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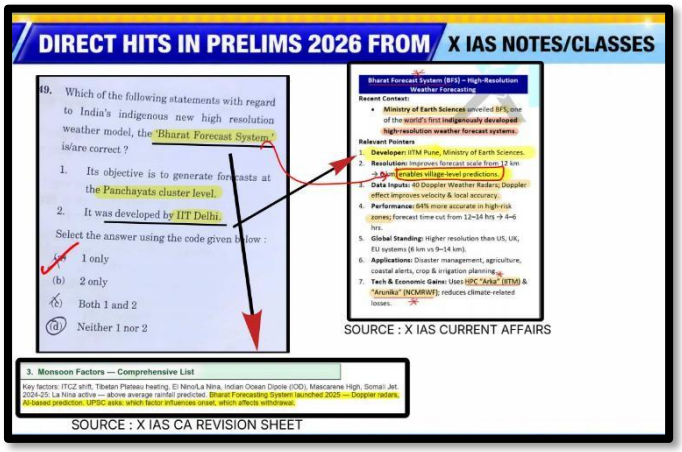
CT30 Prelims Module, Current X-Press Monthly Magazines and CA Fastrack Course collectively delivered 40 Direct Hits in UPSC Prelims 2026. Every file was uploaded to the student portal before the examination and remains fully verifiable.

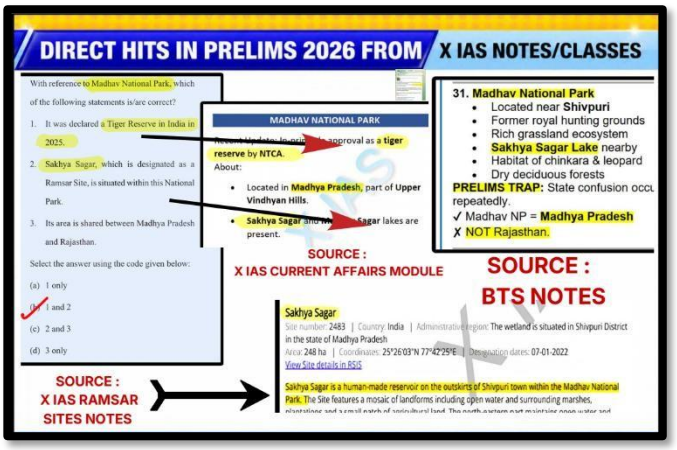
"UPSC does not reward information overload—it rewards precision. The difference between a topper and an average aspirant is not effort; it's direction."

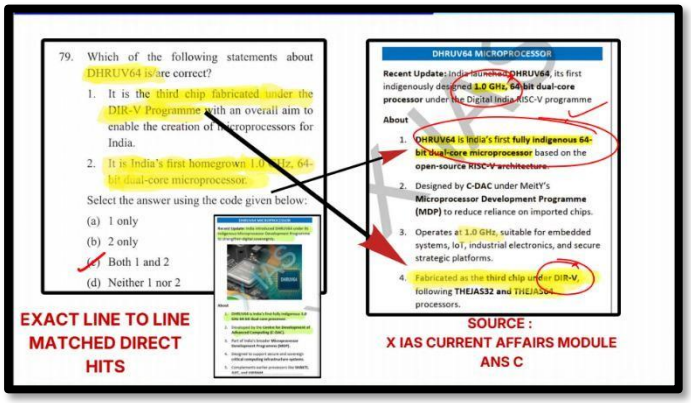
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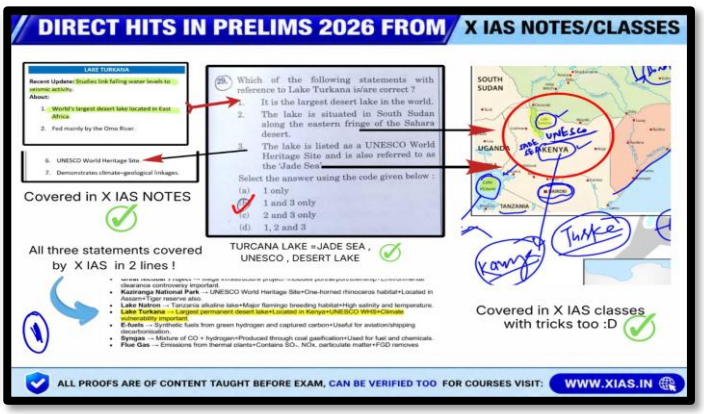
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How to Master Current Affairs with This Magazine (Read Carefully):

This magazine is designed as a one-stop solution for UPSC aspirants. It saves your time as it compiles everything in one place, reduces duplication, and builds exam-ready recall. Use the following framework to get the best results.

The S4 Formula (4 Steps to Mastery)

1. **Scan:** First quick reading for flow & understanding (Target Retention ~40–50%).

2. **Study**: First revision, underline & link with syllabus (Target Retention ~60–70%).

3. **Strengthen**: Second revision with active recall & integration with static topics (Target Retention ~75–80%).

4. **Secure**: Third revision, consolidate with Test Solutions & extra notes (Target Retention ~85%+).

Current Affairs Mastery Tracker (Fill honestly every month):

Step (S4 Formula)	**Target Retention**	**Date Completed**	**Retention % (Self-Eval)**
Scan (1st Reading – overview & highlight)	~40–50%	☐ _____	_____ %
Study (1st Revision – GS linkage & slow revision)	~60–70%	☐ _____	_____ %
Strengthen (2nd Revision (fast) – active recall & static integration)	~75–80%	☐ _____	_____ %
Secure (3rd Revision- near exam – consolidation, content on tips)	~85%+	☐ _____	_____ %

Do's & Don'ts: (Expert Advice)

Do's:	**Don'ts:**
• Understand the structure (GS-wise). • Link every topic with the UPSC syllabus & PYQs. • Highlight key facts, schemes, reports for Prelims & Mains. • Integrate with static topics (e.g., climate report -- GS3, polity case – GS2). • Practice answer writing using data/examples from the magazine. • Revise regularly (at least 3 rounds) with the tracker chart.	• Don't make fresh notes – the magazine is already compressed. • Don't rely on one-time reading – retention curve drops fast. • Don't follow multiple CA sources – stick to this base. • Don't read passively – mark, annotate, self-test.

Usage Tips

• Treat this as your **primary CA resource**.

• Add **additional notes/updates** only in the provided space.

• **Be selective** – everything in CA is not equally important; focus on **exam utility.**

Note:

To avoid FOMO, each subject's current affairs is subdivided by sources for easy tracking. Example: Environment includes inputs from The Hindu, Indian Express, Down to Earth, Vision, Drishti, Insights, PIB, etc.

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POLITY & GOVERNANCE

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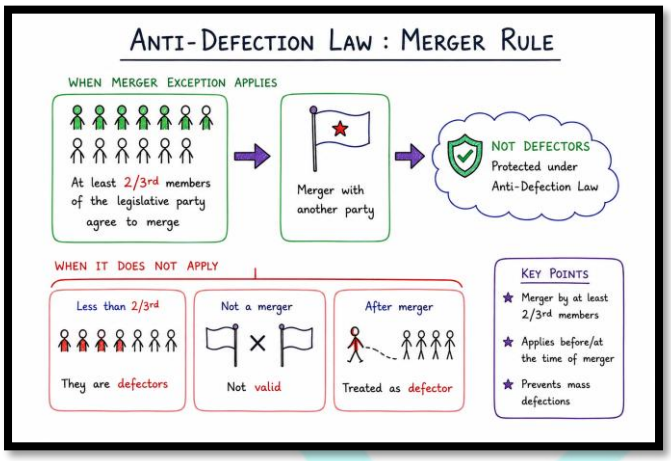
सत्यमेव जयते

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SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

THE DEBATE OVER THE 10TH SCHEDULE

Recent Update: High-profile, bulk defections, most notably the group split within the **Aam Aadmi Party** (AAP) and mass realignments in the **Trinamool Congress (TMC)**, have intensified debate over the Anti-Defection Law.



About

1. The **Tenth Schedule**, added through the **52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985**, aims to curb **political defections** and ensure **government stability**.
2. It provides for the **disqualification** of legislators who voluntarily give up party membership or vote against the **party whip**.
3. **Paragraph 4** permits exemption from disqualification when **two-thirds** of legislators agree to a **merger** with another political party.
4. The **Subhash Desai (2023)** judgment clarified that the **legislative wing** cannot function independently from the **original political party**.
5. The law has strengthened **party discipline**, reduced **horse-trading**, and improved **democratic accountability**.
6. Major concerns include the **bias of the Speaker**, absence of a **time limit** for decisions, misuse of the **two-thirds merger rule**, and restrictions on legislators' **independent judgment**.
7. Reforms suggested include creating an **independent tribunal**, clearly defining the **original political party**, limiting the **party whip** to confidence matters, prescribing a **three-month disposal period**, and reviewing the **merger provision**.
8. Strengthening the **Anti-Defection Law** is essential to balance **political stability**, **representative democracy**, and **constitutional morality**.

PANCHAYAT ADVANCEMENT INDEX (PAI) 2.0 REPORT

Recent Update: **PAI 2.0 Report** released to assess the performance of **Gram Panchayats** through data-driven governance.

About

1. **PAI 2.0** is India's first **data-driven assessment framework** for evaluating over **2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats** and **Traditional Local Bodies**.
2. It measures Panchayat performance using **150 indicators** and **230 data points** across **nine themes** aligned with the **Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)**.
3. The framework promotes **evidence-based planning**, **administrative transparency**, **real-time monitoring**, and **citizen participation** through **Gram Sabha validation**.
4. Leading Panchayats have successfully adopted **technology**, **peer learning**, and **data-driven Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs)**.



5. Key challenges include **regional disparities**, **digital divide**, **infrastructure deficits**, **resource dependency**, and weak performance in **social justice** indicators.
6. The report recommends **targeted funding** for **Aspirant Panchayats**, **capacity building**, linking **National Panchayat Awards** with PAI performance, and expanding **vernacular digital support**.
7. It also encourages **Union Ministries** to integrate **PAI 2.0** into rural development schemes for better monitoring and policy formulation.

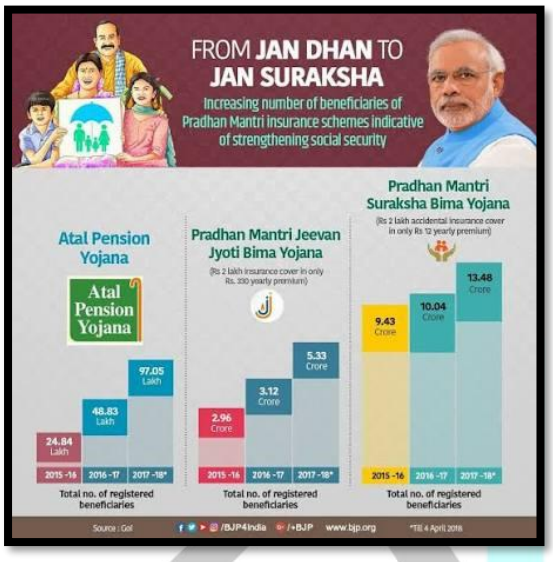
8. With **97.3% participation**, **PAI 2.0** strengthens **good governance**, **accountability**, and India's progress towards achieving the **SDGs by 2030**.

11 YEARS OF JAN SURAKSHA SCHEMES

Recent Update: 11 years of **Jan Suraksha Schemes** marked with over **94.56 crore enrolments**.

About

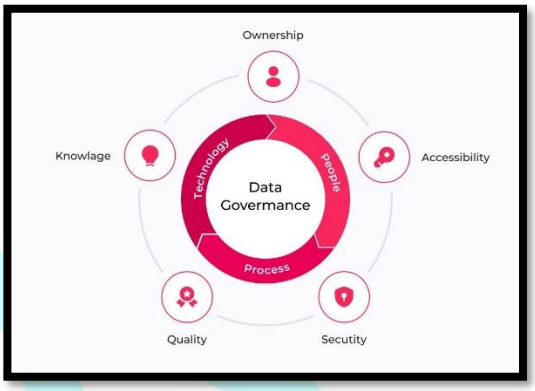
1. **Jan Suraksha Schemes**, launched on **9 May 2015**, aim to provide **universal social security** through affordable **life insurance**, **accident insurance**, and **pension coverage**.



2. The three flagship schemes are **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**, **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)**, and **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**.
3. These schemes have achieved **massive enrolment**, promoted **financial inclusion**, strengthened the **Jan Dhan ecosystem**, and enhanced **women's financial empowerment**.
4. They provide critical **financial assistance** to vulnerable families during accidents, death, and old-age insecurity, especially in the **unorganized sector**.
5. Major challenges include **premium lapses**, **low awareness**, **insurance illiteracy**, **inflation reducing benefit value**, and **irregular incomes** affecting APY contributions.
6. Suggested reforms include increasing the **sum assured**, improving **digital claim settlement**, rewarding **continuous premium payments**, and expanding outreach in **tribal** and **Aspirational Districts**.
7. The government also proposes integrating **life insurance**, **accident insurance**, and **pension benefits** into a **single social security product**.
8. The schemes have become an important pillar of **inclusive welfare**, reducing **financial vulnerability** and contributing to the vision of **Viksit Bharat**.

CRISIS OF DATA GOVERNANCE AND DATA STANDARDISATION IN INDIA

Recent Update: Recent analysis of **NITI Aayog's National Data and Analytics Platform vision** document showed India's data ecosystem remains incoherent, leading to fiscal leakages that inflate spending by **4%-7%** annually.



About

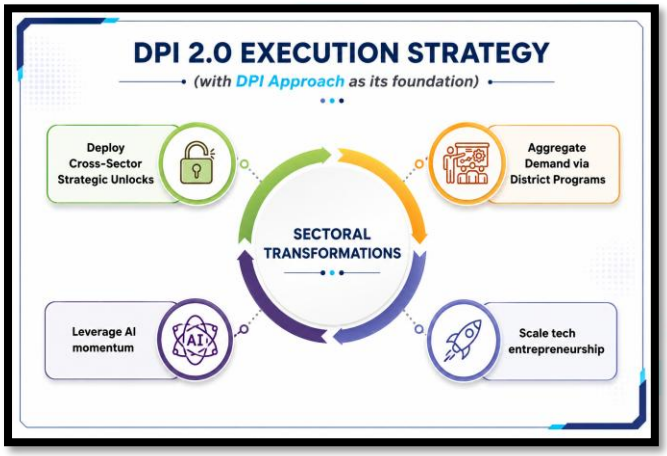
1. **Data Governance** refers to the framework for managing, sharing, standardising, and securing **government data** to enable **evidence-based policymaking**.
2. India currently faces **poor interoperability**, as different Ministries use **inconsistent definitions**, **time periods**, and **indicators**, creating **data silos**.
3. Large volumes of public data remain **underutilized**, while fragmented systems in sectors such as **health**, **innovation**, and **welfare** reduce administrative efficiency.
4. Weak data governance results in **fiscal leakages**, **duplicate beneficiaries**, **poor transparency**, **inaccurate global rankings**, and **inefficient delivery of welfare schemes**.
5. The lack of standardised datasets also limits **research**, **innovation**, **entrepreneurship**, and weakens **Parliamentary oversight** and public accountability.
6. The government proposes empowering the **India Data Management Office (IDMO)**,

preparing a **National Statistical Standards Manual**, and mandating **standardised data uploads** across Ministries.

7. It also recommends strengthening **Data.gov.in**, linking **Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI)** performance with institutional incentives, and aligning definitions with **international standards**.
8. A **unified**, **transparent**, and **interoperable** data ecosystem is essential for **efficient governance**, **economic growth**, and achieving the vision of **Digital India**.

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHES DPI@2047 ROADMAP TO ADVANCE INCLUSIVE AND PRODUCTIVITY-LED GROWTH

Recent Update: NITI Aayog released the **DPI@2047 Roadmap** to transform **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** into an engine of inclusive growth.



About

1. The **DPI@2047 Roadmap**, prepared by **NITI Frontier Tech Hub**, **EkStep Foundation**, and **Deloitte**, aims to expand the role of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** beyond welfare delivery.
2. It envisions using **DPI**, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, and **digital innovation** to improve **productivity**, **market access**, **entrepreneurship**, and **citizen capabilities**.
3. Major challenges include **high transaction costs**, **language barriers**, **fragmented data systems**, **digital trust deficits**, and weak **local entrepreneurial ecosystems**.
4. Many citizens continue to face **knowledge gaps**, while several digital solutions fail because they are developed without sufficient **local demand**.
5. The roadmap recommends **state-led implementation**, **district-level demand aggregation**, **two-year transformation cycles**, and convergence between **AI** and **Digital Public Infrastructure**.
6. It also proposes **AI-powered vernacular assistants** to improve access to government services and expert guidance for citizens and businesses.
7. At the international level, it recommends establishing a **neutral global institution** to promote collaboration and share India's successful **DPI model**.
8. The **DPI@2047 Roadmap** seeks to transform India's districts into centres of **innovation**, **inclusive growth**, **wealth creation**, and **sustainable economic development**.

NEET 2026 PAPER LEAK: A CRISIS OF EXAMINATION GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL CREDIBILITY

Recent Update: NEET-UG 2026 paper leak exposed major weaknesses in India's **examination governance system**.

About

1. The **NEET-UG 2026** controversy highlighted serious failures in securing confidential examination materials, raising concerns about the credibility of **merit-based admissions**.
2. Key reasons include the **vulnerability of the pen-and-paper examination system**, **administrative instability** within the **National Testing Agency (NTA)**, **logistical weaknesses**, and inadequate **digital infrastructure**.
3. Rapid circulation of leaked question papers through **social media** and **messaging platforms** exposed the growing challenge of managing **digital security threats**.
4. Education is in the **Concurrent List**. While the **Public Examinations Act, 2024, is a Central law,** many paper-leak syndicates operate across state borders (e.g., the Bihar-Jharkhand-Rajasthan axis).
5. The proposed reforms include expanding **Computer-Based Testing (CBT)**, restructuring the **National Testing Agency (NTA)**, adopting **multi-session examinations**, and implementing the **Radhakrishnan Committee** recommendations.

