

NEWS TODAY

Sample Registration System (SRS) Report 2021 Released

SRS is a **large-scale demographic survey** conducted every year by the **Office of the Registrar General of India** in all States and Union Territories.

Key findings of the Report

- **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** Declined from 130 per lakh live births in 2014–16 to **93 in 2019–21**. (SDG 2030 target is ≤ 70)
- **Child Mortality**
 - ⊖ **Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR):** Declined from 26 in 2014 to **19 in 2021**. (SDG 2030 target is ≤ 12)
 - ⊖ **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR):** Declined from 39 in 2014 to **27 in 2021**.
 - ⊖ **Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR):** Declined from **45** in 2014 to **31 in 2021**. (SDG 2030 target is ≤ 25)
- **Sex Ratio at Birth:** Improved from 899 in 2014 to 913 in 2021.
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** 2.0 in 2021 (2.3 in 2014)
 - ⊖ **Bihar** reported the highest **TFR at 3.0**.
- **Life-expectancy at birth: 69.8 years** (for period 2017–21), registering a **decline of 0.2 years** from 2016–20.
 - ⊖ Life expectancy for males has been estimated at 68.2 years and that for females, at 71.6 years.
- **Other:** Proportion of the economically active population between 15–59 years has reached to 66.2%

Definition of Key Indicators

- **MMR:** Number of maternal deaths during a given time period **per 100 000 live births** during the same time period.
- **IMR:** Number of infants deaths **from birth to the 1 year old** **per 1,000 live births**.
- **NMR:** Number of neonatal deaths that **from birth to 29 days** **per 1,000 live births**.
- **U5MR:** Number of deaths of children **under 5 years of age** **per 1,000 live births**.
- **TFR:** Average number of children a woman would have at the end of their reproductive period.

Disinformation fueling psychological warfare in the wake of Operation Sindoor

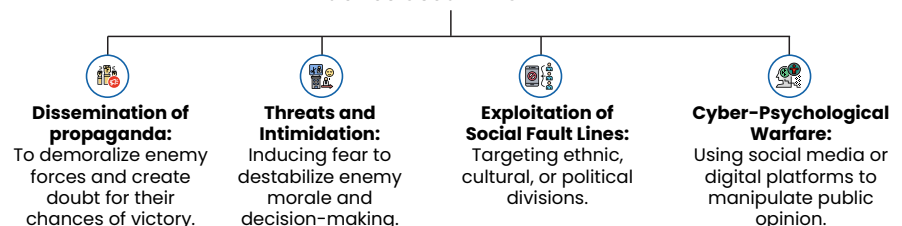
Following **Operation Sindoor**, India's **Press Information Bureau (PIB)** intensified efforts to counter misinformation/disinformation spread through social media.

- **Disinformation** is deliberate creation and **spread of false and/or misleading content**. While **misinformation** is the inadvertent spread of such content.

What is Psychological warfare (PSYWAR)?

- It is the planned **tactical use of propaganda, threats, and other non-combat techniques** during wars or periods of geopolitical unrest to mislead, intimidate and demoralize enemy.
 - ⊖ E.g. **Distribution of pamphlets or flyers** encouraging the enemy to surrender or Using social media to spread fabricated or **misleading information to influence public opinion**.
- **Objective:** To weaken the resolve, unity and effectiveness of opposing forces without engaging in direct combat.
- **Three categories of PSYWAR Propaganda**
 - ⊖ **White propaganda:** Information is truthful and only moderately biased.
 - ⊖ **Grey propaganda:** Information is mostly truthful and contains no information that can be disproven.
 - ⊖ **Black propaganda:** Information is fake and is attributed to false sources.

