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Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**31<sup>st</sup> JULY, 2024**



**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services



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**S.NO. TOPIC**

1. MAINS ORIENTED NEWS
2. INDIA'S OPEN ECOSYSTEMS FACING AN UNUSUAL THREAT: ENCROACHING TREES
3. OPTION OR STRATAGEM ?
4. WAYANAD LANDSLIDES
5. UNITED STATES OVERTAKES UAE AS INDIA'S SECOND LARGEST LNG SUPPLIER
6. PLACE IN NEWS: ETHIOPIA

**The Hindu Analysis- 31st July**

WEDNESDAY  
July 31, 2024  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDITION  
18 Pages

www.thehindu.com

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Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirappalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna



**UNION BUDGET**  
**FM calls Opposition charges misleading**  
NEWS » PAGE 4



**MADURO'S VICTORY**  
**Protests sweep Venezuela**  
WORLD » PAGE 14



**PM TO INDUSTRY LEADERS**  
**No dearth of will to fulfil people's hopes**  
BUSINESS » PAGE 12



**BROADCASTING REGULATION BILL**  
**A licence raj for digital content creators**  
*It will look to control online narratives*  
EDITORIAL » PAGE 8



**SKIPPER TO THE FORE**  
**Harmanpreet shines as India beats Ireland**  
SPORT » PAGE 17

**INSIDE**



**No Bill pending with Raj Bhavan: Bengal Governor**

**NEW DELHI**  
Days after the Supreme Court issued notice to the Centre and the West Bengal Governor over delay in clearing Bills passed by the Assembly, Governor C.V. Ananda Bose told *The Hindu* that no Bill was pending with the Raj Bhavan. » PAGE 6



**Rajapaksa's party won't back Ranil in coming polls**

**COLOMBO**  
The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna — led by the Rajapaksa clan which was deposed from power in 2022 — has said it will not back President Ranil Wickremesinghe in the presidential polls in September. » PAGE 14

## 122 dead as landslides flatten Wayanad villages

**Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala buried under debris**

**Swollen river changes course and floods neighbouring localities**

**Rescue teams and volunteers are struggling in knee-deep mud**

**Body parts recovered from Chaliyar river in distant Malappuram**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
WAYANAD/  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

**A**t least 122 persons were killed and 197 injured after multiple landslides flattened some three villages in Vythiri taluk of the hilly Wayanad district of Kerala early on Tuesday.

The death toll is expected to climb as more persons are feared dead. As many as 25 mangled body parts were recovered from the Chaliyar river near Pothukallu area in Malappuram district and four from Chooralmala in Wayanad.

The Kerala government declared a state of mourning on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said an intense rescue effort involving State and Central forces was under way in the Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala localities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an *ex gratia* payment of ₹2 lakh for the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

The government has identified a waterlogged hillock 6 km from the vil-



**Wiped out:** A rescue operation under way in the Meppadi area of Wayanad in Kerala following the landslide on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

lages, which abutted the Iruvaniyapuzha river, as the origin of the landslides.

The first landslide occurred at 2 a.m. when the residents were asleep. The cascading wave of sodden mud, boulders, and uprooted trees measured at least two floors in height if the waterline visible on a multi-storey school building was anything to go by. Images showed a wide, muddy slash on the verdant, uninhabited hillside, where the mud had slid down to bury the villages

thousands of metres below. The second landslide occurred at 4.10 a.m.

The moving landmass roared over the devastated locality and plunged into the swollen river, changing its course and flooding neighbouring localities. "In the place of one river, there are two now," Mr. Vijayan told mediapersons in Thiruvananthapuram. The second landslide wiped out the Chooralmala bridge across the Iruvaniyapuzha, cutting off the disaster site from search and rescue

teams. Hundreds of landslide survivors hunkered down in nearby hill resorts and schools, waiting for rescue workers to evacuate them to safer ground.

**'Scale reduced'**

He said revenue officials had reduced the scale of the disaster by evacuating several settlements around the hill, including the lone tribal settlement at Chembra. However, the landslide took an unexpected path.

