



# **CURRENTLY - FROM NEWS TO NOTES**

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

# The Hindu & The Indian express

Headline	Source
IIT-M tops NIRF rankings; Minister criticises its 'peer perception' parameter	The Hindu, Page 1
Centre and Manipur govt. ink peace pact with Kuki-Zo groups	The Hindu, Page 1















Headline	Source
Singapore backs India on patrolling Malacca Straits	The Hindu, Page 4
India's birth rate down, first dip in TFR in 2 years	The Hindu, Page 4















# IIT-M tops NIRF rankings; Minister criticises its 'peer perception' parameter

chnology (IIT), Madras med the top overall poon in the higher educa the National Institution-Ranking Framework IRF) on Thursday. It also ained the country's or the 10th straight year.

The NIRF's methodolo-, however, came in for me criticism from Union Education Minister Dharendra Pradhan, who pre-2025 awards. He was especially sceptical about the peer perception' parameer, that carries 10% of marks for the ranking, and iggested that the NIRF hould ensure that governdo not fall behind because of this vardstick

After the 2024 rankings, ates and State-run educanal institutions had aleged that the rankings reected "regional bias" as tropolitan education inutions score higher on he 'peer perception' criteia, in comparison to subrban or State-run higher ducation institutions.

The other parameters hat the NIRF currently onsiders for the overall tegory are teaching, esearch and professional practice: graduation outnes; and research and

Mr. Pradhan said he was onfident that the NIRF would evolve into one of he best accreditation franeworks by including nore parameters such as ntrepreneurs created by in institution, involving more data-driven ap-

tutions in the future. In the tenth edition of the NIRF rankings, awards were given in 17 categories joined in the process, he said. "This shows the stable growth of our higher education sector," Mr.

Pradhan said, maintaining that the challenge is to increase the number of students and the quality of education in the higher education sector. "Very soon, a new mechanism for institutional ranking will be placed. We will go by the theory of one nation, one data," he noted. The top 100 institutions

in the overall category comprised 24 State univer sities, 22 private deemed universities, 19 IITs and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), nine private universities, eight National Institutes of Technology, seven Central universities, five medical institutions, four Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research. one college, and the Indian Agriculture Research Institute.

The IISc, Bengalur egory for the tenth con secutive year and also stood first in the Research Institutions category for IIM Ahmedabad was the paches, and including best institution for Man-

All India Institute of Medi-

cal Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi occupied the top slot among Medical institutions for the eighth consecutive

Delhi is the best place for studying Pharmacy and IIT Roorkee retained its top position in Architecture lege in Delhi secured the first rank among Colleges for the second consecutive year, replacing Miranda House. The National Law School of India University, Bengaluru retained its first position in Law for the

In the Universities cate gory, IISc ranked first, followed by Jawaharlal Nehru nipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal: Iamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; and University of Delhi, Delhi. Jadavpur University Kolkata was declared the best among State Public Universities, followed by Anna University, Chennai Paniab University, Chandigarh; Andhra University, Visakhapatnam; and Kera-

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IG-NOU), New Delhi was the best among Open UniversiIIT-M tops NIRF rankings; Minister criticises its 'peer perception' parameter

Source: The Hindu, Page No. 1

**GS Paper II: Education** 

#### Context

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 results were released, where IIT Madras secured the top overall position for the seventh consecutive year and also remained the best engineering college for the tenth straight year. However, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan expressed concern over the 'peer perception' parameter, which carries 10% weight in the rankings, and suggested reforms to make the system more inclusive for government-funded and regional institutions.

