



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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International Solar Alliance (ISA) GS-2 International Treaties & Agreements, Important International Institutions

CONTEXT

Recently, the fourth general assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was held. A total of 108 countries participated in the assembly, including 74 member countries, 34 observer and prospective countries, 23 partner organisations and 33 special invitee organisations.

ABOUT ISA

The ISA is an **intergovernmental treaty-based organisation** with a global mandate to catalyse solar growth by helping to reduce the cost of financing and technology. ISA, **co-founded by India and France during the 2015 climate change conference in Paris** has assumed centre-stage for India's attempts at a global climate leadership role.

ISA is the **nodal agency for implementing One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG)**, which seeks to transfer solar power generated in one region to feed the electricity demands of others. India has allotted **5 acres of land to the ISA** in **National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE)** campus, Gurugram and has released a sum of Rs. 160 crore for creating a corpus fund, building infrastructure and meeting day to day recurring expenditure of the ISA up to the year 2021-22. NISE is an **autonomous institution** of the **Ministry of New and Renewable (MNRE)** and is the apex National R&D institution in the field of Solar Energy.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Solar Investments:-A promise to **achieve USD 1 trillion global investments** in solar energy by 2030. A **Solar Investment Action Agenda** and a **Solar Investment Roadmap** will be **launched at COP26 (United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference)**.

On One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG): Gave a green light to the “One Sun” political declaration for the launch of **Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG)** at **COP26**. The concept of a **single global grid for solar** was first outlined at the **First Assembly of the ISA** in late 2018.

COP 26 Green Grid Initiative:-The aim of this initiative is to help achieve the pace and scale of reforms to infrastructure and market structures needed to underpin the global energy transition.

New ISA Programmes: New ISA programmes launched **on management of solar PV panels & battery usage waste and solar hydrogen programme**. The **new Hydrogen initiative** is aimed at enabling the use of solar electricity

to produce hydrogen at a more affordable rate than what is available currently (USD 5 per KG), by bringing it down to USD 2 per KG.

Initiatives of India

- **National Solar Mission** (a part of National Action Plan on Climate Change): To **establish India as a global leader in solar energy**, by creating the policy conditions for its diffusion across the country as quickly as possible.
- **INDC's target**: It targets installing 100 GW grid-connected solar power plants by the year 2022. This is in line with **India's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)** target to achieve about 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources and to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 33 to 35% from 2005 level by 2030.
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA) and One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG)**:
- **Government Schemes**: Such as **Solar Park Scheme**, Canal bank & Canal top Scheme, Bundling Scheme, Grid Connected **Solar Rooftop Scheme** etc.
- **First Green Hydrogen Mobility project**: National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) Renewable Energy Ltd (REL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union Territory of Ladakh to set up the country's first Green Hydrogen Mobility project. **Green hydrogen** is produced by electrolysis of water **using renewable energy (like Solar, Wind)** and has a lower carbon footprint.

BY ANSHUM VERMA

FACULTY (POLITY, GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT)

Understanding ETFs alongwith Bharat Bond Exchange Traded Fund (ETFs) (GS 3, Economics, The Hindu, Indian Express)

News/Context: The government is likely to launch the next tranche of the Bharat Bond ETF by December and expects to raise over Rs 10,000 crore to fund growth plans of central public sector enterprises, according to a senior finance ministry official.

The government is likely to launch the next tranche of the Bharat Bond ETF by December and expects to raise over ₹10,000 crore to fund growth plans of central public sector enterprises, according to a senior finance ministry official.

The official added that the fund requirements of CPSEs are being worked out and the third tranche of the exchange-traded fund (ETF) will be launched by the end of the calendar year.

“We are finalising on the amount to be raised but it would be over Rs 10,000 crore,” the official said.

What is ETF: An ETF, short for exchange traded fund, is just like a stock and can be also called a basket of securities that also trade on the stock market.

Exchange traded funds pool the financial resources of several people and use it to purchase various tradable monetary assets such as shares, debt securities such as bonds and derivatives. Most ETFs are registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). It is an appealing option for investors with limited expertise in the stock market.

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The second tranche of the Bharat Bond ETF, which was launched in July 2020, was oversubscribed more than three times, collecting about ₹11,000 crore. It had fetched about ₹12,400 crore in its debut offer in December 2019.

The Bharat Bond ETF offered maturity options of five and 12 years in its second tranche, while in the first tranche, maturity options were for three and 10 years.

Edelweiss Asset Management is the fund manager of the scheme.

What is Bond Rating: Bond ratings are representations of the creditworthiness of corporate or government bonds. The ratings are published by credit rating agencies and provide evaluations of a bond issuer's financial strength and capacity to repay the bond's principal and interest according to the contract. The three private independent rating agencies – S&P, Moody's, and Fitch – control almost 95% of the market share of the bond rating business. Each rating agency uses its own grading system. However, all

rating systems classify bond investments by quality grade (investment grade/non-investment grade/not rated) and risk (from default to highest quality). Investment grade bonds are considered safe investments with minimal default risk but provide minimal yields. Non-investment grade bonds are riskier, but they offer a higher yield.

Bond ratings prepared by professional analysts provide institutional and individual investors with a reliable source for making investment decisions.

Md Layeeque Azam, Economics Faculty

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX – 2021 INDIA’S REPORT CARD [GS paper II- SOCIAL JUSTICE]

CONTEXT: In the latest Global Hunger Index 2021, **India slips to 101st spot**, behind Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal

only 15 Countries faring worse than India this year, like-

1. Papua New Guinea (102)
2. Afghanistan (103)
3. Nigeria (103)
4. Congo (105)

SOME BASIC INFORMATION : The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool that measures and tracks hunger globally, region-wise and country-wise, prepared by European NGOs of Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe.