The erased villages did

not fall under the government's disaster-prone zone. Mr. Vijayan said officials had identified 37 of the bodies retrieved by rescue workers from the expansive disaster site. The government has expedited forensic examination and autopsy to return the bodies to the relatives at the earliest. He said the rescue operation would continue into the night. Officials told *The Hindu* in Wayanad that several of the dead were plantation workers from West Bengal and north-

**Disaster zone**  
The villages in Wayanad that were hit by multiple landslides on Tuesday



**Heavy rain, landslides hit Karnataka**

**MANGALURU**  
Heavy rains and landslides were reported in many places in coastal Karnataka and south interior Karnataka on Tuesday. A massive landslide at Sakleshpur in Hassan taluk on Monday night swept away a portion of the road that serves as an alternative to the Bengaluru-Mangaluru highway. The inflow into all major reservoirs has also been increasing. » PAGE 3

**Rain claims three lives in Coimbatore**

**COIMBATORE**  
Three people have died in rain-related incidents in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu on Tuesday. A woman and her granddaughter died in a minor landslide near Valparai, while a man died after the wall of his house near Polachi collapsed. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin condoned the deaths and announced a solatium of ₹3 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased. » PAGE 3

**MORE REPORTS**  
» PAGE 5





## MAINS ORIENTED NEWS

1. **India's open ecosystems facing an unusual threat: encroaching trees:** (GS Paper- III - Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.)
2. **Option or Stratagem?** (GS Paper- II -Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure)
3. **Wayanad Landslide:** (GS Paper- III - Disaster and Disaster Management.)

### Prelims Oriented News:

- ❖ **United States overtakes UAE as India's second largest LNG supplier**
- ❖ **Place in News: Ethiopia**

## INDIA'S OPEN ECOSYSTEMS FACING AN UNUSUAL THREAT: ENCROACHING TREES

- ❖ Grasslands and savannahs are biodiverse habitats in tropical and temperate regions throughout the world.
- ❖ **Activities threatening them** include:
  - ☛ The conversion of grasslands,
  - ☛ Intensive agriculture,
  - ☛ Loss due to erosion,
  - ☛ Large-scale development projects, and
  - ☛ Overgrazing.
- ❖ But lurking among these usual suspects is also a highly unusual one: **trees**.
- ❖ The increase in tree and shrub cover is called **woody encroachment**.

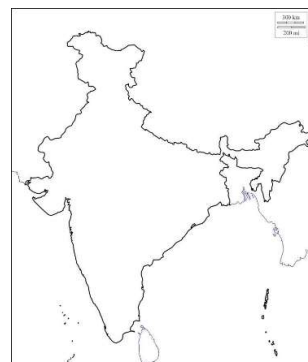


### Why woody encroachment?

- ❖ Grasslands are generally maintained by certain natural as well as human activities like
  - ☛ **grazing and fire,**
  - ☛ **they limit the growth of tree species.** But once these regimes are **disrupted**, trees have the calm they need to establish themselves and start woody encroachment.
  - ☛ A **higher concentration of carbon dioxide** in the air **encourages deep-rooted woody plants** in grasslands to proliferate.
  - ☛ Once **trees** become dominant in a system, they may **further suppress grasses** through shading and fire suppression.

### Indian Grasslands:

- ❖ Western **arid** grasslands; (Issue?- fragmented patches in a sea of forests and Intensive Agriculture)
- ❖ **Floodplain** grasslands in Himalayan landscape; Mostly **inside protected areas** - Home to many endangered species- one-horned rhinoceroses, swamp deer, Bengal floricans etc
- ❖ **High-altitude** Shola grasslands crown the Western Ghats





## Reasons?

Colonial Conservation Policies → "open ecosystems" → "Wasteland"  
↓  
Converted Grasslands into Plantations  
+ Criminalize communities that practised grazing and fire mgt  
Because they took up space in which trees could grow - for timber

We see  
Trees ← as providers of Carbon Sequestration



## India's large-scale tree plantation programmes:

### 1. Banni grasslands

- spread of the invasive species *Prosopis juliflora* — which the Gujarat Forest Department planted in 1961 to combat desertification and provide firewood to communities — has since transformed swaths of the grasslands into a *Prosopis* woodland.