SIMPLIFYING SUCCESS

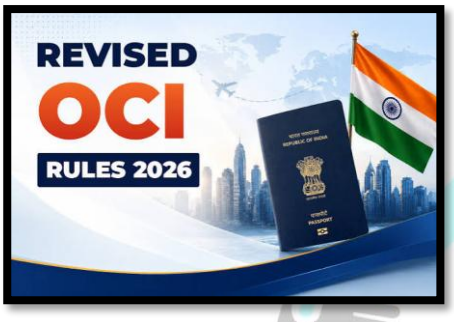
6. Additional measures include **encrypted digital question paper delivery**, **Aadhaar-based biometric verification**, and **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based surveillance** to detect malpractice.

7. Strengthening **examination security**, **institutional accountability**, and **technology-driven monitoring** is essential to restore public confidence and uphold the integrity of India's **education system**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

THE CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) RULES, 2026

Recent Update: MHA notified the **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026,** to digitise OCI services.



About

1. The **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026** introduce a **fully digital framework** for managing **OCI** registrations.
2. The Rules provide **electronic OCI (e-OCI)** registration to replace the traditional paper-based system.
3. All **OCI registration, renunciation, and cancellation** applications must now be submitted through the **online portal**.
4. A minor holding an **Indian passport** cannot simultaneously possess the passport of another country.
5. Applicants must provide **biometric details** to enable seamless access through **Fast Track Immigration (e-Gates)**.
6. A **centralized digital registry** enables real-time tracking and automatic cancellation of invalid OCI cards.
7. Appeals against rejected applications are heard by an authority **one rank higher** than the original decision-maker.
8. The Rules promote **paperless governance**, **greater transparency**, and **efficient delivery** of OCI services.

ORDINANCE IN INDIA

Recent Update: The **President** promulgated the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026**.

About

1. An **Ordinance** is a temporary law issued by the **President** or **Governor** when the legislature is not in session.
2. It carries the **same legal force and effect** as an **Act passed by Parliament**.
3. **Article 123** empowers the **President**, while **Article 213** empowers the **Governor** to issue Ordinances.
4. An Ordinance can be issued only when **immediate legislative action** is necessary during a legislative recess.
5. It can be made only on subjects where **Parliament** has the constitutional power to legislate.



6. Every Ordinance must receive **Parliamentary approval** within **six weeks** of the reassembly of Parliament.
7. An Ordinance cannot be used to **amend the Constitution** or bypass constitutional limitations.
8. The Ordinance-making power ensures **swift legislative action** during urgent and extraordinary situations.

PRESIDENT'S RULE

Recent Update: Sitting CM's refusal to resign brought the option of President's Rule to the forefront.

About

1. **Constitutional Basis**: **Article 356**; imposed when **constitutional machinery fails** in a state.
2. **Ground**: Usually based on **Governor's report** or otherwise if the President is satisfied that state government cannot run as per Constitution.
3. **Effect on Executive**: **Chief Minister and Council of Ministers are dismissed**; President takes over state executive functions through Governor.
4. **Effect on Legislature**: The State Legislative Assembly may be dissolved or kept under suspended animation.
5. **Parliament's Role**: Proclamation must be **approved by both Houses within 2 months**.
6. **Duration**: Initially for **6 months**; can continue up to **3 years** with parliamentary approval every 6 months, subject to constitutional conditions.
7. **Judicial Check**: In **S.R. Bommai case (1994)**, Supreme Court held that **Article 356 is subject to judicial review** and cannot be used arbitrarily.

THE JUSTICE ARAVIND KUMAR COMMITTEE

Recent Update: The **Supreme Court** constituted the **Justice Aravind Kumar Committee** to improve judicial infrastructure.

About

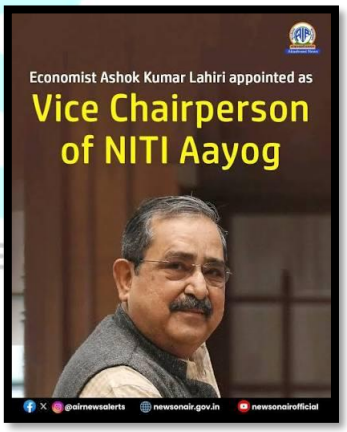
1. The **Justice Aravind Kumar Committee** is a high-level panel constituted by the **Supreme Court of India**.
2. It aims to modernise the **physical and digital infrastructure** of courts across the country.
3. The Committee is chaired by **Justice Aravind Kumar** and includes senior judges and technical experts.
4. It focuses on improving **court buildings**, **litigant facilities**, and **technology-enabled judicial services**.
5. The Committee promotes **e-Courts**, **virtual hearings**, and digital infrastructure to reduce case delays.
6. It identifies major infrastructural gaps and recommends **long-term reforms** for the judiciary.
7. The Committee also estimates the **financial requirements** needed for judicial modernization.
8. Its recommendations seek to create **modern, accessible, and technology-driven courts** across India.

RECONSTITUTION OF NITI AAYOG

Recent Update: The Government reconstituted **NITI Aayog** with **Ashok Kumar Lahiri** as the new **Vice-Chairperson**.

About

1. **NITI Aayog** is the premier **public policy think tank** of the Government of India.
2. It was established on **1 January 2015**, replacing the **Planning Commission**.
3. The **Prime Minister** serves as the **Chairperson**, while the Prime Minister appoints the Vice-Chairperson.
4. NITI Aayog promotes **cooperative federalism** by actively involving **States and Union Territories** in policymaking.
5. It prepares **long-term policy frameworks**, promotes innovation, and supports evidence-based governance.



6. The **Governing Council** includes the **Chief Ministers** of States and **Lieutenant Governors** of Union Territories.
7. It monitors government programmes and drives reforms to improve the **Ease of Living** and **Ease of Doing Business**.
8. NITI Aayog plays a key role in shaping India's **development strategy** and achieving **Viksit Bharat**.

SECTION 124A (SEDITION LAW)

Recent Update: The Supreme Court clarified that **courts may proceed with trials or appeals relating to the offence of sedition** (Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code) if the accused has no objection.

About

1. **Section 124A** of the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)** criminalised acts considered as **sedition** against the Government.
2. The provision was introduced in **1870** and was extensively used by the **British Government** against freedom fighters.
3. It covered acts that attempted to create **hatred**, **contempt**, or **disaffection** towards the Government.
4. The offence was **cognizable**, **non-bailable**, and punishable with **life imprisonment**.
5. In **S.G. Vombatkere (2022)**, the **Supreme Court** kept the operation of the provision in abeyance.
6. Under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, Section **124A** has been replaced by **Section 152**.
7. The new provision focuses on acts threatening the **sovereignty**, **unity**, and **integrity of India**.
8. The debate continues on balancing **national security** with the **fundamental right to free speech**.

THE JUDGES INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Recent Update: The **Judges' Inquiry Committee** submitted its report on allegations against a High Court Judge to the Lok Sabha Speaker.

About

1. The **Judges Inquiry Committee** is a statutory body constituted under the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**.
2. It investigates allegations of **proven misbehaviour** or **incapacity** against **Supreme Court** and **High Court Judges**.
3. The Committee consists of a **Supreme Court Judge**, a **Chief Justice of a High Court**, and an **eminent jurist**.
4. It frames charges, records evidence, and exercises powers similar to a **Civil Court**.
5. The accused Judge is given a fair opportunity to present a defence and cross-examine witnesses.
6. The Committee submits its findings to the **Lok Sabha Speaker** or the **Rajya Sabha Chairman**.
7. Parliament can initiate the **removal process** only after the Committee finds the charges proved.
8. The mechanism strengthens **judicial accountability** while protecting the **independence of the judiciary**.

THE PRIVILEGE NOTICE

Recent Update: **Privilege Notices** remained in focus over alleged breaches of Parliamentary privileges by the Education Minister.

About

1. A **Privilege Notice** is a procedure used by **Members of Parliament (MPs)** to report a **breach of parliamentary privilege**.
2. It protects the **rights**, **privileges**, and **dignity** of Parliament, its Committees, and its Members.
3. The notice is submitted to the **Speaker** of the Lok Sabha or the **Chairman** of the Rajya Sabha.
4. The Presiding Officer may decide the matter directly or refer it to the **Committee on Privileges**.
5. The Committee examines evidence, records statements, and submits its recommendations to the House.
6. Parliament may issue warnings, reprimands, suspension, or other penalties for proven breaches.
7. The constitutional basis for Parliamentary privileges is provided under **Articles 105** and **194**.
8. The Privilege Notice safeguards the **authority**, **autonomy**, and **effective functioning** of the Legislature.

MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (MTP) ACT

Recent Update: The Supreme Court asked the Union government to amend the abortion law to remove the **time limit on medical termination of unwanted pregnancies** in the case of minor rape victims.

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About

1. The **Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971** provides the legal framework for **safe abortion** in India.
2. The Act was significantly amended in **2021** to expand access to safe and legal pregnancy termination.
3. The upper gestation limit is **20 weeks** for general cases and **24 weeks** for specified categories of women.
4. Pregnancy up to **20 weeks** requires the opinion of **one Registered Medical Practitioner**, while **20–24 weeks** requires **two**.
5. Cases involving **substantial fetal abnormalities** can be considered beyond **24 weeks** on the recommendation of a **Medical Board**.
6. The Act extends the ground of **contraceptive failure** to both **married and unmarried women**.
7. It mandates **strict confidentiality** of the woman's identity and medical information.
8. The Act promotes **safe abortion services**, **women's dignity**, and **reproductive autonomy**.

CABINET APPROVES INCREASE IN SUPREME COURT JUDGE STRENGTH TO 37

Recent Update: The **Union Cabinet** approved increasing the **Supreme Court's sanctioned strength** from **33 to 37 judges**.

About

1. The proposal seeks to amend the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956**.
2. The sanctioned strength will increase from **33 to 37 judges**, excluding the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**.
3. Including the **CJI**, the total strength of the Supreme Court will become **38 judges**.
4. **Article 124(1)** empowers **Parliament** to increase the number of Supreme Court judges by law.
5. The proposal aims to reduce the **pendency of cases** and improve judicial efficiency.
6. New judges are appointed by the **President** based on the recommendations of the **Supreme Court Collegium**.
7. The salaries and expenses of judges are charged to the **Consolidated Fund of India**.
8. Increasing judicial strength will improve **access to justice** and enable faster disposal of cases.

INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR PROMOTION OF CRITICAL MINERAL RECYCLING

Recent Update: The Government launched an incentive scheme under the **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)**.



About

1. The scheme promotes **recycling of critical minerals** from **e-waste**, **spent batteries**, and industrial scrap.
2. It is implemented by the **Ministry of Mines** for the period **2025–26 to 2030–31**.
3. The objective is to reduce India's dependence on imported **lithium**, **cobalt**, **nickel**, and other critical minerals.
4. The scheme provides both **Capital Expenditure (Capex)** and **Operating Expenditure (Opex)** incentives.
5. It supports **Greenfield** as well as **Brownfield** recycling projects across the country.

6. Beneficiaries are classified into **Group A** and **Group B** based on their manufacturing revenue.
7. The initiative promotes **urban mining**, **resource efficiency**, and a **circular economy**.
8. It strengthens India's **critical mineral security** for clean energy and advanced manufacturing.

COUNTRY STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME (COSOP)

Recent Update: India and **IFAD** launched the **Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2026–2033**.



About

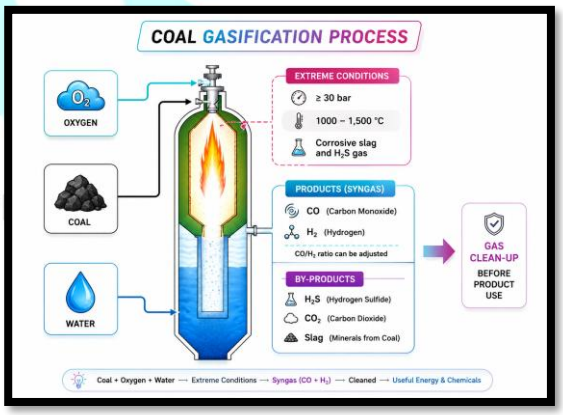
1. **COSOP** is a long-term partnership framework between **India** and the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**.
2. The programme aims to improve **rural livelihoods**, **farm incomes**, and **climate resilience**.
3. It focuses on strengthening **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**, **Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)**, and cooperatives.
4. The programme promotes **market-oriented agriculture**, **financial inclusion**, and value-chain development.
5. It encourages innovation in **agriculture**, **fisheries**, **animal husbandry**, and other allied sectors.
6. COSOP also supports **South-South Cooperation** by sharing India's successful rural development models.
7. The programme emphasizes **knowledge sharing**, **technology adoption**, and resilient rural institutions.
8. It aims to create **sustainable**, **inclusive**, and **market-linked rural development** across India.

THE SCHEME FOR PROMOTION OF SURFACE COAL/LIGNITE GASIFICATION PROJECTS

Recent Update: The Union Cabinet approved the **"Scheme for Promotion of New Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects for Production of Syngas and Downstream Products".**

About

1. The scheme promotes **surface coal and lignite gasification** to produce **Synthesis Gas (Syngas)**.
2. It is implemented by the **Ministry of Coal** to reduce dependence on imported fuels and chemicals.
3. The scheme supports the national target of **100 Million Tonnes of coal gasification by 2030**.
4. Financial assistance is provided up to **20% of the Plant and Machinery cost**.



5. Incentives are released in **four instalments** based on project milestones.
6. The scheme encourages both **indigenous** and advanced gasification technologies.
7. A total of **Rs. 37,500 crore** has been allocated to incentivise the production of **syngas** and downstream products, targeting the gasification of **75 million tonnes (MT) of coal/lignite** by 2030.
8. It also provides a **30-year coal linkage** to ensure long-term investment stability.
9. The initiative strengthens **energy security**, **industrial growth**, and **import substitution**.

MISSION FOR COTTON PRODUCTIVITY

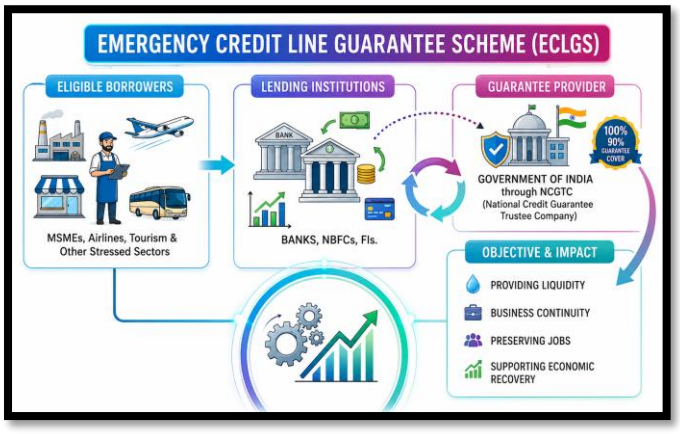
Recent Update: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved Rs 5,659.22 crore for **'Mission for Cotton Productivity'** (2026-27 to 2030-31)

About

1. The Mission aims to increase **cotton production**, **productivity**, and **quality** across India.
2. It is jointly implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture** and the **Ministry of Textiles**.
3. The Mission follows the Government's **5F Vision – Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign**.
4. It promotes **high-yielding**, **climate-resilient**, and **pest-resistant** cotton varieties.
5. Modern farming techniques like the **High-Density Planting System (HDPS)** are encouraged.
6. India occupies **first position** in the world in cotton acreage with **113.60 lakh hectares** under cotton cultivation, which is around 36 per cent of the world's area of 316.20 lakh hectares.
7. It also modernises **ginning units** and improves cotton quality through better processing.
8. **Kasturi Cotton Bharat** is promoted as a premium and traceable Indian cotton brand.
9. The Mission aims to make India **self-reliant** and globally competitive in the cotton sector.

EMERGENCY CREDIT LINE GUARANTEE SCHEME (ECLGS) 5.0

Recent Update: The Government introduced **ECLGS 5.0** to support businesses affected by global uncertainties.



About

1. **ECLGS 5.0** provides **government-backed credit guarantees** to eligible borrowers.
2. The scheme is implemented by the **National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)**.
3. It supports **MSMEs**, **non-MSMEs**, and eligible **scheduled passenger airlines**.
4. The scheme offers **100% guarantee** for MSMEs and **90% guarantee** for other eligible borrowers.
5. Additional working capital is provided to address **short-term liquidity shortages**.
6. No **guarantee fee** is charged, reducing the financial burden on borrowers.
7. Loans are available with **moratorium benefits** and longer repayment periods.
8. The scheme improves **credit availability**, **business continuity**, and **economic stability**.

THE IP CATALYST INITIATIVE

Recent Update: **MeitY** launched the **IP Catalyst Initiative** to accelerate **Patent-to-Product** commercialisation.

About

1. **IP Catalyst** is a digital platform that supports the complete **innovation and commercialisation lifecycle**.
2. It is implemented by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** through **C-DAC, Pune**.
3. The initiative aims to transform **publicly funded research** into commercially viable products and technologies.
4. It provides financial support for **patent filing**, including **international patents** for startups and MSMEs.
5. The platform offers **IP advisory**, **prior-art search**, and **technology readiness assessment** services.
6. It facilitates **technology transfer**, licensing, and collaboration between **industry**, **academia**, and **startups**.

7. The initiative also supports **prototype development** and large-scale deployment of innovative products.
8. It strengthens India's **innovation ecosystem** and promotes **indigenous technology development**.

SEHAT MISSION

Recent Update: **ICAR** and **ICMR** jointly launched the **SEHAT Mission** to improve nutrition and public health.

About

1. **SEHAT Mission** promotes the vision of **Healthy Food, Healthy Farms, and Healthy India**.
2. It is jointly implemented by **ICAR** and **ICMR** through a scientific farm-to-plate approach.
3. The Mission promotes **bio-fortified crops** rich in essential micronutrients like **zinc** and **iron**.
4. It encourages cultivation and consumption of **nutritious millets** such as **Ragi**, **Jowar**, and **Bajra**.



