

WEEKLY DIGEST

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WEEK - 1

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UPSC AT 100: UPHOLDING MERITOCRACY AND SHAPING THE NATION

CONTEXT

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) celebrated its centenary on 1 October 2025, marking 100 years since its establishment in 1926. The occasion highlights its enduring legacy as the guardian of meritocracy and impartial civil service recruitment in India.



ABOUT UPSC AT 100: UPHOLDING MERITOCRACY AND SHAPING THE NATION

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE UPSC

- Colonial Beginnings (1919–1926):
 - The foundation for a central recruiting authority in India was first laid by the Government of India Act of 1919. Acting on the recommendations of the Lee Commission (1924), the Public Service Commission was established in 1926 to promote fairness and neutrality in civil service appointments. Sir Ross Barker served as its inaugural Chairman.
- Federal Public Service Commission (1935):
 - With the enactment of the Government of India Act, 1935, the commission was reconstituted as the Federal Public Service Commission, allowing Indians a greater role in administrative recruitment during the later years of British rule.

- **Post-Independence Transformation (1950):**
 - Following India's independence, Articles 315 to 323 of the Constitution redefined the body as the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), granting it constitutional status and ensuring its independence in selecting candidates for public services.
- **Contemporary Role:**
 - Today, the UPSC conducts diverse examinations for services in civil administration, engineering, medicine, forestry, defence, and statistics, continuing to serve as a cornerstone of India's merit-based governance system.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE UPSC

- **Meritocracy:**
 - The UPSC upholds the principle of merit-based selection, ensuring that recruitment depends entirely on candidates' competence and performance rather than privilege or influence. Inspiring examples like Ira Singhal, the 2014 topper from a small town, reflect the inclusivity and reach of this system.
- **Fairness:**
 - Equal opportunity lies at the heart of the Commission's functioning. Candidates, irrespective of caste, gender, or background, are offered an equitable platform. The option to write the Mains examination in any of the 22 scheduled languages exemplifies this commitment to linguistic and social equity.
- **Integrity:**
 - The Commission safeguards its autonomy from political or external pressures, maintaining the confidentiality and impartiality of its processes. Anonymous evaluation of answer scripts across 48 subjects ensures transparency and prevents bias.
- **Efficiency Amid Complexity:**
 - Managing one of the largest recruitment systems in the world, the UPSC efficiently handles 10–12 lakh preliminary applicants each year across more than 2,500 centres, maintaining precision, punctuality, and credibility throughout its operations.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATION-BUILDING:

- **Sustaining Administrative Continuity:**
 - Throughout India's post-independence journey, UPSC-selected officers have been at the forefront of governance—steering the nation through wars, socio-economic reforms, natural disasters, and public health crises—thereby preserving administrative stability and institutional resilience.
- **Promoting Inclusivity in Governance:**
 - The Commission's recruitment framework has progressively expanded to include candidates from rural, semi-urban, and marginalized communities, thereby enriching governance with diverse perspectives. According to DoPT data, over 60% of recent successful candidates come from rural backgrounds, reflecting this inclusivity.
- **Professionalising the Civil Services:**
 - UPSC has been instrumental in nurturing a professional and ethical bureaucracy grounded in neutrality, integrity, and efficiency, which remains vital for the functioning of India's democratic institutions.
- **Strengthening Federalism:**
 - By recruiting for the All India Services—including the IAS, IPS, and IFoS—the Commission reinforces cooperative federalism, ensuring a balanced administrative linkage between the Union and the States.

RECENT REFORMS :

- **Technological Advancements:**
 - The UPSC has embraced digital transformation through the introduction of online application systems, biometric verification, and facial-recognition tools, aimed at minimizing impersonation and examination malpractice.
- **PRATIBHA Setu Initiative:**
 - Launched to enhance career mobility, PRATIBHA Setu connects candidates who qualified for the interview stage with alternative professional opportunities, ensuring that their potential and skills are effectively utilized rather than lost.
- **AI-Driven Recruitment:**
 - The Commission is exploring the integration of Artificial Intelligence to streamline processes such as candidate screening, evaluation, and fraud detection, making recruitment more transparent and efficient.

