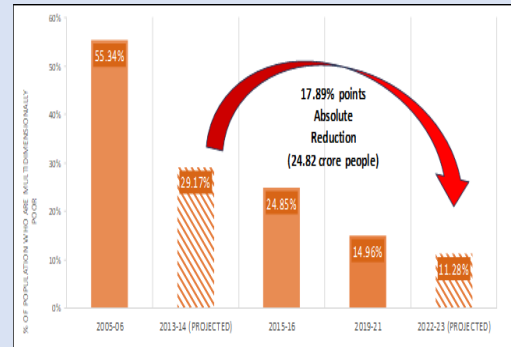




TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
<p><b>INDIA'S MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY RATE</b></p>	<p><b>WHY IN NEWS?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NITI Aayog released a discussion paper revealing a <b>significant decline in India's multidimensional poverty from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Significant Decline:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The discussion paper reveals a <b>noteworthy reduction in India's multidimensional poverty from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23, marking a decline of 17.89 percentage points.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Population Impact:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately <b>24.82 crore people escaped multidimensional poverty in the last nine years</b>, attributing this achievement to government initiatives addressing poverty across various dimensions.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>State-wise Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Uttar Pradesh recorded the largest decline</b>, with 5.94 crore people escaping poverty, <b>followed by Bihar (3.77 crore), Madhya Pradesh (2.30 crore), and Rajasthan (1.87 crore).</b></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Pace of Decline:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate of decline in the poverty headcount ratio accelerated from <b>7.69% annually (2005-06 to 2015-16) to 10.66% annually (2015-16 to 2019-21).</b></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Improvement in All Indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All <b>12 indicators of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)</b> exhibited significant <b>improvement</b> during the study period, showcasing comprehensive progress.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Government Initiatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The government's commitment to addressing <b>healthcare, food security, financial inclusion, housing, clean energy, and sanitation</b> has played a crucial role in reducing multidimensional poverty.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>SDG Target:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India is <b>likely to achieve its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target</b> of halving multidimensional poverty well <b>before 2030.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>State Disparities:</b></li> </ul>

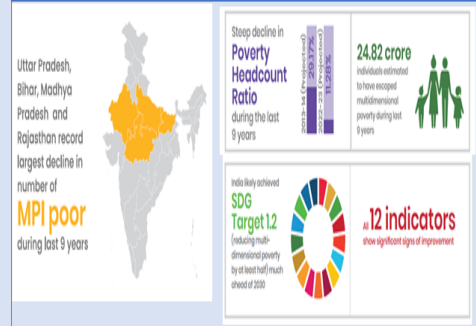




- While state performances vary, **traditionally high-poverty states have made remarkable progress**, contributing to the **reduction of inter-state disparities** in multidimensional poverty.

❖ **Government Programs:**

- Initiatives like **Poshan Abhiyan, Anemia Mukh Bharat, Targeted Public Distribution System, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, Saubhagya, Swachh Bharat Mission, Jal Jeevan Mission, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, and PM Awas Yojana** have collectively improved living conditions and well-being.



**SHANKARACHARYAS & ADI SHANKARA**

**WHY IN NEWS?**

- The decision of the **four shankaracharyas, who lead the Hindu mathas in Dwarka, Joshimath, Puri, and Sringeri**, to skip the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22 has sparked attention.

**WHO IS SHANKARACHARYAS?**

❖ **Shankaracharya Title:**

- The term "**Shankaracharya**" translates to 'teacher of the way of Shankara' and is a **religious title held by the heads of the four cardinal mathas or peeths** believed to be founded by **Adi Shankara (c 788 CE-820 CE)**.



❖ **Lineage and Tradition:**

- According to tradition, these religious teachers belong to a lineage that extends **back to Adi Shankara himself**.
- However, historical evidence for the existence of **these mathas is limited before the 14th century CE** when the **Vijayanagara kingdom** started supporting the **Sringeri matha**.

❖ **Historical Scrutiny:**

- Indologist Paul Hacker** noted that **prior to 1386**, the historical **timelines of the directors of Sringeri Math** seem unrealistically long, with spans **exceeding 60 years** each.
- This observation raises questions about the **retrospective establishment of the lineage**, potentially for legitimizing these monasteries.

❖ **Purpose of Establishment:**



- The retrospective establishment of the lineage could have aimed **to provide legitimacy to these monasteries**, transforming them into **centers of knowledge and learning**.
- These mathas today **comprise religious shrines, temples, libraries, and residences**, forming complex and spread-out organizations dedicated to preserving and advancing Shankara's tradition.

#### ABOUT ADI SHANKARA

##### ❖ Birth and Childhood:

- Adi Shankara was **born in Kalady village** along the **River Periyar** in present-day **Kerala's Ernakulam district**.

