DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

03 NOVEMBER, 2023

S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	UNESCO NAMES KOZHIKODE 'CITY OF LITERATURE': WHAT THIS TAG MEANS
2.	UNDERSTANDING WORKER PRODUCTIVITY
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

UNESCO NAMES KOZHIKODE 'CITY OF LITERATURE': WHAT THIS TAG MEANS
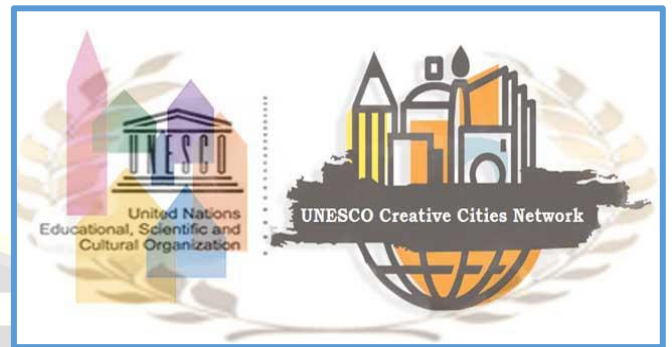
SOURCE: THE HINDU

WHY IN NEWS?

➢ **Kozhikode in Kerala and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh** have recently joined UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in recognition of their contributions to distinct creative fields.

UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK (UCCN):

➢ **About:**
  ✓ The **UCCN was established in 2004** to **encourage collaboration among cities that recognize creativity** as a vital element for sustainable urban development.
  ✓ It **encompasses 350 cities in over a hundred countries** and aims to harness the **potential of cultural industries for creative, social, and economic growth.**
  ✓ This initiative aligns with UNESCO's **objectives related to cultural diversity, resilience against challenges** like climate change, inequality, and urbanization, and fosters a culture of creativity in urban planning.

➢ **Objectives of the CCCN:**
  ✓ The **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** encourages member cities to **acknowledge the significance of creativity in urban development through partnerships involving public and private sectors** and civil society.
  ✓ It seeks to **establish hubs of creativity and innovation, offering opportunities for cultural sector** professionals while aligning with the UN's sustainable development goals.

➢ **Areas of Action:**
  ✓ The **network's objectives are pursued both within member cities and internationally**, involving **sharing experiences, knowledge, best practices, artistic and professional exchanges, research,** and evaluations.
  ✓ A noteworthy event is the **annual conference of mayors and stakeholders from network cities**, which promotes collaboration between creative cities worldwide.
  ✓ The last **conference took place in Istanbul**, with the **next one scheduled for July 2024 in Braga, Portugal.**

KOZHIKODE AND GWALIOR JOIN UNESCO'S CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

*These cities were chosen to represent **different creative fields, with Kozhikode** falling under **the category of literature** and **Gwalior in the category of music.***

➢ **Kozhikode's Literary Tradition:**
  ✓ Kozhikode, located in **North Kerala**, boasts a **rich literary and cultural heritage**.
  ✓ The city has been home to **numerous prominent figures in the state's literary** and cultural scene.
  ✓ Kozhikode houses major media organizations, numerous publishing houses, and libraries that contribute to its literary legacy.

- ✓ It's also where the **first Malayalam novel, "Kundalatha" by Appu Nedungadi,** was penned in 1887.
- ✓ The city has nurtured celebrated writers such as **S K Pottekkatt, Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, and MT Vasudevan Nair, as well as talents in film and theater.**

➢ **Gwalior's Music Tradition:**

- ✓ Gwalior serves as an exemplary example of **living cultural heritage** and it houses **one of the biggest annual music festivals of India** - The **Tansen Sangeet Samaroh** to celebrate the rich culture of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ It is often referred to as the "**City of Music"** and has made **significant contributions to classical Indian music**, particularly in the **field of Hindustani classical music**.
- ✓ The city's **historic Gwalior Gharana**, a prominent school of music, has produced many celebrated musicians over the years.
- ✓ **Cultural Significance:**
  - • Gwalior's music tradition has **deep cultural roots and continues to thrive**.
  - • The city has been a **hub for various musical genres**, including **dhrupad and khayal**, and has played a **pivotal role in preserving and propagating India's classical music heritage**.