### 2. Shola grasslands,

- eucalyptus plantations

### 3. Terai grasslands of the Himalaya.

- Malabar silk-cotton tree

## Issues?

- Woody encroachment in open ecosystems has **altered biodiversity**. There has been a big **decline in grassland birds**.
- It **changes the soil conditions**, which changes the grass species **Invite increased predation**: the grass allowed grassland species to hide from predators
- Example: Decrease in population of grassland specialist **rodents in the Banni grasslands of Kutch**.







## OPTION OR STRATAGEM ?

### Context :

- ❖ Misuse of Powers by Governors when it comes to assent of bills by the State legislatures.
- ❖ Seen in opposition ruled states of Punjab, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu

### Powers of Governors over assent of Bills :

- ❖ Article 200, when a Bill is passed by the state legislature, the Governor has four options:
  1. grant assent to the bill;
  2. withhold assent to the bill ;
  3. return the bill for reconsideration, if it is not a Money Bill : If the legislature passes the bill again, with or without amendments, the Governor has to give assent;
  4. reserve the bill for the consideration of the President.
- ❖ Earlier the governors were exercising (2) excessively but after SC curtailed it now they are exercising (4)
- ❖ **Seven Bills from Kerala that may not normally require the President's assent were sent up to Rashtrapati Bhavan**

### Powers of Governors over assent of Bills :

- ❖ **Punjab case**
  - The Court ruled that Governors do not have a veto over Bills, and that whenever they withheld assent, they were bound to return the Bills to Assembly; and if the Assembly adopted the Bills, with or without amendments, they were bound to grant assent.
- ❖ **Telangana Case**
  - SC observed that Governors were expected to act on Bills "as soon as possible"

### Article Says :

1. Travesty of the Constitution as it is **deliberate inaction on Bills passed by the Assemblies.**
  2. **Strategy of Governors:** Governors have taken to the stratagem of sending Bills they disapprove of to the President for consideration.
  3. **Subvert Federalism:** President refuses assent, based on the advice of the Union government, there is no recourse left for the State legislatures.
  4. **Centre is given a contrived veto over State laws — something not envisaged in the Constitution**
- ❖ Time for the Court to adjudicate the question and place limitations on the use of the option given to Governors.

## Option or stratagem?

Court should limit Governor's power to refer Bills to President without cause

**T**he manner in which some Governors have been dealing with legislation passed by the State legislatures is a travesty of the Constitution. After the Supreme Court of India intervened in the case of Punjab and raised questions about the action or inaction of Governors in Tamil Nadu and Telangana, it was believed that incumbents in Raj Bhavans would end their deliberate inaction on Bills passed by the Assemblies. However, it appears that on finding that their supposed discretion to sit indefinitely on the Bills or withhold assent to them has been significantly curtailed, Governors have taken to the stratagem of sending Bills they disapprove of to the President for consideration. When the President refuses assent, based on the advice of the Union government, there is no recourse left for the State legislatures. This has given rise to the question whether the provision for reservation of some Bills for the President's consideration is being misused for subverting federalism. In other words, the Centre is given a contrived veto over State laws – something not envisaged in the Constitution. This is precisely the question that Kerala has raised in its writ petition before the Court, challenging the Governor's action in sending the Bills to the President and the latter's refusal of assent. It is now quite an appropriate time for the Court to adjudicate the question and place limitations on the use of the option given to Governors.

It is worth recalling that in the Punjab case, the Court ruled that Governors do not have a veto over Bills, and that whenever they withheld assent, they were bound to return the Bills to Assembly; and if the Assembly adopted the Bills, with or without amendments, they were bound to grant assent. In the case of Telangana, the Court observed that Governors were expected to act on Bills "as soon as possible", underscoring that the phrase had significant constitutional content and that constitutional functionaries would have to bear this in mind. It is quite surprising that the Governors of West Bengal and Kerala have learnt nothing from these judgments and observations. Seven Bills from Kerala that may not normally require the President's assent were sent up to Rashtrapati Bhavan; four were refused assent without any reason being assigned. The inaction on these Bills range from 23 to 10 months. West Bengal has also challenged the inaction on some Bills, a few of which may have been referred to the President. The issue transcends the political considerations that may have inspired the action or inaction on the part of the Governor. At its core, it concerns the question whether the Constitution permits such indirect central intervention in the legislative domain of the States.