CHALLENGES AHEAD:

- **Evolving Skill Requirements:**
 - The changing landscape of governance demands civil servants proficient not only in traditional administration but also in emerging domains such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analytics, and climate policy, necessitating a broader skill set.
- **Ensuring Equity:**
 - Rising costs of coaching and the dominance of urban preparation hubs risk undermining the level playing field that the UPSC aspires to maintain, posing challenges to equal opportunity in recruitment.
- **Mounting Examination Pressure:**
 - With a selection ratio of nearly 1 in 1,000, aspirants often experience severe financial, emotional, and social strain, highlighting the need for mental health awareness and support mechanisms.
- **Shifting Public Expectations:**
 - In an era of digital governance and instant communication, citizens increasingly demand faster, more transparent, and technology-driven administration—pushing the civil services to continuously upgrade skills and adapt to new governance models.

WAY FORWARD :

- **Modernising Curriculum:**
 - Civil service training programmes should be updated to incorporate subjects such as digital governance, climate change, and global geopolitics, ensuring that officers remain relevant in a rapidly evolving policy environment.
- **Promoting Inclusive Access:**
 - Greater efforts are needed to expand rural outreach, financial aid, and digital learning initiatives, thereby enabling aspirants from all backgrounds to compete on an equal footing.
- **Advancing Continuous Learning:**
 - The Mid-Career Training Programmes (MCTPs) must be further strengthened to help officers reskill and upskill in response to emerging administrative and technological challenges.
- **Reinforcing Ethical Foundations:**
 - Training and institutional culture should place stronger emphasis on empathy, integrity, and accountability, embedding these values at the core of public service.

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)

CONTEXT

India has been re-elected to Part II of the ICAO Council (2025–2028) during the 42nd ICAO Assembly in Montreal.



ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)

- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes international collaboration in civil aviation. It provides the global framework to ensure that air transport is safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally sustainable.
- Establishment:
 - Year of Formation: 1944, through the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation
 - Headquarters: Montreal, Canada
 - Member States: 193
- Objectives:
 - To formulate and harmonize international standards for civil aviation among member countries.
 - To uphold aviation safety, security, environmental sustainability, and balanced global growth of the aviation sector.
 - To advance inclusive air connectivity, guided by the principle of “No Country Left Behind.”
- Key Functions:
- Standard-Setting:
 - Develops and maintains Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) that govern international aviation operations.
- Governance:
 - Administered by the ICAO Council, consisting of 36 member states, elected every three years by the ICAO Assembly.

- **Strategic Roles:**

- **Safety Oversight:** Implements the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) to enhance operational safety worldwide.
- **Air Navigation Efficiency:** Improves aviation infrastructure and capacity to support seamless global air traffic.
- **Security and Facilitation:** Strengthens aviation security measures and facilitates smoother border management.
- **Economic Development:** Encourages harmonized air transport policies for fair and sustainable growth.
- **Environmental Protection:** Promotes sustainable aviation fuels and eco-friendly practices to mitigate climate impacts.

- **INDIA AND THE ICAO**

- India is a founding member (since 1944) and has maintained a continuous presence on the ICAO Council for over eight decades.
- It plays an active role in shaping global aviation policies, safety regulations, and technical standards.
- India continues to emphasize safety, security, innovation, and inclusive global air connectivity as part of its ICAO engagement.

INDIA'S SECOND MINERAL EXPLORATION CONTRACT

CONTEXT

India has obtained a second exploration contract from the International Seabed Authority (ISA) for Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS) in the Carlsberg Ridge of the Indian Ocean. This achievement makes India the first nation to hold two PMS contracts, securing the largest designated area for PMS exploration worldwide.