> *Indian cities in UCCN*
>
> The Indian cities already on the **UCCN list include:**
> - ☛ Srinagar for Crafts and Folk Arts (2021)
> - ☛ Mumbai for Film (2019)
> - ☛ Hyderabad for Gastronomy (2019)
> - ☛ Chennai for Music (2017)
> - ☛ Jaipur for Crafts and Folk Arts (2015)
> - ☛ Varanasi for Music (2015).

SIGNIFICANCE:

➢ **Promoting Cultural Significance:**

- ✓ Kozhikode's selection in the literature category and Gwalior in music underscores the cultural and artistic significance of these cities.
- ✓ This **showcases India's diverse and thriving cultural landscape** on a global platform.

➢ **Fostering Urban Development**:

- ✓ The UCCN was established to **emphasize the role of creativity in sustainable urban development**.
- ✓ By joining this network, Kozhikode and Gwalior are **committing to enhancing their cities through cultural initiatives and innovation.**

India's both the nominations have been included in the UNESCO's Creative Cities Network
Gwalior for Music & Kozhikode for Literature
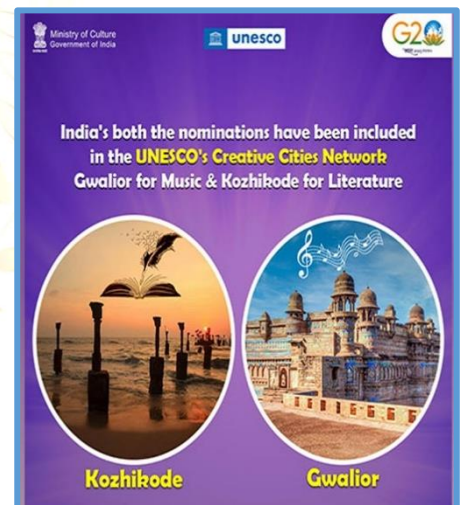Kozhikode   Gwalior

➢ **UNESCO's Goals:**

- ✓ The UCCN aligns with UNESCO's objectives **related to cultural diversity, environmental resilience, and societal challenges.**
- ✓ It serves as a means to promote these **goals through creativity, addressing issues like climate change and inequality.**

➢ **Global Collaboration:**

- ✓ The network includes cities from **around the world, providing opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and collaboration.**
- ✓ This inclusion enables **Kozhikode and Gwalior to engage with creative cities globally**, sharing experiences and best practices.

➢ **Supporting Cultural Industries:**

- ✓ Both cities can **leverage their newfound status to boost their cultural industries**, including literature and music.
- ✓ This support can **lead to economic growth and social development within these sectors.**

Prelims Specific:

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

- ✓ UNESCO is a **specialized agency of the United Nations (UN)** that aims to foster peace through international collaboration in the domains of Education, the Sciences, and Culture.
- ✓ **Established in 1945**, its headquarters are situated in Paris, France.

Major UNESCO Initiatives	Description
Man and Biosphere Programme	✓ Focuses on conserving biodiversity, sustainable development, and human-environment relationships.
World Heritage Programme	✓ Identifies and safeguards cultural and natural heritage sites of exceptional universal value globally.
Global Geopark Network	✓ Supports geological heritage conservation, education, and sustainable development.
Network of Creative Cities	✓ Recognizes cities contributing significantly to creativity in areas like music, literature, and design.
Atlas of World Languages in Danger	✓ Monitors and raises awareness about endangered languages worldwide.

UNESCO Reports	Description
UNESCO Science Report	✓ Offers insights into global science and technology trends, covering research, innovation, and scientific cooperation.
Global Education Monitoring Report	✓ Assesses progress and challenges in global education, focusing on achieving inclusive and quality education for all.
State of the Education Report for India	✓ Evaluates the state of education in India, addressing issues, achievements, and areas for improvement in the country's education system.