## WAYANAD LANDSLIDES

# 122 dead as landslides flatten Wayanad villages

Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala buried under debris

Swollen river changes course and floods neighbouring localities

Rescue teams and volunteers are struggling in knee-deep mud

Body parts recovered from Chaliyar river in distant Malappuram

**The Hindu Bureau**

WAYANAD/  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

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The death toll is expected to climb as more persons are feared dead. As many as 25 mangled body parts were recovered from the Chaliyar river near Pothukallu area in Malappuram district and four from Chooralmala in Wayanad.

The Kerala government declared a state of mourning on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said an intense rescue effort involving State and Central forces was under way in the Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala



**Wiped out:** A rescue operation under way in the Meppadi area of Wayanad in Kerala following landslides on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

localities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an *ex gratia* payment of ₹2 lakh for the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

The government has identified a waterlogged hillock 6 km from the vil-

lages, which abutted the Iruvanipuzha river, as the origin of the landslides.

The first landslide occurred at 2 a.m. when the residents were asleep. The cascading wave of sodden mud, boulders, and uprooted trees measured

at least two floors in height if the waterline visible on a multi-storey school building was anything to go by. Images showed a wide, muddy slash on the verdant, uninhabited hillside, where the mud had slid down to bury the villages

thousands of metres below. The second landslide occurred at 4.10 a.m.

The moving landmass roared over the devastated locality and plunged into the swollen river, changing its course and flooding neighbouring localities.

### Disaster zone

The villages in Wayanad that were hit by multiple landslides on Tuesday



### Heavy rain, landslips hit Karnataka

**MANGALURU**  
Heavy rains and landslips were reported in many places in coastal Karnataka and south interior Karnataka on Tuesday. A massive landslide was reported near Harle Estate at Sakaleshpur in Hassan taluk on Monday night.

» PAGE 7

### Rain claims three lives in Coimbatore

**COIMBATORE**  
Three people have died in rain-related incidents in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu on Tuesday. A woman and her granddaughter died in a minor landslide that occurred near Valparai in Coimbatore district. » PAGE 7

CONTINUED ON

» PAGE 12

MORE REPORTS

» PAGE 13

## 572 mm of rainfall in just 48 hours: a battering that Wayanad did not anticipate

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The downpour subsided, but not enough to avert the tragedy that struck Wayanad in Kerala in the early hours of Tuesday. A glance through the rainfall that battered the State reveals that a station called Thettamala in Wayanad received a whopping 409 mm during the 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday.

Even Wadakkancherry in central Kerala received 340 mm during the period, perhaps one of the heaviest the State had seen during the opening months of the southwest monsoon.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in his media address, said that according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast on Monday, the area was supposed to receive rainfall in the range of 64 mm to 204 mm (orange alert) in the 24 hours.

However, the area where the disaster struck recorded 200 mm in the first 24 hours and 372 mm of rain in the next, a total of 572 mm of rain in just 48 hours.

### "Accumulated impact"

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Neetha K. Gopal, IMD Director, Thiruvananthapuram, said: "It's true that we had not anticipated an extreme rainfall event, but had been expecting some intense spells in north Kerala. As per our observation, it was the accumulated impact of the rain that led to chaotic scenes in



**Safe hands:** Rescuers help residents to move to a safer place after multiple landslides in the hills in Wayanad. REUTERS

### Chief Minister says there was only an orange alert for the disaster-hit region in the district

Wayanad. The soil was already in saturated mode during the heavy rain the previous day, and the excess precipitation on that fateful night led to the catastrophe. The IMD is exploring ways to introduce a night-time analysis of the weather parameters during the peak season, considering the pattern of rain in Kerala."

