

India's solar and wind energy sectors added 52,700 new workers in project development roles in the last financial year, an eightfold increase from financial year 2021, according to a joint report by three think tanks on Friday. Nearly 99% all of the new workforce (52,100 workers) were employed in the solar energy sector, with the wind energy sector registering very small growth (600 new workers). India's solar and wind energy sectors employed 1,64,000 workers as of FY'22, showing a 47% increase from FY'21. 84% of this workforce is in the solar energy sector. The study was jointly conducted by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), NRDC India (Natural Resources Defence Council India), and Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ).

The discovery of 5.9 tonnes of lithium deposits in Jammu and Kashmir, a first for India, would reduce the need for imports and improve employment opportunities, officials in the Union Territory said on Friday, adding that the find was a major boost to the manufacture of rechargeable batteries for smartphones, laptops and electric cars. The lithium inferred resources have been established in Reasi district. "There was a presence of bauxite in composite form and during its processing lithium was also discovered.

Birders, wildlife enthusiasts and forest officials have sighted 145 different bird species during the first Sundarban bird festival. The first ever festival was organised by the Sundarban Tiger Reserve (STR) division of West Bengal Forest Department, where six teams visited different areas inside the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve.

The species recorded during the bird festival included 78 forest birds and 42 species of waders, raptors etc. The two-day exercise which ended on Friday also recorded six species of waterfowl. The total number of birds spotted during the exercise was 5,065. Two threatened bird species of the Sundarbans, Eurasian Curlew and Lesser Sand Plover, were also spotted. Birders were able to spot seven of the 12 species of kingfishers found in the Sundarbans.

The Supreme Court asked the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the government to produce the existing regulatory framework in place to protect Indian investors, who are mostly middle class and reported to have lost several lakhs of crores in the past two weeks after the U.S. based short seller firm Hindenburg Research published a report, which led to sudden

GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS (GLOF) THREATEN 3 MILLION INDIANS: STUDY

1. Study was conducted by scientists at UK's Newcastle University, UK is first global assessment of areas at greatest risk of GLOF. GLOF occurs from unstable natural dam formed from glacier retreat. When glacier retreats, it leaves behind large impression in ground filling it with water and lake is formed, this is known as moraine which can be impounded by pile of debris & ice.
2. **Causes behind GLOFs**-Build-up of water pressure or structural weakness of boundary due to increase in flow of water due to climate change-induced melting. Earthquake (Tectonic) or cryoseism (non-tectonic seismic event of glacial cryosphere). Avalanche of rock or heavy snow. Volcanic eruptions under ice. Heavy rainfall/melting of snow lead to massive displacement of water in a glacial.
3. **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) guidelines for reducing GLOFs** -Identify and Mapping Dangerous Lakes. Use of Synthetic-Aperture Radar imagery to detect changes in water bodies, including new lake formations, during the monsoon months. Constructions and development in High prone areas should be prohibited. Robust early warning system in vulnerable zones should be put in place.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PULLS UP DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS (DOT) ON INTERNET SHUTDOWNS

1. House Panel report highlights action taken by government on its earlier observations/recommendations on 'Suspension of Telecom Services/Internet and its Impact'. Internet shutdowns are measures taken by government or on behalf of government to intentionally disrupt access to and use of information and communications systems online.
2. State Governments can issue orders for temporary suspension of internet services to maintain law and order under Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017. Key Highlights of Report-
3. **Observations**-Frequent internet shutdown without any empirical study on its effectiveness. No maintenance of official records on telecom services/internet shutdowns. No study conducted to assess the impact of internet shutdown on economy. Only official members in Review Committee review the decision on Telecom Suspension. Also, committee isn't constituted by all states/UTs.
4. **Recommendations**-Commission a thorough study to assess impact of internet shutdown on economy and their effectiveness in dealing with public emergency and public safety. Lay down clear principle of proportionality and procedure for shutdown lifting in coordination with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to prevent misuse of suspension rules. Both DoT and MHA should establish a mechanism to maintain centralized database of all internet shutdowns. Expand Review Committee composition by including non-official members for better checks and balances under Telecom Suspension Rules, 2017. Also, ensure that review committee are constituted by all states/UTs.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (GSI) FINDS LITHIUM DEPOSITS IN JAMMU & KASHMIR (J&K)

1. For the first time, GSI has established Lithium inferred resources (which are in preliminary exploration stage i.e., G3) of 5.9 million tonnes in Salal-Haimana area of Reasi District of J&K (UT). Lithium, referred as white gold, is first of alkalis in periodic table. It's a non-ferrous metal. It is lightest solid metal. It is extracted from either brines or mined rocks. It has lowest density of all metals.
2. 50 percent of global lithium resources are located in Bolivia (maximum), Chile, and Argentina, which forms Lithium Triangle in South America. Australia is global leader in lithium production. India has discovered first lithium reserves in igneous rocks located in Marlagalla-Allapatna region of Karnataka's Mandya district.
3. **Significance of Lithium**-Key component of rechargeable batteries (used in EVs) and energy storage solutions. Lithium oxide is used in special glasses and glass ceramics. Critical mineral for energy transition, and net-zero emissions will require higher reliance lithium.
4. GSI, attached office to Ministry of Mines, was set up in 1851 primarily to find coal deposits for Railways. It is Headquartered in Kolkata and has six regional offices. It is a scientific agency of India to carry out geoscientific activities.

