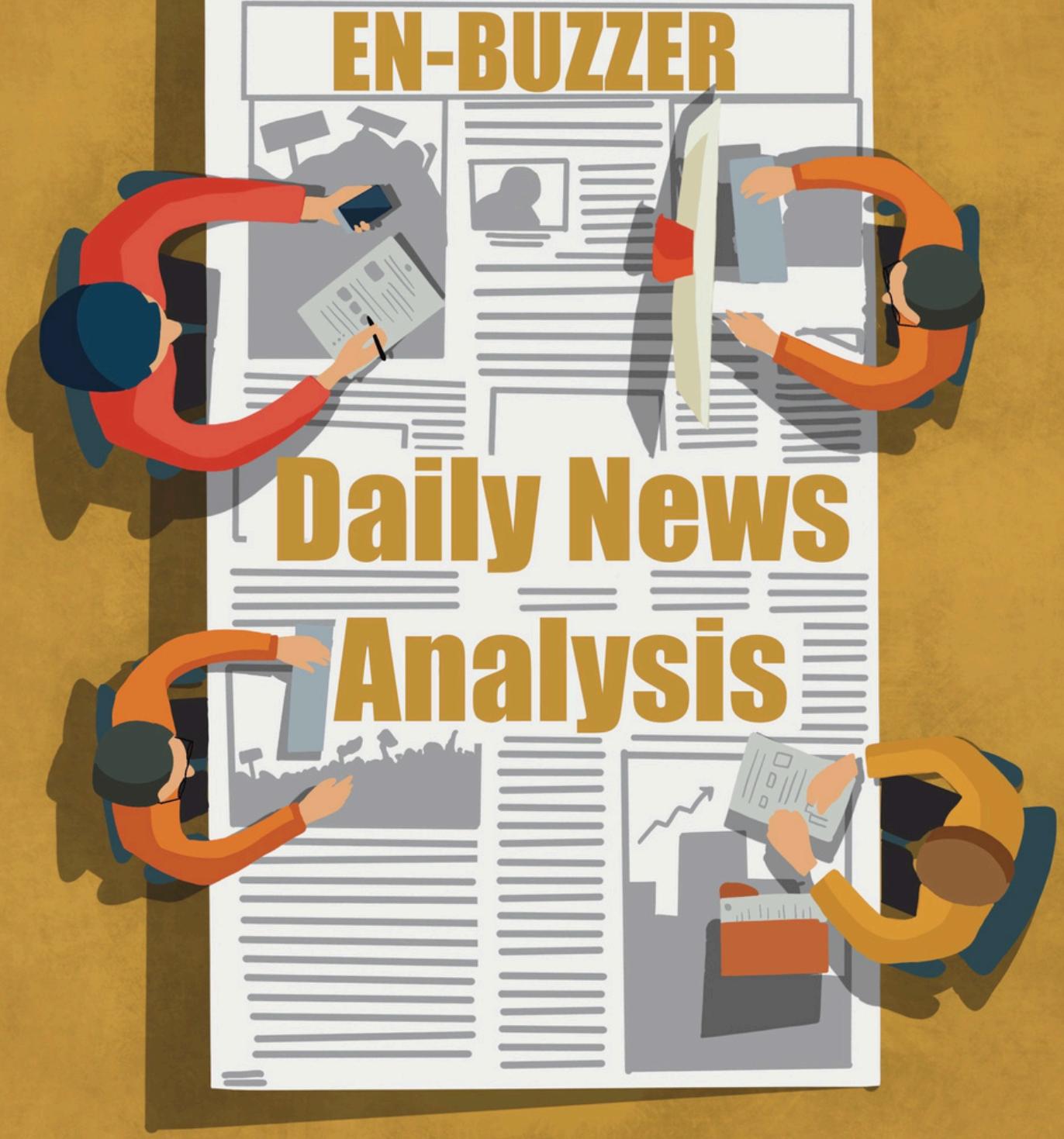




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1. Employability Crisis in India

- **Prelims** - Employability Crisis in India
- **Mains** - GS 2 - Social Justice

Why in the news?

