



INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION



**INSIGHTS
DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS + PIB
SUMMARY**

17 DECEMBER 2024

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HEALTH EQUITY

Syllabus: Health

Context: Health equity remains a critical goal for achieving [Universal Health Coverage \(UHC\)](#) in India. Despite government initiatives systemic inequalities persist across gender, religion, and regions, widening the gap in access to quality healthcare services.



What is Health Equity?

Health equity ensures that **everyone has a fair opportunity** to achieve their highest health potential, addressing avoidable disparities caused by social, economic, and environmental factors.

Various Parameters of Health Equity

1. **Access to Healthcare:** Equitable distribution of hospitals, health workers, and medicines in rural and urban areas.
2. **Financial Protection:** Reducing out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures and ensuring insurance coverage.
3. **Gender Parity:** Equal healthcare access for women, men, and non-binary individuals.
4. **Social Determinants:** Addressing poverty, education, housing, and clean water to improve health outcomes.
5. **Quality of Care:** Ensuring timely, affordable, and standardized healthcare services for all.

Present Inequity in Health in India:

1. **Gender Inequality:**
 - **Anaemia among Women:** 59% in the lowest wealth quintile (NFHS-5, 2019-21).
 - Maternal mortality remains higher in rural areas due to lack of care.
2. **Religious Inequality:**
 - **Muslims** have higher infant mortality rates (43 per 1,000 live births) than the national average (Census 2011).

3. **Regional Disparity:**

- Urban areas have 75% of healthcare professionals, but only **27% of India's population** resides there ([WHO](#)).
- Rural CHCs face **83% shortages** of specialists, worsening access to care.

4. **Caste and Tribal Marginalization:**

- **Child Mortality:** Higher among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes.
- Immunization rates lower for marginalized groups compared to upper castes (NFHS-5).

5. **Economic Disparity:**

- Out-of-pocket expenses: **39.4%** of total health expenditure (NHA, 2021-22).
- Over **50 million people** are pushed into poverty annually due to healthcare costs.

Government initiatives:

1. **Ayushman Bharat – PMJAY:** Provides ₹5 lakh annual health cover for low-income families.
2. **National Health Mission (NHM):** Focuses on strengthening primary and urban healthcare systems.
3. **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission:** Promotes digital healthcare access and efficiency.
4. **Free Medicine Schemes:** Tamil Nadu's robust **drug procurement system** ensures free medicines.
5. **Focus on Primary Healthcare:** Kerala's model emphasizes strong primary health infrastructure.

Challenges for health equity:

1. **Inadequate Public Funding:** Government healthcare spending stands at only **1.84% of GDP**.
2. **Shortage of Healthcare Workers:** Severe deficit of doctors and specialists, particularly in rural areas.
3. **Over-Reliance on Private Sector:** High private healthcare costs exacerbate inequities.
4. **Socioeconomic Barriers:** Poverty, gender discrimination, and illiteracy hinder healthcare access.
5. **Regional Imbalance:** States with low healthcare infrastructure struggle with accessibility and quality of care.

Way ahead to achieve health equity:

1. **Increased Public Health Spending:** Raise budgetary allocation to **2.5% of GDP** for improved infrastructure and resources.
2. **Strengthen Primary Healthcare:** Focus on **PHCs and CHCs** with adequate staffing and facilities in rural areas.
3. **Expand Insurance Coverage:** Integrate **informal sector workers** into schemes like PMJAY.
4. **Leverage Technology:** Use digital health platforms for telemedicine and health awareness.
5. **Address Social Determinants:** Tackle poverty, education gaps, clean water access, and nutrition to improve overall health outcomes.

Conclusion:

Achieving health equity requires political commitment, increased investment, and inclusive policies that address systemic disparities. **As Nelson Mandela said, "Health cannot be a question of income; it is a fundamental human right."**

Insta Links:

1. [Inclusive-health-care](#)

PYQ:

1. Consider the following statements: (UPSC-2023)

Statement-I: India’s public sector health care system largely focuses on curative care with limited preventive, promotive and rehabilitative care.

