 2015, there has been a decline of 16% in TB incidence (new cases emerging each year) and an 18% reduction in mortality due to TB.

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2) The incidence rate in India has fallen from 237 per lakh population in 2015 to 199 per lakh population in 2022, while the mortality rate has declined from 28 per lakh population in 2015 to 23 per lakh population in 2022.

3) Nearly 32% of TB notifications in 2023 came from the private health care sector, which is an increase of 17% from the previous year.

4) While the overall notification of TB cases has improved by over 50% in the last nine years on an annual basis, Uttar Pradesh saw the highest jump in notifications (by 21% compared to the previous year) followed by Bihar (15%).

## Subject: History and Art & Culture

### 900-year-old Chalukyan inscription

#### Why in the News?

A 900-year-old Kannada inscription from the Kalyana Chalukya dynasty has been found at Gangapuram, a temple town, in Telangana.

#### About Chalukya Dynasty

1. The Chalukya dynasty ruled large parts of southern and central India between the 6th and 12th centuries. During this period, they ruled as three related yet individual dynasties:

**i) Badami Chalukyas:** The earliest Chalukyas, with their capital at Badami (Vatapi) in Karnataka. They rose to prominence during the reign of Pulakeshin II and began to assert their independence after the decline of the Kadamba kingdom of Banavasi.

**ii) Eastern Chalukyas:** They emerged in the eastern Deccan after the death of Pulakeshin II. Their capital was Vengi, and they ruled until about the 11th century.

**iii) Western Chalukyas:** They were the descendants of the Badami Chalukyas. They emerged in the late 10th century and ruled from Kalyani (modern-day Basavakalyan).

#### About Kalyani Chalukyas

##### 1. Dynasty and Capital:

a) The Chalukyas of Kalyani belong primarily to a Kannadiga dynasty, also known as western chalukyas. They were known after their capital city, Kalyani, which is present in the modern-day Bidar district of Karnataka.

##### 2. Establishment and Expansion:

a) The empire was established by Tailapa II.

b) During their 300-year rule in the western Deccan and southern part of the Indian peninsula, the Chalukyas of Kalyani expanded and reached the zenith of power.

3. The most successful period of the later Chalukya rulers in Karnataka's history is often referred to as the '**Chalukya Vikrama era**'.

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4. Vikramaditya VI (1076-1126 CE) played a crucial role during this time. He controlled feudatories in the northern region, including **Kadamba Jayakesi II of Goa, Silhara Bhoja, and the Yadava King.**

### 6. Decline:

a) After Vikramaditya VI's death, consistent confrontations with the Chola dynasty led to the decline of the Western Chalukya empire.

### 7. Art and architecture:

- a) The Chalukyas contributed significantly to the development of Kannada and Telugu literature.
- b) Their architecture, known as the 'Gadag style, bridged the gap between the Badami Chalukya architecture of the 8th century and the Hoysala architecture of the 13th century.
- c) The Western Chalukyas minted punch-marked gold coins called pagodas with Kannada legends.
- d) Temples built during their rule are abundant in detailed carvings and ornate sculptures, featuring themes like kirtimukha makaras, and mithuna (erotic) figures

## Delisting of lost monument by ASI

### Why in the news?

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to declassify 18 monuments from protected status. This is because the national significance of monuments have diminished.

### What are Centrally protected Monuments?

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASR Act) 1958 regulates the preservation of monuments and archaeological sites of national importance.

It protects monuments and sites that are more than 100 years old. This includes temples, cemeteries, inscriptions, tombs, forts, palaces, step-wells, rock-cut caves, and even objects like cannons and mile pillars ("kos minars") that may be of historical significance.

### What does the "delisting" of monuments mean?

It refers to the removal of certain specific monuments and archaeological sites from the list of protected sites maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

### Impact of delisting-

- 1) When a monument is delisted, it will not fall under the purview of the ASI for conservation, protection, and maintenance.
- 2) The monument will not receive special attention or protection from the ASI.
- 3) Construction-related activities that were previously restricted around the protected site can now be carried out.

### What is the process of delisting?

1) **Gazette notification**-It involves a decision by the Central Government, which issues a gazette notification declaring that the monument has ceased to be of national importance.

2) **Public feedback**– A gazette notification invites public objections or suggestions within 2 months regarding the delisting of these monuments.