5. The Mission supports **integrated farming systems** combining crops, livestock, fisheries, and beekeeping.
6. It promotes safe farming practices by reducing exposure to **harmful pesticides** and chemicals.
7. The Mission also develops **nutrition-based dietary solutions** for preventing lifestyle diseases.
8. It adopts the **One Health** approach by linking **human**, **animal**, and **environmental health**.

VIKSIT BHARAT – GUARANTEE FOR ROZGAR AND AJEEVIKA MISSION (VB–GRAM G)

Recent Update: The Government announced **VB–GRAM G** as the successor to **MGNREGA** from **1 July 2026**.

About

1. **VB–GRAM G Act, 2025** replaces **MGNREGA** with a stronger focus on productive rural assets.
2. The Act guarantees **125 days** of unskilled wage employment to every eligible rural household.
3. It promotes **livelihood-oriented asset creation** instead of only wage-based employment.
4. Works are restricted to **Water Security**, **Rural Infrastructure**, **Livelihood Infrastructure**, and **Climate Resilience**.
5. Every project must originate from a **Viksit Gram Panchayat Plan (VGPP)** based on local needs.
6. The Mission uses **face authentication**, **biometric verification**, and **geospatial monitoring** for transparency.
7. Workers receive **unemployment allowance**, **transport allowance**, and **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** for timely wage payments.
8. The Mission aims to strengthen **rural livelihoods**, **financial resilience**, and the vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

ONE CASE ONE DATA INITIATIVE

Recent Update: The **Supreme Court of India** launched the **One Case One Data Initiative**.

About

1. The initiative creates a **single digital database** for judicial records across all levels of courts.
2. It integrates case data from **High Courts**, **District Courts**, and **Taluka Courts**.
3. The system ensures that updates made in one court are automatically reflected across the judicial network.
4. It enables seamless tracking of cases as they move through different stages of appeal.
5. Judges, lawyers, and litigants can access a **comprehensive digital case history**.



6. The initiative reduces **data duplication**, **manual record collection**, and administrative delays.
7. It improves **case management**, **judicial transparency**, and overall court efficiency.
8. The initiative supports the vision of a **digitally integrated and technology-driven judiciary**.

SHE-MART INITIATIVE

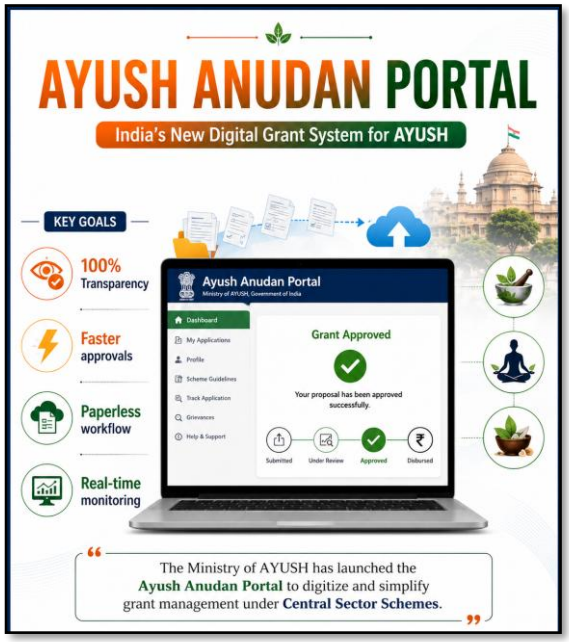
Recent Update: The Government launched the **SHE-MART Initiative** to strengthen **women-led rural enterprises**.

About

1. **SHE-MART** promotes **Self-Help Group (SHG)** products through organised rural marketing platforms.
2. It is implemented by the **Ministry of Rural Development** under **DAY-NRLM**.
3. The initiative aims to transform **women entrepreneurs** into successful business owners and retailers.
4. Community-owned retail stores are managed by **SHG Federations** for better market access.
5. Products are integrated with **ONDC** to enable commission-free digital selling across India.
6. **India Post** provides affordable logistics and last-mile delivery support for rural products.
7. The initiative promotes **organic products**, **handicrafts**, **processed foods**, and other rural goods.
8. SHE-MART strengthens **women's entrepreneurship**, **financial inclusion**, and **rural livelihoods**.

THE AYUSH ANUDAN PORTAL

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Ayush** launched the **Ayush Anudan Portal** for digital grant management.



About

1. The **Ayush Anudan Portal** is a paperless platform for managing grants under various **Ayush schemes**.
2. It has been developed under the **Ayush Grid Initiative** by the **Ministry of Ayush**.
3. The portal digitizes the **submission**, **evaluation**, and **tracking** of grant applications.
4. It is integrated with **NGO Darpan** for faster verification of applicant organizations.
5. Applicants can monitor the **real-time status** of their proposals through an online dashboard.
6. The portal supports **scheme-wise applications** and transparent evaluation processes.
7. It can also be accessed through the **My Ayush Integrated Services Portal (MAISP)**.
8. The portal improves **transparency**, **efficiency**, and **accountability** in grant management.

THE AYUSH GRID INITIATIVE

Recent Update: Union Minister **Shri Prataprao Jadhav** Launches Ayush Anudan Portal under **Ayush Grid Initiative.**

About

1. The **Ayush Grid** is the digital backbone for **Ayurveda**, **Yoga**, **Unani**, **Siddha**, **Sowa-Rigpa**, and **Homoeopathy**.
2. It was launched by the **Ministry of Ayush** under the **Digital India Programme**.

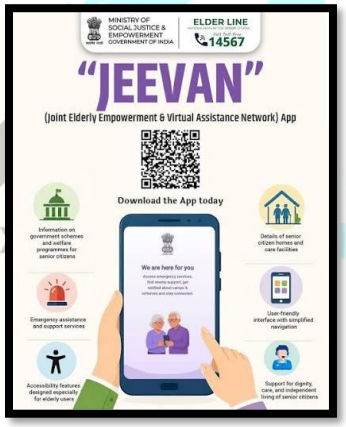
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3. The initiative aims to create an integrated and **citizen-centric digital health ecosystem**.
4. It is fully aligned with the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)** for seamless health record integration.
5. The **Ayush Health Management Information System (AHMIS)** standardizes patient records across Ayush institutions.
6. It supports **telemedicine**, **research**, **drug regulation**, and digital capacity building.
7. Citizen services include platforms such as the **Yoga Locator** and other digital health applications.
8. The initiative strengthens **digital governance**, **traditional healthcare**, and **public service delivery**.

THE JEEVAN APP AND SHATAYU DASHBOARD

Recent Update: The Government launched the **JEEVAN App** and **SHATAYU Dashboard** for senior citizen welfare.

About



1. The **JEEVAN App** and **SHATAYU Dashboard** were developed by the **Department of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
2. They aim to improve the **healthcare**, **safety**, and **social security** of senior citizens.
3. The **JEEVAN App** provides information on welfare schemes, pensions, and healthcare services.
4. It includes an **SOS emergency feature** connecting elderly users with emergency services and helplines.
5. The app also provides details of **verified old-age homes** and senior citizen care centres.
6. The **SHATAYU Dashboard** maintains a database of **trained geriatric caregivers** across districts.
7. It tracks caregiver certification, availability, and service quality through a digital platform.
8. These initiatives strengthen **elderly care**, **digital inclusion**, and **age-friendly governance**.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

INDIAN FEDERALISM UNDER STRESS

Recent Update: Debate intensified over **delimitation**, **fiscal devolution**, and strengthening **cooperative federalism**.

About

1. **Indian Federalism** is witnessing increasing stress due to **demographic changes**, fiscal imbalances, and growing centralisation of governance.
2. The proposed **post-2026 delimitation** may reduce parliamentary representation of states that successfully controlled **population growth**, particularly in Southern India.
3. Greater reliance on **cesses** and **surcharges**, which remain outside the **Article 270 divisible pool**, has reduced the effective financial share of states.
4. Delays by Governors in granting assent to State Bills under **Article 200** have created frequent tensions between the **Union** and **State Governments**.
5. National initiatives such as **One Nation, One Election** and **One Nation, One Ration Card** have triggered debates over **regional autonomy**.
6. Persistent disputes over **water sharing**, **boundaries**, and **language** continue to test India's federal structure.
7. Experts recommend revitalising the **Inter-State Council**, strengthening **fiscal federalism**, and clearly defining the Governor's discretionary powers.
8. Preserving **trust**, **consensus**, and **cooperative federalism** is essential for maintaining India's constitutional balance.

SOURCE: PIB

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ADVANCING FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN INDIA

Recent Update: India accelerated **AI-driven financial inclusion** through **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** and innovative fintech solutions.



About

1. India is transforming financial inclusion through the integration of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** and **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.
2. The **JAM Trinity**—**Jan Dhan**, **Aadhaar**, and **Mobile connectivity**—has created a strong digital foundation for inclusive financial services.
3. **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** has revolutionised digital payments, while **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** has significantly reduced leakages in welfare delivery.
4. The **BHASHINI** initiative is developing multilingual banking services to provide financial access in all **22 Scheduled Indian languages**.
5. The **Unified Lending Interface (ULI)** enables faster credit assessment using digital footprints, particularly benefiting **MSMEs**.
6. The **Account Aggregator (AA)** framework facilitates secure, consent-based sharing of financial information among institutions.
7. The **RBI Regulatory Sandbox** and **MuleHunter.AI** promote fintech innovation while strengthening cybersecurity and fraud detection.
8. Technology-driven financial inclusion is improving **digital payments**, **credit access**, **transparency**, and inclusive economic growth.

DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE (DPI)

Recent Update: **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** continued to emerge as the backbone of India's digital governance and financial ecosystem.

About

1. **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** is a shared digital ecosystem that enables governments and private institutions to deliver services efficiently at scale.
2. It functions as the digital equivalent of physical infrastructure by supporting governance, financial inclusion, and service delivery.
3. DPI is built upon three core pillars—**Digital Identity**, **Real-Time Payments**, and **Data Exchange with User Consent**.
4. **Aadhaar** provides secure digital identity, while **UPI** enables instant, low-cost, interoperable digital payments.
5. The consent layer allows citizens to securely share personal data only after providing explicit permission.
6. DPI is designed around principles of **interoperability**, **open APIs**, **scalability**, and low operational costs.
7. It encourages **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)**, where government builds core infrastructure and private firms develop innovative applications.
8. DPI has become a key enabler of **Digital India**, **financial inclusion**, and technology-driven governance.

INDIA'S WATER SCARCITY

Recent Update: Central Water Commission data shows storage in **166 reservoirs fell from 71.082 BCM on April 30 to 63.232 BCM on May 14**, even as drinking water, irrigation and hydropower demand remain high



About

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1. India supports nearly **18% of the global population** but possesses only about **4% of the world's freshwater resources**.
2. Although the country receives around **4,000 BCM** of annual rainfall, only about **1,123 BCM** is considered utilisable.
3. Per capita water availability has declined sharply from over **5,000 cubic metres** in 1947 to nearly **1,400 cubic metres** today.
4. Agriculture consumes nearly **85–90%** of India's freshwater, with water-intensive crops placing enormous pressure on groundwater resources.
5. Excessive groundwater extraction has made India the **largest user of groundwater** globally, especially in states like **Punjab**, **Haryana**, and **Rajasthan**.
6. Rapid urbanisation, climate change, pollution, and inadequate storage infrastructure have further intensified water scarcity.
7. Experts recommend **micro-irrigation**, groundwater recharge, smart water management, and a **circular water economy** to improve water security.
8. Sustainable water governance is essential for achieving **SDG 6**, ensuring long-term water security, and supporting economic development.

DR. K. RADHAKRISHNAN COMMITTEE (2024)

Recent Update: The **Dr K. Radhakrishnan Committee** recommended comprehensive reforms to strengthen the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** and restore confidence in national examinations.

About

1. The **Dr. K. Radhakrishnan Committee** was constituted in **2024** by the **Ministry of Education** following irregularities in **NEET-UG** and **UGC-NET** examinations.
2. The Committee recommended transforming the **National Testing Agency (NTA)** into a more **autonomous**, **professional**, and accountable institution.
3. It proposed the **DIGI-EXAM** system using **Aadhaar authentication**, **biometrics**, and **AI-based identity verification** to prevent impersonation.
4. The Committee suggested **Computer-assisted Secure Pen-and-Paper Testing (CPPT)** using encrypted digital transmission of question papers.
5. It recommended conducting large examinations in **multiple sessions** and establishing over **1,000 permanent secure testing centres** across India.
6. Mobile testing centres were proposed to improve examination access in the **North-Eastern**, **Himalayan**, and **island regions**.
7. The report also advocated **AI-based grievance redressal**, continuous staff training, stronger cybersecurity, and greater oversight of coaching institutions.
8. The recommendations aim to enhance **transparency**, **fairness**, **security**, and public confidence in India's examination system.

HIGH COURT JUDGES APPOINTMENT

Recent Update: The **Supreme Court Collegium** recommended the appointment of **nine judges** to the **Calcutta High Court**.

About

1. **High Court Judges** are appointed by the **President of India** under **Article 217** of the Constitution.
2. The appointment is made after consultation with the **Chief Justice of India**, the **Governor of the concerned State**, and the **Chief Justice of the concerned High Court**.
3. For a common High Court serving multiple states, the Governors of all concerned states are consulted during the appointment process.
4. The Constitution also provides for **Acting Chief Justices (Article 223)**, **Additional Judges (Article 224)**, **Acting Judges (Article 224(2))**, and **Ad hoc Judges (Article 224A)**.
5. **Additional Judges** may be appointed for up to **two years** to clear case backlogs or manage temporary increases in judicial work.
6. **Ad hoc Judges** are retired High Court judges who may be requested to serve again with their consent and the President's approval.
7. The appointment process seeks to maintain **judicial independence**, constitutional balance, and efficient functioning of the judiciary.

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8. A transparent and merit-based appointment system is essential for strengthening the **rule of law** and judicial credibility.

HEALING THE RURAL–URBAN HEALTH DIVIDE

Recent Update: Despite the approval of thousands of new **MBBS** and **PG seats**, rural India continues to face an acute shortage of doctors and specialists.

About

1. Rural India continues to suffer from severe shortages of **doctors**, **specialists**, and functional healthcare infrastructure despite increased medical education capacity.
2. Community Health Centres (**CHCs**) face nearly **80% specialist vacancies**, particularly in states such as **Bihar**, **Uttar Pradesh**, **Madhya Pradesh**, and **Rajasthan**.
3. Many rural hospitals lack adequate **medical equipment**, **diagnostic facilities**, **essential medicines**, and proper residential infrastructure for doctors.
4. Low salaries, limited career opportunities, difficult living conditions, and excessive workload discourage doctors from serving in rural areas.
5. As a result, patients often depend on expensive private healthcare, increasing **medical indebtedness** and worsening health inequalities.
6. Experts recommend **financial incentives**, compulsory rural service, improved infrastructure, **telemedicine**, and stronger public health management.
7. Programmes such as **e-Sanjeevani**, dedicated **Public Health Cadres**, and community-based healthcare can improve rural healthcare delivery.
8. Sustainable healthcare reforms require balanced investment in **human resources**, infrastructure, technology, and primary healthcare services.

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

Recent Update: The Government celebrated **25 years of PMGSY** and accelerated the implementation of **PMGSY Phase-IV**.

About

1. **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** launched in **2000** to provide all-weather road connectivity to unconnected rural habitations.
2. The scheme follows a **60:40 Centre-State funding pattern** for plain states and **90:10** for **North-Eastern**, **Himalayan States**, and **Union Territories**.
3. Over the years, PMGSY has expanded through **Phase I**, **Phase II**, **Phase III**, and the newly launched **Phase IV**.
4. **PMGSY Phase-IV** aims to connect **25,000 rural habitations** by constructing around **62,500 km** of rural roads.
5. The scheme integrates with **PM Gati Shakti**, **PM-JANMAN**, and **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan** to improve rural and tribal connectivity.
6. It promotes **green construction technologies**, including **waste plastic roads**, **fly ash**, **cold mix technology**, and **cell-filled concrete**.
7. Real-time monitoring through **OMMAS** and a **three-tier quality control mechanism** ensures transparency and construction quality.
8. PMGSY has significantly improved **rural connectivity**, **market access**, **education**, **healthcare**, and socio-economic development.

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NCRB'S CRIME IN INDIA 2024 REPORT

Recent Update: **NCRB's Crime in India 2024 Report** recorded a **6% decline** in cognisable crimes but highlighted a **17% rise** in cybercrimes.

About

1. The **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** publishes the annual **Crime in India Report** to assess crime trends, law enforcement performance, and public safety across India.
2. The report recorded **58.85 lakh cognisable crimes** in 2024 compared to **62.41 lakh** in 2023, mainly due to the implementation of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023**.
3. The overall **crime rate** declined from **448.3** to **418.9 per lakh population**, marking the lowest level since **2019**.
4. Cases of **murder**, **kidnapping**, **theft**, and **robbery** declined, whereas crimes against

children, **senior citizens**, and **juveniles** registered an increase.

5. **Cybercrime** emerged as the fastest-growing category, crossing **1.01 lakh cases**, with digital frauds accounting for over **70%** of reported incidents.
6. The report also highlighted rising cases of **economic offences**, **missing persons**, and **drug overdose deaths**, while crimes against **SCs** and **STs** declined.
7. **Telangana** recorded the highest cybercrime rate, while **Delhi** ranked among the worst metropolitan cities for violent and economic crimes.
8. The report emphasizes strengthening **cybersecurity**, **digital literacy**, **forensic capacity**, and coordinated policing to tackle emerging digital crimes.