#### **About NIRF**

- Full Form: National Institutional Ranking Framework
- Launched: 2015
- First Published: 2016
- Published By: Ministry of Education, Government of India
- Implementing Agency: National Board of Accreditation (NBA) under the MHRD (now **Ministry of Education)**
- Frequency: Annual



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# **Parameters of Ranking**

NIRF ranks higher education institutions in different categories based on five broad parameters:

- 1. Teaching, Learning & Resources (TLR)
- 2. Research & Professional Practice (RP)
- 3. Graduation Outcomes (GO)
- 4. Outreach & Inclusivity (OI)
- 5. Perception (PR)

## **Importance of NIRF**

- 1. Benchmarking Quality: Provides a reliable framework to measure and compare institutions.
- 2. Promotes Competition: Encourages institutions to improve in teaching, research, and inclusivity.
- 3. Informs Students & Parents: Helps in making informed choices for admission.
- 4. Policy Tool: Assists the government in identifying strong and weak areas in higher education.
- 5. International Visibility: Strengthens India's position in global education rankings.
- 6. Accountability: Increases transparency in higher education quality standards.

Q. Discuss the significance of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for higher education in India and highlight its key limitations. (10 marks, GS2 – Education)





# Centre and Manipur govt. ink peace pact with Kuki-Zo groups

Viiaita Singh

and the Manipur government signed a Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with the Kuki-Zo insurgent groups on Wednesday with negotiated terms and conditions or ground ules", the Ministry said on Thursday. The development comes days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's expected visit to Manipur on September 13, nis first visit since ethnic violence between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people erupted in the State on

The Union Home Ministry

Security forces will conduct verification of cadres and de-list foreign nationals, if any, the Ministry said. A senior government official said that once identified, the foreign nationals would be deported. The revised ground rules reiterate territorial integrity of Manipur and relocation of camps run by insurgent

Prior to May 3, 2023, the SoO groups demanded auonomous territorial councils within Manipur, but

Asked if the SoO groups have given up their demand for a separate administration or Union Territory with a legislature, Seilen Haokip, spokesperson Kuki National Organisation (KNO), one of the signatories, told The Hindu. "Though the agreement speaks about territorial integrity of Manipur, it also mentions political settlement within the Constitution of India. The Constitu- NH-02," the government tion speaks about the integrity of the country, not a district or a State."

He added that "negotiat- been blocked and reed political settlement mained open for commuwithin Constitution of In- ters and for transportation dia" is a new inclusion in of essential goods.

#### Core pact

with 're-negotiated terms and conditions or ground rules'

torial integrity of Manipur and relocation of

■ The rules also stress need for a negotiated soluand stability to the State

the agreement as it was not there in the 2008 text when the demand was for territorial councils in

agreed to open the Nation mapur) passing through Kangpokpi district "for the free movement of commu ters and essential goods"

#### Highway shut

The highway, key to con nect the Imphal Valley where the Meitei peopl live, to Nagaland and Asbeen shut for the past two years for the movement of the Meitei people

"The decision came after a series of meetings between officials of MHA and a delegation of KZC in the last few days at New Delhi KZC has given commitment to cooperate with Security Forces deployed by Government of India (GoI) to maintain peace along

that the highway has never

Centre and Manipur govt. ink peace pact with Kuki-Zo groups

Source: The Hindu Page no.: 1

**GS Paper: GS-3 (Internal Security)** 

#### Context

The Union Home Ministry and the Manipur government have signed a Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with Kuki-Zo insurgent groups, ahead of PM Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Manipur. This comes after months of ethnic clashes between Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities since May 2023.

# **Suspension of Operations (SoO)**

- SoO is a ceasefire arrangement between the government and insurgent groups.
- Insurgent cadres agree to halt violence and stay in designated camps, while security forces suspend operations against them.
- It allows space for dialogue and negotiated political settlement within the constitutional framework.

#### **Revised Ground Rules**

- 1. Territorial Integrity: Reaffirmed no compromise on Manipur's boundaries.
- 2. Relocation of Camps: Insurgent groups must shift camps as per security concerns.
- 3. Cadre Verification: Identification to weed out foreign nationals.
- 4. Negotiated Settlement Clause: New inclusion any political solution will be within the Constitution of India, not outside it.





# **National Highway-2 (Imphal-Dimapur)**

- A vital route connecting the Imphal Valley with Nagaland and Assam.
- Critical for supply of essentials and commodities.