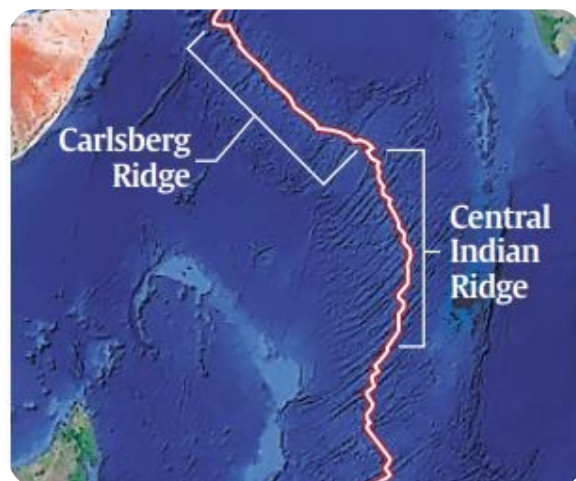


ABOUT INDIA'S SECOND MINERAL EXPLORATION CONTRACT

- India has signed a contract with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) under the UNCLOS framework for exploring a 10,000 sq. km area in the Carlsberg Ridge of the Indian Ocean.
- The exploration activities will be conducted by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), starting in 2026.
- Aim:
 - To secure access to strategic minerals vital for India's energy transition, advanced manufacturing sectors, and overall resource security.
 - To bolster India's participation in the Blue Economy and support the objectives of the Deep Ocean Mission.
- Key Features:
 - This contract complements India's first Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS) exploration agreement signed in 2016, covering the Central and Southwest Indian Ridge.
 - The exploration process includes:
 - Reconnaissance surveys using ship-based equipment.
 - Near-seabed investigations employing autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) and remotely operated vehicles (ROVs).
 - Resource assessment of the discovered mineral deposits.
 - The effort is supported by India's Samudrayaan mission and advancements in deep-sea technology development.

ABOUT CARLSBERG RIDGE

- The Carlsberg Ridge is a prominent mid-ocean ridge system in the Indian Ocean, created by the process of seafloor spreading.
- Location:
 - It stretches from the triple junction where the African, Indian, and Australian tectonic plates meet (around 2°N, 66°E) toward the Gulf of Aden.
 - The ridge forms a natural boundary separating the Arabian Sea to the northeast from the Somali Basin to the southwest.



Key Features:

- Estimated to have formed about 40 million years ago, the ridge spreads at a rate of 2.4 to 3.3 centimeters per year.
- It lies at depths ranging between 1,800 and 3,600 meters below sea level.
- Characterized by a median valley and rugged terrain, typical of slow-spreading mid-ocean ridges.
- Renowned for its hydrothermal vent systems which harbor abundant polymetallic sulphide (PMS) deposits.
- Its northern section near 2°N latitude is geographically closer to India compared to previous exploration areas located around 26°S.
- The ridge is situated in a seismically active region, associated with the East African Rift System.

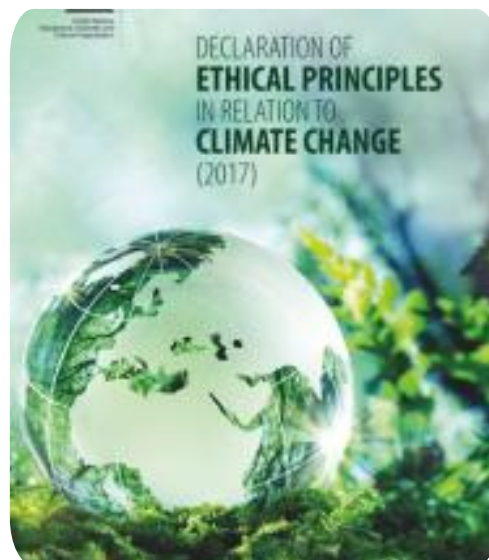
ABOUT POLYMETALLIC SULPHIDES (PMS)