NATIONAL CRIME RECORDS BUREAU (NCRB)

Recent Update: The overall crime rate in India declined in **2024 compared with 2023** but there was an **increase of over 17% in cybercrime cases**, according to **the Crime in India 2024** report released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

About

1. The **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** was established in **1986** under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** with headquarters in **New Delhi**.
2. It was created based on the recommendations of the **Tandon Committee**, **National Police Commission**, and the **MHA Task Force**.
3. NCRB serves as the national repository of **crime statistics**, supporting evidence-based policing and criminal justice administration.
4. Its major publications include **Crime in India**, **Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India (ADSI)**, and **Prison Statistics India**.
5. It operates the **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)**, connecting over **15,000 police stations** through a nationwide digital platform.
6. NCRB manages the **National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS)** and the **National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO)**.
7. It supports crime analytics, criminal identification, inter-state coordination, and modernisation of police investigation systems.
8. NCRB plays a vital role in promoting **technology-driven policing**, **criminal intelligence**, and **data-based policy formulation**.

GOVERNOR'S POWER IN POST-ELECTION STALEMATES

Recent Update: Constitutional debate intensified over the **Governor's powers** following the **West Bengal Assembly election** results.

About

1. A post-election stalemate arises when a **Chief Minister** refuses to resign despite losing the legislative majority after an election.
2. Under **Article 164(1)**, the Chief Minister holds office during the **Governor's pleasure**, subject to maintaining majority support in the Legislative Assembly.
3. The **Supreme Court** has clarified that the Governor's pleasure is **not absolute** and depends upon the confidence of the elected House.
4. The Governor may ask the Chief Minister to resign, invite the majority party to form the government, or order a **Floor Test** where majority is disputed.
5. Judgments such as **S.R. Bommai (1994)** and **Shivraj Singh Chouhan (2023)** established that a **Floor Test** is the only constitutional method to determine majority.
6. If constitutional machinery fails and no government can be formed, the Governor may recommend **President's Rule** under **Article 356**.
7. Defeated candidates may challenge election results by filing an **Election Petition** under the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**.

8. Constitutional conventions require timely resignation, respect for democratic mandates, and smooth transfer of executive authority.

HATE SPEECH IN INDIA

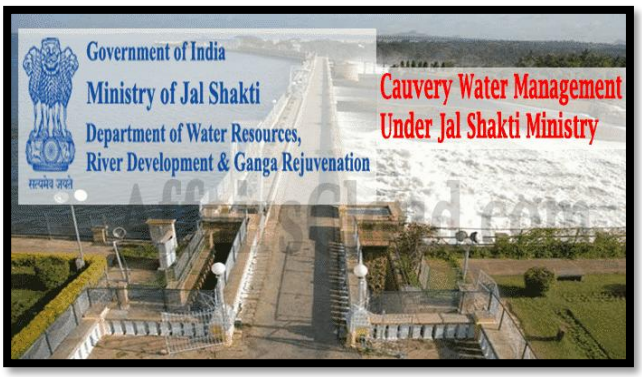
Recent Update: The Union Home Ministry has informed Karnataka that its proposed bill to curb **hate speech** might be unnecessary. Existing laws are deemed sufficient to address such issues.

About

1. **Hate Speech** refers to expressions that promote hatred, discrimination, intimidation, or violence against individuals or groups based on protected characteristics.
2. The **267th Law Commission Report** defines hate speech as communication that incites hatred based on religion, race, caste, gender, or similar identities.
3. While **Article 19(1)(a)** guarantees freedom of speech, **Article 19(2)** permits reasonable restrictions in the interests of public order and dignity.
4. Existing legal provisions under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, **Representation of the People Act**, and **SC/ST Act** penalize various forms of hate speech.
5. The Supreme Court emphasized that hate speech undermines **fraternity**, **constitutional morality**, and India's pluralistic values.
6. Social media algorithms, misinformation, identity politics, and weak enforcement have contributed to the growing spread of hate speech.
7. Judicial decisions such as **Tehseen Poonawalla**, **Shaheen Abdulla**, and **Shreya Singhal** have strengthened safeguards against hate speech and mob violence.
8. Effective implementation of existing laws, digital accountability, and public awareness are essential to preserve social harmony and constitutional values.

CAUVERY WATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (CWMA)

Recent Update: **CWMA** directed **Karnataka** to release Cauvery water to **Tamil Nadu** in accordance with the **2018 Supreme Court verdict**.



About

1. The **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)** was established in **June 2018** under the **Cauvery Water Management Scheme, 2018**.
2. It is a **statutory quasi-judicial body** constituted under **Section 6A of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956**.
3. CWMA functions under the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** with headquarters in **New Delhi**.
4. Its primary responsibility is implementing the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal Award**, as modified by the **2018 Supreme Court judgment**.
5. The Authority regulates reservoir releases, monitors water availability, and ensures equitable sharing among **Karnataka**, **Tamil Nadu**, **Kerala**, and **Puducherry**.
6. During distress years, it determines proportional water sharing based on rainfall and reservoir storage conditions.
7. The **Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)** assists CWMA by monitoring daily reservoir levels and river flows.
8. CWMA provides a permanent institutional mechanism for resolving interstate river disputes through scientific and rule-based water management.

RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION (RTE) ACT, 2009

Recent Update: The Supreme Court recently asked ten States and three Union Territories to show whether they have implemented **Section 12(1)(c) of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education(RTE) Act, 2009.**

About

1. The **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009**, operationalises **Article 21A**, making elementary education a fundamental right for children aged **6–14 years**.
2. The Act guarantees **free and compulsory education** in neighbourhood schools without charging fees that may prevent children from completing elementary education.
3. **Section 12(1)(c)** mandates **25% reservation** for children from **Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)** and disadvantaged groups in private unaided schools.
4. The Act prohibits **capitation fees**, admission screening, physical punishment, and mental harassment of children.
5. It prescribes norms relating to **teacher qualifications**, **pupil-teacher ratio**, school infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, and working days.
6. The **RTE (Amendment) Act, 2019** allows states to conduct examinations for **Classes V and VIII**, replacing the earlier no-detention policy.
7. Despite improving enrolment and infrastructure, challenges remain regarding reimbursement delays, hidden costs, documentation barriers, and learning outcomes.
8. Effective implementation, timely reimbursements, stronger grievance mechanisms, and improved public schools are essential for achieving the Act's vision of **inclusive education**.

NITI AAYOG

Recent Update: The Government reconstituted **NITI Aayog**, appointing a new **Vice-Chairperson** and expanding its focus on **technology**, **innovation**, and **research-driven policymaking**.

About

1. **NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India)** was established in **2015** through a **Cabinet Resolution**, replacing the **Planning Commission**.
2. It is a **non-constitutional**, **non-statutory** policy think tank that promotes **cooperative** and **competitive federalism**.
3. The **Prime Minister** serves as the **Chairperson**, while the Prime Minister appoints the Vice-Chairperson.
4. Its **Governing Council**, comprising **Chief Ministers** and **Lieutenant Governors**, is the highest decision-making body.
5. NITI Aayog provides strategic policy advice, long-term planning, monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination of best governance practices.
6. Major initiatives include the **Aspirational Districts Programme**, **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**, and several national development indices.
7. It publishes important reports such as the **SDG India Index**, **State Health Index**, **Fiscal Health Index**, and **Export Preparedness Index**.
8. NITI Aayog plays a crucial role in promoting **innovation**, **evidence-based policymaking**, and **sustainable national development**.

NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY (NPRD)

Recent Update: India celebrated **National Panchayati Raj Day**, marking **33 years** of the **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**.



About

1. **National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD)** is observed every year on **24 April** to commemorate the enforcement of the **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**.
2. The Amendment inserted **Part IX (Articles 243–243O)** into the Constitution and granted constitutional status to **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**.
3. It established a **three-tier Panchayati Raj system** consisting of **Village**, **Intermediate**, and **District** levels.

4. The Amendment introduced the **Eleventh Schedule**, assigning **29 subjects** to Panchayats for decentralized governance.
5. It provides reservation for **Scheduled Castes**, **Scheduled Tribes**, and at least **one-third reservation for women**, with many states increasing it to **50%**.
6. The **State Election Commission** conducts Panchayat elections, while the **State Finance Commission** recommends financial devolution every five years.
7. Digital initiatives such as **e-Gram Swaraj**, **SVAMITVA Scheme**, and **Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan** have strengthened grassroots governance.
8. Stronger fiscal autonomy, administrative devolution, and institutional capacity are essential for realising the vision of **democratic decentralisation**.

73RD CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ACT, 1992

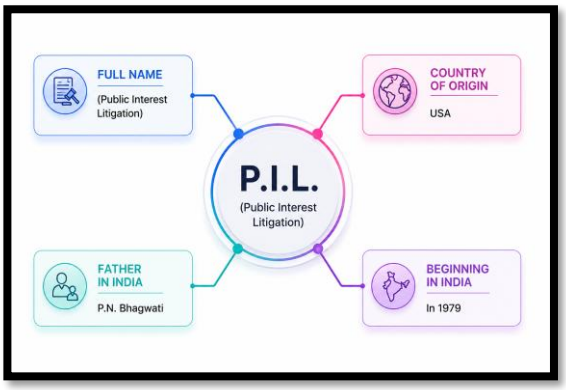
Recent Update: The **73rd Constitutional Amendment** continued to serve as the constitutional foundation of **grassroots democracy** in India.

About

1. The **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992,** came into force on **24 April 1993**, granting constitutional status to **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**.
2. It inserted **Part IX** into the Constitution and added the **Eleventh Schedule**, containing **29 functional subjects** for Panchayats.
3. The Amendment established the **Gram Sabha** as the foundation of direct democracy in rural India.
4. It provided for a **three-tier Panchayati Raj structure**, except in states with populations below **20 lakh**.
5. Panchayats enjoy a **five-year tenure**, and elections must be conducted within **six months** if dissolved prematurely.
6. The Amendment created the **State Election Commission** and **State Finance Commission** to ensure regular elections and financial devolution.
7. It introduced reservations for **SCs**, **STs**, and **women**, thereby promoting inclusive political participation.
8. The Amendment remains a landmark reform for **decentralisation**, **local self-government**, and participatory rural development.

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION (PIL) – SIGNIFICANCE & REFORMS

Recent Update: In May 2026, Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in India faced a major debate regarding judicial overreach and a massive backlog, with over **3,500 pending cases in the Supreme Court alone.**



About

1. **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** has significantly expanded access to justice for **marginalised**, **poor**, and **disadvantaged** sections of society.
2. Landmark cases such as **Hussainara Khatoon**, **M.C. Mehta**, **Vishaka**, and **Narmada Bachao Andolan** have shaped India's constitutional jurisprudence.
3. PIL has expanded the scope of **Article 21**, recognizing rights relating to **environment**, **legal aid**, **speedy trial**, and **human dignity**.
4. It has strengthened executive accountability by compelling governments to implement constitutional and statutory obligations.
5. Concerns regarding **judicial overreach**, **frivolous petitions**, and politically motivated litigation have increased in recent years.
6. The **Supreme Court Rules, 2013**, and **Balwant Singh Chaufal Guidelines** seek to filter out non-genuine PILs.
7. Experts recommend specialized **PIL Benches**, stricter scrutiny, and exemplary costs for abuse of the PIL mechanism.
8. A balanced PIL framework can continue protecting **constitutional rights** while preventing misuse of judicial processes.

BHARAT AUDYOGIK VIKAS YOJANA (BHAVYA)

Recent Update: The Union Government launched **BHAVYA** to develop world-class **plug-and-play industrial parks** across India.

About

1. **BHAVYA (Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** aimed at creating globally competitive industrial smart cities.
2. The scheme is implemented by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** with the **National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC)** as the Project Management Agency.
3. It has a total financial outlay of **₹33,660 crore** and will be implemented from **FY 2026–27 to FY 2031–32**.



4. The programme seeks to remove infrastructure bottlenecks by providing **plug-and-play manufacturing facilities**, faster approvals, and multimodal logistics.
5. Around **100 industrial parks** will be developed, with the first **50 parks** selected through a competitive challenge-based framework.
6. Projects will be implemented through **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs)** incorporated under the **Companies Act, 2013**.
7. The scheme provides funding for **core infrastructure**, **value-added industrial facilities**, and **social and community amenities**.
8. BHAVYA supports the objectives of **Make in India**, **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**, and manufacturing-led economic growth.

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL ELECTION

Recent Update: Preparations began for the election of the next **United Nations Secretary-General**, whose term starts on **1 January 2027**.

About

1. The **Secretary-General (UNSG)** is the **Chief Administrative Officer** of the **United Nations**, as provided under the **UN Charter**.
2. The office was created with the establishment of the **United Nations** in **1945** to lead the **UN Secretariat**.
3. Although the **UN Charter** does not prescribe a fixed tenure, the established convention limits Secretaries-General to **two five-year terms**.
4. The **UN Security Council** recommends a candidate, who is formally appointed by the **UN General Assembly**.
5. The next Secretary-General will assume office on **1 January 2027** after completion of the current term.
6. Candidates are generally distinguished global leaders such as former **Heads of State**, **Prime Ministers**, or senior international civil servants.



7. The selection process emphasises **regional balance**, **gender equality**, diplomatic experience, and broad international acceptability.
8. The Secretary-General plays a key role in **preventive diplomacy**, **peacekeeping**, **conflict mediation**, and coordination of global development initiatives.

SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE (SPV)

Recent Update: The **BHAVYA Scheme** mandated implementation through **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs)** for efficient industrial infrastructure development.

About

1. A **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** is a legally separate entity created to execute a specific project or business objective.

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2. Under the **BHAVYA Scheme**, SPVs are incorporated under the **Companies Act, 2013** to develop and manage industrial parks.
3. The SPV structure separates project risks from the sponsoring governments and participating agencies.
4. Equity contributions from the **Central Government** are linked to state land transfers and achievement of project milestones.
5. SPVs ensure better financial management, transparent governance, and faster execution of infrastructure projects.
6. They can raise funds, enter contracts, acquire assets, and coordinate with multiple stakeholders independently.
7. The model is widely used in **industrial corridors**, **metro rail projects**, **smart cities**, and other large infrastructure initiatives.
8. SPVs improve **project efficiency**, **accountability**, and timely completion of strategic infrastructure projects.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (NICDC)

Recent Update: NICDC was designated as the **Project Management Agency (PMA)** for implementing the **BHAVYA Scheme**.

About

1. The **National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC)** is the nodal agency responsible for planning and developing integrated industrial corridor projects in India.
2. It functions under the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
3. NICDC promotes world-class industrial infrastructure through integrated **manufacturing zones**, **logistics hubs**, and **smart industrial cities**.
4. It coordinates with **State Governments**, **Central Ministries**, and private investors for planning and project execution.
5. As the **Project Management Agency** for **BHAVYA**, NICDC oversees planning, implementation, monitoring, and technical support.
6. It facilitates **multimodal connectivity**, **plug-and-play infrastructure**, and ease of doing business for domestic and global investors.
7. Major industrial corridor projects include the **Delhi–Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC)**, **Chennai–Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC)**, and other national corridor initiatives.
8. NICDC plays a crucial role in advancing **Make in India**, **industrialisation**, **logistics efficiency**,



and manufacturing-led economic growth.

CAPTAGON

Recent Update: The **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** made India's first **Captagon seizure** under **Operation RAGEPILL**, exposing an India–Myanmar drug trafficking network.

About

1. **Captagon** is a highly addictive **psychotropic substance** and **central nervous system (CNS) stimulant** widely abused in conflict regions.
2. It was originally marketed as **Fenethylline** during the **1960s** for treating **ADHD**, **narcolepsy**, and **depression** before being banned.
3. Modern illicit Captagon usually contains **amphetamines**, **methamphetamine**, **caffeine**, and other harmful chemical additives.
4. It is popularly known as the **"Jihadi Drug"**, **"Captain Courage"**, and **"Poor Man's Cocaine"** due to its widespread illegal use.
5. The drug produces **euphoria**, suppresses **fear**, **fatigue**, and **hunger**, enabling users to remain awake for prolonged periods.
6. **Syria** is regarded as the global production hub, with illegal trade financing organized crime and regional conflicts.

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7. Captagon is regulated under **Schedule II of the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971**, and its legal manufacture ceased globally in **2009**.
8. In India, Captagon is prohibited under the **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985**.

HIMACHAL PRADESH'S ANTI-CHITTA MODEL

Recent Update: Himachal Pradesh's Anti-Chitta Model gained national attention for combining strict enforcement with community participation against heroin abuse.

About

1. The **Anti-Chitta Model** is Himachal Pradesh's integrated strategy to curb **heroin (chitta)** trafficking, addiction, and organized drug networks.
2. The State became the first to conduct **panchayat-level mapping** of drug users and traffickers, classifying areas into **Red**, **Yellow**, and **Green** zones.
3. Authorities invoked the **PIT-NDPS Act, 1988**, confiscated illegal assets worth over **₹51 crore**, and introduced mandatory drug testing for police recruitment.
4. More than **1,000 Anti-Chitta Volunteers** provide confidential intelligence, identify drug hotspots, and conduct awareness campaigns.
5. Panchayat-level committees actively monitor local drug abuse and support community-based preventive interventions.
6. Rehabilitation centres are being developed with support from **NITI Aayog**, **AIIMS Delhi**, and **PGIMER Chandigarh**.
7. The model combines **financial action against traffickers** with **rehabilitation and reintegration** of drug-dependent individuals.
8. It serves as an example of **community-driven**, **technology-supported**, and **multi-agency** narcotics control.

NARCOTICS CONTROL BUREAU (NCB)

Recent Update: NCB intensified cross-border narcotics investigations through **Operation RAGEPILL**.

About

1. The **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** is India's nodal agency for enforcing narcotics laws and combating illicit drug trafficking.
2. It was constituted on **14 November 1985** under the **NDPS Act, 1985** and functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
3. The headquarters of the **NCB** is located in **New Delhi**.
4. The Bureau coordinates with **Central** and **State agencies** to strengthen nationwide drug law enforcement.
5. It collects and shares intelligence on drug trafficking networks operating within and outside India.
6. The agency analyses seizure trends, trafficking methods, and emerging narcotics threats across the country.
7. It prepares national statistics on drug enforcement and supports international cooperation against transnational drug crimes.
8. NCB plays a crucial role in strengthening **India's anti-narcotics strategy**, **border security**, and **organized crime control**.