Statement-II: Under India’s decentralized approach to health care delivery, the States are primarily responsible for organizing health services.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement-I
- b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
- c) Statement-I is correct but Statement II is incorrect
- d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct

Answer: b)

Meta Description:

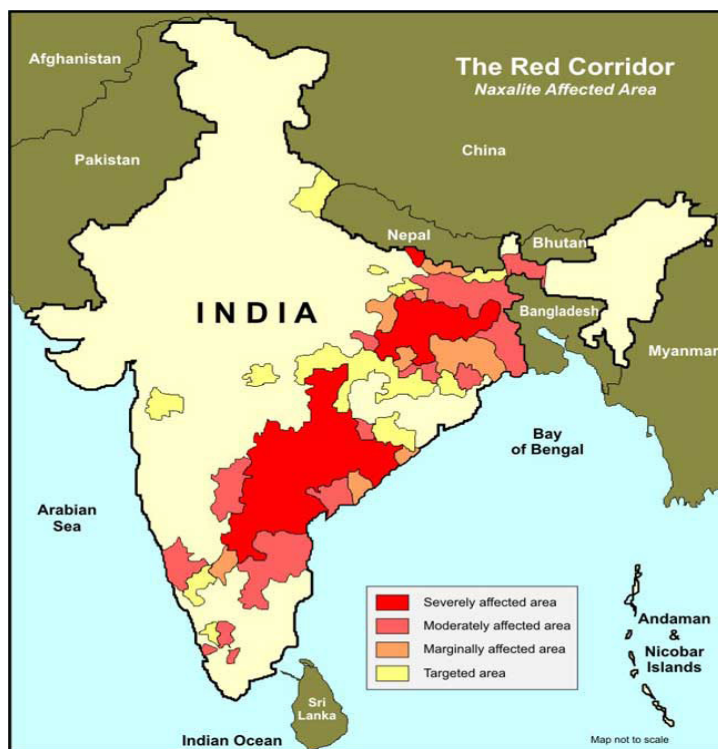
Explore India’s health equity challenges, gender and regional disparities, government initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, and strategies to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

GS Paper 3:

NAXALISM

Syllabus: Internal Security

Context: Union Home Minister Amit Shah reiterated the commitment to eliminate Naxalism from Chhattisgarh by 2026.



What is Naxalism?

- **Definition:** Naxalism is a form of **Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)** that aims to overthrow the state using violent means, inspired by **Maoist ideology**.
- **Origin:** Began in **Naxalbari village**, West Bengal, in **1967** as a tribal-peasant uprising.
- **Ideology:** Driven by **Marxist-Leninist** principles, with a focus on addressing issues like land reforms and exploitation.
- **Objective:** Establish a **People's Democratic Republic** through armed insurgency.
- **Affected Regions:** Mainly impacts the **Red Corridor** – states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Bihar.

Evolution of Naxalism in India:

- **1967 (First Stage):** Peasant uprising in **Naxalbari**, West Bengal, led by Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, and Jangal Santhal.
- **1975-2004:** Groups fragmented; **People's War Group (PWG)** in Andhra Pradesh and **MCCI** in Bihar strengthened.
- **2004 Onwards:** PWG and MCCI merged to form **CPI (Maoist)**, consolidating the Naxal movement.
- **Spread of Red Corridor:** Expansion into states like **Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand**, and forays into southern states.
- **Current Status:** Naxal violence reduced by 47% (2015-2020) but remains concentrated in core regions.

Types of Naxalism:

- **Rural Naxalism:** Dominant in forested and tribal regions; targets government symbols and infrastructure.
- **Urban Naxalism:** Maoist infiltration in **urban centres** to radicalize intellectuals, students, and labour groups.

