



30 July, 2024

Oropouche Fever

Context: According to Brazil's health ministry, two individuals in the state of Bahia have become the first people in the country to die from Oropouche fever.

Etiology

- **Virus:** Oropouche virus (OROV), a member of the Bunyaviridae family, genus Orthobunyavirus.
- **Primary Vectors:** Biting midge (*Culicoides paraensis*); mosquitoes (*Culex* spp.) can also transmit the virus.
- **Reservoirs:** Sloths, non-human primates, and birds.

Transmission

- **Vectors:** Spread through bites from infected midges (primarily *Culicoides paraensis*) and mosquitoes.
- **Geographic Spread:** Historically prevalent in Central and South America and the Caribbean; recent outbreaks in new regions, including Cuba (first reported on June 11, 2024).
- **Human-to-Human Transmission:** No evidence of direct human-to-human transmission.

Clinical Features

Symptoms:

- Sudden onset of high fever
- Headache
- Muscle pain (myalgia)
- Joint pain (arthralgia)
- Chills
- Nausea and vomiting
- **Incubation Period:** Symptoms typically appear 4-8 days after the bite.
- **Duration:** Symptoms usually last about 7 days.
- **Complications:** Severe cases are rare but can include meningitis or encephalitis.

Treatment

- **Supportive Care:** No specific antiviral treatment available.
- Rest
- Hydration
- Pain and fever management with acetaminophen or NSAIDs

Epidemiology and Climate Factors

- **Disease Spread:** Oropouche fever has recently seen a sharp increase in cases, extending to regions not previously affected.
- **Climate Influence:** Primarily associated with tropical climates, though outbreaks have also occurred in non-tropical areas. Vegetation loss and deforestation may contribute to disease spread.
- **Research Status:** The disease is understudied, with limited data on its epidemic potential and spread.

Public Health Considerations

- **New Regions:** The emergence of cases in new regions suggests high susceptibility and potential for further spread.
- **Prevention:** Currently, there is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment available. Control measures focus on vector management and supportive care.

India Employment Report 2024

Context: India, a founding member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), is expected to file a complaint against the UN agency regarding its India Employment Report 2024.

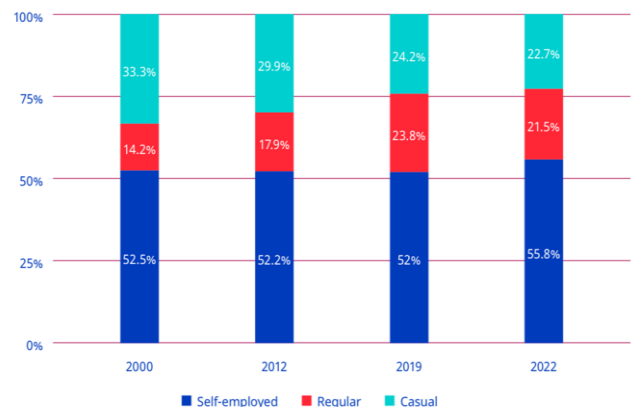
Employment Condition Index:

- Improved from 2004-05 to 2021-22.
- States like Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh consistently ranked lower.
- States such as Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand, and Gujarat consistently ranked higher.

Indicators of the Employment Condition Index:

- Based on the percentage of workers in regular formal employment.
- Includes the percentage of casual laborers and the proportion of self-employed workers below the poverty line.
- Measures work participation rate, average monthly earnings of casual laborers, unemployment rate among those with secondary education and above, and youth not engaged in employment, education, or training.

▶ Figure 2.7. Share of employment (UPSS, aged 15+), by work status, 2000, 2012, 2019 and 2022 (%)



Concerns Highlighted in the Report:

- Slow transition from farm to non-farm employment.
- Increase in self-employment and unpaid family work, particularly among women.
- Poor quality of youth employment compared to adult employment.
- Stagnant or declining wages and earnings.