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA (TRAI) RELEASES CONSULTATION PAPER ON DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDER (DCIP) AUTHORIZATION UNDER UNIFIED LICENCE(UL)

market volatility following a meltdown in the Adani Group shares. Assuring the SEBI that it does not intend to go on a “witch hunt” and is more interested in an “open dialogue,” a three judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud flagged the court’s concern for Indian investors and highlighted the need to protect them from such sudden market volatility in the future.

Yet, overall manufacturing levels were 4.7% higher on a sequential basis and the Manufacturing index component of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) hitting the highest level since March 2022. On the basis of enduse, four of six subsectors — primary goods, capital goods, infrastructure and construction goods, and consumer nondurables — recorded a rise in the range of 7% to 8% in December 2022, partly aided by weaker growth numbers a year ago.

However, Consumer durables output slipped into contraction again, slipping a sharp 10.4% in December 2022, from a 1.9% contraction a year ago. After three months of contraction, consumer durables had rebounded in November to grow 5.2% year-on-year. December’s output was 2.2% lower than November 2022 and marked the second worst production level in 13 months.

The Union government has signed loan agreements to borrow up to ₹13,879 crore to strengthen health infrastructure from international agencies. As per a written reply in Lok Sabha by Minister of State for Health, Dr. Bharti Pawar, as on February 6, loan agreements have been signed with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for \$300 million (₹2,474 crore) and with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for 50 billion Japanese Yen (₹3,162 crore).

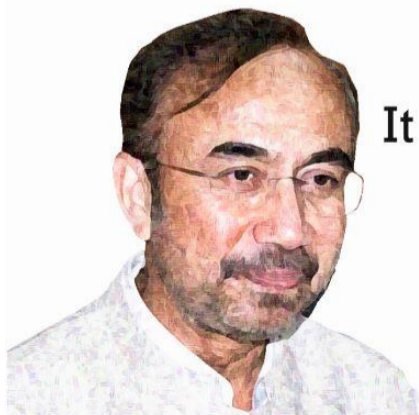
1. TRAI is seeking views to introduce DCIP authorization under UL regime as it underlined the importance of robust Digital Connectivity Infrastructure (DCI) in economic development. UL offers service-wise authorizations, where licensees establish networks and use them to provide services.
2. **Importance of DCI**-Increases productivity and provides amenities that enhance quality of life. It is used for financial services, e-governance, tele-medicine etc. Helps in implementation of various government schemes under Digital India, Make in India, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission etc. Earlier, National Digital Communications Policy (NDPC-2018) emphasized on DCI under ‘Propel India’ mission.
3. NDPC-2018 envisages enabling unbundling of different layers (e.g., infrastructure, network, services, and applications layer) through differential licensing. DCIP will work at infrastructure and network layer; creating neutral third-party entities which can create passive and active DCI.
4. Currently, Infrastructure Providers Category-I (IP-I) rolls out passive infrastructure while active infrastructure creation is permitted to Telecom Service Providers only. DCIPs can lease/rent/sell their infrastructure only to such entities which are licensed under Indian Telegraph Act. Potential Benefits Of DCIP: Increased common sharable DCI and network resources, cost reduction, attract investment, strengthen service delivery segment, etc.

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS (IMPAC5) CONCLUDES IN VANCOUVER, CANADA

1. IMPAC5 is a global forum that brings together ocean conservation professionals and high-level officials to inform, inspire and act on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). It aims to protect 30 percent of global ocean by 2030 (i.e., 30*30 campaign). It supported Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, “Our Ocean, Our Future, Our Responsibility” Call for Action and Ocean Conservation Pledge.
2. It was jointly hosted by Host First Nations (Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh) together with International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPWS), Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia.
3. MPA is a section of ocean where a government has placed limits on human activity. Currently, an estimated 7.65% of ocean is covered by MPAs. They are notified as either ‘national parks’ or ‘wildlife sanctuaries’ under ‘Wildlife Sanctuaries’ under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
4. **Need of MPAs**-Protect marine habitats and variety of life that they support. Raising the profile of an area for marine tourism and broadening local economic options. Generate income through tourism and sustainable fishing. Maintaining climate change resilience as it protects coastal habitats to reduce human vulnerability.

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT FUND(AIF)

1. NSE indices launched sub-category level benchmarks under Nifty AIF Benchmark. AIF is any fund established in India which is a privately pooled investment vehicle that collects funds from investors, both Indian or foreign, for investing.
2. **Different Categories**-Category I: Mainly invests in start-ups, SMEs, or any other sector which Government considers economically and socially viable. Category II: These include private equity funds or debt funds for which no specific incentives or concessions are given by government or any other Regulator.



“It is not the pursuit of excellence.
It is the excellence of pursuit that matters.”

DR. KHAN
(KSG)