- In India, only around 42.6% of graduates are deemed employable- a figure that goes beyond mere statistics, revealing a deeper structural fault in the education-to-employment system.

Employability Crisis in India

- **What is it?:** The employability crisis reflects a significant gap between the skills of the workforce and the requirements of the job market, leading to high unemployment and underemployment, especially among educated youth.
- **Causes of Employment Crisis:**
 - **Skill Mismatch:** Graduates lack industry-relevant technical and soft skills, making large numbers unemployable.
 - ★ About 80% of engineering graduates lack employable skills as per Mercer Mettl India Graduate Skill Index 2025.
 - **Educational Shortcomings:** The outdated curriculum, poor integration of industry needs in education, and low focus on vocational training worsen the employability scenario.
 - ★ NEP 2020 reforms have not fully addressed these issues.
 - **Economic Factors:** Slow industrial growth and insufficient job creation in manufacturing limit opportunities.
 - ★ The agriculture sector is seasonal and low productive, providing temporary employment to a large part of the workforce.
 - **Technological Disruption:** Automation and artificial intelligence reduce traditional jobs and demand advanced skills, increasing unemployment risk for those not upskilled.
 - **Labour Market Pressure:** Rapid population growth adds millions of job seekers annually, intensifying competition in a job-scarce market.
 - ★ Youth workforce entry is about 70-80 lakh per year.

→ **Barrier to Accessibility:** Problems like caste discrimination, poor communication skills, and lack of transport particularly affect marginalized groups' employability.

- **Impacts:**

→ **Unemployment Issues:**

- ★ High educated unemployment, with statistics showing many engineering and professional graduates unable to find suitable jobs.
- ★ Female unemployment is notably high; about one in five educated women remain unemployed.

→ **Economic Impacts:**

- ★ Stunted growth of the industrial sector as well as its impact on GDP.
- ★ Wage stagnation for fresh graduates.
- ★ Low-quality jobs in informal sectors, and psychological stress leading to social issues.

→ **Political Impacts:**

- ★ Rising brunt of unemployability could lead to anti-government sentiments.
- ★ It could lead to emigration of unskilled labour to abroad.

- **Remedies and Way Forward:**

- **Skill Development:** Promote skill-building programs aligned with industry demands, including digital and technical skills in emerging sectors.
- **Education Reform:** Modernize curriculum, strengthen vocational training, foster industry-academia partnerships, and encourage practical learning.
- **Boost Industrial Growth:** Spur manufacturing and service sector expansion to create scalable job opportunities.
- **Encourage Entrepreneurship:** Promote startups, MSMEs, and provide easier access to finance to create self-employment opportunities.
- **Technology Leverage:** Use technology for job creation and facilitate lifelong learning and upskilling. And inclusion of AI and Machine Learning.
- **Policy Support:** Government policies to incentivize job creation, support informal sector formalization, and strengthen social safety nets.

- **Initiatives of GoI:**

- **Skill India Mission (2015):** Umbrella for PMKVY, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, and National Skill Development Corporation.
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Emphasises experiential learning and industry linkages.
- **PM Vishwakarma Yojana:** Upskilling traditional artisans.
- **Digital Skill Hubs and Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalayas:** Promoting sector-specific skills (logistics, railways, etc.).
- **NAPS & NATS:** Apprenticeship programmes integrating skill training with employment.

2. AI in Indian Education Sector

- **Prelims** - AI in Indian Education Sector
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Science and Technology

Why in the news?

- India is preparing to transform its education system by introducing Artificial Intelligence (AI) education for students from as early as Class 3, beginning with the 2026–27 academic year.