"For instance, during the active monsoon season, high intensity rainfall occurs during the night and early morning due to the effect of various oceanic factors in coastal States. So, analysing the weather parameters, including local factors, during the night will provide some leeway. However, the window for acting during

these situations would be limited, especially in our tropical climate where the atmospheric developments are very fast and quick," Ms. Gopal said.

The heavy rain that had been pounding the State, especially in north and central Kerala, for the past two days is likely to continue for a couple of more days, triggered by an off-shore trough at the mean sea level that persists along the south Gujarat to Kerala coast.

The State is also likely to receive heavy rainfall for the next two to three days, powered by strong westerly and north-westerly winds in the lower levels over Kerala.

An orange alert has been issued for five districts from Malappuram to Kasaragod on Wednesday, warning of very heavy rainfall, and a yellow alert for four districts — Ernakulam, Idukki, Thrissur and Palakkad — forecasting isolated heavy rain.







# Heavy equipment, rescue dog teams airlifted to Wayanad

Defence Minister's office says additional teams from Army and Navy, and helicopters from Air Force have been mobilised; Coast Guard has sent disaster relief teams comprising highly trained personnel and a dedicated medical team for support

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

**H**heavy engineering equipment and rescue dog teams were being airlifted, and disaster relief teams had been dispatched by the Indian Coast Guard to provide aid to people after a series of landslides in the hilly areas of Wayanad district in Kerala early on Tuesday.

"As tragic disaster struck at Wayanad in wee hours today, Indian Armed Forces swung into immediate action and 300 Military personnel were moved forthwith to commence rescue operations. During the day, additional columns of Army, Naval teams and helicopters from Air Force were mobilised to assist the rescue and relief efforts," the office of Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh posted on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

The Minister's office al-



**When the ground shakes:** A landscape transformed overnight for the worse by a sudden upheaval of earth at Chooralmala in Wayanad on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

so said all-out efforts were under way as additional troops, heavy engineering equipment, rescue dog teams, and other essential relief stores were being airlifted by service aircraft from Thiruvananthapuram, Bengaluru, and Delhi.

Earlier in the day, his of-

fice also said in a post on X that the Defence Minister had on Tuesday spoken to the Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, to take stock of rescue and relief work being undertaken by Army units.

The Coast Guard district headquarters for Kerala

and Mahe and station in Bepore had dispatched disaster relief teams to the landslide-affected areas, the Ministry said.

The teams comprising highly trained personnel and dedicated medical team have been mobilised to provide immediate relief

and support to the communities impacted by the disaster, it said.

The teams are equipped with essential disaster-relief materials, including rubber inflatable boats for rescue operations, diesel-driven pumps to manage water and drainage issues, life jackets for safety, raincoats and gumboots for personnel protection in adverse weather, and earth-clearing equipment for removing debris and accessing affected areas, the statement said.

## Aid delivery

The Coast Guard also dispatched food materials, drinking water and other essential supplies to support the affected population. The distribution of these supplies is being coordinated with the district disaster management team to ensure efficient aid delivery, the Defence Ministry said. The force is working closely with local authorities to mitigate the impact of this disaster.

## Modi calls Kerala CM, promises full support for relief work in State

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan fielded calls from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday. Mr. Modi and his Cabinet colleagues promised full assistance for relief work in the State.

Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, reached out to Mr. Vijayan. He promised the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) Opposition's support to the State government's efforts. Mr. Gandhi also expressed his desire to meet survivors and families of victims in Wayanad. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Va-



**Bring back to safety:** Territorial Army personnel engaged in rescue operations in disaster-hit Wayanad on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dra, who is the party's prospective candidate for the Wayanad Lok Sabha byelection, will likely accompany Mr. Gandhi.

Union Minister of State for Fisheries, George Kurian, said the Prime Minister's Office is closely moni-

toring the Wayanad situation. The PMO had ordered Army, Air Force and naval stations in South India to rush reinforcements to Kerala.

Mr. Vijayan also dispatched Revenue Minister K. Rajan, PWD Minister

Muhammad Riyaz, Forest Minister K. Saseendran, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Minister O R Kelu, and Ports Minister Kadanapally Ramachandran to Wayanad to coordinate rescue and relief operations.

