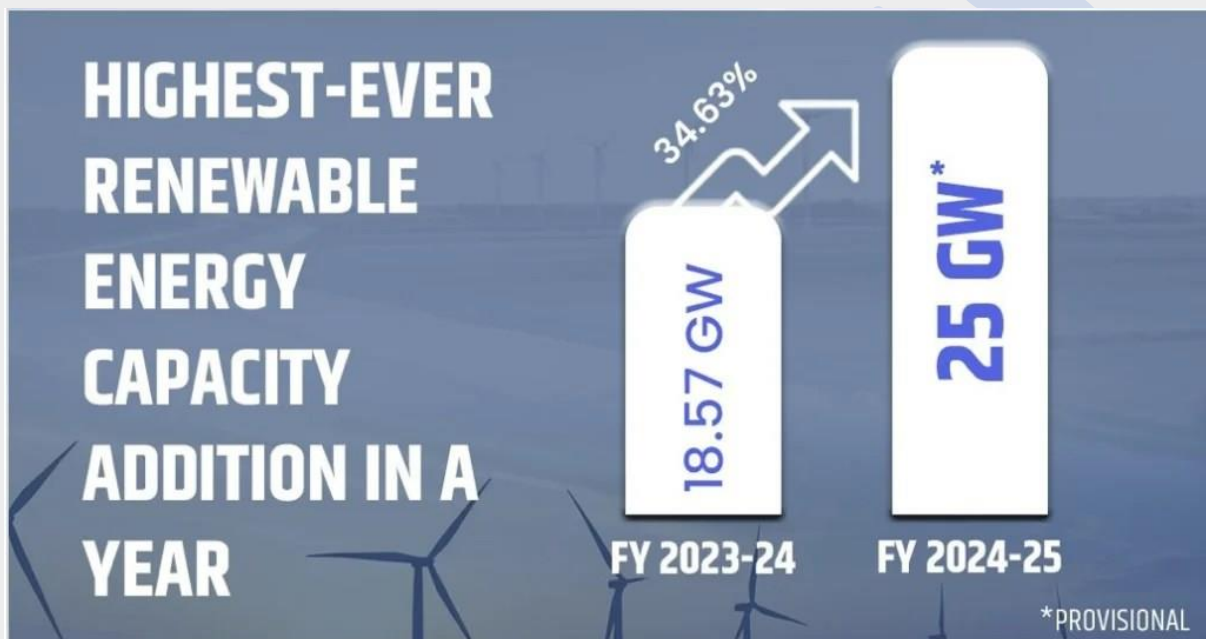


1. India Achieves Historic Milestone in Renewable Energy Capacity Addition in FY 2024-25

Why in News?

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) achieved historic milestone in the renewable energy sector for the financial year 2024-25. The country has added an unprecedented 25 GW of renewable energy capacity, marking an increase of nearly 35% over the previous year's addition of 18.57 GW.



Solar Sector Drives Renewable Surge

India's solar power sector led the renewable energy growth, with capacity additions soaring from 15 GW in FY24 to nearly 21 GW in FY25, a remarkable 38% increase. The country also achieved the significant milestone of surpassing 100 GW of installed solar capacity this year.

Domestic Solar Manufacturing Scales New Heights

In a strong push towards Atmanirbharta, India's solar module manufacturing capacity nearly doubled from 38 GW in March 2024 to 74 GW in March 2025, while solar PV cell manufacturing capacity tripled from 9 GW to 25 GW.

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana Sees Widespread Impact

The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana witnessed impressive progress, benefiting over 11.01 lakh households by March 31, 2025. Under the scheme, ₹5,437.20 crore has been disbursed as Central Financial Assistance to 6.98 lakh beneficiaries, significantly promoting the adoption of rooftop solar.

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana is a scheme launched by the Government of India in its 2024-25 budget for rooftop solar plant project with an investment of over 75,000 crore rupees to provide solar power for about 1 crore households and to provide them 300 units of free electricity every month.

Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi announced this scheme on February 13, 2024. Under PMSG Yojana, beneficiaries receive a fixed one time subsidy amount from government directly into their bank accounts. Beneficiaries are also eligible for bank loans at concessional rates.