Reasons Behind Naxalism:

1. **Economic Inequality:** Unequal distribution of land and lack of employment opportunities for marginalized communities.
2. **Exploitation of Tribals:** Displacement of tribals due to mining, deforestation, and lack of forest rights.
3. **Lack of Development:** Absence of infrastructure like **roads, schools, healthcare**, and clean water.
4. **Governance Deficit:** Weak local governance, corruption, and failure to implement welfare schemes.
5. **Political Marginalization:** Exclusion of **Dalits, Adivasis**, and landless peasants from political participation.

Government initiatives to counter Naxalism:

1. **Security Operations:** Deployment of **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)** and anti-Naxal units like **Greyhounds** and **Bastariya Battalion**.
2. **Development Programs:** Initiatives like **Road Connectivity Project, Aspirational Districts Program**, and **ROSHNI Scheme**.
3. **Rehabilitation Policies:** Surrender and rehabilitation programs to reintegrate former Naxals into society.
4. **Intelligence Strengthening:** Multi-Agency Centers (MACs) and UAV surveillance for real-time intelligence sharing.
5. **Skill Development:** Programs like **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)** to provide employment opportunities.

SAMADHAN STRATEGY

- S– Smart Leadership
- A– Aggressive Strategy
- M– Motivation and Training
- A– Actionable Intelligence
- D– Dashboard Based KPIs and KRAs
- H– Harnessing Technology
- A– Action plan for each Theatre
- N– No access to Financing

Challenges to Counter Naxalism:

1. **Terrain Complexity:** Naxals exploit remote forests and inaccessible areas for guerrilla warfare.
2. **Inadequate Coordination:** Poor inter-state coordination among security forces and agencies.
3. **Lack of Intelligence:** Inadequate actionable intelligence and reliance on outdated technology.
4. **Social Support Base:** Strong Naxal influence among marginalized tribals and landless farmers.
5. **Urban Maoism:** Growing infiltration into intellectual and urban circles, complicating countermeasures.

Way ahead to tackle naxalism in India:

1. **Holistic Development:** Focus on **roads, education, healthcare**, and livelihood opportunities in affected regions.
2. **Improved Governance:** Address governance deficits with transparent implementation of welfare schemes.
3. **Community Engagement:** Win trust through tribal empowerment, forest rights, and inclusive policies.
4. **Modernized Security Forces:** Equip forces with advanced technology, better training, and intelligence tools.
5. **Peace Dialogues:** Open channels for political dialogue to reintegrate Naxals into the mainstream society.

Conclusion:

As Karl Marx aptly said, **“The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.”** Tackling Naxalism requires a balanced approach of security measures, development, and inclusive governance to end decades of unrest and ensure lasting peace.

Insta Links:

1. [Naxalism](#)

PYQ:

1. What are the determinants of left-wing extremism in Eastern part of India? What strategy should the Government of India, civil administration and security forces adopt to counter the threat in the affected areas? (UPSC-2020)
2. Left Wing Extremism (LWE) is showing a downward trend, but still affects many parts of the country.

Briefly explain the Government of India's approach to counter the challenges posed by LWE. (UPSC-2018)

Meta Description:

Learn about Naxalism in India, its evolution, causes, types, government initiatives, and challenges. Discover strategies to tackle Left Wing Extremism for inclusive development and peace.

Content for Mains Enrichment (CME)

KARNATAKA PDS IRREGULARITIES

Context: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagged irregularities in the implementation of Karnataka's Public Distribution System (PDS) during 2017-2022.

CAG Report on PDS Diversion:

- **Unauthorized Vehicles Used:**
 - Transporters used **passenger vehicles** (e.g., Tata Indica, Maruti Omni, three-wheelers) instead of authorized trucks.
- **Inflated Transport Claims:**
 - **1,725 trips** out of 2,510 tested showed **unauthorized vehicles** transporting foodgrains.
- **Lack of Monitoring:**
 - WSD (Wholesale Depot) managers failed to ensure use of **authorized vehicles** per contract agreements.
- **Hygiene and Maintenance Issues:**
 - Poor hygiene observed, including pest infestations and **stray animals** in depots.