# 2008 SoO Agreement

- Aim: Ceasefire with Kuki insurgent groups.
- Insurgents kept in designated camps; arms under lock.
- Talks allowed on territorial/autonomous councils.
- No explicit mention of Manipur's territorial integrity.
- Focus: Containing militancy, not deeper political settlement.

#### **2025 Revised SoO Agreement**

- Aim: Peace after 2023 ethnic violence.
- Territorial integrity of Manipur reaffirmed.
- No demand for separate administration; settlement only within Constitution of India.
  - Insurgent camps to be relocated, cadres verified (foreigners excluded).
  - Added clause: Negotiated political settlement within Constitution.

NH-2 reopened for free movement of essentials.

#### **Background**

- On 3 May 2023, large-scale ethnic violence broke out in Manipur between the Meitei (valley-dwelling) and the Kuki-Zo tribes (hill-dwelling).
  - Trigger: A protest by the All Tribal Students' Union Manipur (ATSUM) opposing the Manipur High Court's direction to consider granting Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to Meiteis.

## **Key Developments**

#### 1. Ethnic Clashes

- Protests escalated into armed conflict, leading to killings, arson, and destruction of villages.
- · Violence spread across Imphal Valley and hill districts.

### 2. Humanitarian Impact

- Over 200+ people killed.
- Around 60,000+ displaced, many living in relief camps.
- Thousands of homes and places of worship destroyed.

## 3. Security Response

- Army and paramilitary forces deployed.
- Internet bans imposed intermittently for months.
- Curfews enforced in violence-hit areas.





# 4. Socio-political Divide

- Meiteis demand land rights and ST status.
- Kukis demand protection of their autonomy and identity.
- Deep mistrust between communities.

#### 5. Governance & Judicial Actions

- Supreme Court criticized state machinery for "failure of law and order."
- Centre appointed Security Advisor & peace committees to ease tensions.

#### 6. Recent Peace Moves

- Signing of revised Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with Kuki–Zo groups (Sept 2025).
- Reopening of National Highway-2 for movement of essentials.













# Singapore backs India on patrolling Malacca Straits

Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

Singapore on Thursday acknowledged India's plans to patrol the strategically important Malacca Straits. The discussion was part of the agenda when Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong at Hyderabad House where the two sides signed five agreements, including one to export green energy from India to Singapore through dedicated ports.

"Today, we have charted a detailed roadmap for the future of our partnership. Our cooperation will not remain confined to traditional areas. In keeping with the needs of changing times, advanced manufacturing, green shipping, skilling, civil nuclear energy, and urban water management will also emerge as focus points of our collaboration," said Mr. Modi welcoming his Singapo-



PM Narendra Modi with his Singapore counterpart Lawrence Wong at Hyderabad House, in New Delhi on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

rean counterpart who paid a three-day visit to India.

A joint statement said the two sides will deepen defence technology cooperation in "quantum computing, AI, automation and unmanned vessels". Both sides will cooperate to enhance maritime security, "submarine rescue" in the "Indo-Pacific" and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, said the statement, adding that "Singapore

acknowledges with appreciation India's interest in the Malacca Straits Patrol".

Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, P. Kumaran said India is interested in patrolling the Malacca Straits as it is next to the Andaman Sea and said that talks are on. Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore patrol the Straits and India is expecting some kind of synergy among member countries.



















Between India and East Asia, the navigation-time and distance can be greatly reduced by which of the following?

- 1. Deepening the Malacca straits between Malaysia and Indonesia.
- 2. Opening a new canal across the Kra isthmus between the Gulf of Siam and Andaman Sea.

