

Jeddah Commitments adopted at Fourth Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

It is a comprehensive framework for global action to combat AMR through a One Health approach.

Commitments aim to translate the Political Declarations of the UNGA's High-Level Meeting on AMR into practical commitments for urgent actions.

AMR occurs when germs like bacteria, viruses, etc. develop the ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them.

Key highlights of Jeddah commitments (Non-legally binding instrument)

One Health AMR learning hub: Focused on sharing best practices and building capabilities for implementing multi sectoral National Action Plans on AMR.

One Health Approach is an integrated, unified approach aimed to sustainably balance and optimize health of people, animals and ecosystems.

Independent Panel for Evidence on Action Against AMR by 2025: To avoid duplication of ongoing efforts.

National AMR coordinating mechanism: To implement and ensure sustainable financing and monitoring of National Action Plans (NAPs).

Promotes global data sharing through platforms such as GLASS AMR/AMC, ANIMUSE, and INFARM.

Adherence to Codex Alimentarius Commission guidelines: To ensure the prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials.

Supports Quadripartite organizations (FAO, WHO, WOA, UNEP): To achieve 2030 goals of UNGA Political Declaration on AMR.

Initiatives to combat AMR

Global initiative:

Global Antimicrobial Resistance and Use Surveillance System (GLASS).

ReAct - Action on Antibiotic resistance.

Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

Indian initiatives:

National Program on AMR containment (12th FYP).

Red Line campaign

National AMR surveillance network of state medical college labs (NARS-Net).

Just transitions must reflect climate justice, India at CoP29

India underscored the need for global climate justice and equitable action during the Second Annual High-Level Ministerial Round Table on Just Transition at CoP29 .

About Just Transition

It is broadly defined as ensuring that no one is left behind or pushed behind in the transition to low carbon and environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

Need for just transition

Climate Change Mitigation: Switching to low-carbon energy is key to limiting global warming.

Global Commitments: Help in meeting India's Nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and Panchamrita Pledge.

Energy Security: Reduces reliance on fossil fuel imports.

Challenges in just transition

Determining cost of just energy transition: At global level, there is no established empirical method to estimate the cost of a just energy transition

Intellectual Property Issues: IPR on green technologies hinders their access to developing countries.

Ethical Dilemmas: Equity and Responsibility, Environmental Justice, Economic Justice etc.

Other Issues: Limited domestic financial resources, May lead to high economic vulnerabilities etc.

Way ahead

Unrestricted Technology Transfer

Equitable Public Climate Finance from Developed Countries

Strengthened International Cooperation and Trust in Climate Action

Set up National Just Transition body to independently monitor Just transition

Initiatives Taken for Just Transition in India

PLI Scheme: To build an ecosystem for manufacturing of high efficiency solar PV modules in India.

Sovereign Green Bonds to reduce carbon intensity.

National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) funds clean energy ventures through a coal cess .

Launch of Green Term Ahead Market to facilitate sale of renewable energy power through exchanges.

Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve (TR) notified as 56th TR of India

On the advice of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Chhattisgarh government notified the areas comprising the Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla Wildlife Sanctuary as the 56th TR of India.

Key details

After Guru Ghasidas - Tamor Pingla TR being notified Chhattisgarh now has 4 TRs: Indravati TR, Udanti-Sitanadi TR & Achanakmar.

TR is notified by State Governments under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 on advice of NTCA.

It's the 3rd largest TR after Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem TR (A.P) and Manas TR (Assam).

A TR comprises:

Core/critical area: Required to be kept as inviolate, without affecting the rights of the Scheduled Tribes or such other forest dwellers as per the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

Buffer/ peripheral area: It promotes human-wildlife coexistence, with lesser protection. It recognizes local rights, determined through Gram Sabha.

Location & Landscape of Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla TR:

Geography: Chota Nagpur plateau and partly in Baghelkhand plateau.

Fauna: leopards, hyenas, jackals, wolves, sloth bears, etc.

Rivers: Hasdeo Gopad, Baranga etc.

Adopts Landscape approach to conservation: As envisaged in the National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-31), the TR is contiguous with the Sanjay Dubri TR (MP), and connected with Bandhavgarh TR (MP) and Palamau TR (Jharkhand)

About Landscape approach to tiger conservation:

It involves viewing protected areas as a network of populations interconnected to each other through corridors to support viable tiger populations.

Interconnected populations are referred to as meta-populations.

Significance: Habitat connectivity, gene flow, reducing inbreeding depression, avoiding translocation etc.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence reviews Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) role in coastal security

ICG provided a comprehensive overview of its operational capabilities, strategic initiatives, and preparedness to address the nation's coastal security challenges.

Security Concerns of the coast

Terrorist maritime infiltration: Potential sea-based terrorist attacks. E.g., 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Maritime Trafficking Risks: Smuggling of gold, luxury items, drugs & potential use of maritime routes for illegal trade.

Industrial & strategic infrastructure vulnerabilities: Numerous Special Economic Zones along coastline; Critical oil and gas infrastructure (refineries, offshore platforms), 13 major ports handling 90% of maritime trade, etc.

Risk of damage to strategic installation: Naval commands (Vishakhapatnam, Mumbai, Kochi, Port Blair); Nuclear power plants at Tarapur, Kudankulam, Kalpakkam.

Other Challenges: Poor coordination among agencies, illegal fishing, marine pollution, and vulnerability to natural disasters.