Relevance in UPSC exam syllabus:

- **GS Paper II (Governance):** Issues with PDS implementation and accountability in welfare schemes.
- **GS Paper III (Economy):** Leakages and inefficiencies in food distribution systems.
- **Essay:** Topics related to **food security, governance reforms**, and transparency in public systems.
- **Ethics Paper (GS IV):** Case studies on **accountability, ethical lapses**, and corruption in public service delivery.

Facts for Prelims (FFP)

USTAD ZAKIR HUSSAIN

Context: Ustad Zakir Hussain, the globally celebrated tabla maestro, passed away in San Francisco due to Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF).

About Zakir Hussain:

- **Birth:** Born on March 9, 1951, in **Mumbai, India**.
- **Family & Roots:** Son of legendary tabla player **Ustad Alla Rakha**; trained in the **Punjab Gharana** tradition.

- **Music Legacy:** A pioneer in **Indian classical and fusion music**, blending tabla with jazz, film, and world music.
- **Achievements & Awards:**
 - Winner of **five Grammy Awards**, including one for the fusion group **Shakti**.
 - Awarded **Padma Shri** (1988), **Padma Bhushan** (2002), and **Padma Vibhushan** (2023).
 - Collaborated with artists like **John McLaughlin**, **Pandit Ravi Shankar**, and **Ali Akbar Khan**.
- **Global Influence:** Popularized the tabla globally through concerts, commercials, and innovative collaborations.



asionally [lung biopsy](#).

- **Treatment:**

- **Antifibrotic medications:** Pirfenidone, Nintedanib (slows progression).
- **Oxygen therapy and lung exercises.**
- Lung transplantation for advanced cases.

Insta Links:

1. [Classical-music](#)

Meta Description:

Explore the life and legacy of tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, who passed away due to idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Learn about his achievements, contributions to Indian classical music, and facts about IPF, its causes, symptoms, and treatments.

[Facts for Prelims \(FFP\)](#)

CHARAK INITIATIVE

Context: The Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL), launched 'CHARAK' (Community Health: A Responsive Action for Koylanchal) to provide free treatment for life-threatening diseases to economically weaker sections in Singrauli and Sonbhadra districts.

About Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF):

- **What it is:** A chronic, progressive lung disease causing **scarring (fibrosis)** of lung tissue, making breathing difficult.
- **Causes:**
 - Exact cause unknown (idiopathic).
 - Triggered by **environmental factors** (smoke, dust, pollution), genetic predisposition, and chronic inflammation.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Shortness of breath (dyspnea)
 - Dry cough
 - Fatigue and unintended weight loss
 - Low oxygen levels leading to complications like pulmonary hypertension and respiratory failure.
- **Diagnosis:** Confirmed via **high-resolution CT scans**, pulmonary function tests, and oc-



About CHARAK Initiative:

- **What it is:** A **health-centric CSR initiative** by NCL for free treatment of life-threatening diseases.
- **Launched by:** Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL), under the Ministry of Coal.

- **Aim:** To provide **free and specialized healthcare** to economically weaker sections suffering from life-threatening diseases.
- **Eligibility:** Residents of **Singrauli and Sonbhadra districts** with annual family income below **₹8 Lakhs**.
- **Covered Diseases:** Includes malignancy, TB, [HIV](#) complications, cardiovascular diseases, organ transplants, burns, neurological disorders, accidental trauma, etc.

Insta links:

1. [Impact-of-CSR-funds](#)

Meta Description:

NCL launches CHARAK initiative in Singrauli to provide free treatment for life-threatening diseases to economically weaker sections. Learn about eligibility, features, and healthcare benefits.