UNDERSTANDING WORKER PRODUCTIVITY
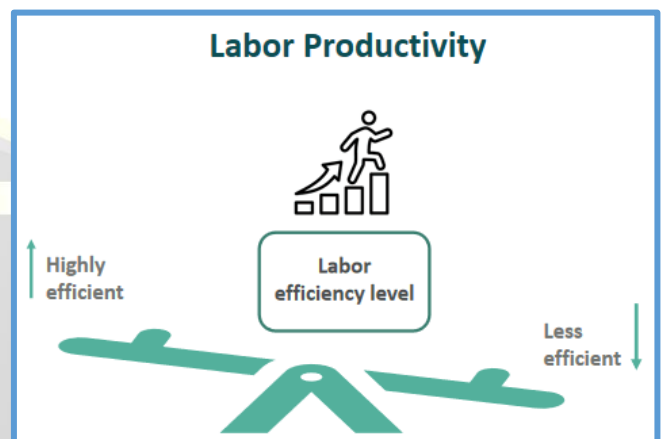
WHY IN NEWS?

The article discusses the debate sparked by Infosys founder N.R. Narayana Murthy's call for young Indians to work longer hours to boost productivity and economic growth.

DEBATE SPARKED BY NARAYANA MURTHY'S COMMENTS

➢ Infosys founder N.R. Narayana Murthy **recently suggested that young Indians should work 70 hours a week** to boost the country's development.

➢ It delves into the **concepts of worker productivity and labor productivity**, the complexities **of measuring productivity**, and the **relationship between worker productivity and economic growth**.

➢ The article also addresses income distribution **disparities in India** and questions the **validity of comparing India's economy to those of Japan and Germany.**

➢ It concludes by emphasizing the **importance of a human-centric approach to development**.
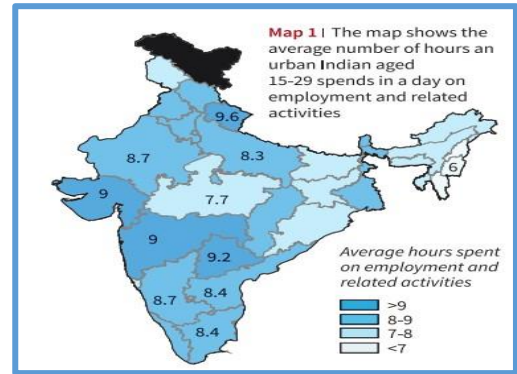
WORKER PRODUCTIVITY VS. LABOR PRODUCTIVITY

➢ **Difference:**

  ✓ **Worker productivity, which differs from labour productivity** only in the types of work involved, **measures the output value per unit of labour time at a micro level**.

  ✓ At the macro level, it's **evaluated through the labour-output ratio** or changes in **Net Domestic Product (NDP) per worker in each sector.**

  ✓ However, in some services, especially those **requiring intellectual labour**, measuring output **independently is challenging**, so workers' income often acts as **proxies for productivity.**

  ✓ Increasing working hours **to enhance productivity implies** that the **additional work and output value produced don't receive commensurate pay,** which may benefit profits but adversely affect workers.

➢ **Complexities of Measuring Productivity:**

  ✓ Measuring productivity, especially in **services involving intellectual labor**, can be challenging.

  ✓ In such cases, **workers' income is often used as a proxy for productivity**.

  ✓ Mr. Murthy's assertion that increasing **working hours enhances productivity can be flawed.**

➢ **Link Between Worker Productivity and Economic Growth:**

  ✓ The connection between **worker productivity and economic growth is intricate**.

  ✓ While enhanced productivity influences **economic growth, it may not necessarily lead to improved prosperity for workers.**

  ✓ **Income disparities** and **skewed income distribution** within India are highlighted.
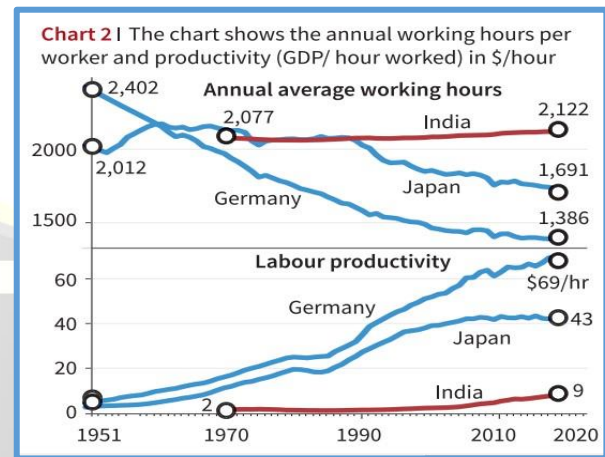
CURRENT WORKING HOURS STATUS IN INDIA