The criteria for application under this scheme includes citizenship of India, the ownership of legal house with sufficient space at rooftops to enable installation of solar panels.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: Indian Express

2. Employee Pension Scheme 1995 and need to increase pension

What Is EPS 95 Pension Scheme?



The Employee Pension Scheme 1995 (EPS 95), which the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation introduced on November 19, 1995, is a social security initiative intended to cater to the retirement needs of employees in the organised sector. Administered by the EPFO, this scheme guarantees pension benefits to eligible employees who reach the age of 58.

Under this scheme, a combined contribution of 12% of the employee's salary, which includes the basic wage and dearness allowance, is made by the employer and the employee towards the EPF. While the employee's entire share goes directly to the Employees' Provident Fund each month, 8.33% of the employer's contribution is designated for the Employees' Pension Scheme, with the remaining 3.67% directed to the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF).

Eligibility

To avail the pension, individuals need to be members of EPFO. To qualify for a service pension, an individual must serve a minimum of 10 years. The standard retirement age for a regular pension is 58 years; however, retiring earlier may still enable one to receive a pension at a reduced rate.

Employees earning Rs 15,000 or less per month are required to enroll in this scheme. In the event of an employee's passing, if the widowed spouse remarries, pension benefits will transfer to the children.

Present pension level

Presently, only 1,000 Rs. Per month pension is given under this scheme. The Standing Committee of Parliamentarians on Labour, Textiles, and Skill Development, in its report on the 2025–26 demands for grants to the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, has emphasized the urgent need to revise the minimum monthly pension of ₹1,000 for member-pensioners under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). This amount, set in August 2014 under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) of 1995, has remained unchanged for over a decade, failing to account for inflation and the rising cost of living.

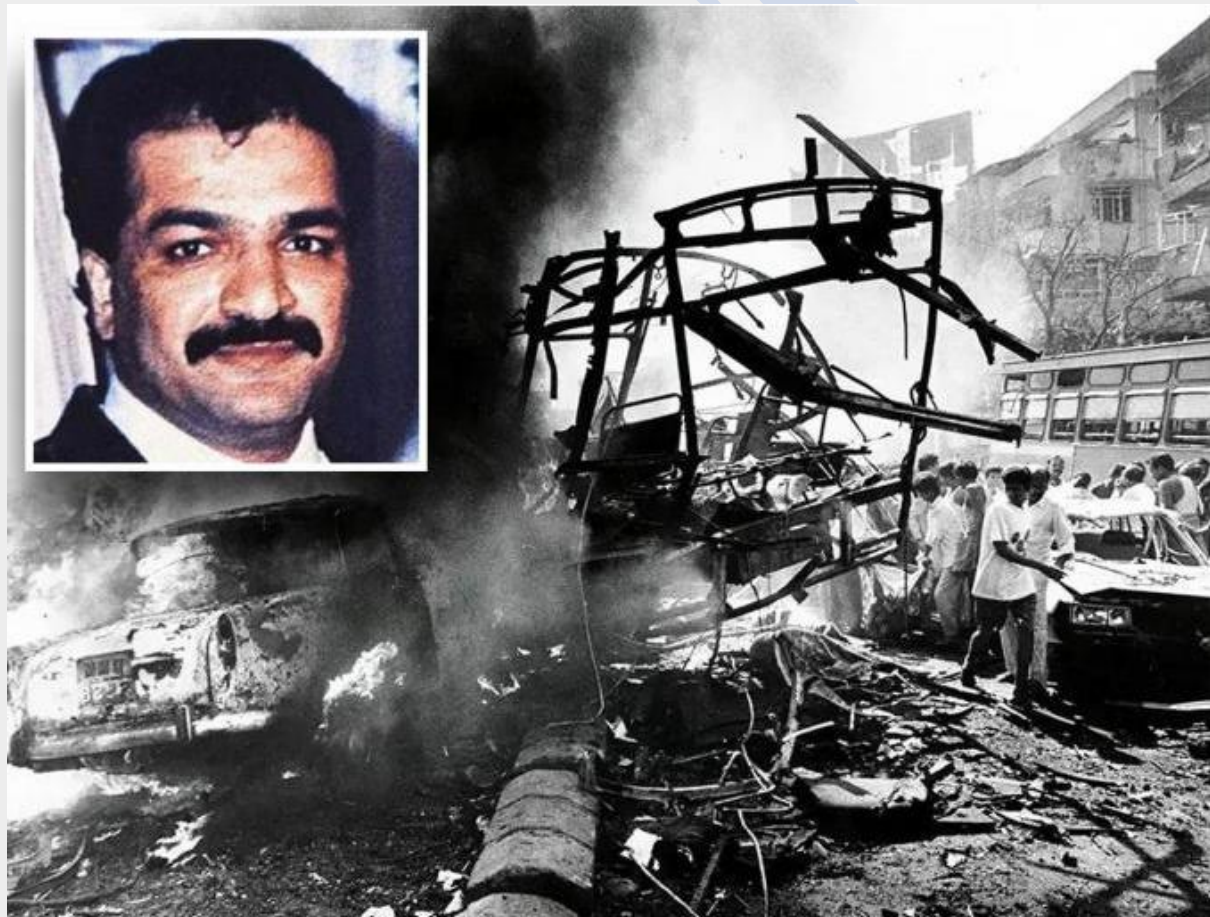
Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: The Hindu