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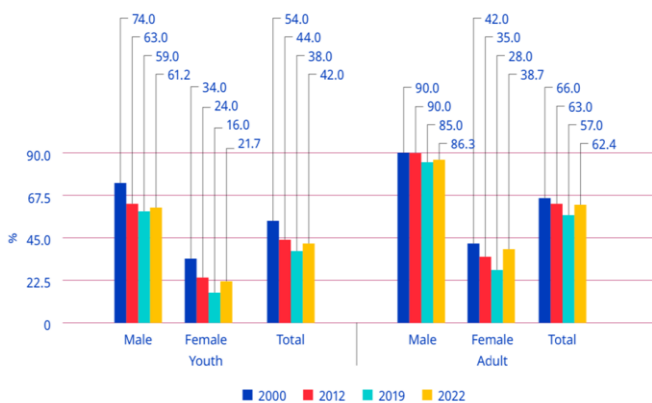
➤ Employment Quality:

- Approximately 82% of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector.
- Nearly 90% of workers are informally employed.
- Increase in self-employment and unpaid family work, especially among women.

➤ Participation of Women:

- Female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) declined by 14.4 percentage points from 2000 to 2019.
- LFPR increased by 8.3 percentage points from 2019 to 2022.

▶ Figure 4.3. Labour force participation rate (UPSS) of youths and adults, by gender, 2000, 2012, 2019 and 2022



Source: Computed from unit-level data of various Employment and Unemployment Surveys, and Periodic Labour Force Survey data.

➤ Structural Transformation:

- Share of agriculture in total employment fell from 60% in 2000 to 42% in 2019.
- Employment in construction and services rose from 23% in 2000 to 32% in 2019.

➤ Youth Employment:

- Youth employment increased, but quality remains a concern.
- Youth made up 82.9% of the total unemployed population in 2022.
- Youth unemployment rose from 5.7% in 2000 to 17.5% in 2019, then decreased to 12.1% in 2022.
- Recovery post-lockdowns was accompanied by an increase in poor-quality jobs.

➤ Report Highlights:

- Based on National Sample Surveys and Periodic Labour Force Surveys (2000-2022).
- Female LFPR improved from 2019, particularly in rural areas.
- Self-employment and casual work remain dominant.
- Real wages for casual laborers modestly increased; wages for regular workers stagnated or declined.
- Projected increases in urbanization and migration rates.

➤ Youth Employment Challenges:

- India remains in the demographic dividend zone for another decade.
- Youth population expected to decrease from 27% in 2021 to 23% by 2036.
- Annual addition of 7-8 million youths to the labor force.
- Post-lockdown recovery included poor-quality jobs.

➤ Recommendations:

- Promote job creation.
- Improve employment quality.
- Address labor market inequalities.
- Strengthen skills and active labor market policies.
- Bridge gaps in understanding labor market patterns and youth employment.

National Culture Fund

Context: There was an information dissemination about the National Culture Fund in the Parliament.

➤ Establishment and Purpose:

- Established by the Government of India under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890, through a Gazette Notification in 1996.
- Created as a distinct funding mechanism to enable direct support for arts and culture through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).
- Aims to mobilize additional resources for promoting, protecting, and preserving India's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Management Structure:

➤ Governing Council:

- Chaired by the Union Minister of Culture.
- Comprises up to 24 members, including the Chairman and Member Secretary.
- Includes representatives from corporate and public sectors, private foundations, and non-profit organizations to ensure non-governmental input in decision-making.

➤ Executive Committee:

- Chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Culture.
- Consists of up to 11 members responsible for executing policies set by the Governing Council.

➤ Tax Benefits and Legal Framework:

- Donations to NCF are eligible for 100% tax benefit under Section 80G (ii) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- Activities covered under Schedule VII No. (v) of the Companies Act, 2013, allowing CSR contributions for the protection of national heritage, art, culture, and restoration projects.

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Roles and Functions:

➤ **Administration and Application:**

- Manages the fund for conservation, maintenance, promotion, protection, and preservation of monuments.
- Supports the training and development of cultural specialists and administrators.
- Facilitates the creation of additional space in museums and the construction of new museums.
- Documents fading or extinct cultural expressions.

➤ **Project Implementation:**

- Forwards partnerships with corporates, NGOs, and others to implement heritage projects.

- Provides donors the flexibility to select projects, locations, and implementing agencies.
- Monitors project progress through regular meetings of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC), chaired by the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India for ASI projects, and NCF/Ministry of Culture officials for other projects.

➤ **Auditing and Compliance:**

- Annual accounts audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- Donors and sponsors must comply with the terms and conditions specified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for each project.

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Narmada Bachao Andolan



Recently, a Delhi court suspended the sentence awarded to social activist Medha Patkar, known for the Narmada Bachao Andolan, in a criminal defamation case filed by Delhi Lieutenant-Governor.