OPERATION SINDOOR

Recent Update: India marked **one year of Operation Sindoor**, highlighting major advances in defence preparedness and counter-terror capabilities.



About

1. **Operation Sindoor** was launched on **7–8 May 2025** after the **Pahalgam terror attack** in **Jammu & Kashmir**, which claimed **26 civilian lives**.
2. The **Indian Air Force** used **Rafale fighter aircraft** to destroy **nine terrorist launchpads** across **Pakistan** and **Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK)**.

3. India later targeted Pakistani military infrastructure after responding to cross-border drone attacks and military escalation.
4. A ceasefire came into effect on **10 May 2025** following communication between the **Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs)** of both countries.
5. India simultaneously suspended aspects of the **Indus Waters Treaty**, restricted trade, and intensified diplomatic efforts against cross-border terrorism.
6. The operation demonstrated India's shift from **strategic restraint** to **proactive counter-terrorism**, holding state sponsors accountable.
7. Indigenous defence systems such as the **Akash missile system** and anti-drone technologies played a significant operational role.
8. Operation Sindoor strengthened **tri-service integration**, **Atmanirbhar defence manufacturing**, and India's overall national security posture.

DOVAL DOCTRINE

Recent Update: Operation Sindoor highlighted the growing relevance of the **Doval Doctrine** in India's counter-terrorism strategy.

About

1. The **Doval Doctrine** is India's strategic security approach emphasizing **proactive deterrence**, **intelligence dominance**, and calibrated use of hard power.
2. It advocates a **"defensive offence"** strategy by neutralizing threats before they escalate into major security challenges.
3. The doctrine integrates **military operations**, **intelligence gathering**, **psychological warfare**, and **diplomatic pressure** into a unified framework.
4. It seeks to impose higher strategic costs on states that support or sponsor cross-border terrorism.
5. The doctrine rejects passive responses and supports precise, proportionate, and targeted retaliation against terror infrastructure.
6. It also emphasizes strengthening indigenous defence capabilities and technological superiority.
7. Diplomatic isolation of state sponsors of terrorism forms an important component of the doctrine.
8. The Doval Doctrine has significantly influenced India's evolving **national security** and **counter-terrorism** policies.

UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT, 1967 (UAPA)

Recent Update: Manipur expanded enforcement powers under the **UAPA**, allowing ***lower-ranked police officers to conduct searches and arrests.***

About

1. The **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA)** is India's principal anti-terror legislation aimed at preventing unlawful and terrorist activities.
2. The Act empowers authorities to investigate, arrest, search, and prosecute individuals involved in activities threatening India's sovereignty and security.
3. Under the recent **Manipur notification**, officers of the rank of **Head Constable/Havildar** and above can exercise powers of arrest, search, and seizure.
4. Earlier, these powers were generally exercised by senior officers such as **Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs)** or **Assistant Commissioners of Police (ACPs)**.
5. The notification authorizes action based on the **"reason to believe"** standard regarding terrorist offences or related evidence.
6. The UAPA provides stringent provisions, including difficult bail conditions and detention for up to **180 days** during investigation.
7. Critics argue that expanded powers may increase risks of **arbitrary arrests**, misuse, and human rights violations in conflict-sensitive regions.
8. Effective implementation requires strong judicial oversight, accountability, and protection of constitutional liberties.

MANIPUR ETHNIC CONFLICT

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Recent Update: Expansion of **UAPA** powers in **Manipur** renewed debate on balancing national security with civil liberties.

About



1. The **Manipur ethnic conflict** primarily involves tensions between the **Meitei** community in the valley and the **Kuki-Zo** tribes residing in the hill districts.
2. Long-standing disputes over **land rights**, **Scheduled Tribe (ST) status**, and political representation have intensified ethnic divisions.
3. The expansion of UAPA powers has raised concerns regarding possible misuse in an already sensitive conflict environment.
4. Lower-ranking police officers exercising extraordinary powers may increase the possibility of arbitrary arrests and community mistrust.
5. Experts recommend evaluating **Meitei ST status** using the recommendations of the **Lokur Committee (1965)** and **Virginius Xaxa Committee (2013)**.
6. Recovery of illegal weapons, rehabilitation of **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)**, and impartial law enforcement remain critical priorities.
7. Strengthening **India–Myanmar border management** and promoting inclusive political dialogue are essential for lasting peace.
8. Sustainable resolution requires **constitutional safeguards**, **community trust**, and equitable socio-economic development.

INDIA'S POST-LWE TRANSFORMATION

Recent Update: The **Union Home Minister** announced that India had become free from **Left Wing Extremism (LWE)**, marking a major internal security milestone.

About

1. **Left Wing Extremism (LWE)**, also known as the **Maoist insurgency**, was once considered India's most serious internal security challenge.
2. The elimination of Maoist strongholds has restored **constitutional governance** and the State's monopoly over the legitimate use of force.
3. Peace has enabled improved implementation of constitutional safeguards under the **Fifth Schedule**, **Sixth Schedule**, and the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**.
4. The decline in insurgency allows redeployment of **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)** towards border security and other emerging threats.
5. Mineral-rich regions such as **Bastar** and **Saranda** are expected to attract greater investment and infrastructure development.
6. Increased voter participation in former conflict zones reflects deeper democratic integration and political stability.
7. However, challenges remain regarding governance deficits, organized crime, judicial delays, and protection of tribal rights.
8. Long-term success depends on **inclusive development**, **tribal empowerment**, **effective governance**, and sustainable peace-building.

AIEEEE FRAMEWORK

Recent Update: The **AIEEEE Framework** was proposed to guide India's transition from **Left Wing Extremism (LWE)** towards sustainable governance and development.

About

1. The **AIEEEE Framework** is a governance model designed to ensure successful post-conflict transformation in former **LWE-affected** regions.
2. It stands for **Accountability, Innovation, Evidence, Equity, Empathy, and Efficiency** in public administration.
3. The framework promotes convergence of **Central** and **State Government** schemes instead of introducing multiple overlapping programmes.

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4. It emphasizes **outcome-based governance**, measuring success through improvements in human development rather than financial expenditure.
5. The framework supports evidence-based policymaking using **real-time data** for targeted interventions and efficient resource allocation.
6. It encourages equitable development while protecting the rights and livelihoods of tribal and marginalized communities.
7. Administrative empathy and citizen-centric governance are considered essential for rebuilding trust in conflict-affected areas.
8. The AIEEEE Framework aims to establish **inclusive**, **transparent**, and **sustainable governance** in post-insurgency regions.

FOREST RIGHTS ACT (FRA), 2006

Recent Update: The Allahabad High Court has ruled that the **Forest Rights Act, 2006,** overrides all earlier conflicting laws and court orders, striking down a **District Level Committee decision that had denied the Tharu tribe's forest rights** in Uttar Pradesh.

About

1. The **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**, commonly known as the **Forest Rights Act (FRA)**, recognizes the traditional rights of forest-dwelling communities.
2. The Act seeks to correct the historical injustice faced by **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** and other traditional forest dwellers.
3. It recognizes both **Individual Forest Rights (IFR)** and **Community Forest Rights (CFR)** over forest land and resources.
4. The **Gram Sabha** plays the central role in verifying, recommending, and managing forest rights under the Act.
5. FRA grants communities ownership over **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)**, grazing rights, and access to traditional forest resources.
6. Proper implementation of the Act strengthens livelihood security, environmental conservation, and tribal self-governance.
7. Delays in recognition of **Community Forest Rights (CFRs)** and bureaucratic hurdles remain significant implementation challenges.
8. Effective implementation of FRA is crucial for **tribal empowerment**, **inclusive development**, and sustainable forest management.

VIRGINIUS XAXA COMMITTEE (2014)

Recent Update: The recommendations of the Virginius Xaxa Committee were cited to strengthen tribal rights and improve governance in Scheduled Areas.

About

1. The **High-Level Committee on Socio-Economic, Health and Educational Status of Tribal Communities**, chaired by **Prof. Virginius Xaxa**, submitted its report in **2014**.
2. The Committee comprehensively examined the socio-economic conditions and governance challenges affecting **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** in India.
3. It recommended stronger implementation of the **Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006** and the **PESA Act, 1996**.
4. The report emphasized granting meaningful **Community Forest Rights (CFRs)** and ownership over **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)**.
5. It called for greater participation of **Gram Sabhas** in natural resource governance and local decision-making.
6. The Committee recommended improving education, healthcare, livelihood opportunities, and land rights for tribal communities.
7. It also highlighted the need to prevent displacement caused by mining, infrastructure, and industrial projects.
8. The report remains an important policy reference for **tribal welfare**, **inclusive governance**, and **sustainable development**.

VAN DHAN VIKAS KENDRAS

Recent Update: Under the **Janjatiya Garima Utsav 2026**, TRIFED organized workshops for tribal artisans and VDVK members

About

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1. **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)** are tribal livelihood centres established under the **Van Dhan Yojana** of **TRIFED**.
2. The programme aims to enhance the value addition, processing, and marketing of **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** collected by tribal communities.



3. These Kendras organize tribal gatherers into **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and producer collectives for sustainable livelihoods.
4. They provide training in **processing**, **packaging**, **branding**, and **entrepreneurship** to improve tribal incomes.
5. The initiative promotes local value addition instead of selling raw forest produce at low prices.
6. Van Dhan Kendras also strengthen the implementation of the **Forest Rights Act** and community-based forest management.
7. The programme contributes to **tribal empowerment**, **employment generation**, and sustainable utilization of forest resources.
8. It plays an important role in promoting **inclusive growth**, **forest-based livelihoods**, and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

SAMUDRA MANTHAN MISSION

Recent Update: India is in the final stages of rolling out the ambitious **"Samudra Manthan"** programme, which is aimed at exploring deep-sea oil, gas, and mineral reserves.

About

1. **Samudra Manthan Mission** is a flagship initiative aimed at exploring **deep-sea oil and natural gas reserves** to strengthen India's **energy security and was launched in 2025**.
2. The mission seeks to increase India's annual **exploratory drilling wells** from around **30** to **100 wells** beginning from **FY 2026–27**.
3. It is implemented under the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)** with scientific support from the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**.
4. The initiative promotes the use of **advanced offshore drilling**, seismic surveys and deep-water exploration technologies.
5. The mission aims to reduce **crude oil and natural gas imports**, thereby improving India's **energy independence**.
6. It is expected to encourage investments, generate employment and strengthen India's offshore petroleum ecosystem.
7. **Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)** is different from Samudra Manthan Mission, with **MoES** serving as the nodal ministry for DOM.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION (TDIP) SCHEME

Recent Update: The Union Communications Minister released **revised guidelines** for the **TDIP Scheme** to expand participation across India's telecom ecosystem.

About

1. **Technology Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP) Scheme** is a **Central Sector Scheme** under the **Department of Telecommunications**, Ministry of Communications.
2. The scheme aims to establish India as a **global leader in telecom innovation, standardisation and exports**.
3. It promotes **research, indigenous technology development, intellectual property creation and commercialization** in the telecom sector.
4. The scheme is implemented through **TSDSI**, **Telecom Centres of Excellence** and **Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL)**.
5. It has a total financial outlay of **₹203 crore** for the period **2026–31**.

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6. Revised guidelines have expanded eligibility to include **startups, MSMEs, academic institutions, research organisations, telecom service providers and industry players**.
7. The scheme strengthens **Atmanirbhar Bharat** by promoting indigenous telecom technologies and global competitiveness.

BIONEST

Recent Update: The Union Government inaugurated the **BIRAC-BioNEST Incubation Centre** at **CFTRI, Mysuru**, Karnataka.

About

1. **BioNEST (Bioincubators Nurturing Entrepreneurship for Scaling Technologies)** is an initiative of the **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)**.
2. It aims to promote **biotechnology startups**, innovation and entrepreneurship across India.
3. BioNEST incubators provide **state-of-the-art laboratories, scientific equipment, business mentoring and networking support**.
4. The programme also offers **intellectual property support, commercialization assistance and investor linkages**.
5. Funding is aligned under the **Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Bio-RIDE)** umbrella scheme.



6. The initiative strengthens India's **biotechnology innovation ecosystem** and encourages technology-based entrepreneurship.
7. **BIRAC** functions under the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** and plays a key role in supporting biotech innovation.

STARTUP INDIA FUND OF FUNDS (FFS 2.0)

Recent Update: The Union Cabinet approved **Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0** in **2026** to boost investment in deep-tech startups.

About

1. **Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0 (FFS 2.0)** is a **₹10,000 crore government-backed fund** under the **Startup India Initiative**.
2. The scheme builds upon the success of **Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS 1.0)** launched in **2016**.
3. It mobilises long-term domestic capital by investing in **SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)** instead of investing directly in startups.
4. These AIFs subsequently provide funding to eligible **DPIIT-recognised startups** across India.
5. The scheme primarily focuses on **deep-tech, advanced manufacturing and innovation-driven enterprises**.
6. The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** is the nodal department, while **SIDBI** implements the programme.
7. The initiative promotes **innovation, entrepreneurship, employment generation and domestic venture capital availability**.

RELIEF SCHEME

Recent Update: The Government expanded the **RELIEF Scheme** to support exporters affected by the **West Asia geopolitical crisis**.

About

1. **RELIEF (Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation)** is a scheme launched under the **Export Promotion Mission (EPM)**.
2. It provides **credit insurance cover** to exporters whose consignments are disrupted due to geopolitical crises.
3. The scheme particularly supports exporters whose goods are stranded or destined for the **Gulf and West Asia**.
4. It aims to minimise export losses and maintain confidence among Indian exporters during international disruptions.
5. The implementing agency is **ECGC Ltd. (Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd.)**, under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
6. The scheme strengthens India's export resilience by ensuring continuity of

international trade despite external uncertainties.

7. **ECGC Ltd.** is a wholly Government-owned enterprise providing export credit insurance and risk management services.

TRADE ENABLEMENT AND MARKETING INITIATIVE (TEAM)

Recent Update: TEAM is being implemented under the **Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP)** Programme to expand MSMEs' access to digital commerce through **ONDC**.



About

1. **Trade Enablement and Marketing Initiative (TEAM)** was launched in **2024** by the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME)**.
2. It is implemented under the **RAMP Programme**, a **World Bank-supported Central Sector Scheme** for improving MSME productivity.
3. The scheme aims to enable **Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)** to access **digital commerce** through the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)**.
4. **National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)** is the implementing agency responsible for execution of the programme.
5. TEAM has a total financial outlay of **₹277.35 crore** and will be implemented during **FY 2024–2027**.
6. Eligible beneficiaries are **Udyam-registered manufacturing and service sector MSEs**, with a target of supporting **5 lakh enterprises**, including **50% women-owned units**.
7. The initiative promotes **digital inclusion, market access, competitiveness and formalisation** of India's MSME sector.

CREDIT GUARANTEE FUND TRUST FOR MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES (CGTMSE)

Recent Update: CGTMSE recently organised a **Global Symposium on Credit Guarantees** to strengthen collateral-free financing for MSMEs.

About

1. **CGTMSE** was established in **2000** to improve access to **collateral-free institutional credit** for **Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)**.
2. It is jointly promoted by the **Ministry of MSME** and the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**.
3. The Trust operates the **Credit Guarantee Scheme**, encouraging banks to provide loans without demanding collateral security.
4. In case of borrower default, **CGTMSE** absorbs approximately **75% to 90%** of the loss incurred by the lending institution.
5. The scheme improves **credit flow**, reduces lending risk and promotes entrepreneurship among new and existing MSEs.
6. It supports the objective of **financial inclusion** by expanding formal credit access to small businesses across the country.
7. **CGTMSE** is a **Trust**, not a bank or financial institution, and it only provides **credit guarantees**.

PRADHAN MANTRI MUDRA YOJANA (PMMY)

Recent Update: Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) recently completed **11 years** since its launch, continuing to expand credit access for micro enterprises.

About

1. **PMMY** is a flagship **Central Sector Scheme** launched in **2015** to provide affordable credit to **Micro and Small Enterprises (MSMEs)**.
2. The scheme aims to **"Fund the Unfunded"** by bringing small businesses into the formal financial system.
3. The **Ministry of Finance** is the nodal ministry, while **MUDRA Ltd.** refinances loans provided through **Member Lending Institutions (MLIs)**.

4. PMMY offers four loan categories: **Shishu** (up to ₹50,000), **Kishor** (₹50,000–₹5 lakh), **Tarun** (₹5–10 lakh) and **Tarun Plus** (₹10–20 lakh).
5. Loans are provided through **Public Sector Banks, Private Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Cooperative Banks, NBFCs, MFIs and Small Finance Banks**.
6. Eligible borrowers receive a **MUDRA Card** for working capital needs, while eligible loans are guaranteed through the **Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU)**.
7. The scheme strengthens **entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, employment generation and small business development** across India.

BHARAT MARITIME INSURANCE POOL (BMI POOL)

Recent Update: The Government approved a **₹12,980 crore sovereign guarantee** for the **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool** to safeguard India's shipping sector during global crises.



About

1. **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool)** is a domestic maritime insurance mechanism created to protect India's shipping and trade interests.
2. The scheme ensures uninterrupted and affordable **marine insurance** even when foreign insurers withdraw during conflicts or geopolitical instability.
3. It initially operates for **10 years**, with a provision for an additional **5-year extension**.
4. The pool provides insurance coverage to **Indian-flagged vessels**, **Indian-controlled ships** and vessels transporting cargo to or from India.
5. It covers **Hull, Machinery, Cargo, Protection & Indemnity (P&I)** and **War Risks**, ensuring comprehensive maritime risk protection.
6. The initiative strengthens **maritime trade resilience**, protects supply chains and reduces dependence on foreign insurance markets.
7. The sovereign guarantee enhances confidence among shipping companies and ensures continuity of India's overseas trade.