## Subject: Geography & Places in news

### Afanasy Nikitin Seamount (AN Seamount)

#### Why in the News?

Recently, India applied for rights to explore two vast tracts in the Indian Ocean seabed. The application to explore the Afanasy Nikitin Seamount (AN Seamount) is advantageous for India.

#### About Afanasy Nikitin Seamount (AN Seamount)



Figure 4. Source: The Hindu

1. It is a **major seamount** in the **central Indian Ocean Basin**. It is located about **3,000 km away from India's coast**.

2. It reaches up to about 1,200 meters, rising from an oceanic depth of around 4,800 meters.

3. It is **rich in deposits** of cobalt, nickel, manganese and copper.

#### 4. Laws related to extraction:

a) For doing extraction in this region, countries must apply first for an

**exploration licence to the ISBA**. These rights to extraction are applied to areas that are part of the open ocean.

b) Open ocean means ocean (including air, surface and seabed) **where no countries can claim sovereignty**.

c) Around 60% of the world's seas are open ocean and believed to be rich in a variety of mineral. However, the costs and challenges of extraction are prohibitive.

d) Currently, no country has commercially extracted resources from open oceans.

e) **Exclusive rights**: Countries have exclusive rights up to 200 nautical miles, and its underlying sea-bed from their borders.

Note: The **Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf** is a **UNCLOS-linked body**. It decides on the **limits of a country's continental shelf**.



## 50,000-year-old magnetofossil

### Why in the News?

Recently, scientists have found 50,000-year-old magnetic fossils in the Bay of Bengal. It is one of the youngest giant magnetofossils to be found yet.

### About the magneto fossil

**1. About:** Magnetofossils are the **fossilised remains of magnetic particles**.

They are created by magnetotactic bacteria, also known as magnetobacteria.

2. Magnetotactic bacteria are **mostly prokaryotic organisms** that arrange themselves along the earth's magnetic field. These unique creatures were **first described in 1963**.

3. These organisms were believed to follow the magnetic field to reach places that had **optimal oxygen concentration**.

4. It was found that the bacteria contained **novel structured particles** in small sacs that essentially **worked as a compass**. They are **rich in iron**.

5. These magnetotactic bacteria create **tiny crystals made of the iron-rich minerals** magnetite or greigite. The crystals **help them navigate the changing oxygen levels** in the water body in which they live.

6. The fossils left behind by the crystal-creating bacteria help scientists collect information regarding the conditions that prevailed millions of years ago, and which contributed to **"the sediment magnetic signal"**

### Findings of the study

1. The sediment core from the **southwestern Bay of Bengal** consisted mainly of **pale green silty clays**.

2. There is presence of **'conventional' magnetofossils** along with giant ones.

3. At a depth of around 1,000-1,500 m, the Bay of Bengal has a distinctively **low oxygen concentration**.

4. The rivers Godavari, Mahanadi, Ganga-Brahmaputra, Cauvery, and Penner played a crucial role in the formation of the magnetofossils.

5. Nutrient-rich sediments from rivers introduced reactive iron to the Bay of Bengal along with organic carbon in low-oxygen conditions, which supported growth of magnetotactic bacteria.

6. The freshwater discharge from these rivers along with the other oceanographic processes, like **eddy formation**, provided the oxygen content in these waters that isn't usually found in other low-oxygen zones.



## Subject: Miscellaneous

### ICG Ship Samudra Paheredar

#### Why in the News?

The Minister of External Affairs recently visited Indian Coast Guard ship Samudra Paheredar, which is in Manila Bay in the Philippines, as part of an overseas deployment to ASEAN countries.

#### About Indian Coast Guard ship Samudra Paheredar



Source: Shipspotting

Aspects	Details
About	It is a <b>specialised Pollution Control Vessel (PCV)</b> of the Indian Coast Guard. It is the <b>second PCV of India</b> (the first being ICGS Samudra Prahari).
Built by	ABG Shipyard, Surat
Stationed on	East Coast of India in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Features	<p>a) The ship's primary role is <b>pollution response at sea</b>. It is equipped with the <b>most advanced and sophisticated pollution response and control equipment for mitigating oil spills</b>.</p> <p>b) It includes containment equipment like <b>hi-sprint booms and river booms, recovery devices like skimmers and side sweeping arms</b>. The ship is capable of unhindered oil-recovery operations.</p> <p>c) The special features include an <b>integrated platform management system, a power management system and a high-powered external firefighting system</b>.</p> <p>d) It is <b>capable of operating one twin-engine ALH/ Chetak helicopter</b>.</p>