

INDIAN FOOD PROCESSING SECTOR - PLISFPI SCHEME (SUMMARY)

The PLISFPI scheme, launched by the Government of India with the aim of transforming India into a global food processing hub, is achieving results that exceed expectations.

1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

- **Full Name:** Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI).
- **Launch & Duration:** From FY 2021-22 to 2026-27.
- **Total Outlay:** ₹10,900 Crores.
- **Primary Objective:** To boost domestic manufacturing capacity, encourage exports, and establish Indian brands globally.

2. THREE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE SCHEME

1. **Category-I:** Manufacturing of four major food product segments: Ready-to-Cook (RTC) / Ready-to-Eat (RTE) foods (including millet-based products), Processed Fruits & Vegetables, Marine Products, and Mozzarella Cheese.
 2. **Category-II:** Incentivizing Innovative and Organic products of MSMEs across all four segments.
 3. **Category-III:** Financial support for Branding and Marketing of Indian food products abroad (reimbursement of up to 50% of expenditure).
- **Special Sub-scheme:** A new component, **PLISMBP** (PLI for Millet-Based Products), was carved out in 2022-23 with an outlay of ₹800 Crores to promote millet production and value addition.

3. MILESTONES ACHIEVED (AS OF FEBRUARY 2026)

- **Employment:** Created approximately **3.39 lakh jobs**, significantly outperforming the original target of 2.5 lakh.
- **Investments:** Beneficiaries have reported investments amounting to nearly **₹9,207 Crores**.
- **Exports:** Exports of agricultural processed food products grew at a **CAGR of 13.23%**.
- **Capacity:** Food processing and preservation capacity has increased by **34 lakh MT per annum**.
- **MSME Support:** Out of 165 approved applications, **69 belong to the MSME sector**.

4. KEY FACTS FOR EXAMS (HIGH-YIELD POINTS)

- **GVA Growth:** The Gross Value Added (GVA) of the food processing sector increased from ₹1.34 lakh crore in 2014-15 to **₹2.24 lakh crore** in 2023-24.
- **Export Share:** The share of processed food exports in total agricultural exports grew from 13.7% in 2014-15 to **20.4%** in 2024-25.
- **Implementing Agency:** **IFCI** (Industrial Finance Corporation of India) has been appointed as the Project Management Agency (PMA) to oversee the scheme.

Conclusion:

Aligned with the vision of **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and **Make in India**, the PLISFPI scheme serves as a bridge between agriculture and industry, strengthening the rural economy and enhancing India's competitive edge in the global food market.

JAGADGURU ADI SHANKARACHARYA: KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Adi Shankaracharya was a profound visionary and philosopher who rejuvenated Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism) in India.

1. ADVAITA VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

- **Doctrine:** He propounded the '**Advaita**' (Non-dualism) philosophy. Its essence is that the individual soul (*Atman*) and the Supreme Reality (*Brahman*) are not different but one – summarized by the phrase "**Aham Brahmasmi**" (I am Brahman).
- **Objective:** To remove superstitions from society, enable the realization of Truth, and make the wisdom of the Upanishads accessible to the common people.

2. CHATURDHAM - ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FOUR PEETHAS (MATHAS)

To unify India through a common cultural thread, he established four monasteries (Mathas) in the four cardinal directions:

- **North:** Jyotir Math (Badrinath, Uttarakhand).
- **South:** Sringeri Sharada Peetham (Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka).
- **East:** Govardhana Peetham (Puri, Odisha).
- **West:** Dwarka Sharada Peetham (Dwarka, Gujarat).

3. LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMENTARIES

- **Prasthanatrayi:** He wrote simple and lucid commentaries (*Bhashyas*) on the **Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and the Bhagavad Gita**.
- **Major Works:** He authored numerous hymns and texts, including **Vivekachudamani, Bhaja Govindam, Saundarya Lahari, and Sivananda Lahari**.

4. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (EXAM POINTS)

- **Period:** 8th Century (widely considered as 788–820 CE).
- **Birthplace:** Kalady, Kerala.
- **Legacy:** He restored Sanatana Dharma through logic and Vedic knowledge during a time when the influence of Buddhism and Jainism was predominant.
- **Bhakti Movement:** His intellectual Vedanta provided the philosophical foundation for the subsequent Bhakti movements in India.

7TH INDIA-BHUTAN JOINT GROUP OF CUSTOMS (JGC) MEETING

This high-level meeting was held to strengthen border trade and customs cooperation between India and Bhutan.

1. MEETING CONTEXT

- **Date:** April 20–21, 2026.
- **Venue:** Munnar, Kerala.

2. BILATERAL TRADE FACTS

- **Major Partner:** India accounts for nearly **80%** of Bhutan's total trade.

- **Trade Value:** Bilateral trade exceeded **\$1.9 billion** in FY 2024–25, registering a growth of **46%** compared to the previous year.
- **Land Customs Stations (LCS):** There are **10** notified stations along the India–Bhutan border.
 - **West Bengal:** 6 stations.
 - **Assam:** 4 stations.