- Polymetallic sulphides are mineral deposits found on the ocean floor near hydrothermal vents. They form when cold seawater meets magma beneath the seabed, causing the release of hot, mineral-rich fluids that solidify and accumulate on the ocean floor.
- These deposits typically occur along mid-ocean ridges and hydrothermal vent areas at depths ranging from 2,000 to 5,000 meters.
- PMS deposits are rich in valuable metals such as copper, zinc, lead, silver, gold, along with trace amounts of rare and precious metals.
- Applications:
 - Used extensively in electronics and advanced technology sectors, owing to their copper and rare metal content.
 - Important for green energy technologies, with zinc and silver playing key roles in solar panels and battery production.
 - Strategically significant for aerospace, defense, and clean technology manufacturing.

ETHICS AT THE HEART OF GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

CONTEXT

The forthcoming COP30 summit in Brazil has renewed focus on the ethical dimensions of climate governance with the introduction of a Global Ethical Stocktake, designed to embed justice, equity, and responsibility at the heart of international climate action.



ABOUT ETHICS AT THE HEART OF GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION:

ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Justice and Equity:

- The principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” (CBDR) under the UNFCCC embodies fairness in climate governance—recognizing that developed nations carry historical responsibility for emissions, while developing countries require space for sustainable development.
- Example: The Paris Agreement’s “leave no one behind” approach reflects the idea of distributive justice in sharing climate responsibilities.

2. Intergenerational Responsibility:

- Decisions made today have lasting consequences for future generations. Ethical climate action calls for stewardship rather than exploitation of natural resources.
- Example: The International Court of Justice (2025) reaffirmed intergenerational equity as a foundational principle in global climate treaties.

3. Human Rights Linkage:

- Climate change directly affects fundamental rights such as access to food, water, housing, and a healthy environment—all integral to the right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.
- Example: The Inter-American Court (2024) recognized the right to a stable climate as an essential human right.

4. Integrity and Credibility:

- A persistent gap between climate promises and their implementation undermines trust. Ethical climate governance requires accountability, transparency, and sincerity in delivering Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- Example: Instances of corporate greenwashing highlight the erosion of public confidence in climate pledges.

5. Solidarity with the Vulnerable:

- Those most affected by climate change—marginalized communities, Indigenous peoples, and countries of the Global South—must be at the center of adaptation and resilience strategies. Ethics demands empathy, inclusion, and participatory decision-making.
- Example: Community-based conservation efforts in Himachal Pradesh, such as local snow leopard monitoring, exemplify ethical inclusion in environmental governance.

ROLE OF ETHICS IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE:

- Guiding Negotiators:
 - Climate diplomacy must extend beyond political compromise to embrace moral accountability. Negotiators carry a duty to act decisively, as every delay in action translates into real human suffering.
- Embedding Ethical Frameworks:
 - Initiatives such as Brazil's Global Ethical Stocktake ahead of COP30 represent efforts to institutionalize ethics within international climate negotiations, ensuring justice, equity, and responsibility guide global decisions.
- Courts as Ethical Custodians:
 - Judicial bodies increasingly serve as moral arbiters, reinforcing the connection between law and ethics by compelling states to act with diligence, fairness, and precaution in addressing climate impacts.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Climate Action:
 - Businesses must go beyond symbolic commitments by embracing Hans Jonas's "ethics of responsibility," integrating sustainability and accountability into their operations to prevent tokenistic or performative climate pledges.

ETHICS AND THE INDIAN CONTEXT :

- Constitutional Provisions:
 - Article 48A mandates the State to safeguard and improve the environment and protect the nation's natural resources.
 - Article 51A(g) places a fundamental duty on citizens to preserve and enhance the natural environment, reflecting collective ethical responsibility.
- Judicial Interpretation:
 - In *Vellore Citizens' Forum v. Union of India* (1996), the Supreme Court reinforced the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle, embedding environmental ethics within India's legal framework.
- Gandhian Philosophy:
 - Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of trusteeship embodies the spirit of sustainable living and moral stewardship, emphasizing that human beings are trustees—not exploiters—of natural resources.