##### ❖ Legend of Initiation:

- According to a popular legend, **a crocodile seized young Shankara**, and upon his mother's agreement, it released him on the condition that **he would embrace sanyas (asceticism)**.
- Subsequently, Shankara left home.

##### ❖ Scholar-Monk Life:

- Initiated into **studies by Govindacharya**, Shankara became a **scholar-monk**.
- He **extensively travelled**, challenging prevailing philosophical traditions, **establishing mathas**, and organizing monastic orders.

##### ❖ Geographical Travels:

- Shankara's journeys spanned from **Kanchi in Tamil Nadu to Kamrup in Assam**, covering regions like Kashmir, the **Himalayan Kedar and Badri dhams, Kashi (Varanasi)** on the Ganga, and Puri on the Bay of Bengal.

##### ❖ Preaching Advaita Vedanta:

- Adi Shankara propagated **Advaita Vedanta philosophy throughout India**, emphasizing **radical nondualism** where

empirical perception is deemed illusory, and the principle of brahman is the true reality.

##### ❖ Prolific Author:

- He is credited as the **author of 116 works**, including renowned **commentaries (bhashyas) on 10 Upanishads, the Brahmasutra, and the Bhagavad Gita**.

#### Advaita Vedanta:

**Definition:** Hindu philosophy by Shankara emphasizing **nondualism**.

**Belief:** Empirical perception is **illusory (maya)**; **brahman** is the **sole true reality**.

**Thrust:** **Unity of atman (individual consciousness)** and **brahman (ultimate reality)**.

#### DARJEELING ZOO'S SUCCESS WITH SNOW LEOPARDS

#### WHY IN NEWS?

- *The **Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZP)** in Darjeeling has gained attention for its remarkable success in breeding **77 snow leopards since the 1980s**, making it the **second-most successful facility globally after New York's Bronx Zoo**.*



## ABOUT PADMAJA NAIDU HIMALAYAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK (PNHZP)

### ❖ Location and Size:

- ☛ The Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZP) is situated in Darjeeling over 67.57 acres.
- ☛ With approximately 10 acres dedicated to displays and the remainder comprising zoo forests and the old Conservation Breeding Centre.



### ❖ Conservation Pioneers:

- ☛ PNHZP has been a trailblazer in the conservation breeding of endangered Eastern Himalayan Species in India.

### ❖ Initiatives and Projects:

- ☛ The first ex-situ conservation breeding program commenced in 1986 with a focus on Snow Leopards.
- ☛ The Red Panda conservation breeding project began in 1990.
- ☛ In 2003-04, the park achieved a milestone by successfully reintroducing four female Red Pandas into the Singalila National Park, marking the world's first such reintroduction program for the species.

### ❖ Zoo Sections:

- ☛ **Pheasant Diversity:** Darjeeling Zoo houses nine Pheasant species, including six indigenous and four exotic varieties.
- ☛ **Biodiversity:** The zoo also hosts one species of amphibian and three species of reptiles.

### ❖ Conservation Centers:

- ☛ PNHZP features three conservation breeding centers: the Old Conservation Breeding Center, Conservation Breeding Center at Topkeydara, and the Satellite Zoo at Dowhill.

### ❖ International Affiliations:

- ☛ The zoo is affiliated with the World Association of Zoos and Aquarium (WAZA) and Zoological Information Management System (ZIMS) since 2009.
- ☛ In 2022, the Central Zoo Authority of India (CZA) ranked PNHZ Park as the top zoo in all categories among all zoos in the country.



### RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ❖ PNHZP has gained attention for its remarkable success in breeding 77 snow leopards since the 1980s, making it the second-most successful facility globally after New York's Bronx Zoo.



- ❖ **Breeding wild cats in captivity** is notoriously challenging due to their temperament, unique physiology, and genetic complexities.
- ❖ PNHZP's achievement underscores the **critical role of captive breeding programs in conserving endangered species**, providing insurance for the dwindling snow leopard population, **estimated between 4000 to 7000 in the wild.**
- ❖ The success contributes to the **global captive stock, with over 160 zoos worldwide housing more than 600 snow leopards.**

## DAVOS SUMMIT

### WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *The **World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, is making headlines as global leaders, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres, World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, and WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, gather to discuss major global issues.***

### WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF) OVERVIEW

- ❖ **Establishment: Founded in 1971 as a non-profit foundation.**
- ❖ **Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.**
- ❖ **Nature: Independent, impartial, and not affiliated with specific interests.**
- ❖ **Mission: Engages global leaders to shape agendas in politics, business, culture, and more.**
- ❖ **Values: Prioritizes entrepreneurship in the global public interest and upholds high governance standards.**