The leader of the Opposition, V D Satheeshan, has reached Wayanad. He called Mr. Vijayan and extended the UDF's support for the ongoing operations. KPCC president K. Sudhakaran and BJP State K. Surendran asked their cadres in Wayanad to bolster the search and rescue effort.

Mr. Vijayan urged citizens to contribute generously to the CMDRF.

Mr Vijayan will review the situation early Wednesday.





# Kerala ignored recommendations to prevent such disasters, says Gadgil

**The Hindu Bureau**

KANNUR

Ecologist Madhav Gadgil, who was the Chairman of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, has termed the disaster in Wayanad a man-made tragedy, attributing it to the Kerala government's failure to implement crucial ecological recommendations.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Tuesday, Mr. Gadgil criticised the State government for not adhering to the panel's guidelines designed to prevent such disasters amid extreme climate changes. Mr. Gadgil



Madhav Gadgil

highlighted that the panel's report had classified the region into three levels of ecological sensitivity, with the areas now struck by the disaster being marked as highly sensitive.

"No development

should have taken place in these highly sensitive areas," he said, noting that these zones had been utilised for tea plantations during the British period and had since seen extensive development, including the construction of resorts and artificial lakes.

Mr. Gadgil said the presence of quarries operating a few kilometres from the disaster site had further exacerbated the situation. Though these quarries were now defunct, the shockwaves caused during their operational period could have extended to the disaster-stricken areas,

triggering landslides during heavy rain, he said.

Mr. Gadgil accused the government of rejecting the panel's report, leading to recurring disasters in Wayanad and other parts of the State. He warned that without serious and proactive measures on the part of the State to implement the report's recommendations, such disasters would recur, exacerbated by climate change, which could bring extreme rainfall and droughts.

"Only if the government takes the report seriously can such disasters be avoided," Mr. Gadgil said.

## Landslides

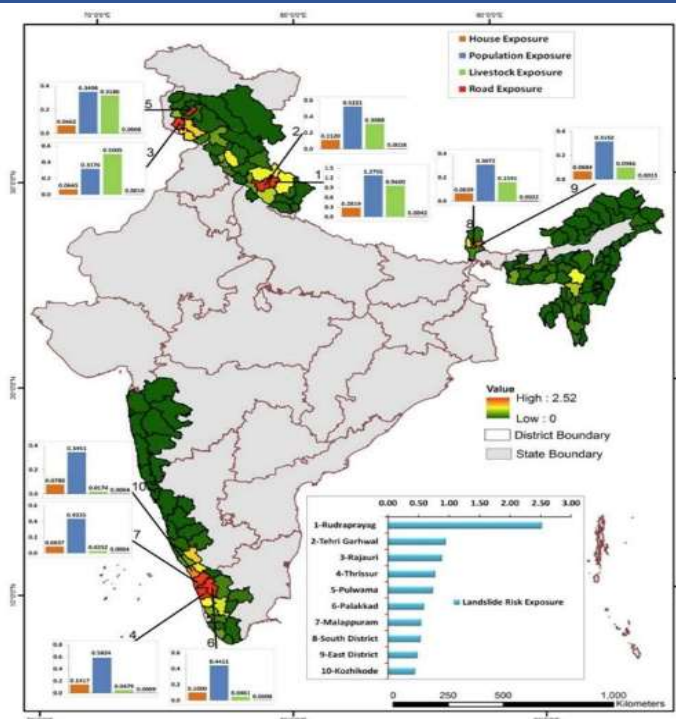
- ❖ It is a sudden and rapid movement of a mass of rock, soil, or debris down a slope under the influence of gravity.

## Causes

1. Natural Causes (Heavy Rainfall, Earthquake, Volcanic eruptions, Geological Composition etc.)
2. Man Made/Anthropogenic Causes (Deforestation, unregulated mining and quarrying activities, Climate changes and its after effects like heavy rain, melting of glaciers etc.)