CHALLENGES IN ETHICAL CLIMATE ACTION:

- National Interest vs. Global Good:
 - Developed nations often prioritize economic competitiveness and domestic priorities over collective climate responsibility. This has led to delays in climate finance, technology transfer, and growing trust deficits between the Global North and South.
- Political Polarization and Climate Denial:
 - Partisan politics and denial of climate science continue to hinder global consensus. Such divisions weaken multilateral cooperation, even as the urgency of the climate crisis intensifies.
- Greenwashing and Weak Accountability:
 - Many governments and corporations inflate or misrepresent their climate achievements. The lack of strong monitoring and enforcement mechanisms undermines transparency and public trust in climate commitments.
- Insufficient Adaptation Finance:
 - Vulnerable and developing communities often receive inadequate financial and technical support for climate adaptation. This shortfall exposes an ethical disconnect between global rhetoric and the real commitment to climate justice for the Global South.

WAY FORWARD :

- Institutionalizing a Global Ethical Stocktake:
 - Establish a mechanism to periodically evaluate global climate action through the lenses of justice, equity, and shared responsibility, thereby reinforcing the ethical foundation of UNFCCC processes.
- Advancing Just Transition Policies:
 - Design and implement inclusive transition strategies that protect the livelihoods of workers, farmers, and local communities as economies move away from fossil fuels toward sustainable alternatives.
- Strengthening Ethical Climate Jurisprudence:
 - Judiciaries worldwide should link climate law with moral accountability, ensuring that governments uphold rights-based and ethically sound climate action.
- Promoting Ethical Leadership:
 - Leaders and policymakers must prioritize stewardship, fairness, and long-term sustainability over short-term political or electoral interests to build public trust in climate governance.
- Integrating Ethical Education:
 - Incorporate climate ethics and sustainability values into educational curricula and professional training to foster a culture of responsibility, empathy, and environmental stewardship among future generations.

SCHEDULE M NORMS

CONTEXT

The Union Health Ministry has ordered the strict implementation of the revised Schedule M standards under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

This action comes in response to incidents of child fatalities caused by cough syrups contaminated with diethylene glycol (DEG), exposing critical failures in pharmaceutical manufacturing quality control.



ABOUT SCHEDULE M NORMS

- Schedule M is a key provision under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, that lays down the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for the production of pharmaceutical products in India.
- It specifies the minimum standards for facilities, equipment, documentation, quality systems, and trained personnel required to ensure that drugs are safe, effective, and of consistent quality.
- Origin and Evolution:
 - Introduction: Schedule M was introduced under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, to regulate the quality of drug manufacturing across the country.
 - Earlier Framework: Initially, the focus was limited to basic hygiene, infrastructure, and record maintenance, with minimal attention to process validation or data reliability.
 - Recent Revision (2023–24): The updated Schedule M aligns India's GMP framework with WHO-GMP and PIC/S (Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme) standards, reinforcing India's reputation as a global pharmaceutical manufacturing hub.
 - Compliance Deadline: All pharmaceutical units are required to comply with the revised norms by December 31, 2025.

KEY FEATURES OF THE REVISED SCHEDULE M

- **Pharmaceutical Quality System (PQS):**
 - Mandates a comprehensive quality and risk management system covering every stage of the manufacturing process.
- **Quality Risk Management (QRM):**
 - Requires manufacturers to identify, evaluate, and mitigate potential product risks using scientific, evidence-based methods.
- **Data Integrity – ALCOA+ Principles:**
 - All data and records must be Attributable, Legible, Contemporaneous, Original, Accurate, Complete, Consistent, Enduring, and Available.
- **Pharmacovigilance System:**
 - Introduces mandatory reporting and monitoring of adverse drug reactions to strengthen post-marketing surveillance.
- **Equipment and Process Validation:**
 - Implements lifecycle-based validation—covering design, installation, operation, and performance qualification—to ensure reliability and compliance.
- **Supply Chain and Vendor Traceability:**
 - Establishes complete raw material traceability, with supplier audits and digital monitoring systems to enhance supply chain transparency.
- **Infrastructure Modernisation:**
 - Mandates computerised storage systems, controlled environmental conditions, and regular self-inspections to maintain high manufacturing standards.