3. PRIORITY AREAS OF DISCUSSION

- **Coordinated Border Management (CBM):** Streamlining inspections and procedures at the border.
- **Pre-arrival Information Exchange:** Discussion on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the advance exchange of customs data.
- **Anti-Smuggling Measures:** Strengthening mechanisms to curb smuggling through intelligence sharing and enforcement cooperation.
- **Digitization:** Modernizing customs processes and monitoring cargo movement via the **Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS)**.

4. EXAM-ORIENTED POINTS

- **Landlocked Country:** Since Bhutan has no coastline, '**Transit Trade**' through Indian territory is vital for its economy.
- **Kochi Port Visit:** The Bhutanese delegation visited Kochi Port to gain insights into maritime trade, container handling, and maritime enforcement technologies (e.g., AIS, Satellite phones).
- **Legal Framework:** All bilateral trade cooperation is governed by the '**Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit**' between the two nations.

INDIA'S SEAFOOD EXPORTS - RECORD GROWTH (2026)

India's seafood exports have reached an all-time high. The fisheries sector is playing a pivotal role in achieving the vision of '**Viksit Bharat @ 2047**'.

1. KEY STATISTICS (FY 2025–26)

- **Total Export Value:** **₹72,325.82 Crore** (\$8.28 Billion).
- **Export Volume:** 19.32 Lakh Metric Tonnes.
- **Primary Product: Frozen Shrimp.** It accounts for **2/3rd** of the total export earnings (approximately ₹47,973 Crore).

2. TOP EXPORT MARKETS (IMPORTERS)

- **USA:** Remains the largest market for Indian seafood (retains the top spot despite a slight decline in volume).
- **China:** The second-largest export destination (recorded a 22.7% growth in value).
- **European Union (EU):** Registered the highest growth rate at **37.9%**.
- **Other Growth Hubs:** Southeast Asia (36.1% growth) and Japan.

3. POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The following technical terms are crucial for competitive exams:

- **TEDs (Turtle Excluder Devices):** Mandatory specialized devices in shrimp trawl nets to protect sea turtles from being trapped.
- **MMPA (Marine Mammal Protection Act):** Compliance with U.S. standards to ensure the protection of marine mammals during fishing.
- **National Traceability Framework (2025):** A system to track the origin and production process of exported seafood to ensure quality and safety.
- **EEZ Rules, 2025:** New regulations for the sustainable utilization of fishery resources within the **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.

4. LOGISTICS & PORTS

Approximately **64%** of India's seafood exports are handled by these five major ports:

1. **Visakhapatnam (Vizag)**
2. **JNPT (Navi Mumbai)**
3. **Kochi**
4. **Kolkata**
5. **Chennai**

5. EXAM-ORIENTED POINTS

- **MPEDA:** The **Marine Products Export Development Authority** is the nodal agency that releases these statistics and promotes exports.
- **Blue Revolution:** A government initiative aimed at the rapid growth and management of the fisheries sector.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY):** The flagship scheme launched to promote sustainable development of the fisheries sector and enhance exports.
- **Market Diversification:** India has achieved significant success in reducing its over-reliance on the US market by expanding exports to China, Europe, and Southeast Asia.

Quick Fact: In competitive exams, you might be asked about the **EEZ**. India's Exclusive Economic Zone extends up to **200 nautical miles** from its coast, providing vast resources for the "Blue Economy."

INS SUNAYNA'S VISIT TO JAKARTA: KEY HIGHLIGHTS

This visit is being conducted as part of India's '**MAHASAGAR**' and '**Neighbourhood First**' policies.

1. KEY MISSION DETAILS

- **Vessel:** INS Sunayna (an Offshore Patrol Vessel - OPV).
- **Initiative:** IOS SAGAR.
- **Destination:** Jakarta, Indonesia (April 21, 2026).
- **Unique Feature:** The ship carries a multinational crew from **16 Friendly Foreign Countries**. It arrived after transiting through the **Straits of Malacca and Singapore**.

2. PRIMARY VISION & POLICIES

These acronyms are highly important for competitive exams:

- **MAHASAGAR:** Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions. This is India's comprehensive vision for regional security and growth.
- **SAGAR:** Security And Growth for All in the Region. Its objective is to enhance peace and security in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- **Neighbourhood First Policy:** The priority India gives to strengthening relations with its neighboring countries.



3. PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- **Harbour Phase:** Completed in India in March 2026.
- **Sea Phase:** Currently progressing through April–May 2026.
- **PASSEX (Passage Exercise):** A joint naval exercise scheduled with the Indonesian Navy (TNI AL) upon the ship's departure from Jakarta.
- **Other Activities:** Professional exchanges, joint Yoga sessions, and sporting events.