### PURPOSE OF WEF:

- ❖ Largely funded by partnering corporations, global enterprises with an **annual turnover greater than \$5 billion.**
- ❖ Introduced a membership system for the **world's leading 1,000 companies.**

### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

- ❖ **Expanded focus from management to economic and social issues in 1973.**
- ❖ **Initiated partnership with China's economic development commissions in 1979.**
- ❖ Has been a platform for **international diplomacy and pivotal meetings.**

### G20 ORIGIN:

- ❖ **WEF played a role in the inception of the G20.**
- ❖ In 1998, participants at **WEF emphasized the inclusion of major developing countries.**



## Places In News- CHABAHAR PORT

- ❖ G20 meetings were **initially restricted to finance ministers** and later **elevated to a summit**.

### GLOBAL RANKINGS AND REPORTS:

- ❖ WEF publishes global rankings and indices, including the **Global Competitiveness Report** and the **Global Gender Gap Report**.

### WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, during his visit to Iran, expressed "grave concern" over attacks on ships near India, The minister also emphasized India's anti-terrorism stance and addressed the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, stressing the need for sustainable humanitarian corridors. Additionally, an agreement was reached on the development of the strategically vital Chabahar port.*

### LOCATION:

- ❖ **Geography:** Situated in **southeastern Iran in the Gulf of Oman**.
- ❖ **Access:** Only Iranian port with direct ocean access.
- ❖ **Chabahar is located 700 km (430 mi) away from Zahedan, in the Sistan and Baluchistan province on Iran's southern coast.**
- ❖ **Strategic Significance:** Termed the **"Golden Gate"** due to **proximity to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries like Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.**



### SIGNIFICANCE:

- ❖ **Trade Opportunities:** Considered a crucial **gateway for trade opportunities involving India, Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asian countries.**
- ❖ **Indian Involvement:** Unmatched level of **interest from India.**
- ❖ **Strategic Bypass:** Offers India an **alternative route** to transport goods to Afghanistan, **bypassing Pakistan's restrictions.**
- ❖ **International Corridor:** Integral to the **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**, countering Chinese influence in the Arabian region.

### INTERNATIONAL NORTH-SOUTH TRANSPORT CORRIDOR (INSTC):

- ❖ **Origins:**
  - ☛ **Formation:** Conceived in **2000 by India, Iran, and Russia in St Petersburg.**
  - ☛ **Participants:** Initially involved **Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman, Syria, and Bulgaria.**
  - ☛ **Observers:** **Pakistan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan** express interest.
- ❖ **Infrastructure:**



- **Length:** Spans 7,200 km, encompassing ship, rail, and road routes.
- **Cost and Time Reduction:** Aims to cut carriage costs between India and Russia by 30% and reduce transit time by over 50%.
- ❖ **Objective:**
  - **Trade Connectivity:** Enhance connectivity between major cities such as Mumbai, Moscow, Tehran, Baku, and Astrakhan.
- ❖ **Strategic Implications:**
  - **Alternative to BRI:** Positioned as a competitive and fair alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative.
  - **Regional Connectivity:** Boosts regional connectivity, fostering economic and strategic ties.

## SEMICONDUCTOR CHIPS

### WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *Despite a ban, China continues to purchase these chips from the United States, highlighting their importance.*

### ABOUT SEMICONDUCTOR CHIPS

#### ❖ Definition:

- Semiconductors are materials with conductivity between conductors and insulators, crucial for electronic devices.
- A semiconductor is a material, *often silicon-based*, that conducts electricity more than an insulator (e.g., glass) but less than a pure conductor (e.g., copper or aluminum).

### TYPES OF SEMICONDUCTORS

#### ❖ n-type Semiconductor:

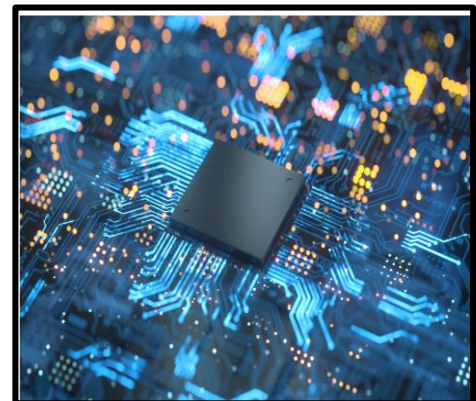
- Contains impurities like phosphorus, arsenic, antimony, or bismuth.
- Exhibits increased electron concentration.

#### ❖ p-type Semiconductor:

- Doped with elements like phosphorus, arsenic, or antimony.
- Demonstrates a higher concentration of "holes" (electron deficiencies).