➤ **Current Working Hours of Young Indians:**
   - ✓ According to data from **the Time Use Survey conducted in India in 2019**, young **Indians aged 15-29 presently work an average of 7.2 hours a day** in **rural areas** and **8.5 hours a day in urban areas**.
➤ **High Working Hours in Uttarakhand:**
   - ✓ In the context of **urban areas,** a state-wise comparison reveals that **Uttarakhand leads the way**, with its **young population working an average of 9.6 hours a day.**

Map 1 | The map shows the average number of hours an urban Indian aged 15-29 spends in a day on employment and related activities

Average hours spent on employment and related activities
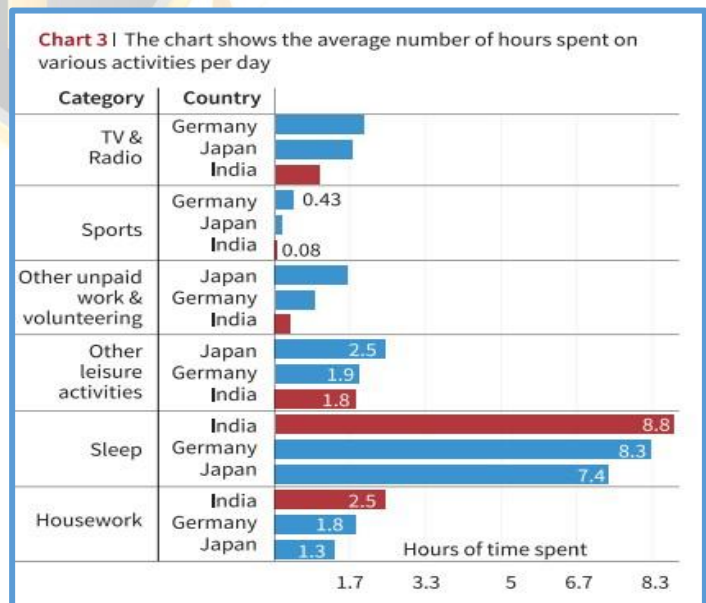- >9
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COMPARING INDIA WITH JAPAN AND GERMANY

➤ **Link Between Work Productivity and Longer Hours:**
   - ✓ Mr. Murthy asserts that **India's low work productivity** necessitates **longer working hours** to **compete with countries like Germany and Japan.**
   - ✓ This is due to stark differences in **labour force, technological development, and sociopolitical structures.**
   - ✓ **After World War II,** both these **nations temporarily increased their average** annual working hours to **2,200-2,400 hours (8.3 to 9 hours per day),** but later, as labour productivity improved.
   - ✓ They **reduced working hours to about 1,400-1,600 hours (5.3 to 6 hours per day)** by 2020.

Chart 2 | The chart shows the annual working hours per worker and productivity (GDP/ hour worked) in $/hour

➤ **Comparing Work Hours and Labor Productivity:**
   - ✓ India, on the other hand, maintained annual **working hours above 2,000** but experienced only a **marginal increase in labor productivity, from $2 per hour to $9** in the same period.
➤ **Implications of Longer Work Hours:**
   - ✓ Longer work hours mean **less time for sports and leisure activities**.
   - ✓ When compared to Germany and Japan, **Indians allocate less time to sports and leisure**.
   - ✓ They **spend more time on sleep and household chores**.