AI in Indian Education Sector

- **Policy Milestones:**
 - **National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (2018):** Identified education as a core sector for AI transformation. Recommended adaptive learning, predictive analytics, and digitization of records.
 - **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Promotes digital learning and AI literacy starting early in school.
 - **CBSE Initiatives:** Over 18,000 schools offer AI as a skill subject from Class 6 (15-hour module); Classes 9–12 have AI as an optional subject.
 - **MoE Announcement (Oct 2025):** From 2026-27, AI will be taught from Class 3 onwards for all students. Frameworks for teacher training and curriculum are being developed.
 - **CISCE Board:** Robotics and AI included in curriculum since 2025-26.
- **Applications of AI in school education:**
 - **Personalized Learning:** AI adapts content to each student's pace, strengths, and weaknesses (e.g., Embibe, Byju's adaptive platforms).
 - **Administrative Tasks:** AI automated grading, attendance, planning, freeing up teacher time (e.g., Knewton, TeacherKit).
 - **Equitable Access:** Platforms like DIKSHA and SWAYAM use AI for multilingual and accessible content delivery.
 - **Special Needs Support:** Text-to-speech, language translation, virtual tutors increase inclusion.
 - **Teacher Training:** Pilot AI tools help teachers prepare lesson plans and deliver more interactive lessons.

- **Advantages:**

- Boosts student engagement with interactive and gamified tools (Labster, Quizizz).
- Bridges teacher shortage by scaling personalized instruction.
- Improves data-driven decision making for school management.
- Supports diverse learners by overcoming language and ability barriers.

- **Challenges:**

- **Digital Divide:** Unequal access risks excluding rural/under-resourced students.
- **Data Privacy & Ethics:** Managing sensitive student data and algorithmic bias is crucial.
- **Over-reliance on AI:** Can weaken critical thinking, authentic learning.
- **Capacity & Skills:** Training over one crore teachers to deliver AI content.
- **Job Displacement Concerns:** Concerns regarding AI replacing teachers.

3. Wind Energy in India

- **Prelims** - Wind Energy in India
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Joshi, announced on Thursday that India is projected to add 6 gigawatts (GW) of new wind energy capacity by the end of the 2025–26 financial year.

Wind Energy in India

- **India's Wind Energy Potential:**

- India has a wind energy potential of approximately 695.51 GW at 120 meters above ground level, according to the National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE).
- Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh are the top states for installed wind energy capacity.

- **Installed Capacity:**

- As of 2023, India ranks 4th globally for wind energy capacity, with an installed capacity of about 42,000 MW.
- Tamil Nadu is the leading state in India, with 10,603.5 MW installed capacity, contributing to nearly 25% of India's total wind power.

- **Wind Energy Contribution:**

- Wind energy contributes around 9% to India's total electricity generation, with the potential for significant growth.

- **Challenges to Growth:**

- Land Availability: Wind projects require large tracts of land, and competition with agriculture and urbanization makes this challenging.
- Grid Infrastructure: Improving transmission and grid integration to handle renewable power is crucial.
- Financial Viability: Ensuring that wind energy projects are financially sustainable, especially with fluctuating energy prices and grid integration issues.

- **Repowering Initiatives:**

- The Repowering and Refurbishment Policy focuses on replacing old, small capacity turbines with newer, larger ones to improve energy generation.
- Tamil Nadu, in particular, has significant potential for repowering, which could enhance its contribution to the country's renewable energy supply.

- **Technological Advancements:**

- Modern Turbines: The wind turbine sector has evolved, with turbines now ranging from 2 MW to 2.5 MW in capacity, improving efficiency and power generation.
- The shift to higher-capacity turbines is a key factor in enhancing the overall capacity of wind farms in India.

- **Private Sector Involvement:**

- Private companies have been actively investing in wind power generation. However, they emphasize the need for better policies and financial incentives for continued growth.

- **Environmental and Social Benefits:**

- Wind energy is a clean, renewable resource, helping reduce dependence on fossil fuels and contributing to India's climate goals.
- Wind projects also offer opportunities for rural development and job creation, although they face opposition from communities due to land disputes.

4. Aabhar and One District One Product (ODOP)

- **Prelims** - Aabhar and One District One Product (ODOP)
- **Mains** - GS 2 - Governance

Why in the news?

