

School enrolment down by over 1 crore in 2023-24 from 2018-19 level, says govt. report

Key Points:

- ❖ The Ministry of Education has recently released two reports of the Integrated District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) – for 2022-23 and 2023-24 – which show a drop of over one crore in school enrolment from the average enrolment figure from 2018-19 to 2021-22. UDISE+ is a database on school education from pre-primary to higher secondary level.
- ❖ The Ministry of Education maintains the UDISE+ online platform through which data on school education is collected from states.
- ❖ It prepares reports based on this data on parameters such as school enrolment, infrastructure and teachers. This data is crucial when allocating funds for schemes such as PM-Poshan (midday meals), Samagra Shiksha and scholarships.

What do the two new UDISE+ reports say about enrolment?

- ❖ Enrolment in schools across the country remained above 26 crore from 2018-19 to 2021-22, showing increases of a few lakh students each year except for the COVID year of 2020-21, when there was a slight drop. This figure fell in 2022-23 to 25.17 crore. It dropped further to 24.8 crore in 2023-24.

What accounts for the drop in enrollment?

- ❖ Officials in the Ministry of Education have maintained that the drop in school enrolment does not necessarily mean that more children are now out of school.
- ❖ Instead, they have pointed to a “major departure” in how data was collected for the two new reports as the reason for the fall. For past years’ reports, data was collected school-wise, which means that each school would upload details on how many children are in a class, how many boys and girls etc.

- ❖ In contrast, from 2022-23 onwards, data is being collected student-wise, which means that details of each student — their name, address, parents’ name, Aadhaar details — is being entered into the UDISE+ system. A senior official said this is likely to have weeded out “ghost” students — students who may have enrolled both in a government and a private school in order to draw government benefits.
- ❖ The schools enter the details, and officials said this data is verified at the level of a school cluster, and at the district and State levels.
- ❖ Bihar has seen the sharpest drop of 35.65 lakh in 2023-24 enrolment from 2018-19, followed by UP with a drop of 28.26 lakh. A senior official in the Ministry said that the data in the report was arrived at after “engagement” with the states — states that showed large changes from previous years were asked to verify their data.

Why was the change in method introduced?

- ❖ In the new system, data of over 60 items is collected for each student. In addition to details like parents’ name, address, Aadhaar, height, and weight, it also covers the student’s exam result and attendance for the year.
- ❖ The official said that with this, UDISE+ has become “a more accurate registry”. The Ministry has attributed the change in data collection to a recommendation in the National Education Policy 2020, which aims “to achieve universal participation in school by carefully tracking students, as well as their learning levels”.
- ❖ The details that are now being collected for each student are expected to help track their performance and attendance. The new system also includes a registry for teachers with a profile for each teacher. Officials said this is also expected to help deploy teachers suitably, and track their attendance. There were around 98 lakh teachers in 2023-24.

Global HMPV Tracker: Tamil Nadu Detects 2 Cases, India's Tally Rises To 5

Key Points:

- ❖ Five cases of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) were confirmed in India on Monday, marking the first reported instances of the virus in the country.
- ❖ In Bengaluru, a three-month-old baby, who has been discharged, and an eight-month-old, who is recovering at a hospital, were the two cases. A two-month-old was also found infected in Ahmedabad.
- ❖ One case was each reported in Chennai and Salem. The affected infants and their families in Bengaluru and Ahmedabad have no recent travel history, the Union health ministry has said, ruling out exposure from other regions or countries.
- ❖ There was no immediate statement on the cases in Tamil Nadu. The HMPV is a globally recognised respiratory virus that recently gained attention after its outbreak was reported in China.
- ❖ The ministry said it is monitoring the situation through all available surveillance channels. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) will continue to track trends in HMPV circulation throughout the year, it said.
- ❖ The governments in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Delhi have issued guidelines - similar to those followed during Covid-19 - to ensure preparedness for potential health challenges related to HMPV.
- ❖ HMPV, first identified in 2001, is a respiratory infection that causes flu-like symptoms. It can affect people of all ages, although children below five years of age, older adults and those with weakened immune systems are at a higher risk.

ଏବଂଏମ୍ପିଭି ଭୂତାଣୁ କ'ଣ?