LA NIÑA

Context: La Niña, a critical phase of the El Niño Southern Oscillation ([ENSO](#)), significantly influences global and regional weather patterns, including India’s monsoons and winters. Its delayed onset in 2024 has led to varied climatic effects.



FIGURE 1: Planetary Boundary Layer Height (PBLH) is slightly lower during La Niña. But the difference is only noticeable during daytime. This could lead to more trapping of pollutants near the surface

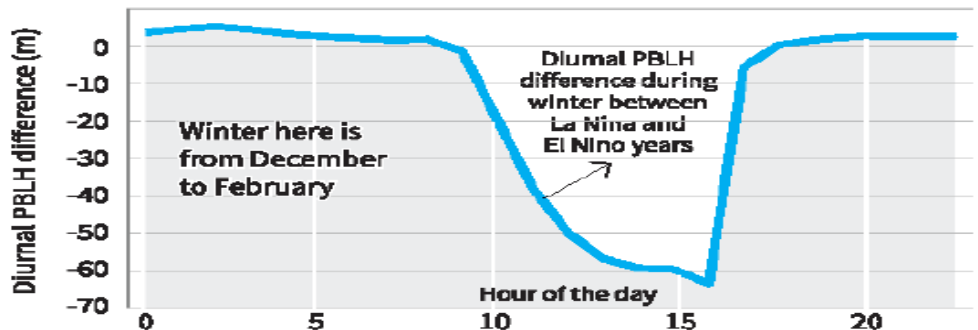
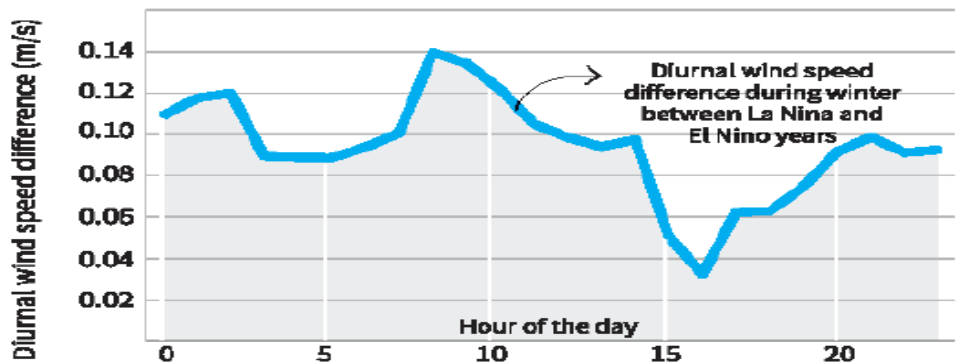


FIGURE 2: Wind speed is higher throughout the day during La Niña compared with El Niño. This could counter the impact of lower temperatures and help in lowering pollutant concentration levels



About La Niña:

- **What it is:** A cooling phase of the Pacific Ocean, characterized by lower-than-average sea surface temperatures between **Indonesia** and **South America**.

- **How it forms:** Strengthened trade winds push warm water westward, allowing colder water to upwell in the central and eastern Pacific.
- **Global Impacts:**
 - Increased hurricanes over the Atlantic Ocean.
 - Droughts in Africa and western U.S.
 - Enhanced rainfall in Southeast Asia and Australia.
- **Impacts on India:**
 - Above-normal monsoons (e.g., 2020-2022).
 - Colder winters in north India and cooler summer relief.
 - Higher wind speeds, improving air quality.

- Extended droughts in Africa and western U.S.
- Increased cyclone activity in Australia and Atlantic hurricanes.
- Prolonged disruptions in global agricultural and marine systems.
- **Impacts on India:**
 - Consistent above-normal rainfall (e.g., 2020-2022).
 - Cooler winters in north India.
 - Enhanced agricultural yield due to robust monsoons.

