



## Current Affairs of the Day

### The second wave too saw penury: study

1. The second wave of the pandemic in India, when a national-level lockdown was not imposed as during the first, failed to significantly alleviate economic distress and hunger among the poor, according to a survey of 6,500 respondents in 14 States.

2. The survey, Hunger Watch-2, was commissioned by the Right to Food Campaign and the Centre for Equity Studies during December 2021 and January 2022 to evaluate economic distress following the second wave. The two organisations conducted Hunger Watch-1 from October to December in 2020 to measure the fallout of the first wave.

3. As much as 66% of the respondents of the second survey said their incomes had decreased from the pre-pandemic level. This proportion was larger among urban households, families earning less than ₹3,000 a month and Muslim households.

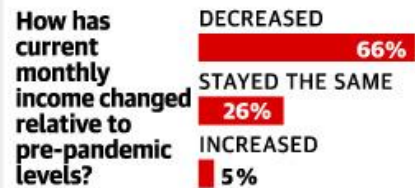
4. Only 34% of the overall sample reported that their household's cereal consumption in the month preceding the survey was "sufficient", and 79% of the households surveyed reported some form of food insecurity.

5. Food insecurity is worse among urban households — 87% of Muslim households reported some form of food insecurity as against 77% of Hindu households, the report noted.

#### Income levels decline

In a survey conducted during December 2021 and January 2022 to evaluate economic distress following the second wave of COVID-19, about 66% respondents reported that incomes fell. Of them, close to 60% said their incomes were now less than half the pre-pandemic levels

Source: Hunger Watch II



**Striking a balance:** Students in Pottipadu Upper Primary School, Vajrakarur Mandal, Anantapur during a mid-day meal break. ■ RVS PRASAD



6. The first survey had reported similar numbers, suggesting that the absence of a national lockdown did not automatically improve the odds of the poorest accessing adequate work and nutrition.
7. Over two-thirds of the respondents, for instance, reported that in October 2020, the quantity of food they were able to consume was less than what it was before the lockdown. Seven out of 10 respondents reported a worsening nutritional quality of diets.

## ‘Money laundering a global problem’

1. The government informed the Supreme Court that ₹18,000 crores was confiscated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) from fugitive businessmen Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi, and returned to banks.
2. Appearing before a Bench, Solicitor-General submitted that money laundering is a “global problem”. The government said the total proceeds of crime in PMLA cases pending before the court is ₹67,000 crore.
3. The number of PMLA cases investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has varied in five years, from 111 to 981 in 2015-16 and 2020-21, respectively.
4. “Very small number of cases are being taken up for investigation under the PMLA as compared to annual registration of the cases under the Money Laundering Act in the UK (7,900), the U.S. (1,532), China (4,691), Austria (1,036), Hong Kong (1,823), Belgium (1,862) and Russia (2,764),” he submitted.
5. “Corruption in high offices is a major facilitator of money laundering”. This is especially true in the developing world. Corruption is an “insidious player which undermines democracy”. Money laundering, in turn, fuels organised crime and terrorism.

## UN report

1. The Solicitor-General quoted a United Nations report which said the proceeds of crime being laundered amount to \$2.1 trillion, which accounts for 3.67% of the global GDP.



2. He said three “supra-national or transnational” crimes which have brought together the global community are narcotics, money laundering and terrorism.
3. He highlighted how people accused of money laundering run to small nations with no extradition treaty with India where they can buy citizenship. He said the global tolerance to money laundering has come down. This has been evident in the increasing number of predicate offences.
4. The Centre was responding to a batch of petitions before the court alleging that the PMLA has evolved as the government’s “hatchet” law in recent years, considering the series of raids and arrests of politicians, their relatives and activists.

## MILAN to be held in Vizag from Feb. 25

Starting with the participation of four countries — Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand — in 1995, the exercise has since transitioned in terms of the number of participants and complexity of exercises.

### Highlights:

1. Amid escalating tensions between Ukraine and Russia, warships of Quad countries, France, Myanmar, South Korea and Vietnam and several others will come together at Visakhapatnam later this week for the largest multilateral exercise MILAN, hosted by the Indian Navy.
2. Russia, Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia among others are participating in the exercise without ships.
3. The exercise, scheduled from February 25 to March 4, will see the participation of around 42 countries with ships from over 15 countries.
4. The U.S. will be joining the exercise for the first time.





## Collaborative theme

1. “The theme of the MILAN 2022 exercise is ‘Camaraderie - Cohesion – Collaboration’, which aims to project India as a responsible maritime power to the world at large,” the Navy said.
2. “The aim of the exercise is to hone operational skills, imbibe best practices and procedures, and enable doctrinal learning in the maritime domain through professional interaction between friendly navies,” the statement elaborated.
3. Activities include an international maritime seminar, professional and subject matter expert exchanges and deep submergence rescue vessel (DSRV) demonstration, it added.

<b>MAINS DAWP</b>	<b>Q1. Does India need a new constitution? Discuss with reasoned arguments.</b>
<b>MCQs</b>	<b>Q1. United Arab Emirates (UAE) opens to</b> 1. Persian Gulf 2. Gulf of Oman 3. Red Sea  Select the correct answer from the codes given below a. 1 and 2 only b. 2 and 3 only c. 2 only d. 1, 2 and 3