SCHEME FOR SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT (SASCI)

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Mines** introduced a **₹5,000 crore incentive scheme** under **SASCI** for **FY 2026–27** to accelerate mine operationalisation.

About

1. **SASCI** is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched by the **Ministry of Finance** during **2020–21** to promote capital investment by States.
2. The scheme was previously known as the **Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure (SASCE)**.
3. It was originally introduced to stimulate economic growth during the **COVID-19 pandemic** through higher public capital expenditure.
4. Under the scheme, States receive **50-year interest-free loans** exclusively for undertaking **capital expenditure projects**.
5. The recently introduced mining incentive component aims to **expedite mine operationalisation**, enhance **mineral production** and improve **State revenues**.
6. The scheme also promotes **better governance**, efficient utilisation of mineral resources and infrastructure development across States.
7. **SASCI** provides **interest-free loans**, not grants, making it an important fiscal support mechanism for States.

NAMASTE SCHEME

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE)** and **UNDP** are collaborating under the **Waste Pickers Component** of the **NAMASTE Scheme** to improve the livelihood and social security of sanitation workers.

About

1. **NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem)** is a **Central Sector**

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Scheme launched in **2022** to eliminate hazardous manual sanitation work.

2. The scheme replaced the **Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)**, which had been operational since **2007**.



3. Its primary objective is to achieve **zero fatalities** in sanitation work by ensuring that all sewer and septic tank cleaning is carried out through **mechanised equipment** and trained personnel.
4. It seeks to **profile all Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs)** across India and create a **national database** for effective rehabilitation and welfare measures.
5. The scheme is jointly implemented by the **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE)** and the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** through the **National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation (NSKFDC)**.
6. It extends **Ayushman Bharat–PMJAY** benefits, skill development, financial assistance and livelihood opportunities to sanitation workers in **500 AMRUT cities**.
7. **Rashtriya Garima Abhiyaan** is another national campaign dedicated to the **eradication of manual scavenging** and rehabilitation of manual scavengers.

SKILLS OUTCOMES FUND (SOF)

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** recently launched the **Skills Outcomes Fund (SOF)** to improve employment outcomes through **outcome-based financing**.

About

1. **Skills Outcomes Fund (SOF)** is India's first dedicated **outcome-based skill financing fund** designed to improve sustainable employment opportunities for youth.
2. The initiative is anchored by the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** under the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**.
3. It builds upon the experience of the **Skill Impact Bond**, India's first outcome-based skill financing initiative launched in **2021**.
4. The fund follows a **blended finance model**, mobilising resources from government, philanthropic organisations and private investors.
5. Financial support is linked to **verified outcomes**, such as successful job placement and long-term employment retention, instead of only training completion.
6. The scheme primarily targets youth from **low-income and economically disadvantaged backgrounds**, helping them secure aspirational livelihoods.
7. The initiative strengthens **skill development, employability, private sector participation and accountability** in India's skilling ecosystem.

YUVIKA PROGRAMME

Recent Update: YUVIKA continues to inspire **Class IX students** through practical exposure to **space science and technology** under the guidance of **ISRO**.



About

1. **YUva VIgyani KAryakram (YUVIKA)** is a flagship educational programme launched by

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the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** in **2019**.

2. The programme aims to create awareness and develop interest among school students in **Space Science, Space Technology and Space Applications**.
3. It is specifically designed for students studying in **Class IX**, with preference given to students from **rural areas**.
4. YUVIKA is conducted as a **two-week residential programme**, combining classroom learning with practical demonstrations and laboratory exposure.
5. Every year, **three students from each State and Union Territory** are selected, covering **CBSE, ICSE and State Boards**.
6. The programme introduces students to **satellite technology, launch vehicles, space exploration and scientific research**, encouraging future careers in STEM fields.
7. The initiative supports India's vision of nurturing a scientifically skilled workforce for the country's future **space missions and technological advancement**.

PRIME MINISTER INTERNSHIP SCHEME (PMIS)

Recent Update: Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS) is being implemented to provide **1 crore internships** in **top 500 companies** over a period of five years.

About

1. **Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS)** is a flagship initiative announced in the **Union Budget 2024–25** under the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)**.
2. The scheme aims to provide **one crore internship opportunities** over five years in India's **top 500 companies**, improving employability among youth.
3. Eligible beneficiaries are **youth aged 21–24 years** who are **not engaged in full-time education or full-time employment**.
4. Graduates from **IITs, IIMs**, holders of advanced professional degrees such as **MBA and CA**, and candidates from higher-income government-employed families are **not eligible** under the scheme.
5. The internship duration is **12 months**, during which interns receive a monthly **stipend of ₹5,000**, including **₹4,500 from the Government** and **₹500 from CSR funds** of participating companies.
6. Beneficiaries also receive a **one-time grant of ₹6,000** and insurance coverage under **PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)** and **PM Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)**.
7. The scheme is managed through an **online portal** administered by the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs**, ensuring transparent selection and monitoring.

FIRST CHIP FABRICATION PLANT

Recent Update: India recently notified its **first commercial semiconductor fabrication plant** at **Dholera Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Gujarat**, marking a major milestone in semiconductor manufacturing.

About

1. India's **first commercial semiconductor fabrication plant** is being established at **Dholera SEZ, Gujarat**, to strengthen domestic semiconductor manufacturing capacity.
2. The facility is being developed by **Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Private Limited** as an **AI-enabled semiconductor fabrication unit**.
3. The project aims to reduce **import dependence**, strengthen **technology sovereignty** and build a globally competitive semiconductor ecosystem in India.
4. The fabrication plant is expected to support sectors such as **electronics, telecommunications, automobiles, defence and artificial intelligence**.
5. The initiative complements the objectives of the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** and the broader **Atmanirbhar Bharat** programme.
6. Establishment of indigenous fabrication facilities will enhance **research, innovation, employment generation and high-value manufacturing** within the country.
7. In **2025**, India unveiled its first fully indigenous microchip, **"Vikram,"** designed by **ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).**

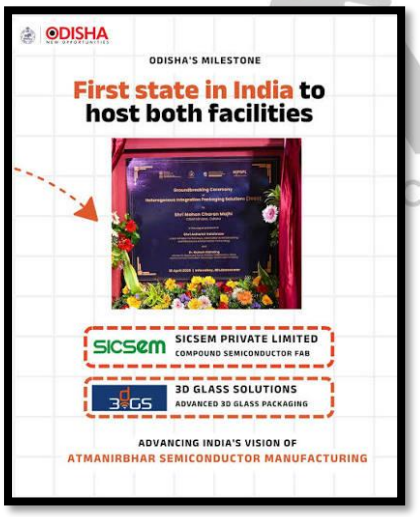
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INDIA'S FIRST ADVANCED 3D SEMICONDUCTOR PACKAGING UNIT

Recent Update: India's **first Advanced 3D Semiconductor Packaging Unit** has been announced in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**, under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**.

About

1. India's **First Advanced 3D Semiconductor Packaging Unit** is being established in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**, to strengthen the country's semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem.
2. The facility is being developed by **US-based 3D Glass Solutions (3DGS)** through its Indian subsidiary.
3. It will function as a **vertically integrated ATMP (Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging)** facility for semiconductor manufacturing operations.
4. The project has received a **Central Government subsidy of ₹799 crore** under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**.



5. The unit aims to strengthen India's capabilities in **advanced semiconductor packaging**, a critical stage of global semiconductor value chains.
6. The project is expected to boost **technology transfer, employment generation, electronics manufacturing and supply chain resilience**.
7. **ATMP** stands for **Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging**, which is different from a **semiconductor fabrication (Fab) plant**.

SMALL HYDRO POWER (SHP) DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Recent Update: The **Union Cabinet** recently approved the **Small Hydro Power Development Scheme** for the period **FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31**.

About

1. The **Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme** supports the installation of **small hydroelectric projects** having a capacity of **1–25 MW** each.
2. The scheme aims to establish a cumulative capacity of **1,500 MW** across the country while promoting clean and renewable energy generation.
3. It gives **special priority** to **North-Eastern States, Himalayan States and other hilly regions** because of their significant hydroelectric potential.
4. Financial assistance is available at **₹3.6 crore per MW (maximum ₹30 crore)** for North-Eastern and border States and **₹2.4 crore per MW (maximum ₹20 crore)** for other States.
5. The scheme mandates **100% domestic sourcing** of plant and machinery, thereby supporting **Make in India** and indigenous manufacturing.
6. It promotes **renewable energy, rural electrification, regional development and reduction of carbon emissions** through sustainable hydropower generation.
7. In India, **Small Hydro Projects** (up to **25 MW**) are administered by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**, whereas **Large Hydro Projects** (above **25 MW**) fall under the **Ministry of Power**.

NAMO DRONE DIDI YOJANA

Recent Update: Karnataka has recorded the **highest number of women Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** trained as drone pilots under the **Namo Drone Didi Yojana**.



About

1. **Namo Drone Didi Yojana** is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched in **2023** to empower **women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** through drone technology.
2. The scheme aims to train women as **drone pilots** and provide drones for delivering **agricultural services**, particularly precision farming and fertilizer application.
3. It has a total financial allocation of **₹1,261 crore** and is implemented from **2023–24 to 2025–26**.
4. The scheme is promoted under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**.
5. Eligible women SHGs receive **Central Financial Assistance of 80%** of the drone package cost, subject to a maximum of **₹8 lakh**.
6. The remaining **20% cost** can be financed through loans under the **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)** with a **3% interest subvention**.
7. The scheme is jointly implemented by the **Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare**, **Department of Rural Development**, **Department of Fertilizers**, and **Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs)**.

MARKET INTERVENTION SCHEME (MIS)

Recent Update: The Government recently approved **potato procurement** under the **Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)** to prevent distress sales by farmers.

About

1. The **Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)** was originally launched in **1983** and is presently a component of **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)**.
2. The scheme aims to prevent **distress sales** by farmers during periods of **bumper production and sharp price decline**.
3. It covers **perishable agricultural commodities**, such as **Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP)**, which are **not covered under the Minimum Support Price (MSP)** mechanism.
4. The scheme is implemented by the **Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** upon the request of State Governments.
5. MIS is activated when production increases by **10% or more**, or market prices decline by **10% or more** compared to normal levels.
6. Procurement is limited to **25% of the total production**, while financial losses are shared in a **50:50 ratio** between the Centre and States (**75:25 for North-Eastern States**).
7. **MIS** is meant for **perishable crops not covered under MSP**, making it different from the regular **MSP procurement mechanism**.

MISSION FOR AATMANIRBHARTA IN PULSES

Recent Update: Bihar recently launched its **first structured pulse procurement initiative** under the **Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses**.

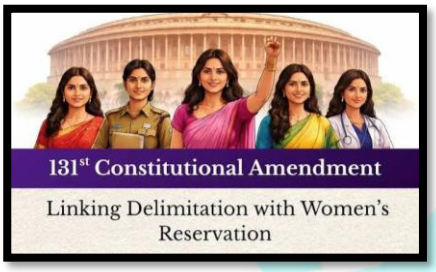
About

1. **Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses** is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** announced in the **Union Budget 2025–26** and approved on **1 October 2025**.
2. The mission aims to achieve **self-sufficiency in pulses** by increasing domestic production, reducing import dependence and improving farmers' incomes.
3. It primarily focuses on **Tur (Arhar), Urad (Black Gram)** and **Masoor (Red Lentil)** cultivation.
4. The mission targets increasing **pulse production to 350 lakh tonnes** and expanding the cultivation area to **310 lakh hectares** by **2030–31**.
5. It is implemented for **six years (2025–26 to 2030–31)** under the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.

6. The scheme promotes **seed improvement, productivity enhancement, procurement support, value chain development and farmer welfare** to strengthen domestic pulse production.
7. The mission contributes towards **nutritional security, agricultural sustainability, import substitution and farmers' income enhancement**.

THE CONSTITUTION (131ST AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

Recent Update: The **Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026** proposes major reforms in **Parliamentary representation, delimitation and women's reservation** in legislatures.



About

1. The **Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026** seeks to restructure the composition of **Parliament** and reform the **delimitation** process in India.
2. The Bill proposes amendments to **Articles 81, 82 and 334A** of the Constitution to reflect demographic changes and strengthen democratic representation.
3. It proposes that the **Lok Sabha** shall consist of **not more than 815 members from States** and **35 members from Union Territories**, taking the total strength to **850 members**.
4. The Bill seeks to amend **Article 82** by removing the condition that delimitation can be undertaken only after the first Census conducted after **2026**.
5. It enables constituency boundaries to be redrawn using the **latest available Census data**, ensuring fairer electoral representation.
6. The Bill also amends **Article 334A** to implement **one-third reservation for women** in the **Lok Sabha** and **State Legislative Assemblies** immediately after delimitation.
7. Seats reserved for women will be **rotated among different constituencies** in every State and Union Territory after each delimitation exercise.

DELIMITATION BILL, 2026

Recent Update: The **Delimitation Bill, 2026** proposes a new legal framework for **readjustment of Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies** across India.

About

1. The **Delimitation Bill, 2026** seeks to **repeal and replace** the existing **Delimitation Act, 2002**.
2. It proposes the establishment of a new **Delimitation Commission (DC)** headed by a **serving or retired Supreme Court Judge**.
3. The **Chief Election Commissioner** and **State Election Commissioners** will serve as **ex-officio members** of the Commission.
4. The Commission will include **10 Associate Members** from each State, comprising **5 Members of Parliament** and **5 Members of the Legislative Assembly**, without voting rights.
5. The Commission will **readjust Lok Sabha and State Assembly seats** and redraw constituency boundaries based on the **latest Census figures**.
6. Orders issued by the Delimitation Commission, once published in the **Official Gazette**, will have the **force of law**.
7. The decisions of the **Delimitation Commission cannot be challenged before any court**, ensuring finality in the delimitation process.

JAN VISHWAS (AMENDMENT OF PROVISIONS) BILL, 2026

Recent Update: The **Lok Sabha** recently passed the **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026** to promote **trust-based governance** and improve the **Ease of Doing Business**.

About

1. The **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026** seeks to decriminalise a large number of **minor regulatory offences** across various laws.
2. The Bill replaces **imprisonment** with **civil monetary penalties** for more than **1,000 minor offences**.

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3. It establishes an **out-of-court penalty resolution mechanism** to reduce litigation and improve administrative efficiency.
4. The legislation introduces a **graded compliance framework**, providing **warnings and advisories** before imposing penalties for first-time and second-time violations.
5. Monetary penalties under the Bill will automatically increase by **10% every three years** to maintain deterrence.
6. The Bill aims to reduce the burden on courts, promote voluntary compliance and improve the regulatory environment for businesses.
7. The legislation supports the Government's vision of **minimum government, maximum governance** through simplified regulatory compliance.

AMENDMENTS TO MINERAL CONCESSION RULES, 2026

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Mines** recently notified the **Amendments to Mineral Concession Rules, 2026** to improve scientific and efficient mineral extraction.

About

1. The amended rules provide a detailed mechanism for including **contiguous areas** within **Mining Leases (MLs)** and **Composite Licences (CLs)** for **deep-seated minerals**.
2. They permit the inclusion of **associated minerals** in existing mining leases of both **major** and **minor minerals** to improve resource utilisation.
3. Mineral classification in India is governed by the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**.
4. **Minor minerals** include **building stones, gravel, ordinary clay and ordinary sand**, except sand used for prescribed purposes.
5. **Major minerals** include minerals such as **coal, iron ore, zinc and limestone**, along with all minerals other than those classified as minor minerals.
6. The amendments promote **scientific mining, efficient extraction and optimal utilisation** of mineral resources across the country.
7. The reforms are expected to improve **mineral resource governance**, increase production and encourage sustainable mining practices.

PROMOTION AND REGULATION OF ONLINE GAMING RULES, 2026

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** recently notified the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026** to operationalise the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025**.

About

1. The **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Rules, 2026** establish a comprehensive regulatory framework for online gaming in India.
2. The Rules classify online games into **E-Sports, Online Social Games and Online Money Games**.
3. They prohibit **Online Money Games**, including activities such as **poker** and **fantasy sports**, while permitting only **Online Social Games** and **E-Sports**.
4. The Rules establish the **Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)** as the statutory regulator under **MeitY**.
5. All eligible online games must obtain a **Certificate of Registration** from **OGAI** before operating legally.
6. The Rules provide a **three-tier grievance redressal mechanism**, digital proceedings and mandatory disposal of complaints within **90 days**.
7. Violations are treated as **non-bailable offences**, with liability extending to the entire company responsible for non-compliance.

ONLINE GAMING AUTHORITY OF INDIA (OGAI)

Recent Update: The **Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)** has been constituted under the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025**, and will become operational from **1 May 2026**.

About

1. **Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)** is a **statutory regulatory body** established under the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025**.
2. It functions as a **digital office** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** to regulate online gaming across India.

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3. OGAI acts as the **central regulator** responsible for registration, classification and regulation of **online games and e-sports**.
4. The Authority determines whether a game qualifies as an **Online Money Game**, maintains the national registry and issues registration certificates.



5. It coordinates with **financial institutions** and **law-enforcement agencies** to ensure effective implementation of gaming regulations.
6. OGAI consists of **six members**, chaired by the **Additional Secretary, MeitY**, with representatives from **MHA, I&B, Youth Affairs & Sports, Department of Financial Services and Department of Legal Affairs**.
7. The headquarters of **OGAI** is located in **New Delhi**, and it is responsible for ensuring a safe, transparent and accountable online gaming ecosystem.

AMARAVATI (ANDHRA PRADESH)

Recent Update: The **Lok Sabha** recently passed a Bill declaring **Amaravati** as the **sole capital of Andhra Pradesh**.

About

1. **Amaravati** is situated on the banks of the **Krishna River** in **Andhra Pradesh** and has immense historical, cultural and political significance.
2. It served as the **capital of the Satavahana Dynasty** during the **3rd century BCE**, making it an important centre of ancient India.
3. According to Buddhist tradition, **Gautama Buddha** delivered the teachings of **Kalachakra** at Amaravati, making it an important centre of **Vajrayana Buddhism**.
4. The **Amaravati Stupa**, constructed during the **2nd century BCE**, is one of India's oldest Buddhist monuments and is renowned for its sculptural depictions of Buddha's life.