ନୂତନ ଭୂତାଣୁର ନାମ ହେଉଛି ହ୍ୟୁମାନ ମେଟାପ୍ନେମୋଭିରସ୍ (ଏବଂଏମ୍ପିଭି) । ଏହା ହେଉଛି ଏକ ଆର୍କଏନ୍‌ଏ ଭୂତାଣୁ। ଏହା ସ୍ନାୟୁ ପୃଷ୍ଠ ପରି ବ୍ୟାପିଥାଏ। ଏବଂଏମ୍ପିଭିର ଲକ୍ଷଣ ମଧ୍ୟ କରୋନା ମହାମାରୀ ପରି।

ଏହାର ଲକ୍ଷଣ ହେଉଛି କାଶ, ଜ୍ୱର, ନାକ ସଂକ୍ରମଣ, ଗଳା ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ଏବଂ ନିଶ୍ୱାସ ନେବାରେ ଅସୁବିଧା। ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷରୁ କମ୍ ପିଲାମାନେ, ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଏବଂ ଦୁର୍ବଳ ରୋଗ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ଶକ୍ତିଥିବା ଲୋକେ ଏହାଦ୍ୱାରା ଅଧିକ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି। ଆର୍କଏ ଏବଂ ପୁସ୍ତୁସ ରୋଗୀଙ୍କଠାରେ ଏହି ସଂକ୍ରମଣ ଶୀଘ୍ର ବ୍ୟାପିଥାଏ।

- ❖ HMPV spreads through mechanisms common to other respiratory viruses:
- ❖ Respiratory secretions from coughing and sneezing.
- ❖ Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- ❖ Contact with contaminated surfaces followed by touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.
- ❖ A seasonal rise in respiratory illnesses in China is drawing significant attention this year, especially on social media. The focus stems from unfounded comparisons to the Covid-19 pandemic, which began five years ago.
- ❖ Preventive Measures - Handwashing, mask-wearing, avoiding close contact, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.

✓ ସାବୁନରେ ବାରମ୍ବାର ହାତ ଧୁଆନ୍ତୁ
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ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ, ଏବଂଏମ୍ପିଭି ପାଇଁ କୌଣସି ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ଆଣ୍ଟିଭାଇରାଲ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ନାହିଁ। କୌଣସି ଚିକିତ୍ସା ମଧ୍ୟ ବିକଶିତ ହୋଇନାହିଁ। ଲକ୍ଷଣଗୁଡ଼ିକର ସମାଧାନ ପାଇଁ ସାଧାରଣ ସହାୟକ ଯତ୍ନ ଦିଆଯାଏ।

Lionel Messi: 1st Footballer to get US Presidential Medal of Freedom

Key Points:

- ❖ Captain of Argentina men's football team Lionel Messi was among the 19 people to be honored with the United States of America's highest civilian award 'The Presidential Medal of Freedom' in a ceremony at the White House on 5 January 2025.

- ❖ However, he was not present during the ceremony due to a prior engagement. Messi became the first men's football player and the second from the sport after female football player Megan Rapinoe, who won it in 2022.



- ❖ Presently Messi is playing for the Inter Miami football club in the Major League of the United States of America. The award was conferred to the 19 distinguished persons by the American President Joe Biden whose term as the 46th President of the United States ends on 19 January 2024. Donald Trump is expected to be sworn in as the 47th President of the country on 20 January 2025.

Bhubaneswar to host the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention 2025

Key Points:

- ❖ Bhubaneswar the capital city of Odisha will host the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention from 8-10 January 2025. It is the first time that Bhubaneswar is hosting the biannual Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention.
- ❖ As part of the Bharatiya Divas Convention, the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in Bhubaneswar on 8 January 2025. The 17 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conventions were held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 8 – 10 January 2023.
- ❖ In India, the 9th of January is observed as the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas since 2003 to mark the contribution of the Pravasi Bhartiya (Overseas Indian) community to the development of India.

Organisers of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention

- ❖ The Union Ministry of External Affairs is organising the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention in association with the Odisha state government.
- ❖ The Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Odisha government.

Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi/Youth Bharatiya Divas Convention

- ❖ The Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention will be Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of Trinidad & Tobago. She will address the convention virtually on 9 January 2025.
- ❖ The Chief Guest of the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be Dr. Dev Pragad, CEO of the American magazine Newsweek.

Inauguration and Valedictory Session 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention

- ❖ The 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9th January 2025. PM Modi will virtually flag off the first special tourist train for the Indian diaspora, Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a. The train will depart from Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi covering multiple destinations of tourist and religious importance.
- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu will address the valedictory session of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention on 10th January 2025.
- ❖ President Murmu will also confer the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award to 27 individuals.
- ❖ The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is given to Non-Resident Indians (NRI), Persons of Indian Origin (PIO), or an organisation/institution established and run by the NRI/PIO in recognition of their outstanding achievements both in India and abroad.

Theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention

- ❖ The theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is **"Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat"**.

About the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas /Convention

- ❖ The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas is celebrated by the government of India every year on 9th January on the recommendation of Dr. L.M. Singhvi's 'High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora'.
- ❖ The day was chosen to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India on 9 January 1915 to India onboard the ship S.S.Arabia in Mumbai (then Bombay).
- ❖ The Ministry of External Affairs organises a three-day event known as Pravasi Bhartiya Convention to mark the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
- ❖ The first Pravasi Bhartiya Divas/Convention was organised in 2003 in New Delhi from 9-11 January 2003.
- ❖ It was organised annually but since 2015, it has been organised biannually.