Tactics Used in PSYWAR



Implications of Psychological Warfare:

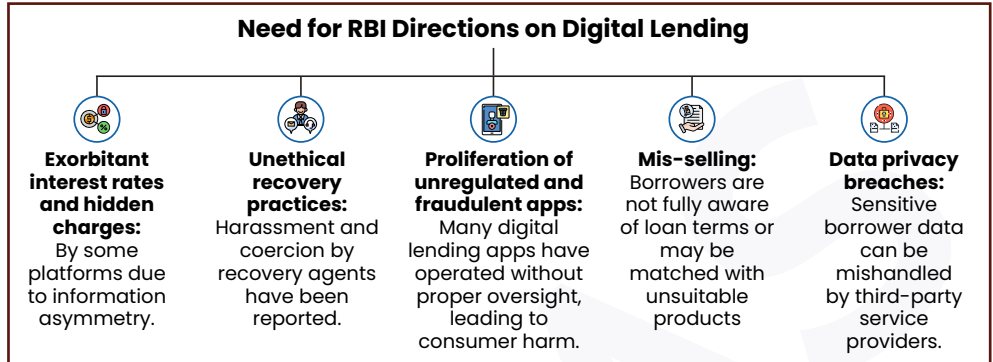
- **Undermines Public Trust:** E.g. Fake narratives sowing doubt about official reports.
- **Ensures Military Success:** E.g. Leaflet campaigns encouraging surrender.
- **Polarization and Panic:** Disinformation inflames societal divisions and hinders coherent national responses.

Reserve Bank of India (Digital Lending) Directions, 2025 Issued by RBI

Key objectives of directions include **enhancing borrower protection, ensuring data transparency, and promoting responsible Digital lending practices.**

Key Highlights of the RBI Directions

- **Defines digital lending** as a remote and automated lending process by use of digital technologies for customer acquisition, credit assessment, loan approval, disbursement, recovery etc.
- **Applies to:** Commercial Banks, Primary (Urban)/State/Central Co-operative Banks, NBFCs (including Housing Finance Companies) and All-India Financial Institutions.
- **Mandatory reporting of Digital Lending Apps (DLAs):** via the RBI's **Centralized Information Management System (CIMS)** portal to create a transparent public directory of legitimate DLAs.
- **Enhanced due diligence:** By the financial entities on **Lending Service Providers' (LSPs)** technical capabilities, data privacy, borrower conduct, and regulatory compliance.
 - ⊕ LSP is an agent of a financial entity who carries out digital lending functions on their behalf.
- **Disclosures to borrowers:** Financial entities and LSPs **must disclose key details** such as **terms and conditions, privacy policies etc.** allowing borrowers to make informed choices.
- **Grievance redressal Officer:** To be appointed by LSPs to deal with digital lending-related complaints and issues.



Defence Minister inaugurates BrahMos Aerospace Testing Facility at Lucknow, UP

This facility is a **key part** of the **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor.**

About BrahMos Missile

- It is a **long range supersonic cruise missile** system.
 - ⊕ **Cruise missiles** are unmanned vehicles that are propelled by jet engines.
 - ⊕ **Supersonic missile** have a range of 2-3 Mach.
- It is **developed** by BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture between **DRDO of India** and **NPOM of Russia**.
 - ⊕ It is named after **Brahmaputra** and **Moskva rivers**.
- **Key Features**
 - ⊕ Operates on '**Fire and Forget Principle**', adopting varieties of flights on its way to the target.
 - ⊕ **Two-stage missile**
 - ◆ **Stage one:** Based on the **solid propellant booster engine**.
 - ◆ **Stage two:** The **liquid ramjet engine** boosts the missile's speed to **about Mach 3 in cruise phase**.
 - ⊕ **Range:** 290 km
 - ⊕ **Versions:** **BrahMos NG missile**, a lighter, smaller and lethal version of the BrahMos missile.
 - ⊕ **Others:** stealth technology (difficult to detect by radar), Pin point accuracy, etc.
- **Advantages**
 - ⊕ **Universal Missile** (can be launch from **land, sea and air**)
 - ⊕ **Export Potential** (E.g. India has delivered **BrahMos to the Philippines in 2024**)
 - ⊕ **Other:** Ensuring lower dispersion of targets, quicker engagement time etc.

Defence Industrial Corridors of India

- **Two DICs** are being set up in India
 - ⊕ **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor:** Consists of six nodal points: **Agra, Aligarh, Chitrakoot, Jhansi, Kanpur, and Lucknow.**
 - ⊕ **Tamil Nadu Defence Corridor:** Consists of five nodal points: **Chennai, Coimbatore, Hosur, Salem, and Tiruchirappalli.**
- **Objective:** To catalyse indigenous production of defence and aerospace-related items, etc.