- ❖ As per ISRO's **Landslide Atlas of India** more than 12 % of India's area is prone to landslides

- ☛ **North-Western Himalayas (Max Prone Area)**
- ☛ **North-Eastern Himalayas**
- ☛ **Western Ghats**







### Landslide in Himalayan Region vs Western Ghats

- ❖ In Himalayan region : High tectonic activities and young mountains, unconsolidated sediments, rivers at young stage, anthropogenic factors
- ❖ Western Ghats : Rainfall, mining and quarrying, deforestation

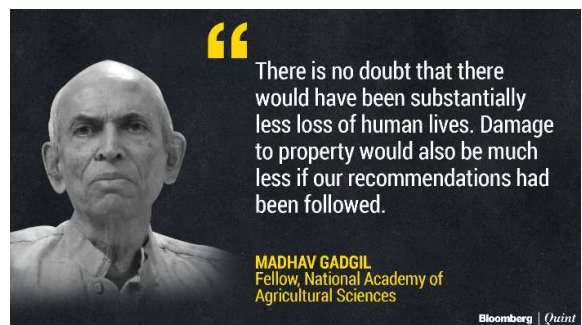


- ❖ An evaluation of landslide occurrences in the Kerala and TN part of Western Ghats reveals the following main features:
- ❖ Almost all mass movements occur **during monsoons** (SW and NE monsoon) in the western flank of western Ghats and **during occasional cyclonic events** in the eastern flank indicating that main triggering mechanism is the **over-saturation of overburden** caused by heavy rains.
- ❖ **Improper land use practices** (heavy tilling, agricultural practices and settlement patterns) deforestation, cultivation of seasonal crops and increase in settlements.
- ❖ **natural drainage lines on slopes are blocked** or modified without adequate provision for surface drainage of excess storm water during high intensity rains prevalent in the area.
- ❖ **Developmental activities** like construction of buildings, road cutting, embankments, causes modification of natural slopes

### Measures

- ❖ Early Warning System - Monitoring and Risk Assessment
- ❖ Proper Land Use Planning
- ❖ Community Awareness and Capacity development (education and training)
- ❖ Immediate Response

Such above steps included in NDMA Guidelines for Landslides





### Madhav Gadgil Report

- ❖ Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) in 2010, chaired by ecologist Dr Madhav Gadgil.
- ❖ To study the impact of population pressure, climate change and development activities on the Western Ghats.

### Recommendations of the Gadgil Panel:

- ❖ The Western Ghats region should be converted into an **Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA)**
- ❖ Three Zones with varying degree of Protection
  - ☛ ESZ 1
  - ☛ ESZ 2
  - ☛ ESZ 3
- ❖ The panel recommended highest degree of protection in ESZ-1 and ESZ-2 categories.
- ❖ Genetically modified crops ,plastic bags be prohibited, Special Economic Zones,new hill stations should not be permitted
- ❖ All developmental activities like mining, construction of thermal power plants, and dams were to stop along with the decommissioning of similar projects that have completed their shelf life in ESZ 1.
- ❖ Recommendations were later on diluted by **K.Kasturirangan Committee** Report.





UNITED STATES OVERTAKES UAE AS INDIA'S SECOND LARGEST LNG SUPPLIER

# United States overtakes UAE as India's second largest LNG supplier

**Rishi Ranjan Kala**  
NEW DELHI

The U.S. displaced the UAE to emerge as India's second largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in 2023, accounting for 3.09 million tonne (mt). LNG is emerging as a substitute fuel in the transition towards green energy.

Analysts attributed the development to weakening LNG prices in international markets as well as India's proximity, via the Cape of Good Hope, to U.S. LNG cargoes compared to North Asia. The U.S. also emerged as the world's largest LNG exporter in 2023.

According to the world LNG report 2024 by International Gas Union (IGU), re-



leased earlier this month, the U.S. supplied India 1.8 mt LNG in the pre-pandemic period (2019) and the quantity increased to 3.86 mt in 2021.

## Trade dynamics

India, the fourth largest LNG importer, scaled back in 2022 owing to rising prices and shipments from the U.S. declined to 2.16 mt. On the other hand, the

UAE's share rose from 2.6 mt in 2019 to 3.32 mt in 2020, slipped to 2.59 mt in 2022 and again rose to 2.85 mt last year.

