



06 December 2023

### National and International News

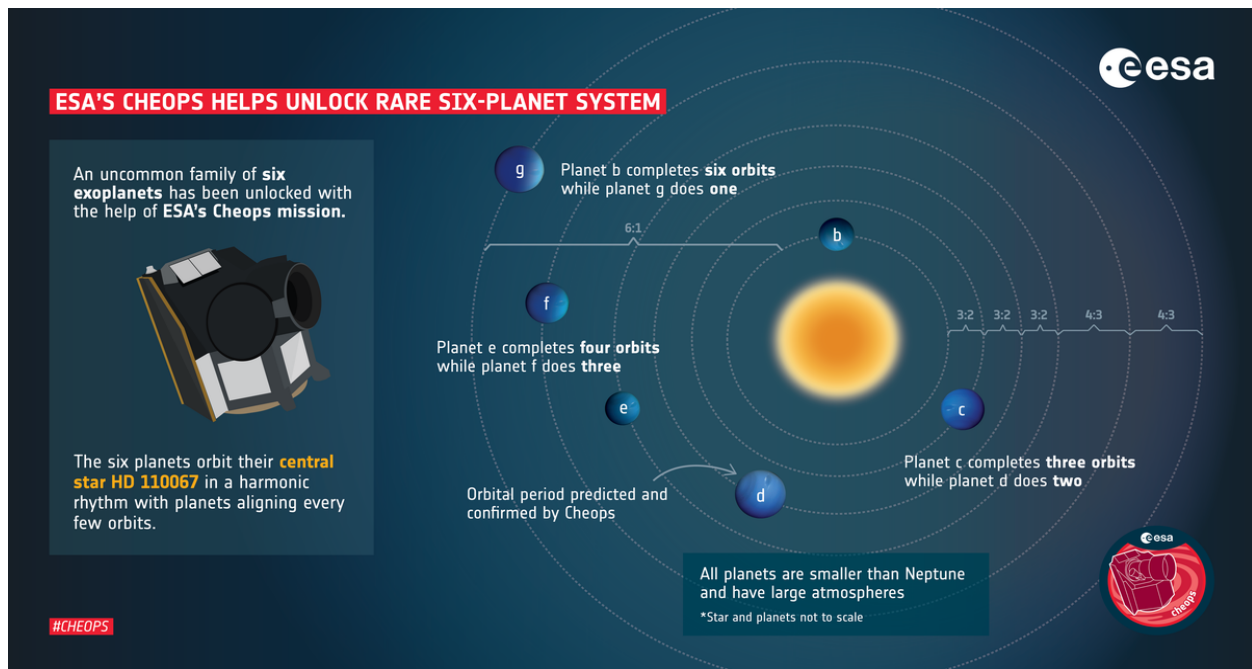
#### Six exoplanets found orbiting a nearby bright star

##### Context

- Six exoplanets orbiting around a nearby **bright star (HD 110067)** in the Coma Berenices constellation have been discovered.

##### Key points

- HD 110067 is the bright star in the **Coma Berenices constellation** (around 100 light-years away), which is visible from Earth's Northern Hemisphere
- The masses of the planets and estimated **densities are relatively low**
- The low densities could be explained by large, hydrogen-rich atmospheres.
- All six planets are **in resonant orbits**, in which the planets exert regular forces on each other as they orbit.
- This feature suggests that the system remains practically unchanged since its birth, at least four billion years ago.
- Scientific Significance:** Enhances understanding of exoplanetary systems.



#### Visa-free entry to Indian citizens

##### Context

- Malaysia** has become the latest country to extend the advantage of visa-free travel to Indian citizens.
- The facility will be extended to Indian travellers till December



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31, 2024 and will be **valid for 30 days** from the date of entry.

### Key points

- The initiative is aimed at ensuring **hassle-free travel for Indians** who have emerged as one of the major tourist groups visiting Malaysia in the recent past.
- At present there are **around 26 countries** that extend visa-free entry to Indian citizens for various reasons.

### One-third of all 2022 suicides were of daily wage earners, farmers, says NCRB report

### Context

India reported a total of over **1.7 lakh suicides** in 2022, nearly **one-third of whom were daily wage earners, agricultural labourers, and farmers**, according to the **National Crime Record Bureau's (NCRB) Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India (ADSI) 2022 report**

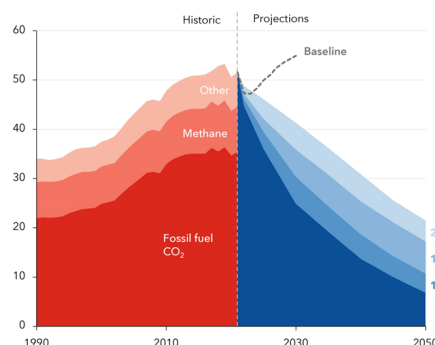
### Key points

- The suicide data published in the **ADSI-2022 report** showed that the **maximum suicides** in the year were reported from **Maharashtra (22,746)**, Tamil Nadu (19,834), Madhya Pradesh (15,386), Karnataka (13,606), Kerala (10,162), and Telangana (9,980).
- Apart from daily wage earners, and agricultural workers and farmers, the ADSI data showed that **9.6% of the suicides in 2022** were of persons who were **self-employed or salaried professionals**.
- This was followed by unemployed persons, who comprise **9.2% of all suicides reported in India in 2022**.
- Among all suicides reported in the year, over **12,000 were of students**.

### Methane

#### Methane matters

Methane is second only to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuels as a cause of global warming.  
(global GHG emissions, GtCO<sub>2</sub>e per year)



Source: IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Excludes emissions from land use and changes to land use.

IMF

### Context

At the ongoing COP-28 climate talks in the United Arab Emirates, a group of well-endowed philanthropic bodies, including the **Sequoia Climate Foundation and the Bezos Earth Fund**, announced that they would collectively invest **\$450 million** in solutions to tackle methane emissions.

### About

- Methane is an **organic compound**.
- Its molecule consists of carbon and four hydrogen atoms (CH<sub>4</sub>).
- It's in the news of late because of its character as a **potent climate pollutant**.
- Methane has a **greater global warming potential (GWP) than carbon dioxide**.
- However, while carbon dioxide lasts for several decades at a time in the atmosphere before breaking down, methane breaks down in a matter of years. That is, it's a **short-lived**



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	<p><b>climate pollutant.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Its sources include cattle-farming, landfills, wastewater treatment facilities, rice cultivation, and some industrial processes.</li> </ul> <p><b>What is GWP?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GWP is a <b>measure of the warming caused by a substance relative to that due to the same mass of carbon dioxide</b>; the GWP100 measures this over a century at a time.</li> <li>If carbon dioxide has a GWP100 of 1, methane is 28, nitrous oxide is 265, and sulfur hexafluoride is 23,500.</li> </ul>
<b>RS passes Post Office Bill</b>	<p><b>Context</b></p> <p>The Rajya Sabha passed the Post Office Bill , which repeals and replaces the <b>Post Office Act of 1898</b>.</p> <p><b>Key points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The bill will ensure the <b>effective functioning of the postal department</b> as a messenger service and as a provider of banking facilities.</li> <li><b>Section 9</b> of the Bill gives the power to intercept, open or detain any item or deliver items to customs authority by the post office officials.</li> <li>The provisions <b>empowering any officer to intercept, open or detain any postal item</b> in the interest of the security of the State is also a concern that giving such a free hand to officers will harm the right to privacy.</li> </ul>



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