Insta links:

1. [El-Nino and-monsoon](#)

About [El Niño](#):

- **What it is:** The warming phase of ENSO, with higher-than-average sea surface temperatures in the eastern Pacific Ocean.
- **How it forms:** Weakened trade winds allow warm water to accumulate in the eastern and central Pacific.
- **Global Impacts:**
 - Heavy rainfall in the southern U.S. and western South America.
 - Severe droughts in Southeast Asia, Australia, and Africa.
 - Disruption of marine ecosystems due to warmer ocean waters.
- **Impacts on India:**
 - Below-normal monsoons (e.g., 2023).
 - Intense summer heat waves and prolonged droughts.
 - Reduced agricultural output and water shortages.

Meta Description:

Explore how La Niña, El Niño, and Triple Dip La Niña influence global climate and India's monsoons, winters, and summers. Learn their causes, impacts, and relevance to Indian weather systems.

CYCLONE CHIDO

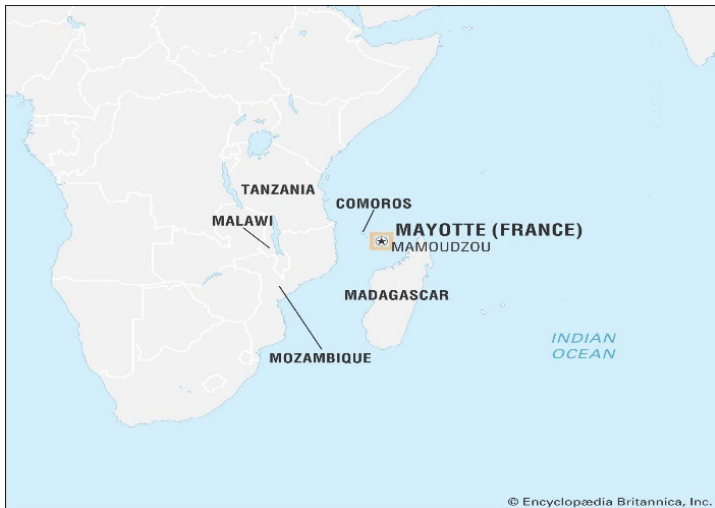
Context: Cyclone Chido, a super cyclone with winds exceeding 200 km/h, struck Mayotte, a French overseas territory in the Indian Ocean, causing unprecedented destruction.

About Cyclone Chido:

- **Origin:** Developed over the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, intensifying rapidly due to rising sea surface temperatures.
- **Classification:** A super cyclone with sustained wind speeds exceeding 200 km/h and gusts surpassing 250 km/h.
- **Criteria for a Super Cyclone**
 - **Wind Speed:** Sustained wind speeds of over 220 km/h (137 mph) or higher.
 - **Classification:** Categorized as a Category 4 or 5 storm on the Saffir-Simpson scale.
 - **Low Central Pressure:** Extremely low central pressure, often below 920 hPa.

About [Triple Dip La Niña](#):

- **What it is:** When La Niña conditions persist for three consecutive years (rare occurrence).
- **How it forms:** Sustained strengthening of trade winds and persistent cooling of the Pacific over multiple cycles.
- **Global Impacts:**



About Mayotte:

- **Location:** Situated in the **Mozambique Channel**, between **northwestern Madagascar** and **northeastern Mozambique** in the Indian Ocean.
- **Capital:** **Mamoudzou**, located on the main island, Grande-Terre.
- **Controlled by:** Overseas **department of France**.
- Consists of **Grande-Terre** (main island), **Petite-Terre**, and surrounding islets.

Insta links:

1. [Super-cyclones](#)

Meta Description:

Cyclone Chido, the strongest storm of the century, devastates Mayotte with winds exceeding 200 km/h. Learn about its origin, features, and Mayotte's location, impacts, and recovery.