About Narmada Bachao Andolan:

- The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is a **social movement in India** that began in **1985** to oppose the construction of large **dams on the Narmada River**.
- The **movement was led by Medha Patkar**, an Indian social activist, along with native tribals, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists.
- The goals of this andolan were to stop construction on the dams, especially the **Sardar Sarovar Dam** and to demand transparency from the government and funding sources, particularly the **World Bank**.
- The movement argued that the dams would **displace thousands of people** and have a devastating impact on the environment.
- It was successful in delaying the construction of some of the dams and forced the World Bank to end its funding of the Sardar Sarovar Dam between **1985 and 1993**.
- The Supreme Court also ordered the World Bank to review the loan it had provided for the project.

Ideas4LiFE



Recently, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav launched Ideas4LiFE at IIT Delhi.

About Ideas4LiFE:

- Ideas4LiFE is an **online portal** to invite ideas and **innovations for products** and services that can encourage environmentally friendly lifestyles.
- The initiative **aims to encourage and motivate students**, faculty and research scholars to contribute their innovative ideas to the global initiative of Mission LiFE.
- The winning ideas under each of the seven themes of **Mission LiFE** will be recognized and awarded with attractive prizes for individuals as well as for institutions.

MQ-9B



Recently, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister of India, approved amendments for procuring 31 MQ-9B HALE UAVs from General Atomics of the U.S.

About MQ-9B:

- The MQ-9B, also known as the **Predator B or MQ-9 Reaper**, is a remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS) and **unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems**.
- It is a High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) drone that can fly for **over 40 hours** using a satellite and is designed for long-endurance missions.
- It can be used for a variety of purposes, including: **Offensive missions, Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Intelligence operations**.
- It is modular and can accommodate a variety of **payloads and munitions**, such as **missiles and bombs**.
- The drones will be **used by the Indian Navy, Army and Air Force for maritime security, surveillance and reconnaissance patrols**.

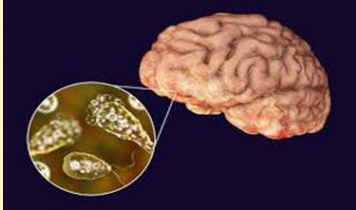
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Amoebic Brain Infection



Recently, an Amoebic brain infection has been confirmed in a four-year-old boy in Kerala.

About the Amoebic Brain Infection:

- Amoebic brain infection, also known as **primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM)**.
- It is a severe and **often fatal disease caused by the amoeba Naegleria fowleri**, also known as the "brain-eating amoeba".
- The amoeba **lives in warm freshwater environments**, such as **lakes, ponds, rivers** and poorly maintained **swimming pools**.
- It infects people **when contaminated water enters their nose** and **travels to the brain**, where it **destroys brain tissue** and **causes swelling**.
- Amoebic brain infection symptoms include **headache, fever, nausea** and vomiting.

Place in News

Iran

Recently, Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized Pearl G, a Togo-flagged oil tanker, in the Gulf, arresting its nine Indian crew members for alleged fuel smuggling near the disputed Arash oil field between Iran and Kuwait.

Iran (Capital: Tehran)

Location: Iran also known as Persia and officially the Islamic Republic of Iran, is a country situated in **Western Asia**.

Boundaries: Iran shares its borders with **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan** (East), **Turkey** and **Iraq** (West), **Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan** and the **Caspian Sea** (North) and **The Persian Gulf** and the **Gulf of Oman** (South).

Physical Features:

- Karun River** is the most significant river of Iran, flowing through the Zagros Mountains and supporting agricultural activities.
- Mount Damavand** is an **active volcano**, considered a stratovolcano, situated in the Alborz mountain range.
- Iran holds substantial reserves of **oil and natural gas**.

Membership:

Iran is a member of various international organizations including the **United Nations, Non-Aligned Movement, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Economic Cooperation Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, World Health Organization** and **International Atomic Energy Agency**.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Where was the 14th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting recently held? – **Vientiane, Lao PDR**
- What does 'Greenium' refer to? – **The savings an issuer of a green bond realizes on the associated coupon payment**
- In which region of India were 'Magnetofossils' recently discovered? – **Ladakh**
- Which organization recently received \$215.6 million from the Green Climate Fund for financing mitigation and adaptation projects? – **SIDBI**
- Where was the country's 500th Community Radio Station recently inaugurated? – **Aizawl**

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