Steps taken to strengthen coastal security

Organizational Initiatives:

NCSMCS (National Committee for Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security): A national forum for reviewing maritime and coastal security.

National Command Control Communications and Intelligence for enhanced surveillance.

Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA): Enhanced through the Coastal Surveillance Network (CSN) with radars, sensors, Automatic Identification System (AIS) etc.

Procedural Initiatives: SAGAR Initiative, Sea Vigil Exercise, Coastal Security Scheme.

Indian Coast Guard (HQ: Delhi)

Legislation: The Coast Guard Act of 1978

Objective: Safeguarding India's 11,098 km coastline and ensuring the security of vital maritime trade routes. Functions: include protecting offshore installations, assisting fishermen, preserving the marine environment, preventing pollution, supporting anti-smuggling operations, and enforcing maritime laws.

Ministry: Ministry of Defense.

Department of Biotechnology and Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council introduces 'One Day One Genome' initiative

Initiative aims to publicly release a fully annotated bacteriological genome, enhancing scientific knowledge, driving innovation, and making microbial genomics data accessible to researchers and the community.

About Genome and Genome Sequencing

Genome: Complete set of genetic material (deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA/ ribonucleic acid or RNA) containing an organism's entire hereditary information, composed of unique nucleotide base sequences.

Genomic Sequencing: The process of determining the precise order of nucleotide bases (adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G), and thymine (T) in DNA; A, C, G, uracil (U) in RNA) within an organism's genetic material.

Applications of Genome Sequencing (GS)

Disease detection: To evaluate rare disorders, preconditions for disorders. E.g., Cystic fibrosis and thalassemia.

Pharmacogenomics: Involves evaluating effectiveness & safety of drugs on the basis of information from an individual's GS.

Metagenomic Sequencing: Explores collective genomes of multiple species in an environmental niche, enabling rapid species identification and environmental impact analysis.

Agriculture: Identify genetic markers for disease resistance and drought tolerance in various crop plants; reduced time to develop new varieties of crop plants; decipher the host-pathogen relationships in crops.

Microbial Sequencing: It enables advanced biofuel development, innovative diagnostic tools, improved vaccines, and sophisticated environmental cleanup techniques.

Significance of Microbes

Environmental: Role in biogeochemical cycles, soil formation, etc. E.g., Algae- make food using sunlight and give off oxygen into the air.

Human body: Essential for our digestion, immunity and even mental health.

Household Products: Development of flavors, foods and beverages. E.g. Lactic Acid Bacteria (LAB) are used in food fermentation.

Industrial: Baker's yeast is used for bread & drinks like beer from cereals and fruit.

Others: Biofuel production by yeast; Sewage Treatment; etc

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Data Shows Improved Women Employment Indicators over Last Six Years.

PLFS (Conducted by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation since 2017-18) aims to estimate key employment and unemployment indicators.

Key Trends in Women Labor Participation:

Increased female employment indicators(Between 2017-18 and 2023-24):

WPR for Women : Doubled from 22% in 2017-18 to 40% in 2023-24;

LFPR for Women: Increased from ~23% to ~41%;

Unemployment Rate: Reduced from ~5.6% to 3.2%.

Rural Female LFPR : Increased significantly by 23 percentage points between 2017-18 and 2023-24 (~25% in 2017-18 and ~48% in 2023-24)

Upward trend of educated women (post-graduate and above) in workforce : Increase from 35 percent in 2017-18 to 40 percent in 2023-24.

Earnings Growth for self-employed: Female self-employed workers saw steady growth in earnings.

Key Indicators used in PLFS

Worker Population Ratio (WPR): Percentage of employed persons in the population.

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR): Percentage of persons in labor force (i.e. working or seeking or available for work) in the population.

Unemployment Rate (UR): Percentage of persons unemployed among persons in the labour force

Barriers in Women Labor Force Participation:

Social : Child care/personal commitments in home making; Fertility rates and the age of marriage;

Economic : lack of employment opportunities; Effect of household income on participation;

Education : Continuing focus on higher qualifications;

Other: Poor infrastructure, rural residence, and inadequate care and support systems etc.

Government initiatives promoting Women LFPR:

Legislative Actions: Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017; The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 etc.

Schemes: Skill India Mission; Stand up India; National Rural Livelihood Mission etc.

Lala Lajpat Rai (28th January 1865 – 17th November 1928)

Nation remembered Shri Lala Lajpat Rai, popularly known as Punjab Kesari, on his 96th death anniversary, today.

Lala Lajpat Rai

Early life:

Born in Dhudike, Punjab, he became a lawyer and co-founded the Hisar Bar Council.

Contribution

He was one of the three members of the Lal Bal Pal trio (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal).

Established 'The People' journal and contributed to 'The Tribune' newspaper.

Authored several books, including biographies of Mazzini, Garibaldi, Shivaji, and Swami Dayanand.

Helped Mahatma Hansraj establish nationalistic Dayananda Anglo-Vedic School, Lahore.

In 1916, he founded the "Indian Home Rule League of America" in New York to support the Home Rule Movement in India

In 1921, he founded 'Servants of the People Society'.

He was elected President of the Indian National Congress in the Calcutta Special Session of 1920.

When the Simon Commission visited Lahore on 30 October, 1928, he led a non-violent march in protest against it.

He died of severe head injuries he sustained due to police lathi charge

Values

Honesty, spirit of independence, virtues of charity and devotion, etc.