4. GEOGRAPHICAL AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE (EXAM-ORIENTED POINTS)

- **Strait of Malacca:** One of the world's busiest shipping lanes, connecting the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. The transit of INS Sunayna through this strait is strategically significant.
- **Indo-Pacific Region:** This mission serves as a testament to India's efforts toward a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
- **Bilateral Relations:** India and Indonesia share a maritime boundary. Cooperation in the defense sector further strengthens the **Strategic Partnership** between the two nations.

Expert Note: In exams, you may be asked about **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)**. Initiatives like IOS SAGAR are designed to improve collective MDA among friendly navies to counter non-traditional threats like piracy and illegal fishing.

INDIA-GERMANY DEFENCE INDUSTRIAL PARTNERSHIP (2026)

Against the backdrop of current geopolitical uncertainty, India is seeking Germany's cooperation to achieve the goals of '**Aatmanirbhar Bharat**' in the defence sector.

1. THE PRIMARY PITCH: CO-CREATION & CO-INNOVATION

- **Aatmanirbhar Bharat:** It was clarified that this is not merely a procurement program but an invitation for foreign companies to **co-create, co-develop, and co-innovate** defence products in collaboration with India.
- **Mittelstand (SMEs):** The Defence Minister emphasized the need for technological cooperation between Germany's '**Mittelstand**' (renowned small and medium-sized enterprises) and Indian startups.

2. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

- **Leadership:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz have placed a special focus on strengthening this strategic partnership.
- **EU Relations:** These bilateral ties are a critical component of the broader **India-European Union (EU)** Defence and Strategic Partnership.

3. RESPONSE TO GLOBAL CRISES (CRISIS MANAGEMENT)

- **West Asia Situation:** India has established a **Group of Ministers (GoM)** to continuously assess the evolving tensions in West Asia.
- **Energy Security:** Concerns were raised regarding the impact on India's energy supply if disruptions occur in key maritime routes like the **Strait of Hormuz**. A coordinated response is essential for food security and global economic stability.

4. CULTURAL TIES

- **Rabindranath Tagore:** Minister Rajnath Singh paid floral tributes to the statue of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore at **Humboldt University** in Berlin. This gesture highlights the deep intellectual and cultural connection Tagore shared with German thinkers in the early 20th century.

5. EXAM-ORIENTED POINTS

- **Germany's Position:** Germany is India's most important trading and defence partner in Europe. Its cooperation is vital for **submarine manufacturing** and advanced military technologies.

- **Strait of Hormuz:** It connects the **Persian Gulf** with the **Gulf of Oman**. It is one of the world's most critical oil transit '**Choke Points**'.
- **International Relations:** India and Germany are democracies bound by shared values. Their cooperation is essential for promoting a '**Multipolar World**'.

Expert Note: In competitive exams, you may encounter questions about **Project 75I**. Germany's ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) is a major contender for this project, which involves building advanced conventional submarines for the Indian Navy.

WORLD EARTH DAY 2026: CELEBRATING 'OUR POWER, OUR PLANET'

World Earth Day is observed annually on April 22 to raise awareness about environmental protection and the Earth's biodiversity.

1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Date:** April 22, 2026.
- **Venue:** National Science Centre, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- **2026 Theme:** "**Our Power, Our Planet.**" This theme emphasizes collective responsibility in preserving and protecting our environment.

2. KEY EVENTS

- **Popular Science Lecture:** "Exploring Antarctica: A Journey to the White Continent."
- **Speaker:** **Dr. Amitava Sen Gupta**, Distinguished Professor, Department of Space (ISRO).
- **Open House Quiz:** An interactive session designed to spark scientific curiosity and test students' knowledge of environmental science and biodiversity.

3. EXAM-ORIENTED POINTS

A. BACKGROUND OF WORLD EARTH DAY

- **Origin:** The first Earth Day was observed on **April 22, 1970**.
- **Objective:** To mobilize global support for environmental protection and address pressing ecological challenges.

B. INDIAN ANTARCTIC PROGRAMME (ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION)

Research stations in Antarctica are a frequent topic in competitive exams:

- **Dakshin Gangotri:** India's first scientific research base station in Antarctica (currently used only as a supply base).
- **Maitri:** India's second research station, established in **1989**.
- **Bharati:** India's third and most modern research station, commissioned in **2012**.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS & ORGANIZATIONS

- **UNEP:** United Nations Environment Programme (Headquarters: **Nairobi, Kenya**).
- **IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- **Indian Constitution:**

- **Article 48A:** (Directive Principles of State Policy) Mandates the State to protect and improve the environment.
- **Article 51A(g):** (Fundamental Duties) Casts a duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, and wildlife.

Summary Note:

The 2026 theme, "Our Power, Our Planet," calls for redirecting human energy (Power) toward eco-friendly fuels and conservation efforts. The involvement of prestigious organizations like ISRO reinforces the need to protect the Earth through a scientific lens.