The Global Hunger Index uses a 100-point scale, with higher scores indicating higher hunger levels. The severity of hunger associated with the range of possible GHI scores is as follows:

LEVEL	VALUE
LOW	9.9
MODERATE	10-19.9
SERIOUS	20-34.9
ALARMING	35-49.9
EXTREMELY ALARMING	≥ 50

The GHI combines 4 component indicators:

1. The proportion of the **undernourished** as a **percentage of the population (PoU)**.
2. the proportion of children under five suffering from wasting, a sign of acute undernutrition (low weight-for-height)
3. the proportion of children under five suffering from stunted growth, a sign of chronic undernutrition (low height-for-age)
4. child mortality under the age of five

In the **2021 Global Hunger Index**—

India :

- Ranks **101st** out of the 116 countries [94 (out of 107) in 2020]
- **India scored 27.5** → that is **serious level of Hunger**
- India has got a **poor ranking** in terms of the Global Hunger Index (GHI) in the Global Hunger Report (GHR) .
- India shows a worsening in PoU and childhood wasting in comparison with 2012.

REACTION OF GOI-

- The Government objected the methodology of the Global Hunger Index.
- The Government of India, through a press release, refuted the GHI, claiming that it is 'devoid of ground reality' and based on 'unscientific' methodology.
- The Government is contesting the PoU figure of 15.3% for 2018-20.
- In opposition to the view of GOI, The report is not based on the Gallup poll; rather, it is on the PoU data that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) puts out regularly.

A/c FAO, **PoU**→ is an estimate of the proportion of the population whose habitual food consumption is insufficient to provide the dietary energy levels that are required to maintain a normal active and healthy life.

PoU is estimated taking into account a number of factors-

- such as food availability
- food consumption patterns
- income levels and distribution
- population structure, etc.

All the data used are from official data sources of respective national governments.

The partial results of the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-20) also show that stunting and wasting indicators have stagnated or declined for most States for which data is available.

→ It must also be remembered that all the data are for the period before the COVID-19 pandemic and things are most likely to have become worse after the second wave.

Many of these surveys find that over 60% of the respondents say that they are eating less than before the national lockdown in 2020.

Services such as the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and school mid-day meals continue to be disrupted in most areas, denying crores of children the one nutritious meal a day they earlier had access to.

The novel coronavirus pandemic has affected food security and nutrition across the world.

In countries such as India , the situation has worsened.

Cuts for schemes

The provision of additional free foodgrains through the Public Distribution System (PDS), has also been lacking. It leaves out about 40% of the population, many of whom are in need and includes only cereals.

At the same time, inflation in other foods, especially edible oils, has also been very high affecting people's ability to afford healthy diets.

The argument that the GHI is an indicator of undernutrition and not hunger, is only diverting attention away from more substantial issues.

BY,

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PLUTUS IAS

Zine Culture : A culture of Art Lovers

(GS Paper 1: Art and Culture)

Context :

A fest related to zine art is going to start in the commercial capital of India, Mumbai. On this occasion many artists, painters and the designers and art lovers would be gathered and they would discuss how they could use zine culture commercially. How zine culture can be converted into economical vibrant art.

Zine Culture

- This culture was initially developed in Europe, particularly in England. The artwork like picture making or colour designing on a small scale, particularly on self-published magazines or work is called Zine culture.
- It emerged during the 1980s when feminist and punk protests were started by several magazines in Europe.
- This culture generally promotes innovations, collaborations and sharing among various communities. These are the good art for putting our issues on an artistic way.

What is Zine

- Even Though this term is very difficult to clearly define, as per the oxford dictionary it is derived from the term fanzine or magazine .
- Generally this was a type of book which was published for entertainment.
- Funny cartoons were used to show science fiction through these fanzines .
- Zines were the roots of the magazines which were published during 60s and 80 to propagate the social and political activism
- Generally the term Zine is used for the publication of appropriate appropriated texts and images in its original form. If we use the definition of this term as the self published unique work for the interests of the minorities (Cultural , religious and other minorities)

Zine Culture is flourishing in India also

- During the decade of the 1930s it flourished in Europe. Gradually it started to flourish in other regions of the world. In India, it penetrated after the 1980s . We have several libraries related to various zines like **The Tate** (Renowned British Museum and the Library for the Zines). Zines are generally non commercial and published only for the home . Zine are the symbol of home made art .
- In India , **Bombay Underground** is the institute patroning zine culture . This is co-founded by Himanshu S and Aqvi Thami. This institute is playing a lot of role in the propagation of the zine culture
- Gayasi zine Bazar is situated in Delhi and Mumbai both places . it has hosted physical pop-ups in both the cities
- Zindabad is the institute working for the promotion of zine culture , organising zine making workshops . It worked online also during this corona pandemic

- There's also the brilliant Blue Jackal (@bluejackalhere), an indie platform for visual narratives (including zines), picture books and comics.

Artist related to Zine

- Aqi Thami, and The Sister Library
- Renuka Rajiv
- Shreyas R Krishnan
- Mil Ke Chai
- Pearl D Souza

Therefore , we can say that India is also the place where zine lovers are many in numbers . The genesis of zine culture lies with marginalised people. Historically disenfranchised communities have the greatest need for self-publishing. Many resistance movements have traditionally used zines to share their ideas. They may not call them zines

This spirit is alive in the work of Marathi feminist publication Mahila Ladaichi Katha, or Darjeeling-based Lali Guras, which publishes the work of local poets. If you go to Chaityabhoomi, especially around 6 December, you'll see lots of stalls, self-published work in many Indian languages, whether it's Ambedkar's writings or songs of resistance. Ambedkar famously self-published much of his own work, finding few avenues in the mainstream discourse of the time."

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

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