Which of the statements, given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

(PYQ 2011)

Singapore backs India on patrolling Malacca Straits

Source: The Hindu Page no.: 4 (Locations in News)

**GS Paper: GS-2 (International Relations)** 

#### **Context**

India and Singapore have agreed to deepen cooperation in maritime security, with Singapore acknowledging India's plans to patrol the Malacca Strait, one of the world's busiest and most strategic sea lanes. This development came during PM Narendra Modi's meeting with Singapore PM Lawrence Wong in New Delhi, where the two sides signed five agreements covering green energy, advanced manufacturing, defence technology, and urban water management.

#### **Difference: Strait vs. Isthmus**

Strait: A narrow water body connecting two larger water bodies.

Example: Strait of Malacca (connects Andaman Sea with South China Sea).

Isthmus: A narrow land strip connecting two larger landmasses, and separating two water bodies.

**Example: Isthmus of Panama (connects North and South America).** 

#### **Malacca Strait**

- Location: Between Malay Peninsula (Malaysia) and Sumatra Island (Indonesia).
- Importance: One of the world's busiest shipping lanes, carrying
   ~25% of global trade.
- Vital for energy security a large share of India, China, Japan's oil
   & LNG imports pass through here.
- Strategic chokepoint any disruption impacts global trade.
- Security Concerns: Piracy, smuggling, terrorism, and increasing Chinese naval presence.



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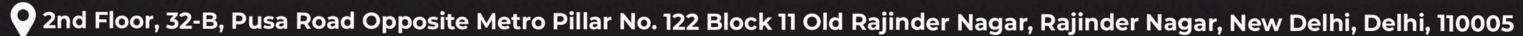
# **Summary of the Article**

- Singapore supported India's proposal to patrol the Malacca Straits, enhancing maritime security cooperation.
- India and Singapore signed five agreements, including on green energy exports, AI, automation, and advanced manufacturing.
- Defence technology cooperation to expand in areas like quantum computing, unmanned vessels, and submarine rescue.
- The Malacca Straits are currently patrolled by Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore. India is expected to join in coordination.

# Importance of India's Patrolling

- 1. Energy Security: Protects vital sea lanes carrying oil and LNG to India.
- 2. Counter China's Influence: Helps India project power in the Indo-Pacific, balancing China's naval assertiveness.
- 3. Maritime Security: Prevents piracy, trafficking, and illegal activities.
- 4. Strategic Leverage: Strengthens India's role in the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and QUAD vision of a free, open Indo-Pacific.
- 5. Regional Diplomacy: Boosts ties with ASEAN states, especially Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia.















# 'India's birth rate down, first dip in TFR in 2 years'

Abhinay Lakshman NEW DELHI

India's Crude Birth Rate (CBR), the number of children born per 1,000 people in the population in a year, has declined 0.7points from 19.1 in 2022 to 18.4 in 2023. The country's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen for the first time in two years to 1.9 in 2023, according to the latest Sample Registration Survey Statistical Report for 2023. In 2021 and 2022, India's TFR remained constant at 2.0.

The report, released by the Office of the Registrar General of India this week, revealed that the highest CBR was in Bihar at 25.8, and the lowest was in Tamil Nadu at 12. Bihar reported the highest TFR (2.8) among the bigger States and Union Territories (UTs), and Delhi reported the lowest (1.2).

The report pointed out that 18 States and UTs had

The latest data was sourced from Sample Registration Survey Statistical Report released this week

reported a TFR of below the replacement level TFR of 2.1. Replacement level TFR denotes the average number of children each woman needs to give birth for one generation to replace the other.

The RGI released the Civil Registration System (CRS), Sample Registration System (SRS), and Medical Certification of Cause of Death (MCCD) reports for 2021 after a four-year delay in May this year, and in June, the SRS, CRS, and MCCD data for 2022 were released. While the SRS for 2023 has been made public, the corresponding CRS and MCCD datasets are yet to appear on the Census website.

The SRS 2023 datasets

showed that the proportion of the elderly in the country (people above 60) rose by 0.7 percentage points in a year to 9.7% of the population. Kerala has the highest proportion of elderly population at 15%. Assam (7.6%), Delhi (7.7%), and Jharkhand (7.6%) reported the lowest proportion of their respective populations to be above 60.