HYDROXYMETHANESULPHONATE

Context: A study reveals hydroxymethanesulphonate, a secondary aerosol, forming in cold urban areas like Fairbanks, Alaska, reshaping understanding of aerosol chemistry in extreme conditions and its air quality impact.

About Hydroxymethanesulphonate:

- **What it is:** A secondary aerosol that forms from chemical reactions involving **formaldehyde** and **sulphur dioxide** in the presence of liquid water.
- **How it is formed:**
 - Occurs when **formaldehyde** reacts with **sulphite ions** in aerosol particles.
 - Requires **liquid water** within aerosol particles, even in extremely cold conditions (supercooled state).
- **Factors favoring its formation:**
 - **Low temperatures:** Inhibit ammonium volatilization, reducing aerosol acidity.
 - **High ammonium ion concentrations:** Neutralize acidity, enabling reactions.
 - **Supercooled liquid water:** Present in aerosols at sub-zero temperatures.
- **Impact on environment:**
 - Contributes to **PM2.5 pollution**, worsening air quality.
 - Influences **cloud formation** and radiative properties, affecting climate.
- **Impact on humans:**
 - Aggravates respiratory illnesses, **lung diseases**, and cardiovascular conditions.
 - Long-term exposure increases risks of **premature mortality** in polluted regions.

Insta Links:

1. [Aerosols](#)

Meta Description:

Learn about hydroxymethanesulphonate, a secondary aerosol forming in cold urban regions, its formation process, factors favouring it, and its impact on air quality, climate, and human health.

CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME FOR E-NWR BASED PLEDGE FINANCING

Context: The Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution, launched the Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF).



About Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR (Negotiable warehouse receipt):

- **Launched in:** December 2024.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution.
- **Aim:** To provide **credit guarantee** for loans availed against **e-NWRs**, ensuring financial support for farmers and traders while minimizing risks.
- **Features:**
 - **Total Corpus:** ₹1,000 crore.
 - **Loan Coverage:**
 1. Up to ₹75 lakh for small and marginal farmers.
 2. Up to ₹200 lakh for MSMEs and traders.
 - **Guarantee Coverage:**
 1. **85%** for loans up to ₹3 lakh.
 2. **80%** for loans between ₹3 to ₹75 lakh for SMFs/women/SC/

ST/PwD.

3. **75%** for MSMEs, traders, and FPOs.

- **Guarantee Fee:** 0.4% p.a. for farmers and 1% p.a. for non-farmers.

- **Implemented by:** Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority ([WDRA](#)).
- **Eligible Institutions:** All **scheduled banks and cooperative banks**.

Insta links:

1. [e-NWR](#)

Meta Description:

Union Minister launches Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR with a ₹1,000 crore corpus to support farmers, MSMEs, and traders through post-harvest loans. Learn about its features, eligibility, and benefits.

Mapping:

MOLDOVA

Context: India extended gratitude to Moldova for its crucial support during **Operation Ganga**, which helped evacuate over 20,000 Indian nationals stranded in Ukraine in February 2022.



About Moldova:

- **Capital:** Chişinău
- **Neighbours:**
 - **Romania** (West)
 - **Ukraine** (North, East, and South)
- **European Union Status:** Moldova is **not part**

of the EU but has **EU candidate status** as of 2022.

- **Transnistria Region:**
 - A **breakaway territory** on Moldova's eastern border across the Dniester River.
 - It is **unrecognized internationally** and has ongoing geopolitical significance.
- **Geographic Features:**
 - **Rivers:** Dniester River (major river), Prut River (border with Romania).
 - **Mountains:** Mostly **low-lying terrain** with rolling hills; **Bălți Steppe** and **Codru hills** are prominent.
 - Known for fertile land and a temperate continental climate.

Insta links:

1. [Russia's-Ukraine-war](#)

Meta Description:

India thanks Moldova for its support during Operation Ganga. Learn about Moldova's capital, geographical features, and its growing bilateral ties with India after the embassy's formal inauguration.