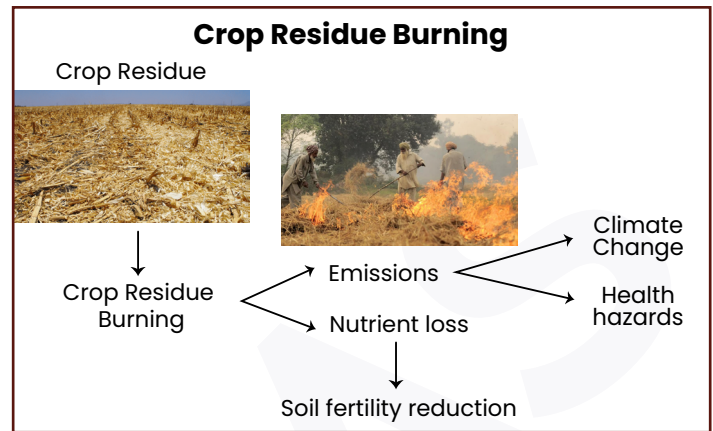
CAQM issues direction for prevention and control of Paddy Stubble Burning

Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) gave directives to Punjab, Haryana, and UP to prevent incidents of stubble burning as per Supreme Court order in **M. C. Mehta vs. Union of India case**.

➤ **CAQM** has been set up for **Air Quality Management** in the **National Capital Region** and Adjoining Areas for better co-ordination and resolution of problems surrounding the air quality index.

Key directions

- **Constitution of a dedicated Parali Protection Force:** Comprising police officers, officers of the Agriculture Department, etc.
- **Mandating use of paddy straw pellets/briquettes for co-firing in brick kilns:** This can be done on the lines of thermal power plants.
- **Mapping of each farm in all villages:** For the proposed mode of paddy stubble management (crop diversification/ in-situ management, etc.).
- **Determined rate for procurement of paddy straw:** Mandated Punjab and Uttar Pradesh to determine common rate of **paddy straw** on the line of Haryana.
- **Promoting ex-situ management:** Optimal utilization of balers, rakers and other machines
- **Other:**
 - ⊕ Establish an online platform for real-time and consistent data reporting.
 - ⊕ Comprehensive review of the inventories of Crop Residue Management (CRM) machines.



Also in News



Safe Harbour

The Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is reconsidering the concept of safe harbour for social media platforms.

About Safe Harbour

- **Safe harbour:** It is a legal concept that protects individual websites that allow third party users to share content from legal liability for any unlawful posts.
- **Need:** As a key safeguard to encourage innovation online and prevent website owners from being unfairly hounded for content they had no hand in publishing.
- **Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000:** Grants intermediaries such protections in India.
 - ⊕ But if an intermediary receives “**actual knowledge**” of **illegal content on their website**, they lose liability protections if they don't work to take content down within a certain time period.



Geotubing

Study finds geotubing at Poonthura, Thiruvananthapuram effective in controlling coastal erosion.

About Geotubing

- Geotubes are **large, permeable fabric tubes filled with dredged materials** or other hydraulically filled materials.
 - ⊕ Geotextile fabric **allows water to escape while retaining the solid particles**, making them effective for dewatering purposes and retaining soil from erosions.
- These tubes are **constructed from high-strength, permeable materials, typically polypropylene woven geotextile**, ensuring durability and resistance to environmental factors.
- **Significance:** Controls **erosion**, reduces **wave impact**, and promotes **beach stabilization**.



Indian grey wolf

In Maharashtra's Kadbanwadi grassland, the already endangered Indian grey wolf is now at an added risk from dog attacks.

About the Indian grey wolf (Canis lupus pallipes)

- The Indian grey wolf is a **subspecies of the grey wolf** that ranges from Southwest Asia to the Indian subcontinent.
 - ⊕ It occupies a **top predator niche in arid and semi-arid open plains and grasslands of India**.
- **Behavior:** It travels in smaller packs and is less vocal than other variants of the Grey wolf.
- **Protection status:**
 - ⊕ **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I.
- **Threats:** Loss of grasslands to agriculture and industrial expansion, modification of habitats, depletion of its natural prey and disease spread through feral dogs.



National Technology Day

India's National Technology Day (**May 11**) has been observed.