The TFR data, which denotes the average number of children expected to be born per woman during her entire span of reproductive period, further showed that all States reporting TFR that is higher than replacement level were in northern India - Bihar (2.8), Uttar Pradesh (2.6), Madhya Pradesh (2.4), Rajasthan (2.3), and Chhattisgarh (2.2). The States and UTs reporting the lowest TFR included Delhi (1.2), West Bengal (1.3), Tamil Nadu (1.3), and Maharashtra (1.4).

# 'India's birth rate down, first dip in TFR in 2 years'

Source: The Hindu, Page No. 4, GS-1 & GS-2

#### **Context**

The latest Sample Registration Survey (SRS) Statistical Report 2023, released by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI), Ministry of Home Affairs, shows a decline in India's population growth indicators.

Crude Birth Rate (CBR) has dropped to its lowest in recent years.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has, for the first time in two years, dipped below the replacement level, highlighting a demographic shift.

The report also captures the rising share of the elderly population, which indicates India is moving toward an ageing society.

# **Key Definitions:**

Crude Birth Rate (CBR): Number of live births in a year per 1,000 people in the population.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR): Average number of children a woman is expected to give birth to during her reproductive years (15–49 years). Replacement-level TFR = 2.1, required for one generation to replace the next.



# 5th SEPT, 2025

#### **Data for Mains**

India's CBR: Declined from 19.1 (2022) to 18.4 (2023).

India's TFR: Fell to 1.9 (2023), below replacement level, after

remaining constant at 2.0 in 2021 & 2022.

Highest CBR: Bihar (25.8).

Lowest CBR: Tamil Nadu (12).

Highest TFR (big states/UTs): Bihar (2.8).

Lowest TFR: Delhi (1.2).

States with TFR above replacement level:

Bihar (2.8), Uttar Pradesh (2.6), Madhya Pradesh (2.4), Rajasthan (2.3),

Chhattisgarh (2.2).

States/UTs with lowest TFR:

Delhi (1.2), West Bengal (1.3), Tamil Nadu (1.3), Maharashtra (1.4).

Elderly Population: Increased to 9.7% of India's population (a rise of

0.7 percentage points in one year).

Kerala has the highest proportion of elderly: 15%.

Lowest proportions: Assam (7.6%), Delhi (7.7%), Jharkhand (7.6%).





# DAILY MCQs FOR PRACTICE

Q1. Which institution topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) overall rankings for the seventh consecutive year in 2025?

- A) IISc Bangalore
- B) IIT Delhi
- C) IIT Madras
- D) AIIMS New Delhi

Q2.The Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact recently signed between the Centre, Manipur government, and Kuki-Zo groups primarily aims to:

- A) Grant autonomy to insurgent groups
- B) Re-negotiate territorial boundaries
- C) Cease armed conflict and maintain peace
- D) Promote infrastructure development in Manipur

Q3.Which countries currently patrol the Malacca Strait along with India's recent inclusion in the Malacca Straits Patrol?

- A) Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand
- B) China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore
- C) Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore
- D) Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines,

**Thailand** 

















# DAILY MCQs FOR PRACTICE

Q4 What is the significance of the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) falling below the replacement level of 2.1 in India as of 2023?

- A) Population growth is likely to accelerate
- B) Women are having fewer children than needed to replace the population
- C) Birth rate is increasing consistently
- D) The elderly population is declining

Q5.National Highway 2 (NH-2) holds strategic importance in Manipur because it:

- A) Links Manipur to Bangladesh
- B) Connects Imphal Valley to Nagaland and Assam for essential supplies
- C) Is the main route to Myanmar from Manipur
- D) Bypasses insurgent areas completely

### **ANSWERS**

- C) IIT Madras
- C) Cease armed conflict and maintain peace
- A) Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore,
   Thailand
- B) Women are having fewer children than needed to replace the population
- B) Connects Imphal Valley to Nagaland and Assam for essential supplies