Qatar remained India's largest LNG supplier for five years running (2019-2023); cargoes topped 10 mt, barring in 2019 when it stood at 9.7 mt. In 2023, shipments from Qatar rose to a high of 10.92 mt.

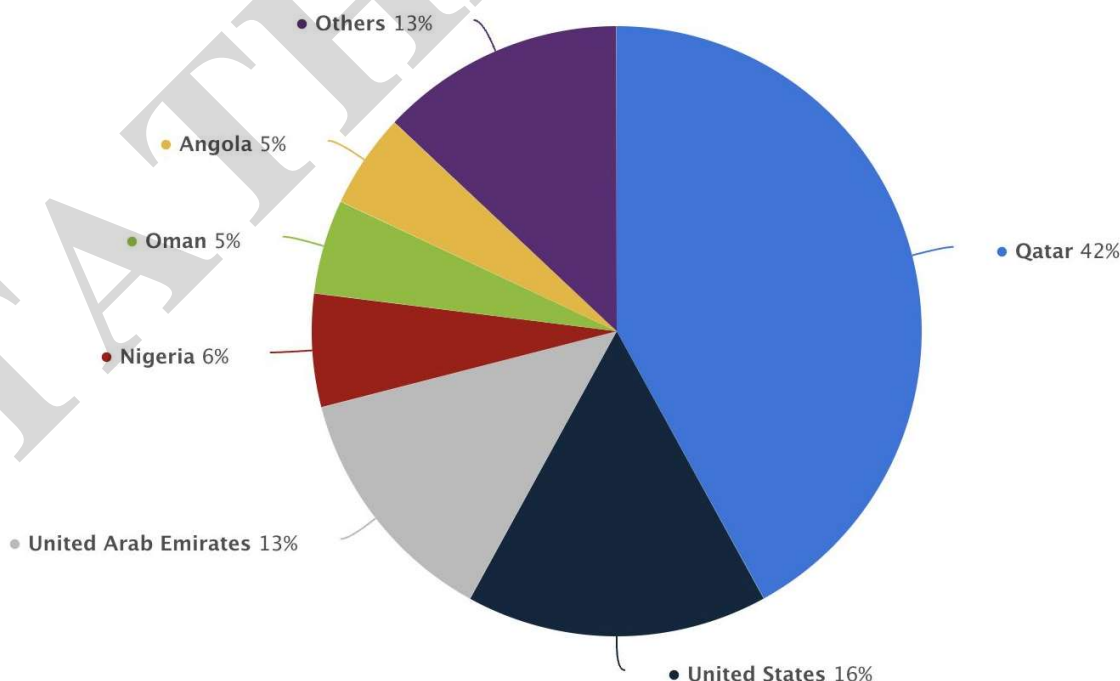
Another notable development during this period is the decline in the share of African nations in India's LNG imports. According to IGU data, Nigeria and Angola, which supplied 2.7 mt and 2.9 mt LNG, respectively, to India pre-pandemic (2019), saw their cargoes shrink to 0.73 mt each in 2023. The share of

both African nations has been declining since 2021.

Kenneth Foo, Associate Editorial Director at S&P Global Commodity Insights, said the U.S. was the standout exporter in the global LNG market in 2023, overtaking Qatar and Australia with strong growth in liquefaction capacity due to investments made several years ago.

Total U.S. LNG exports were about 15% higher year-on-year at 89 mt. "With India at closer proximity via the Cape of Good Hope for U.S. LNG cargoes, compared to North Asia, sellers were more incentivised to sell volumes to India to save freight costs."

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)



## PLACE IN NEWS: ETHIOPIA

### Ethiopia receives IMF relief

- ❖ **Several armed conflicts:** Although the ceasefire between the government and the **Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)** continues to hold in northern Ethiopia, other conflicts and regional instabilities persist.
- ❖ **Climate shocks:** likelihood of El Niño-induced flooding

**Current Economic Situation:** the African country has about **\$28 billion of external debt** and is grappling with sky-high inflation at around **20%** and a **shortage of foreign currency reserves**.