ABOUT DIETHYLENE GLYCOL (DEG)

- **Definition:**
 - Diethylene Glycol (DEG) is a colorless, odorless, and viscous organic compound with the chemical formula $C_4H_{10}O_3$.
 - It is a synthetic industrial solvent belonging to the glycol family and is not approved for use in pharmaceuticals or food products.
 - Chemically, DEG is produced as a by-product of ethylene oxide hydrolysis and is commonly utilized where low-volatility, water-miscible liquids are required.
- **Applications:**
 - **Antifreeze and Coolants:** Widely used as a de-icing and coolant agent in the automotive and aviation industries.
 - **Paints and Plastics:** Serves as a solvent and intermediate in the production of paints, plasticizers, resins, and polyurethane foams.
 - **Brake Fluids and Lubricants:** Helps maintain fluid stability in hydraulic and brake systems.

IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS 2025

CONTEXT

India is set to release its first-ever Red List of Endangered Species at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, scheduled to be held in Abu Dhabi, UAE.



ABOUT IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS 2025

- The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) is a global summit held every four years, organized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- This event unites governments, civil society organizations, scientists, indigenous communities, and private sector representatives to set worldwide priorities for nature conservation, climate action, and sustainable development.
- It is recognized as the largest and most influential international forum for conservation policy.
- The 2025 Congress will be hosted by the United Arab Emirates.
- History:
 - The inaugural IUCN Congress was convened in 1948, shortly after the establishment of IUCN.
 - India has been an active State Member of IUCN since 1969.
 - The previous Congress was held in Marseille, France, in 2021, focusing on themes like post-COVID recovery, biodiversity loss, and addressing the climate crisis.

THEMES OF IUCN CONGRESS 2025

The Abu Dhabi Congress will centre around five transformative themes designed to shape the future of global conservation:

- Scaling Up Resilient Conservation Action – Enhancing ecosystem restoration and species protection on a broader scale.
- Reducing Climate Overshoot Risks – Speeding up climate mitigation efforts to avoid irreversible environmental tipping points.
- Delivering on Equity – Promoting inclusive, just, and community-led approaches to conservation.

- Transitioning to Nature-Positive Economies and Societies – Encouraging sustainable production practices, circular economy models, and green financing.
- Disruptive Innovation and Leadership for Conservation – Leveraging technology, artificial intelligence, and youth engagement to drive breakthroughs in conservation.

PARTICIPANTS:

- The Congress will host over 9,000 delegates worldwide, including heads of state, scientists, policy experts, and business leaders.
- Key multilateral organizations such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UNFCCC, Ramsar Convention, and UNEP will be represented.

KEY FEATURES :

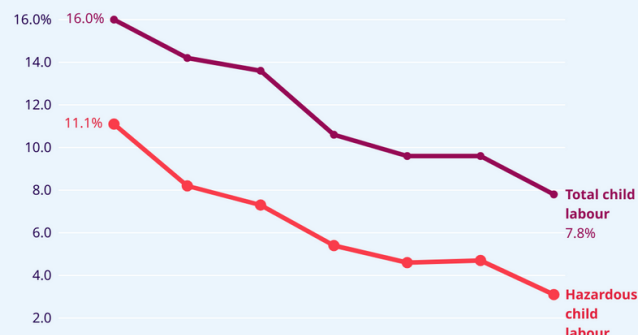
- Global Voting Forum: More than 1,400 IUCN member organizations will vote on resolutions that steer international conservation policies.
- Marketplace for Innovation: A venue to showcase and exchange cutting-edge research, technology, and nature-based solutions.
- Networking Hub: Facilitates collaboration among scientists, NGOs, policymakers, and private sector players for joint conservation initiatives.
- Public Engagement: Includes exhibitions, film screenings, and educational programs aimed at raising awareness among the general public.
- Outcome Document: The adoption of a Global Conservation Declaration to guide biodiversity targets through 2030.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE 2025