5. The **Amaravati School of Art** flourished between the **2nd century BCE and 3rd century CE**, and is famous for its **white limestone sculptures** with intricate narrative carvings.
6. The city is also known for the **Amareswara Temple**, dedicated to **Lord Shiva**, and traditional handicrafts such as **Kondapalli Toys (GI Tag)** and **Kalamkari Textiles (GI Tag)**.

INCLUSION IN THE SCHEDULED TRIBE (ST) LIST

Recent Update: The **Assam Government** has proposed the inclusion of **Koch-Rajbongshi, Matak, Moran, Chutia, Tai Ahom and Tea Tribes** in the **Scheduled Tribe (ST) List**.

About

1. The **Constitution of India** does **not prescribe specific criteria** for identifying or recognising **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**.
2. **Article 366(25)** defines the expression **Scheduled Tribes**, while **Article 342** lays down the constitutional procedure for notifying them.
3. The process begins with a recommendation from the **concerned State Government**, which is forwarded to the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.
4. The proposal is examined by the **Registrar General of India (RGI)**, followed by the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**.
5. After obtaining the required approvals, the proposal is placed before the **Union Cabinet** for final consideration.

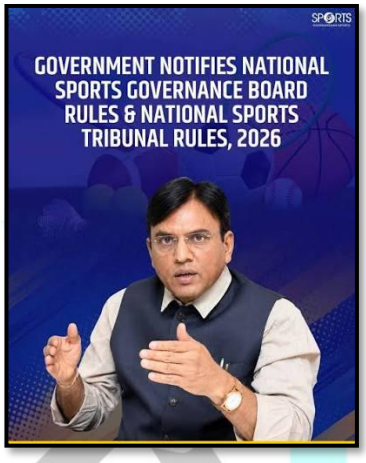
6. Following Cabinet approval, the **President of India** issues a notification under **Article 342** to include the community in the **Scheduled Tribe List**.

National Sports Governance Rules, 2026

Why in the news?

The Central Government notified the **National Sports Governance Board Rules, 2026** and the **National Sports Tribunal Rules, 2026,** under the **National Sports Governance Act, 2025**.

About



- **Parent Act:** National Sports Governance Act, **2025**
- **Sports** falls under **Entry 33, State List (Seventh Schedule)**.
- **National Sports Policy, 2025** replaced the **National Sports Policy, 2001**.
- Related legislation: **Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) Act, 2007**.

National Sports Governance Board

- **Composition:** Chairperson + **2 Members**
- **Appointment:** By the Central Government on the recommendation of a **Search-cum-Selection Committee**
- **Tenure: 3 years** or till **65 years of age**, whichever is earlier
- **Reappointment:** Eligible for **one additional term**
- **Key Functions:**
    - Maintain records of the **National Sports Election Panel** and **National Sports Bodies**
    - Frame model guidelines for governance and committee functioning
    - Recommend adoption of **international covenants** and **global best practices**
- **Audit:** Accounts audited by the **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)**.

National Sports Tribunal

- **Chairperson: 5 years** or till **70 years of age**
- **Members: 5 years** or till **67 years of age**
- **Reappointment:** Eligible for **one additional term**
- **Powers:**
    - Issue orders to secure the **ends of justice** and prevent **abuse of process**
    - Grant **interim orders** (stay/injunction)
    - Orders enforceable like **Civil Court decrees**
    - Orders attain **finality after the appeal period**
- **Tech-enabled Features:**
    - Dedicated **online portal** for e-filing, notices, document submission, and communication
    - **Digitally signed orders** shared electronically

E-Courts Mission Mode Project

Why in the news?

Sikkim became the **first Indian state with a fully paperless judiciary**, as declared by the Chief Justice of India.

About:

- **Launch: 2007**
- **Under: National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)**
- **Implementing Authority: Department of Justice**
- **Guided by: e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India**
- **Nature:** Pan-India **Mission Mode Project** for computerisation and digitisation of the Indian judiciary.

Key Features

- **e-Filing** of cases
- **Digital case records**
- **Online hearings/Virtual Courts**
- **Electronic case tracking**
- **Paperless court functioning**
- **Online access to judicial services**

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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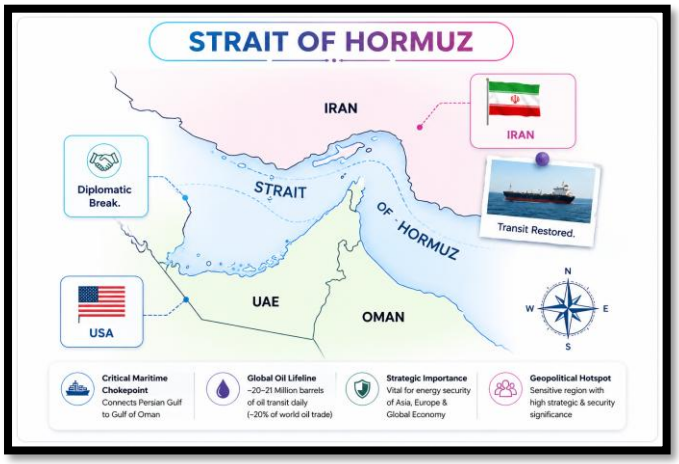
Comprehensive Coverage of Global Affairs

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SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY CHALLENGES

Recent Update: US, Iranian negotiators agree to 60-day ceasefire extension.

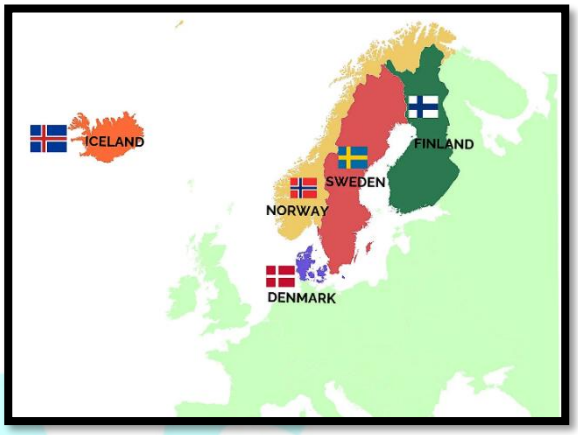


About

1. **Strategic Autonomy** is India's foreign policy principle of taking **independent decisions** based on **national interest** while avoiding formal military alliances.
2. The **2026 Iran War**, closure of the **Strait of Hormuz**, and regional instability have intensified challenges to India's **multi-alignment strategy**.
3. Major challenges include **U.S. unilateralism**, **Indian Ocean security concerns**, **energy coercion**, **defence technology dependence**, and **exclusive global supply chains**.
4. India remains vulnerable due to its dependence on **Gulf energy supplies**, while the **United States** continues to be its largest trading partner.
5. Diversification of defence procurement through platforms such as the **Rafale aircraft** reflects India's efforts to reduce strategic dependence.
6. The way forward includes strengthening **energy security**, expanding **strategic petroleum reserves**, investing in **Green Hydrogen**, and accelerating the **India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**.
7. India should also strengthen **Operation Sankalp**, secure **technology transfer** in defence acquisitions, and promote a **multipolar global order** through **G20** and **BRICS**.
8. A resilient combination of **energy independence**, **technological self-reliance**, **diversified partnerships**, and **balanced diplomacy** will preserve India's **Strategic Autonomy**.

3RD INDIA–NORDIC SUMMIT

Recent Update: **Prime Minister of India** co-chaired the **3rd India–Nordic Summit** in **Oslo, Norway**.



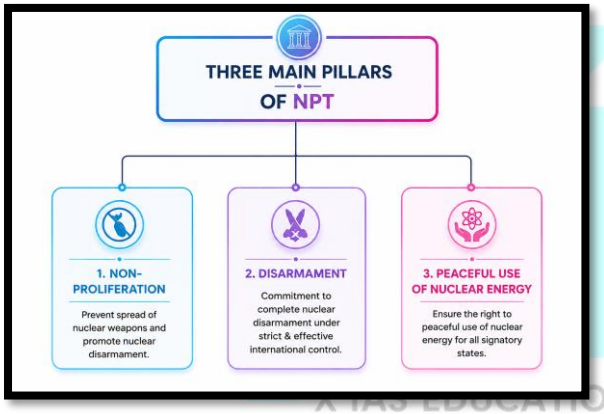
About

1. The **India–Nordic Summit** is a plurilateral platform connecting **India** with **Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden** to strengthen strategic cooperation.
2. The partnership combines India's **large market**, **skilled workforce**, and **manufacturing capacity** with Nordic expertise in **clean energy**, **maritime technology**, **innovation**, and **sustainability**.
3. Key opportunities include collaboration in **semiconductors**, **6G technology**, **green maritime infrastructure**, **Arctic research**, **defence co-production**, and **European Free Trade Association (EFTA)** investments.
4. Cooperation also supports **Make in India**, **India Semiconductor Mission**, **Green Hydrogen**, and advanced **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** research.
5. Major challenges include **geopolitical differences**, **strict environmental regulations**, **non-tariff barriers**, **intellectual property concerns**, **logistics disruptions**, and **labour mobility restrictions**.

6. The summit recommends strengthening **Arctic satellite cooperation**, creating **Green Hydrogen shipping corridors**, promoting **AI data governance**, and establishing Nordic **defence manufacturing clusters** in India.
7. It also emphasises monitoring **EFTA investment commitments** and accelerating implementation of high-value technology and infrastructure projects.
8. The **India–Nordic Partnership** is emerging as a future-oriented collaboration focused on **innovation**, **sustainability**, **technology**, and **long-term economic resilience**.

11TH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

Recent Update: The **11th NPT Review Conference** concluded without achieving a **consensus declaration**.



About

1. The **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** seeks to prevent the spread of **nuclear weapons**, promote **peaceful uses of nuclear energy**, and encourage **global nuclear disarmament**.
2. The treaty recognizes only countries that tested nuclear weapons before **1 January 1967** as **Nuclear Weapon States (NWS)** and places safeguards on **Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS)**.
3. The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** monitors civilian nuclear activities to ensure they are not diverted for military purposes.
4. A strong **NPT** helps prevent **vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation**, protects **civilian nuclear infrastructure**, and strengthens **strategic stability**.
5. Major challenges include **unequal enforcement**, **hypersonic weapon technologies**, **P5 dominance**, **non-signatory nuclear states**, and expanding **nuclear deterrence alliances**.
6. Proposed reforms include a **time-bound disarmament roadmap** for the **P5**, a **Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)**, stronger **hypersonic verification mechanisms**, and wider **Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs)**.
7. The conference also recommends strengthening coordination between the **NPT** and the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)** to reinforce global disarmament efforts.
8. Revitalizing the **NPT framework** through stronger **verification**, **international cooperation**, and **disarmament commitments** is essential for maintaining global nuclear security.

INDIA–ITALY BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: **India** and **Italy** elevated their ties to a **Special Strategic Partnership** during the Prime Minister's visit to Rome.



About

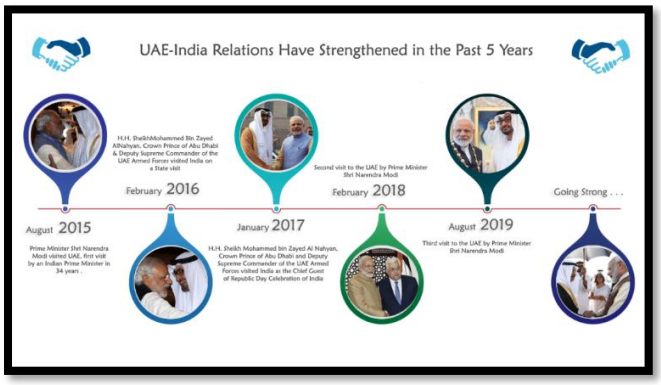
1. **India–Italy relations** have evolved from ancient **Roman-era maritime trade** into a **Special Strategic Partnership** focused on **technology**, **innovation**, **defence**, and **economic cooperation**.
2. The summit resulted in a **Joint Declaration**, a **Defence Industrial Roadmap**, and a target to increase **bilateral trade to €20 billion by 2029**.
3. Major opportunities include **joint defence manufacturing**, **critical mineral recycling**, **technology deployment in Africa**, **scientific**

research collaboration, and **healthcare workforce mobility**.

4. Cooperation supports **Make in India**, **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, **semiconductor development**, **quantum research**, and advanced **manufacturing ecosystems**.
5. Key challenges include uncertainty surrounding the **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**, **European Union regulatory barriers**, **bureaucratic delays**, **Social Security Agreement (SSA)** negotiations, and **data governance differences**.
6. The way forward includes operationalising the **IMEC Ministerial Desk**, strengthening the **Vadinar–Trieste Green Port Corridor**, expanding **financial intelligence cooperation**, and establishing **defence manufacturing clusters** in India.
7. India and Italy should also promote **healthcare professional mobility**, strengthen **innovation partnerships**, and simplify **regulatory coordination** to deepen bilateral engagement.
8. The **India–Italy Special Strategic Partnership** strengthens cooperation in **connectivity**, **critical minerals**, **defence**, **innovation**, and **economic resilience**, making it an important pillar of India's engagement with Europe.

INDIA–UAE SIGN STRATEGIC PACTS

Recent Update: **India** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** signed major strategic agreements expanding cooperation in **defence**, **energy**, and **advanced technology**.



About

1. **India–UAE relations** have evolved from centuries-old **maritime trade** into a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** covering **trade**, **investment**, **defence**, **energy**, and **technology**.
2. Diplomatic relations were established in **1972**, upgraded to a **Strategic Partnership** in **2015**, and further strengthened into a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** in **2017**.
3. The **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) 2022** significantly expanded bilateral trade, reduced tariffs, and strengthened economic integration.
4. Major challenges include the **2026 Iran War**, security concerns in the **Strait of Hormuz**, regional strategic rivalries, risks to the **Indian diaspora**, and governance issues in **advanced technology partnerships**.
5. The partnership aims to strengthen **energy security**, **financial integration**, **defence manufacturing**, **digital innovation**, and **high-technology collaboration**.
6. The way forward includes developing the **Fujairah Strategic Energy Link**, conducting **joint naval patrols**, expanding **Local Currency Settlement (LCS)**, and promoting **joint defence production** under **Make in India**.
7. Both countries should also strengthen the **Virtual Trade Corridor**, improve **digital connectivity**, and enhance cooperation in **cybersecurity**, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, and **critical infrastructure**.
8. The strengthened **India–UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** enhances **regional stability**, **economic resilience**, **energy security**, and India's long-term strategic interests in **West Asia**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ELECTION

Recent Update: The **United Nations** initiated the process for electing the next **Secretary-General**.

About

1. The **UN Secretary-General** is the **Chief Administrative Officer** of the **United Nations** under the **UN Charter**.

2. The Secretary-General is generally elected for **two five-year terms** as an established international convention.
3. The **UN General Assembly** appoints the Secretary-General based on the recommendation of the **UN Security Council**.
4. The **five permanent members (P5)** of the Security Council can veto any candidate during the selection process.
5. The Security Council conducts **straw polls** to identify the most acceptable candidate before the final recommendation.
6. By convention, the post rotates among different **regional groups** of the United Nations.
7. The next **UN Secretary-General** is scheduled to assume office on **1 January 2027**.
8. The election aims to ensure **effective global leadership**, **multilateral cooperation**, and efficient functioning of the United Nations.

OPEC AND OPEC+

Recent Update: The United Arab Emirates has announced it will exit the **Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries** and the broader OPEC+ alliance, with the decision taking effect from **May 1, 2026.**

About

1. **OPEC** is an intergovernmental organisation established in **1960** to coordinate petroleum policies among oil-producing countries.
2. Its founding members were **Iran**, **Iraq**, **Kuwait**, **Saudi Arabia**, and **Venezuela**.
3. OPEC aims to ensure **stable oil prices**, regular supply, and fair returns for oil-producing nations.
4. Its headquarters is located in **Vienna, Austria**, after shifting from **Geneva** in **1965**.



UAE exit from OPEC 'will have limited immediate impact on oil market'

5. **OPEC+** was formed in **2016** by including major non-OPEC producers such as **Russia**, **Mexico**, and **Kazakhstan**.
6. The alliance manages **oil production** through voluntary output adjustments to stabilize global markets.
7. OPEC+ played a significant role in restoring market stability during the **COVID-19 pandemic**.
8. The organization remains a major influence on **global energy security** and **crude oil prices**.

ASIA'S FIRST UNESCO CHAIR ON GENDER INCLUSION

Recent Update: India established **Asia's first UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development** at **SSPU, Pune**.

About

1. The initiative is jointly supported by **UNESCO**, **MSDE**, and **Symbiosis Skills and Professional University (SSPU)**.
2. It aims to promote **gender-inclusive skill development** and increase women's participation in emerging industries.
3. The Chair focuses on sectors such as **Artificial Intelligence**, **semiconductors**, **robotics**, and **advanced manufacturing**.
4. It provides industry-oriented training to women, especially from **underserved communities**.
5. The initiative encourages collaboration with global organizations such as **ILO** and **UNESCO-UNEVOC**.
6. More than **40 industry experts** contribute to curriculum development and skill enhancement.
7. It is supported by both the **Ministry of Skill Development** and the **Ministry of Education**.
8. The initiative promotes **women's empowerment**, **inclusive growth**, and **future-ready workforce development**.

THE FIVE NEW MEMBERS JOINED IUCN

Recent Update: **IUCN** admitted **five new member organisations** from **Mesoamerica and the Caribbean**.