India has 3rd largest metro network in the world after China and US

Key Points:

- ❖ India has the third largest operational metro rail network in the world after China and the United States of America.
- ❖ In 2022, India had surpassed Japan to have the third-largest operational metro network in the world. What is noteworthy is that India has crossed the milestone of having over 1000 km of operational metro rail network.
- ❖ India achieved this milestone when Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 2.8 km stretch between Janakpuri and Krishna Park of Delhi Metro Phase-IV on 5 January 2024.
- ❖ The Prime Minister also inaugurated the 13 km stretch of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor between Sahibabad and New Ashok Nagar.
- ❖ The first stretch of the 82 km long DelhiGhaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) or the Namo Bharat was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in October 2023.
- ❖ It was a 17- kilometer section between Sahibabad and Duhai Depot section (Uttar Pradesh). Now the service has been extended to Delhi with connection to New Ashok Nagar.

Metro Rail Network in India

- ❖ Rapid transit systems in the urban areas also known as metro rails are an urban passenger transportation system on rails. The fast trains that connect the busy areas of the big cities could have underground, surface, or elevated rail tracks.
- ❖ The London Underground rail system popularly known as "Tube", was the first modern metro rail network in the world.
- ❖ It started its operation in 1863. The first metro rail network to become operational in India was in Kolkata (earlier Calcutta) in 1984.
- ❖ It was a 3.4 km route that connected Esplanade and Bhowanipur, in the city and it was built with the assistance of the Soviet Union.
- ❖ The first modern metro system was inaugurated in Delhi in 2002 and it is being operated by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). The initial metro network in Delhi was built with the assistance of Japan.
- ❖ Now DMRC operates India's largest metro network with an operational network of 395 km. ▪ Under Delhi Metro Phase 4, 112.32 km of rail network is under construction which includes the Rithala – Narela - Nathupur (Kundli) metro line. The foundation stone of the Rithala – Narela - Nathupur (Kundli) metro line was laid down by the Prime Minister on 5 January 2025.

- ❖ India's first underwater metro became operational in Kolkata in March 2024 which runs under the Hooghly river. The underwater tunnel is 520 meters long which the train crosses in 45 seconds.
- ❖ Currently, metro rail services are operational in 11 states and 23 cities covering 1000 km of routes.

CSIR develops Paracetamol drugs indigenously

- ❖ The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh announced that the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed the technology to produce Paracetamol indigenously.
- ❖ This was announced by Dr Jitendra Singh at the 40th Foundation Day of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in New Delhi on 5 January 2025.



- ❖ The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is a part of the Union Ministry of Science and Technology. The Director General of the CSIR is the Secretary of the DSIR.
- ❖ The current Secretary of DSIR Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, and Professor A.K. Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the government of India were also present on the occasion.

40th Foundation Day of the DSIR

- ❖ The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research was set up in 1985 by the government of India. The DSIR is an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology.

- ❖ The main function of the department is to carry out the activities relating to Indigenous technology promotion, development, utilisation, and transfer.

Transfer of technology developed by CSIR

- ❖ Speaking on the occasion Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the development of Indigenous technology for manufacturing paracetamol by the CSIR will make India self-sufficient in the drugs that are used in case of fever and pain.
- ❖ At present, India imports key ingredients of the drug from many parts of the world. The technology has been transferred to the Karnataka-based Satya Deeptha Pharmaceuticals Ltd to manufacture the affordable paracetamol domestically.
- ❖ He also mentioned the development and launch of the first indigenously developed antibiotic "Nafithromycin" to treat drug-resistant bacterial infections.
- ❖ The antibiotic has been developed with the support of "Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council" (BIRAC), under the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- ❖ During the 40th Foundation Day celebration numerous agreements were signed for the transfer of technology developed by CSIR to the private companies.
- ❖ Apart from paracetamol, 16 more technologies developed by various laboratories of the CSIR were transferred to various companies for manufacturing purposes, under the 100 days 100 Technology program campaign.

About CSIR

- ❖ CSIR was founded in 1942 to promote scientific knowledge and boost the industrialisation and economic growth of India.
- ❖ It is one of the largest publicly funded research and development organisation in the world. CSIR has a network of 37 national laboratories.

- ❖ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ❖ President: Prime Minister of India.
- ❖ Director General: Dr. N. Kalaiselvi

Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru to host 15th Aero India 2025

Key Points:

- ❖ The latest edition of Asia's biggest biennial air show and aviation exhibition - Aero India 2025 will be held at the Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- ❖ The 15th edition of the Aero India show will be held from 10-14 February 2025. The first edition of the Aero India show was organised in 1996 at the Yelahanka Air Force Station base and the last 14th edition was held in 2023 at the same venue.