Chart 3 | The chart shows the average number of hours spent on various activities per day
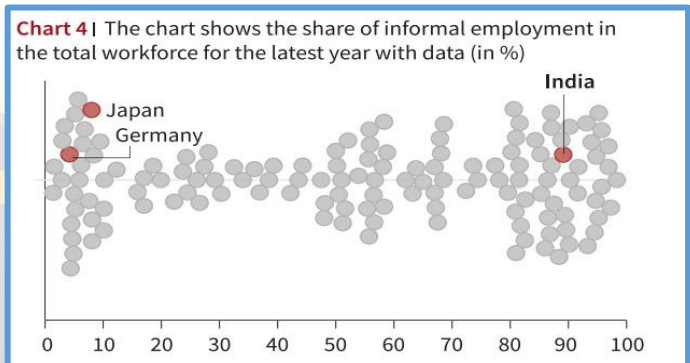
CHALLENGES IN INDIA

➤ **Income Distribution Disparities and Productivity Gains:**
   - ✓ Income inequality within India is explored, **showcasing how the top income groups have disproportionately benefited** from economic growth compared to the lower-income segments.

- ✓ It indicates that a **considerable portion of society's gains have disproportionately benefitted** the top income groups, rather than the workers.
- ✓ Factors like **labour laws and informal employment** contribute to this phenomenon.
- ✓ The link between **worker productivity and economic growth is intricate**.
- ✓ While increased productivity contributes to economic growth, its impact on workers' prosperity is less certain.
- ✓ Disparities in income distribution in India over the years
- ✓ This **delinking of productivity and rewards raises concerns** about the legitimacy of contemporary capitalist structures.

- ➤ **Worker Productivity and Labor Conditions:**
  - ✓ The **rise in informal employment** and the **exploitation of workers in sectors** like **manufacturing and IT** are linked to India's low wages.
  - ✓ Despite high labour productivity, **low wages persist due to profit motives**.

- ➤ **Reliable Data on Indian Workers:**
  - ✓ Recent studied data on Indian workers, suggesting that **the workforce is hardworking but struggles with low wages.**
  - ✓ The article disputes Mr. Murthy's assertions as **possibly intended to promote labor reforms**.

- ➤ **Challenges in Comparing Labor Productivity:**
  - ✓ Considering that **89% of the Indian workforce is engaged in informal employment**, while **Germany has only 4.2% and Japan around 8% in informal employment**, challenges arise in comparing these **nations' labor productivity due to significant** differences in the nature of their labor force.

Chart 4 | The chart shows the share of informal employment in the total workforce for the latest year with data (in %)

WAY FORWARD

- ➤ **Balancing Work and Life:**
  - ✓ Enhance productivity **through technology adoption** and **technical education**.
  - ✓ Focus on output and **invest in the right tools and resources**.
  - ✓ Promote growth and a **promising future to motivate the youth**.
  - ✓ Prioritize self-care, including exercise, **hobbies, quality sleep, and spending time with loved ones**.

- ➤ **Government Schemes to Enhance Productivity:**
  - ✓ Skill development initiatives.
  - ✓ Digital India.
  - ✓ Make in India.
  - ✓ Startup India.
  - ✓ Ease of Doing Business reforms.
  - ✓ National Industrial Corridor Development.
  - ✓ Incentives for research and innovation.
  - ✓ Tax reforms like the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Prelims Specific

PYQs

Q. With reference to Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, consider the following statements:

1. It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. It, among other things, will also impart training in soft skills, entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy.
3. It aims to align the competencies of the unregulated workforce of the country to the National Skill Qualification Framework.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (2018)

(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: C

PRELIMS POINTERS:

Topic	Information
One Nation One Registration Platform	➢ The National Medical Commission plans to launch a patch pilot of the National Medical Register (NMR) within six months, assigning unique identification numbers to doctors. ➢ Doctors can apply for a license to practice in any state. ➢ The NMC issued a gazette notification titled **"Registration of Medical Practitioners and License to Practice Medicine Regulations, 2023."** The platform aims to provide masked IDs to undergraduate students, with the option to unmask them upon course completion. ➢ These IDs can be used to update qualifications and link to state registers for licenses, eliminating duplication and red tape, and providing public access to physician information.
UNESCO's Creative Cities Network	**WHY IN NEWS?** Kozhikode in Kerala and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh have been added to the prestigious creative cities list of UNESCO for contributions in the fields of literature and music respectively. ➢ Established in 2004. ➢ It consists of nearly 300 cities worldwide. ➢ The network's objective is to integrate creativity and cultural industries into local development plans and collaborate at the international level. ➢ UNESCO designates cities in seven fields, and it annually accepts applications for new members, with Indian applications going through the Ministry of Culture. Various Indian cities have joined, focusing on crafts, folk arts, film, gastronomy, literature, and music.
INFUSE Mission	**WHY IN NEWS?** National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched a sounding rocket as part of its INFUSE mission. ➢ Launched from the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, the Integral Field Ultraviolet Spectroscope Experiment (INFUSE) aims to study the Cygnus Loop, a supernova remnant. ➢ The mission collects data from an altitude of 150 miles, specifically gathering far-ultraviolet light from the Cygnus Loop. ➢ Its goal is to understand how the supernova transfers energy to the Milky Way by studying the blast wave's interaction with cold gas pockets, helping to decipher the stars' life cycles. ➢ The **Cygnus Loop** originated from a star, 20 times the size of the Sun and collapsed into a supernova around 20,000 years ago.