- In an effort to promote local artisans and talent, the Indian Railways will support the newly launched 'Aabhar' online store, and others associated with One District One Product (ODOP) and Geographical Indication (GI) initiatives.

Aabhar Online Store

- **What is it?:** Aabhar is an online store launched on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) platform aimed at showcasing and promoting India's rich cultural heritage through products crafted by local artisans, handloom weavers, tribal producers, and women-led enterprises.
- **Objective:** The initiative seeks to promote local talent, encourage social inclusion, and create additional income opportunities for marginalized communities. It supports the government's "Vocal for Local" campaign by providing market access to indigenous products and traditional crafts.
- **Products:** The store features gift items and hampers made under the One District One Product (ODOP) and Geographical Indication (GI) frameworks. Products are sourced from entities like the Central Cottage Industries Emporium (CCIE), Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), and various state handloom and handicraft emporiums.
- **Usage:** Aabhar products are used in official events, ceremonies, and functions by institutions such as the Indian Railways, which patronize this initiative to promote local crafts nationally.
- **Significance:** This initiative integrates local handicrafts into official procurement, aids in preserving cultural heritage, and supports rural and artisanal economies.

One District One Product (ODOP) Initiative

- **What is it?:** ODOP is a government initiative to identify and promote one key product from each district of India. This product represents the district's traditional or unique craftsmanship, agricultural produce, or industry.

>> Kozhikode >> Ernakulam >> Thiruvananthapuram

- **Objective:** To harness local skills and resources for economic development by promoting the identified product at national and international levels. ODOP aims to boost production, improve quality, and create large-scale employment in local communities.
- **Implementation:** ODOP promotes products with Geographical Indication (GI) tags and traditional indigenous crafts, linking them with marketing channels such as Aabhar and platforms like GeM.
- **Benefits:** The scheme helps in preserving indigenous knowledge, promoting sustainable livelihoods, enhancing rural entrepreneurship, and supporting MSMEs.
- **Integration:** The Aabhar store curates ODOP products, creating synergy between the initiative and government e-market procurement, aiding the government's Atmanirbhar Bharat and "Vocal for Local" visions.



5. India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)

- **Prelims** - India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

Why in the news?

- Cyprus places great importance on the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and desire to participate in the initiative.

India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)

- **What is it?:**
 - IMEC is a transcontinental project to enhance connectivity and trade routes from India to Europe via the Middle East.
 - Announced during the G20 Summit in New Delhi in 2023.
- **Objectives:**
 - Reduction in transit time by 40% and costs by 30% (though actual benefits might vary).
 - Creation of a seamless trade route connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe, which is anticipated to reshape international maritime trade.
- **Current Progress:**
 - The eastern part of IMEC, linking India and the UAE, is progressing well, facilitated by strong economic ties.
 - Bilateral trade between India and UAE has grown significantly, supported by the 2022 Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), and now includes non-oil trade diversification.
 - The Virtual Trade Corridor between India and UAE has been launched to streamline trade processes, lowering logistics costs and administrative burdens.
- **Challenges:**
 - The western segment faces uncertainty due to the Israel-Palestine conflict, which has disrupted regional cooperation, especially with stakeholders like Saudi Arabia and Jordan.
 - Implementation in the western corridor may be delayed until regional stability improves, affecting overall IMEC timelines.

- **Future Prospects:**

- For now, only the connectivity aspect is moving forward, while other components like energy grid linkages and clean energy technology cooperation are on hold.
- India and other eastern stakeholders should use this period to enhance internal logistics, port readiness, and capacity-building .

India's Role

- **Infrastructure Development:** Upgrading Indian ports, creating economic zones, and digitizing logistics for improved efficiency.
- **Integration into Global Value Chains:** Enhancing manufacturing competitiveness to position India as a global supply chain alternative.
- **Institutional Support:** Establishing an IMEC Secretariat for streamlined management and governance, which could encourage neighboring countries to join the initiative.