CONTEXT

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has published its significant report, *The State of Social Justice: A Work in Progress (2025)*, ahead of the Second World Summit for Social Development, commemorating 30 years since the 1995 Copenhagen Summit.

► Evolution of child labour rates



ABOUT THE STATE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE 2025

- The State of Social Justice 2025 reviews three decades of global progress since the 1995 Social Development Summit, highlighting ongoing gaps in justice, equality, and inclusion.
- **FOUR FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS:**
 - Fundamental Human Rights and Capabilities: Guaranteeing freedoms, equality, and social protection.
 - Equal Access to Opportunities: Breaking down barriers to education, employment, and fair wages.
 - Fair Distribution: Ensuring equitable sharing of economic growth benefits.
 - Fair Transitions: Managing environmental, digital, and demographic shifts inclusively
- **GLOBAL PROGRESS**
 - Extreme poverty dropped from 39% (1995) to 10% (2025).
 - Child labour among 5–14-year-olds declined from 250 million to 106 million.
 - Working poverty decreased from 28% to 7%.
 - Over half of the global population now benefits from some form of social protection.
- **PERSISTENT INEQUALITIES:**
 - The richest 1% control 20% of global income and 38% of wealth.
 - Women earn only 78% of men's wages; closing this gap could take 50–100 years at the current rate.
 - 55% of income inequality is determined by country of birth, showing a strong geographical bias.
 - Trust in governments, unions, and businesses has declined since 1982, fueled by perceptions of unfairness and growing inequality.

• TRENDS AND PROGRESS IN INDIA:

- Multidimensional poverty decreased from 29% (2013–14) to 11% (2022–23), aligning with global progress.
- Secondary education completion reached 79% (2024), and female literacy rose to 77%.
- Social protection schemes like PM-KISAN, Ayushman Bharat, and e-Shram now cover over 550 million informal workers.
- Despite reforms, over 80% of India's workforce remains informal, reflecting global challenges in improving job quality.
- Female labour force participation is 37% (PLFS 2024–25), below the global average, mirroring persistent gender inequalities.

• IMPROVEMENTS SO FAR

- Advances in literacy, skill development (PMKVY, Skill India), and healthcare access.
- Decline in child labour through enhanced monitoring (NCLP) and educational incentives.
- Expansion of pension and maternity benefits under the Social Security Code, 2020.
- Digital inclusion via Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile (JAM) initiatives, reducing leakages and improving equity.

• CHALLENGES HIGHLIGHTED BY ILO:

- Inequality reduction has stalled, with widening wealth gaps and weak redistribution.
- 58% of global workers remain in informal employment without adequate labour protections.
- 71% of income outcomes depend on birth circumstances; gender disparities persist.
- Declining public trust in institutions threatens democratic governance.
- Digital divides, climate-related job losses, and ageing populations pose risks of deepening inequality.

• ILO RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Integrate Social Justice in All Policies: Embed equity in finance, trade, climate, and health governance.
- Rebuild Trust in Institutions: Enhance transparency, accountability, and inclusive dialogue.
- Invest in People: Expand access to education, skills training, and lifelong learning to close digital and gender gaps.
- Strengthen Social Protection: Achieve universal coverage, portability of benefits, and fair minimum wages.
- Promote Fair Transitions: Ensure climate and digital transitions generate decent work and support displaced workers.
- Enhance Global Cooperation: Reinforce multilateralism to address inequality and migration equitably.