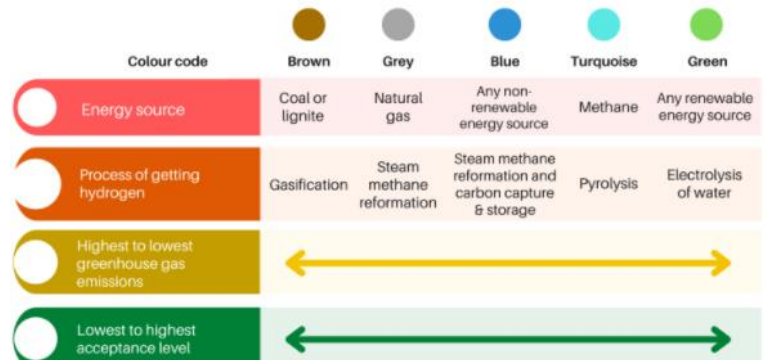| White Hydrogen	**WHY IN NEWS?** scientists looking for fossil fuels beneath the ground of northeastern France have discovered large reservoirs of white hydrogen.

Hydrogen colour palette

Colour code	Brown	Grey	Blue	Turquoise	Green
Energy source	Coal or lignite	Natural gas	Any non-renewable energy source	Methane	Any renewable energy source
Process of getting hydrogen	Gasification	Steam methane reformation	Steam methane reformation and carbon capture & storage	Pyrolysis	Electrolysis of water
Highest to lowest greenhouse gas emissions	← →				
Lowest to highest acceptance level	← →				

> White hydrogen, also known as **"natural," "gold," or "geologic"** hydrogen, is <u>naturally occurring in the Earth's crust and holds promise as a clean energy source.</u>
> It is usually found combined with other molecules.
> White hydrogen has several **advantages**, <u>including zero CO2 emissions when used as fuel, compatibility with existing hydrogen infrastructure and technologies, cost-efficiency compared to steam reforming or electrolysis, abundance in nature, and deposits across the world.</u>
> Estimates suggest there may be tens of billions of tons of white hydrogen globally.

State Food Safety Index	**WHY IN NEWS?** Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) published the State Food Safety Index.

> The State Food Safety Index is an annual assessment released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) since 2018-19.
> It <u>aims to improve food safety in India and is based on five key parameters: Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training & Capacity Building, and Consumer Empowerment.</u>
> In the 2023 index, a **new parameter called 'Improvement in SFSI Rank'** was introduced.
> The <u>states and union territories are classified into three categories for evaluation.</u>

KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT:
1. After adjusting for a new parameter introduced in the 2023 index, 15 out of 20 states showed lower scores in 2023 compared to 2019.
2. The most significant decline in scores over a five-year period was observed in Maharashtra, Bihar, and Gujarat.
3. The 'Food Testing Infrastructure' parameter experienced the most significant drop in scores.
4. States like Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh all reported lower scores for the 'Food Testing Infrastructure' parameter.
5. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand recorded reduced scores in the 'Compliance' parameter.
6. The 'Human Resources and Institutional Data' parameter, which had the third-highest weightage at 18% in 2023 (20% in previous years), was a key focus.
7. The only parameter that showed significant improvement was 'Training and Capacity Building,' despite having the lowest weightage at 8% in 2023 (10% in previous years).