- ❖ Aero India will showcase India's growth in aerospace and defence capabilities. On the 13th and 14th of February, there will be both air displays and exhibitions of a large number of military aircraft from the aerospace sector.

Organisers of Aero India

- ❖ The Aero India show is organised by the Defence Exhibition Organisation, the Department of Defence Production, Union Ministry of Defence.

Theme of the 15th Aero India

- ❖ The theme of the 15th Aero India is 'The Runway to a Billion Opportunities',.
- ❖ The theme of the 14th edition of the Aero India was the same as the 15th one.

Structure of the 15th Aero India

- ❖ The event comprises a curtain raiser event, an inaugural event, a Defence Ministers'

Conclave, CEOs' Round Table, a Manthan start-up event, air shows, an exhibition, and a trade fair of aerospace companies.

- ❖ Defence Ministers' Conclave will be held in which defence ministers of India and the invited country's defence ministers will participate to build a strategic partnership.
- ❖ The theme of the Conclave is BRIDGE - Building Resilience through International Defence and Global Engagement.

Aim of the Aero India

- ❖ Aero shows are organised around the world to provide a platform for the civilian and military aviation sectors to display their products and forge new partnerships.
- ❖ The Indian Aero show aims to put India on the map of the aviation market as a major buyer and an important collaborator.
- ❖ It will provide a platform where Indian companies will forge partnerships with foreign companies so that Indian companies become part of the global value chain in the aviation sector.
- ❖ The Indian companies will also display their capabilities in the aviation sector.
- ❖ The focus will be on promoting Indian start-ups in the aerospace sector. Their state-of-the-art technologies/products and innovation will be displayed at an exclusive IDEX pavilion.

Bangladesh issues second arrest warrant against former PM Sheikh Hasina. Will India extradite her?

Key Points:

- ❖ The International Criminal Tribunal (ICT) of Bangladesh has issued a second arrest warrant against Sheikh Hasina, the deposed prime minister, and 11 others, including former military generals and a former police chief, for their alleged involvement in enforced disappearances.
- ❖ This new arrest warrant, issued on January 6, targets Hasina, who fled to India after her Awami League government was ousted following massive anti-government protests in August last year.

- ❖ This marks the second arrest warrant issued against her, with the tribunal having recorded three cases against Hasina so far.



- ❖ The court's order directs the Inspector General of Police to arrest the 12 individuals, including Hasina, and present them before the tribunal on February 12, in connection with a case involving hundreds of enforced disappearances.
- ❖ Among those named in the case are Hasina's former defense adviser, Major General (retd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, and former IGP Benazir Ahmed. While Siddique is currently in custody, Ahmed is believed to be on the run.
- ❖ In December, the Bangladesh government formally requested Hasina's extradition from India, although New Delhi has acknowledged the request but refrained from commenting on it.
- ❖ The ICT first issued an arrest warrant for Hasina on October 17, charging her with genocide and crimes against humanity related to the violent protests of July and August.
- ❖ Since the fall of the Awami League government, at least 60 complaints have been filed at the ICT, accusing Hasina, her party members, allies, and senior law enforcement officials of enforced disappearances, killings, genocide, and other crimes.

National Bird Day

Key Points:

- ❖ National Bird Day is celebrated every year on January 5. The day is celebrated every year to raise awareness about the importance of birds and their habitats. The day also emphasizes the ecological importance of birds and the need to conserve them.



- ❖ Theme 2025 – **Protecting Our Birds, Protecting Our Future.**
- ❖ National Bird Day was first established in 2002 by the **Avian Welfare Coalition**. The day not only draws attention to the pressing issues of bird extinction and habitat destruction but also encourages individuals and organisations to engage in efforts to conserve bird populations.

Devajit Saikia appointed as Secretary of BCCI

- ❖ Devajit Saikia has been appointed as the Chief Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). While, Prabhtej Singh Bhatia was appointed as treasurer of BCCI. Saikia, the board's joint secretary, has been serving as the acting secretary after Jay Shah took over as International Cricket Council (ICC) Chair in December.
- ❖ His elevation will leave the joint secretary's post vacant for which elections will subsequently be held. Saikia is the advocate-general of Assam.
- ❖ A former first-class cricketer with four domestic caps for Assam, under him the Assam Cricket Association hosted IPL matches in Guwahati as well as warm-up matches of the 2023 ODI World Cup.



World Day of War Orphans

Key Points:

- ❖ World Day of War Orphans is observed annually on January 6. The day raises awareness about the plight of children orphaned due to wars and conflicts, emphasizing their need for care, protection, and support.

- ❖ The day encourages global efforts to provide education, healthcare, and safe environments for children affected by war.
- ❖ World Day of War Orphans was founded by the French organisation SOS Enfants en Détresses. The day focuses on the lives of children impacted by war and aims to improve their future.