About National Technology Day

- It is celebrated each year to commemorate the **successful nuclear tests (Operation Shakti) conducted in Pokhran, Rajasthan, in 1998** and maiden flight of the indigenously developed **Hansa-3 aircraft**.
 - ⊕ These were India's **second such tests after the 1974 nuclear tests (Smiling Buddha)** conducted at Pokhran.
 - ⊕ **Significance of Pokhran Tests:** These tests marked **India's emergence as a nuclear power**, showcasing its scientific and technological prowess.



Banana *Musa indandamanensis*

An infructescence of about 4.2 metres has been recorded in a species of wild banana *Musa indandamanensis*, **making it the longest infructescence recorded** in bananas.

- **Infructescence** is a group or cluster of fruits arranged on an axis/stem that is composed of a main stalk, and often having a complex arrangement of branches.

About *Musa indandamanensis*

- **Discovery:** First recorded from a remote tropical forest near **Krishna Nala reserve forest in the Andaman and Nicobar islands** in 2012.
- **Characteristics:**
 - ⊕ It bears unique green flowers and fruit bunch lux (axis) thrice the size of a regular banana species.
 - ⊕ It is about **11 metres high**, whereas the usual banana species is about three to four metres high.
- **Benefits:** It can provide natural genetic resource for plant breeders to develop high yielding and disease resistant varieties.



Lafora disease

A groundbreaking Study has offered hope in treating Lafora Disease.

About Lafora disease

- It is a **rare, lethal** and serious **genetic disorder** that affects the **brain and nervous system**.
- It belongs to a group of conditions known as **autosomal recessive progressive myoclonus epilepsy (PME)**.
 - ⊕ These diseases **cause seizures, loss of motor skills, and mental decline**.
- **Genetic Factor:** Caused by mutations in the **EPM2A or EPM2B (NHLRC1) genes**.
- **Prevalence:** Mainly found in regions where **consanguineous marriages (marriage between close relatives)** are more common.
 - ⊕ Particularly in **Mediterranean countries (Spain, Italy, France), Northern Africa, the Middle East, and in some regions of Southern India**.



Asteroid 2024 YR4

NASA announced that there are small chances that YR4 could collide with the moon in 2032.

About Asteroid 2024 YR4

- **Discovered using** Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS) (located in Chile).
 - ⊕ ATLAS comprises several telescopes around the world.
- It is a **near-earth asteroid**.

About Asteroids

- **These** are rocky, airless remnants left over from the early formation of our solar system.
 - ⊕ These are often referred as called **minor planets**.
- Most asteroids can be found orbiting the **Sun** between **Mars and Jupiter**.
- **Near-Earth Asteroids** have orbits that pass close by that of Earth.
 - ⊕ Asteroids that actually cross Earth's orbital path are known as **Earth-crossers**.

RIMES

RIMES

Declaration on Disaster Preparedness has been adopted at the 4th Ministerial Conference of **Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES)**, held in **Colombo, Sri Lanka**.

About Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES), 2009

- It is an **intergovernmental body** that provides early warning services, disaster risk reduction strategies, and capacity building to its Member States.
 - ⊕ It evolved from the **efforts of countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific**, in the aftermath of the **2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, to establish a regional early warning system**.
- **Membership:** It has **22 member states** and **26 collaborating states**.
- It operates from its regional early warning center located at **Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand**.

Places in News



Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Capital: Kinshasa)

Devastating floods occurred in the eastern part of DRC near the shores of **Lake Tanganyika**.

Political Features

- Located in **Central Africa**, it is the **second largest country** in Africa (after Algeria).
- **Land Boundaries:** Central African Republic (CAR), South Sudan (North); Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania (East); Republic of the Congo (RoC), Angola (West); Zambia (South).
- **Maritime Boundary:** Atlantic Ocean to its West.

Physical Features

- **Climate:** **Tropical** as **Equator passes through DRC**.
- **Part of Congo Basin:** Congo Basin forests span around 500 million acres and cover six countries: Cameroon, CAR, DRC, RoC, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon.
 - ⊕ The Congo basin is home to the world's **largest tropical peatlands**, along with Brazil and Indonesia.
- **Major River:** **Congo is the major river** and it **crosses the Equator twice**.
- **Major Minerals:** Cobalt, gold, copper, coal, iron ore, lithium etc.



AHMEDABAD



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI



SIKAR