### SEMICONDUCTOR SIGNIFICANCE:

- ❖ Integral in automobiles, gadgets, and medical devices.
- ❖ Key driver of Industry 4.0 digital transformation.
- ❖ Implications for national security and global value chain.
- ❖ Industry dominance: USA, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Netherlands.
- ❖ Heart and brain of modern electronics.



### APPLICATIONS OF SEMICONDUCTOR CHIPS:

- ❖ **Aerospace:** Avionics, navigation systems, satellite communication.
- ❖ **Automobiles:** Engine control units, safety systems, infotainment.



- ❖ **Communications:** Mobile phones, network equipment, fiber optics.
- ❖ **Clean Energy:** Solar panels, wind turbines, smart grids.
- ❖ **Information Technology:** Computers, servers, data storage.
- ❖ **Medical Devices:** ECG machines, imaging devices, diagnostic tools.

**INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR POSITION:**

- ❖ **Imports all chips**, market to touch **\$100 billion by 2025**.
- ❖ **₹76,000 crore** for manufacturing ecosystem.
- ❖ Schemes for **design companies, electronic components**, and semiconductors.
- ❖ **Aim to nurture 20 domestic semiconductor design companies**.

**INDIA POST  
PAYMENT BANK**

**WHY IN NEWS?**

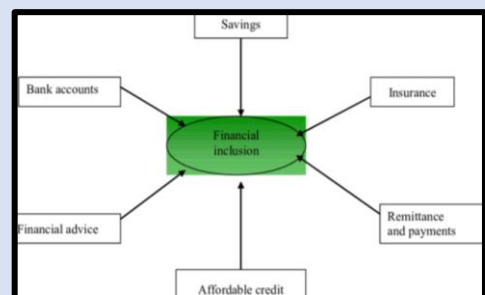
- ❖ *India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has achieved a significant milestone by reaching eight crore customers, a testament to its mission of providing accessible and affordable banking solutions across the nation.*

**About IPPB:**

- ❖ Launched on **September 1, 2018**, with **100% government equity**.
- ❖ **Pilot branches** in Ranchi, Jharkhand, and Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ Leverages vast postal infrastructure for nationwide accessibility.
- ❖ Adopts India Stack principles for **paperless, cashless, presence-less banking**.
- ❖ Implements biometrics for **secure transactions in 13 languages**.
- ❖ Recognizes and empowers postmen, **introduces 'Niveshak Didi' initiative**.
- ❖ Provides various services, **including loan referrals**, health products, and citizen services.

**Principles and Vision:**

- ❖ Dedicated to **providing accessible and affordable** banking solutions nationwide.
- ❖ **Bridging financial gaps** and **empowering underserved populations**.
- ❖ Wide network of post offices **contributes to milestone success**.
- ❖ Focus on **digital banking for seamless transactions** and broader accessibility.
- ❖ Continued commitment to innovation and introducing customer-friendly products.
- ❖ **Vision:** Build the **most accessible, affordable**, and trusted bank for every Indian.



**CPI INFLATION**

**WHY IN NEWS?**

- ❖ *According to the latest official release, India's consumer price index (CPI) based inflation rate touched 5.7% in December.*

**ABOUT CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) INFLATION:**

- ❖ **Definition:**





- CPI inflation is the **rate at which consumers face an increase in the general level of prices for a basket of selected goods and services.**
- It **differs from the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation rate.**
- ❖ **Measurement Purpose:**
  - According to the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**, CPI measures changes over time in the price level of items in a consumption basket.
- ❖ **Basket Composition:**
  - The **all-India CPI basket comprises 299 items**, reflecting goods and services acquired by households for consumption.
- ❖ **Calculation Methodology:**
  - The base year for the current series of **CPI indices is 2012.**
  - The price index is assigned a **value of 100 for the base year**, and changes from these levels are used to calculate inflation rates for each item.

#### CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI)

- ❖ The **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** is a **statistical measure** that **evaluates the average change in prices paid by urban consumers for a basket of goods and services over time.**
- ❖ It **reflects the cost-of-living variations experienced by consumers.**



1. **Released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).**
2. **Basket of Goods and Services:** It includes food, medical care, education, electronics, etc. These items are commonly purchased by Indian consumers.
3. **Types of CPI:** There are four main types of Consumer Price Index in India:
  - **CPI for Industrial Workers (IW)**
  - **CPI for Agricultural Labourer (AL)**
  - **CPI for Rural Labourer (RL)**

} These are compiled by the **Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.**

  - **CPI(Rural/Urban/Combined):** compiled by the **NSO in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.**
4. **Base Year:**
  - As of now, **the base year for CPI is 2012.** However, for a new series of **CPI for Industrial Worker (CPI-IW) with a base year of 2016.**