

## Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) - Quarterly Bulletin (January-March 2024)

### ➤ Unemployment Rate (UR)

- Overall UR in urban areas decreased to 6.7% from 6.8% (Jan-Mar 2023 to Jan-Mar 2024) for persons aged 15 years and above.
- Female UR decreased from 9.2% to 8.5% during the same period.

### ➤ Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

- LFPR in urban areas increased from 48.5% to 50.2% (Jan-Mar 2023 to Jan-Mar 2024) for persons aged 15 years and above.
- Female LFPR rose from 22.7% to 25.6% during the same period.

### ➤ Worker Population Ratio (WPR)

- WPR in urban areas increased from 45.2% to 46.9% (Jan-Mar 2023 to Jan-Mar 2024) for persons aged 15 years and above.
- Female WPR increased from 20.6% to 23.4% during the same period.

### ➤ Definitions

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** Percentage of persons in the labor force within the population.
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR):** Percentage of employed persons within the population.
- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** Percentage of unemployed persons within the labor force.
- **Current Weekly Status (CWS):** Activity status based on the last 7 days preceding the survey.

### ➤ Highlights

- Both male and female LFPR and WPR show an increasing trend.
- Overall unemployment rates have slightly decreased, with a more significant decrease observed in female UR.

## Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)

➤ Recently, the **Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)** has deferred the accreditation of India's **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** for the second year in a row.

### ➤ Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)

- Established as the **International Coordinating Committee in 1993**.
- Renamed GANHRI in 2016.
- Comprised of **120 members, including India**.
- Accreditations are granted with either '**A status**' (full compliance) or '**B status**' (partial compliance) based on adherence to the Paris Principles.
  - The Paris Principles outline internationally agreed minimum standards that **NHRIs must meet to be deemed credible and independent**.

## India Volatility Index (VIX)

➤ Recently, **India VIX surged above the critical threshold of 21**, signaling **heightened volatility in India's stock market**.

### ➤ About India VIX:

- **Definition:** India VIX measures the expected fluctuation of an underlying Index over the next **30 calendar days**.
- **Implications:** Higher India VIX values indicate higher expected volatility, while lower values suggest lower volatility.
- **Basis:** It is derived from the index option prices of **NIFTY**.
- **Methodology:** The computation follows the methodology of the **Chicago Board of Options Exchange (CBOE)**.
- **History:** CBOE introduced the first volatility index for **US markets in 1993**.

## Exercise 'Tarkash'

➤ The **seventh edition of the Indo-U.S. joint counter-terrorism exercise 'Tarkash'** was recently held in **Kolkata**. This exercise was conducted between **India's National Security Guard (NSG) and U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF)**.

## \$134-Million Initiative Aims To Eliminate Mercury-Containing Medical Devices

- The initiative led by UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
  - Total investment: \$134 million.
- **Project Objectives:**
  - Phase out mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers at a rate of 20% annually.
  - Reduce mercury spillages.
  - Encourage adoption of accurate, affordable, and safe mercury-free alternatives.
  - Improve management of mercury-containing medical waste.
- **Member Countries:** Albania, Burkina Faso, India, Montenegro, Uganda
- **Funding Source:** Provided by the **Global Environment Facility**.
- **Execution Oversight:** World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Minamata Convention on Mercury:** Adopted in **2013 at Kumamoto, Japan**. And came into **force in 2017**.
- **Key Features:**
  - First global legally binding treaty to safeguard human health and the environment from mercury's adverse effects.
- **Aims to:** Ban new mercury mines, Phase-out existing mercury mines, Phase-out and phase-down mercury use in products and processes.
- **Named after Minamata, Japan, the city at the center of Minamata disease, caused by severe mercury poisoning.**
- **India ratified the treaty in 2018.**

## Blue Flag Certification

- The **Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority** has recommended the **Injambakkam-Akkarai** stretch development project with the condition to explore **Blue Flag certification**.
- **About Blue Flag Certification:**
  - **Nature:** It is a voluntary, globally recognized eco-label awarded to environment-friendly and clean beaches, marinas, and boats.
  - **Issuing Body:** The certification is granted by the **Denmark-based non-profit Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**.
  - **Criteria:** FEE has established **33 criteria** for a beach to qualify for Blue Flag certification.
- **India's Blue Flag Beaches:** India has **12 Blue Flag-certified beaches**, including Minicoy Thundi and Kadmat in Lakshadweep, Ghoghla in Diu, and Golden Beach in Odisha.

## BHISHM Portable Cubes

- Air Force conducted tests on **BHISHM portable cubes**, an indigenous mobile hospital, at **Agra for airdrops**.
- **About BHISHM Portable Cubes:**
  - It is a significant part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious "**Project BHISHM**" (**Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri**), which was revealed in **February 2022**
  - Designed to treat up to **200 casualties**.
  - Consists of **72 small cubes** equipped with advanced medical equipment, each RFID-tagged for identification.
  - Integrates Artificial Intelligence and data analytics for effective coordination and real-time monitoring of medical services in the field.
  - Robust, waterproof, and light, designed for various configurations, suitable for diverse emergency scenarios.
- **The World's first portable hospital, Aarogya Maitri Aid Cube was unveiled in Gurugram**

## Sangam: Digital Twin Initiative

- Ministry of Communications revealed Stage-I Participants for "**Sangam Initiative: A Leap Towards AI-Driven Infrastructure Transformation**."
- **About Sangam: Digital Twin Initiative:**
  - **Objective:** Proof of Concept aimed at transforming infrastructure planning & design using digital twin technology to create precise, dynamic models of physical environments.
  - **Technological Integration:** Combines 5G, IoT, AI, Digital Twin, and next-generation computational technologies.
  - **Digital Twin:** Virtual representation of an object or system designed to accurately reflect a physical object.
  - **Benefits:** Enhances efficiency and accuracy in infrastructure projects.