3. SAFEMA & Tiger Memon: How 14 properties belonging to 1993 Bombay blasts accused were handed to govt

Why in News?

34 years after 14 properties belonging to Tiger Memon, the key accused in the 1993 Bombay Blasts who is still absconding, were confiscated, a special court in Mumbai last week handed them over to the central government.



1993 Mumbai Bomb Blasts: Special Court Orders Release of 14 Properties of Tiger Memon to Government

Property that is acquired illegally and in contravention with the law is forfeited to the central government under the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act (SAFEMA), 1976.

What is the law?

Forfeiture of property is a commonly accepted criminal law remedy, especially in terrorism related cases. Section 126 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, provided for forfeiture of property as one of the penalties apart from jail term and fine for commissioning or waging war against a friendly country.

SAFEMA was enacted in 1976 to crack down on smuggling and manipulation of foreign exchange through smuggling and other activities. It has provisions for forfeiture of illegally acquired properties of persons involved in such activities. The Act states that such persons acquire gains by violation of income tax or other laws and buy properties with such gains, in their own names or those of their relatives, associates and confidantes.

The law casts a wide net on those who own the property on behalf of the accused- from the spouse of the person; brother or sister of the person; brother or sister of the spouse of the person; any lineal ascendant or descendant of the person; any lineal ascendant or descendant of the spouse of the person and spouse or their lineal descendant of any person referred above.

It applies to anyone convicted or detained under the Customs Act, Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 among others.

The law lays down provision for detention of such properties by a competent authority and issuance of notice to the concerned parties to give them an opportunity to explain if the properties are not connected to the alleged illegal activities. If the authority finds the properties to have been acquired through illegal activities, the persons can be directed to pay a fine or the properties can be confiscated and their possession taken over by the central government. SAFEMA also has its own quasi-judicial Appellate Body that acts as a procedural safeguard against orders of confiscation.

Memon's case

In 1992, the Maharashtra government had initiated proceedings against Ibrahim Abdul Razak Memon alias Tiger Memon, allegedly involved in smuggling activities.

In 1993, the competent authority under SAFEMA ordered the forfeiture of the properties. In 1994, after Memon and other family members were named as accused in the 1993 Bombay blasts case, a designated court under the Terrorism and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) ordered that their properties be attached under the anti-terror law. A court receiver was appointed as custodian.

On March 12, 1993, a series of blasts in Bombay (now Mumbai) killed 257 and left 13 injured. The main conspirators in the case were Ibrahim Tiger Memon and international fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim.

Under the same Act, previously properties belonging to Dawood Ibrahim too have been confiscated and auctioned in the past.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

'Join PrepMate IAS'

WhatsApp 'Name' and 'State' on 75979-00000 to receive daily current affairs in simple and concise language.

Shubham's IAS