About

X IAS EDUCATION | SIMPLIFYING SUCCESS

1. The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** was established in **1948**.
2. It is a global membership union comprising **governments**, **NGOs**, and **Indigenous organizations**.
3. IUCN works to promote **nature conservation**, **ecosystem restoration**, and **sustainable development**.
4. It provides scientific knowledge through its network of over **19,000 experts** worldwide.
5. The organization develops global **conservation standards**, policy recommendations, and best practices.
6. It also implements conservation projects and facilitates cooperation among governments and civil society.
7. Membership is open to **governments**, **sub-national authorities**, **NGOs**, and **Indigenous Peoples' organizations**.
8. IUCN plays a leading role in protecting **biodiversity**, **ecosystems**, and **natural resources** worldwide.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISATION (ISO)

Recent Update: **BIS** hosted the **35th ISO TC 20/SC 14** meeting on **Space Systems and Operations** in **New Delhi**.

About

1. The **International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)** is an independent body that develops **global voluntary standards**.
2. It was established in **1947** and is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
3. ISO develops international standards to improve **quality**, **safety**, **efficiency**, and **interoperability**.
4. It facilitates **global trade** by harmonizing technical standards across different countries.
5. ISO standards cover diverse sectors including **information technology**, **healthcare**, **energy**, and **manufacturing**.
6. The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** represents India as the national standards body.
7. **ISO TC 20/SC 14** develops standards for the **design**, **launch**, and **operation** of space systems.
8. ISO standards promote **innovation**, **consumer protection**, and **international industrial cooperation**.

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK (ECB)

Recent Update: The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** signed an **MoU** with the **European Central Bank (ECB) on central banking cooperation**. Signed **in Basel, Switzerland**, this agreement replaces a previous 2015 pact to facilitate the exchange of information, policy dialogue, and technical cooperation.

About

1. The **European Central Bank (ECB)** is the central monetary authority of the **Eurozone**.
2. It was established in **1998** under the **Maastricht Treaty** and is headquartered in **Frankfurt, Germany**.



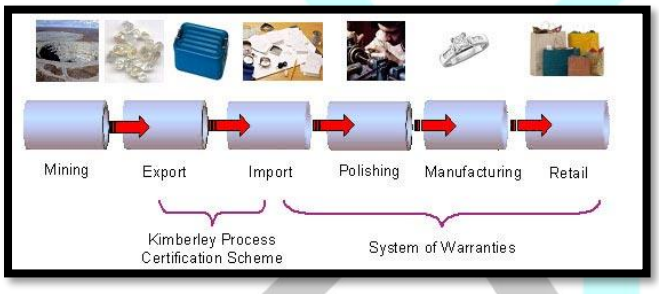
3. The ECB's primary objective is to maintain **price stability** and support sustainable economic growth.
4. It formulates and implements **monetary policy** for countries using the **Euro**.
5. The ECB has the exclusive authority to authorize the issuance of **Euro banknotes**.
6. It manages **foreign exchange reserves** and oversees major payment systems within the Eurozone.
7. The **Governing Council** takes key decisions on interest rates and monetary policy.
8. The ECB plays a crucial role in maintaining **financial stability** and **economic integration** across Europe.

THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS

Recent Update: India assumed the **Chairship of the Kimberley Process** with the theme **3Cs – Credibility, Compliance, and Consumer Confidence**.

About

1. The **Kimberley Process (KP)** is an international initiative to eliminate the trade in **conflict diamonds**.
2. It was launched in **2003** following the adoption of the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)**.
3. The initiative ensures that **rough diamonds** traded globally do not finance armed conflicts or rebel groups.
4. Every international shipment of rough diamonds must carry a **government-certified Kimberley Process Certificate**.



5. Member countries can trade rough diamonds only with other **Kimberley Process participants**.
6. The Process requires countries to establish **national laws**, internal controls, and transparent trade systems.
7. India is promoting **digital certificates** and **blockchain-based traceability** to strengthen the certification process.
8. The Kimberley Process enhances **consumer confidence**, **ethical trade**, and transparency in the global diamond industry.

THE INDIAN OCEAN DIALOGUE (IOD)

Recent Update: India hosted the **10th Indian Ocean Dialogue** after assuming the **IORA Chairship**.

About

1. The **Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD)** is the flagship **Track 1.5** forum of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**.
2. It was established in **2014** following a decision taken at the **IORA Council of Ministers** in **2013**.
3. The Dialogue brings together **government officials**, **experts**, **think tanks**, and **civil society** representatives.
4. It promotes cooperation on **maritime security**, **Blue Economy**, **trade**, and **disaster management**.
5. The **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** organizes the Dialogue with the **Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)**.
6. Representatives from **23 IORA Member States** and **12 Dialogue Partners** participate in the discussions.
7. The forum functions through **consensus-based dialogue** and voluntary regional cooperation.
8. The Dialogue strengthens **maritime cooperation**, **regional connectivity**, and sustainable development in the **Indian Ocean Region**.

THE COMMON CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT BOARD (CCDB)

Recent Update: India assumed the **Chairmanship of the CCDB** for the **2026–2028** term.

About

1. The **Common Criteria Development Board (CCDB)** manages global **IT security evaluation standards** under the **CCRA**.
2. It develops and maintains the **Common Criteria (ISO/IEC 15408)** and the **Common Evaluation Methodology (CEM)**.
3. The Board ensures internationally accepted standards for evaluating the security of **IT products**.
4. It also maintains the **Common Criteria Portal**, the global repository of certified secure IT products.
5. The CCDB promotes **mutual recognition** of IT security certificates among member countries.

6. India participates through **MeitY** and the **STQC Directorate** as a **Certificate Authorizing Nation**.
7. Technical working groups continuously update standards to address **emerging cybersecurity threats**.
8. The CCDB strengthens **cybersecurity**, **international trust**, and **secure digital ecosystems**.

UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF)

Recent Update: The **UNFF** continued efforts to achieve the **Global Forest Goals 2030**.



About

1. The **United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)** is a global policy forum on **Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)**.
2. It was established in **2000** under the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**.
3. The Forum has **universal membership**, with participation from all **UN Member States**.
4. It promotes **forest conservation**, restoration, and sustainable use through global cooperation.
5. The **UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030** provides six **Global Forest Goals** and related targets.
6. The **Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN)** helps developing countries mobilize forest finance.
7. The **Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)** coordinates the work of major international forest organisations.
8. UNFF strengthens **forest governance**, **biodiversity conservation**, and **sustainable development** worldwide.

THE FAO AGRICOLA MEDAL

Recent Update: Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the prestigious **FAO Agricola Medal**.

About

1. The **FAO Agricola Medal** is the highest institutional honour awarded by the **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)**.
2. It was instituted in **1977** to recognize outstanding contributions to **agriculture** and **food security**.
3. The Medal honours global leaders who have transformed **agrifood systems** through visionary public policies.
4. It is presented directly by the **Director-General of FAO** to distinguished international leaders.
5. **Dr. Manmohan Singh** received the Medal in **2008**, followed by **Narendra Modi** in **2026**.
6. The award recognizes achievements in **sustainable agriculture**, **farmer welfare**, and **rural development**.
7. It highlights global leadership in improving **food security** and promoting resilient farming systems.
8. The Medal reflects FAO's commitment to **sustainable agriculture** and **global nutrition**.

ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION (APO)

Recent Update: India is hosting the **68th Governing Body** meeting of the **Asian Productivity Organisation in New Delhi at Bharat Mandapam from May 20-22**.

About

1. The **Asian Productivity Organisation (APO)** is an intergovernmental organisation that promotes **productivity improvement** in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. It supports member countries through **research**, **capacity building**, and **policy advisory services**.
3. The APO functions as a **think tank**, generating evidence-based strategies for sustainable economic growth.
4. It acts as a **catalyst** by encouraging innovation, institutional reforms, and regional cooperation.
5. The Organization provides **technical assistance** and policy advice to improve national productivity systems.
6. It strengthens **National Productivity Organisations (NPOs)** through training and skill development.
7. The APO also serves as a **knowledge hub**, sharing global best practices and productivity tools.
8. It contributes to **economic competitiveness**, **innovation**, and **sustainable development** across member economies.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISATION – ISO TC 20/SC 14

Recent Update: **BIS** hosted the **35th ISO TC 20/SC 14 Plenary Meeting** in **New Delhi**.

About

1. **ISO TC 20/SC 14** is a subcommittee of **ISO** responsible for **Space Systems and Operations** standards.
2. It develops standards covering the **design**, **manufacturing**, **launch**, and **operation** of space systems.
3. The subcommittee also prepares guidelines for **space safety**, **mission reliability**, and **space sustainability**.
4. The **2026 meeting** focused on **space debris mitigation**, mission safety, and sustainable space operations.
5. Around **131 delegates from 13 countries** participated, including experts from **ISRO**, industry, and academia.
6. The meeting promoted international cooperation in developing **uniform technical standards** for space activities.
7. Such standards improve **interoperability**, **quality assurance**, and the safety of future space missions.
8. The initiative strengthens **global collaboration** and supports the sustainable use of **outer space**.

COMMON CRITERIA RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT (CCRA)

Recent Update: India has been nominated as **the Chair of the Common Criteria Development Board (CCDB)** from **April 2026 to April 2028**

About

1. The **CCRA** is an international agreement for the **mutual recognition** of IT security certificates.
2. It enables **IT products** certified in one member country to be accepted by other participating nations.
3. The arrangement is based on the **Common Criteria (ISO/IEC 15408)** for evaluating information security.
4. It reduces the need for **repeated testing**, saving both time and certification costs.
5. India participates through **MeitY** and the **STQC Directorate** as a **Certificate Authorizing Nation**.
6. The framework enhances global confidence in **secure digital products** and cybersecurity standards.
7. It promotes cooperation among countries in developing **trusted digital technologies**.
8. The CCRA strengthens **cybersecurity**, **international trade**, and the global digital ecosystem.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP ON FORESTS (CPF)

Recent Update: The **CPF** continued supporting the implementation of the **UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030**.

About

1. The **Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)** is an inter-agency partnership supporting **global forest governance**.
2. It brings together major international organizations working on **forest conservation** and **sustainable management**.
3. The partnership is chaired by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**.
4. It promotes coordinated action on **forest restoration**, **biodiversity conservation**, and **climate resilience**.
5. The CPF provides scientific expertise and policy support to the **United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)**.
6. It encourages collaboration among governments, international agencies, and civil society organizations.
7. The partnership supports countries in implementing the **Global Forest Goals** and **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
8. CPF strengthens international cooperation for **sustainable forests**, **ecosystem protection**, and **green development**.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

INDIA–ITALY SPECIAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and Italy upgraded their bilateral ties from a **Strategic Partnership** to a **Special Strategic Partnership** during the Prime Minister's official visit to Italy.

About

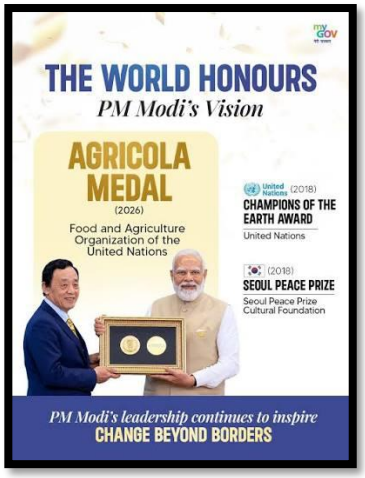
1. India and Italy elevated their bilateral relationship to a **Special Strategic Partnership**, reflecting deeper cooperation across strategic, economic, technological, and geopolitical domains.



2. A new **Foreign Ministers-led mechanism** will periodically review the **Joint Strategic Action Plan (2025–2029)** to ensure effective implementation of agreed priorities.
3. Both countries set an ambitious target of achieving **EUR 20 billion** in bilateral trade by **2029**, focusing on **clean technologies**, **semiconductors**, **critical minerals**, and **pharmaceuticals**.
4. They adopted a **Defence Industrial Roadmap** to promote **co-development**, **co-production**, and collaboration in helicopters, naval platforms, and electronic warfare systems.
5. Cooperation will expand in **Artificial Intelligence**, **green hydrogen**, **renewable energy**, **critical minerals**, and the newly established **INNOVIT India** innovation hub.
6. Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to the **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** as a transformative connectivity initiative linking Asia with Europe.
7. Agreements were also reached to facilitate the mobility of **STEM professionals**, nurses, researchers, and skilled workers while promoting greater cultural and educational exchanges.
8. The partnership significantly strengthens India's engagement with **Europe**, enhances **Indo-Mediterranean connectivity**, and supports **Atmanirbhar Bharat** through advanced technology cooperation.

AGRICOLA MEDAL

Recent Update: The Prime Minister of India received the prestigious **Agricola Medal** from the **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)** for contributions to global food security and sustainable agriculture.



About

1. The **Agricola Medal** is the **highest honour** conferred by the **FAO Director-**

General upon global leaders demonstrating exceptional commitment towards eliminating hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture.

2. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, reducing poverty, and transforming global agrifood systems.
3. India received the honour for implementing the world's largest **food-based social safety net**, benefiting nearly **800 million** people under public food distribution programmes.
4. The FAO also acknowledged **PM-KISAN**, which provides direct income support to more than **110 million farmers** across the country.
5. India's promotion of **natural farming**, **regenerative agriculture**, and **climate-resilient crops**, including the successful celebration of the **International Year of Millets 2023**, received global appreciation.
6. The award highlighted India's effective use of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** for improving agricultural service delivery and farmer welfare.
7. India reaffirmed its commitment to the FAO's **"Four Betters" Framework** comprising **Better Production**, **Better Nutrition**, **Better Environment**, and **Better Life**.
8. The recognition enhances India's global leadership in **food security**, **sustainable agriculture**, and **climate-resilient farming practices**.

INDIA–SWEDEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and Sweden upgraded their relationship to a **Strategic Partnership** and adopted the **Joint Action Plan 2026–2030**.

About

1. India and Sweden elevated bilateral ties by adopting the **Joint Action Plan (2026–2030)** to strengthen long-term cooperation across strategic and emerging sectors.
2. The partnership focuses on **strategic dialogue**, **economic cooperation**, **innovation**, **green technologies**, and **trusted digital connectivity**.
3. Both countries aim to **double bilateral economic exchange** within five years through enhanced trade, investment, and industrial collaboration.
4. Cooperation will expand in **Artificial Intelligence**, **6G**, **quantum computing**, **critical minerals**, **renewable energy**, and **secure digital infrastructure**.
5. Sweden joined **ISRO's Shukrayaan Mission** by contributing the **Venusian Neutrals Analyser (VNA)** payload for scientific research.
6. The two countries will deepen cooperation under initiatives such as **LeadIT**, **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, and **Mission LiFE** to promote climate action.
7. Greater emphasis has been placed on **defence co-production**, innovation ecosystems, intellectual property protection, and startup collaboration.
8. The partnership strengthens India's engagement with the **Nordic region**, promotes advanced technology cooperation, and supports sustainable economic growth.



INDIA–NORDIC SUMMIT 2026

Recent Update: The Prime Minister participated in the **3rd India–Nordic Summit** in **Oslo**, strengthening cooperation with the five Nordic countries.

About

1. The **3rd India–Nordic Summit** brought together India with **Denmark**, **Finland**, **Iceland**, **Norway**, and **Sweden** to deepen strategic cooperation.
2. The partnership was upgraded to a **Green Technology and Innovation Strategic**

Partnership based on democracy, sustainability, and technological innovation.

3. Leaders emphasized successful implementation of the **India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)** and the early conclusion of the **India–EU Free Trade Agreement**.
4. Cooperation expanded in **Artificial Intelligence**, **5G/6G**, **space technology**, **renewable energy**, **green shipping**, and **critical minerals**.
5. The Nordic countries reiterated support for India's permanent membership in a reformed **UN Security Council (UNSC)** and membership in the **Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)**.
6. Defence cooperation will encourage Nordic investments under **100% FDI** in India's **Defence Industrial Corridors** to support **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
7. The summit also strengthened cooperation in **maritime security**, **Arctic research**, **climate finance**, and **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)**.
8. India-Nordic cooperation enhances **innovation-driven growth**, **green transition**, **technology partnerships**, and **Indo-Pacific strategic engagement**.

2026 US–CHINA SUMMIT AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIA

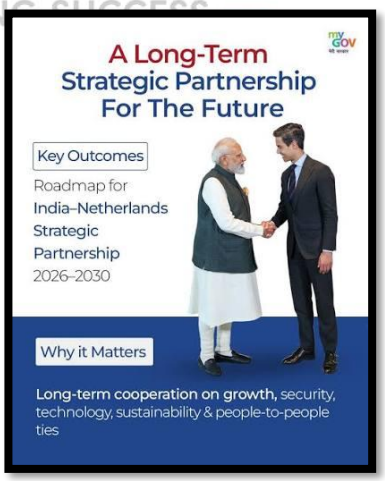
Recent Update: The **US–China Summit** renewed strategic dialogue between the two powers, generating important geopolitical implications for India.

About

1. The **2026 US–China Summit** focused on reducing trade tensions, restoring economic engagement, and maintaining strategic stability between the world's two largest economies.
2. China agreed to increase purchases of **Boeing aircraft**, **American soybeans**, and other products while discussions began on new trade and investment mechanisms.
3. The United States allowed selected Chinese companies to resume purchases of advanced **NVIDIA semiconductor chips**, easing certain technology restrictions.
4. China proposed avoiding the **"Thucydides Trap"**, emphasizing peaceful management of competition between an established and a rising global power.
5. Both countries agreed on the importance of maintaining stability in the **Strait of Hormuz** and preventing nuclear proliferation in **West Asia**.
6. For India, closer US–China engagement may weaken the strategic relevance of the **Quad** and challenge India's vision of a **multipolar Asia**.
7. A prolonged thaw could also slow the global **China Plus One** strategy, affecting manufacturing investments expected to shift towards India.
8. India is expected to strengthen **minilateral partnerships**, diversify strategic alliances, and continue promoting a **rules-based multipolar international order**.

INDIA–NETHERLANDS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (2026–2030)

Recent Update: India and the **Netherlands** adopted the **Strategic Partnership Action Plan (2026–2030)** to deepen cooperation in trade, technology, and sustainability.



About

1. India and the **Netherlands** adopted the **Strategic Partnership Action Plan (2026–2030)** to expand bilateral cooperation across strategic, economic, and technological sectors.
2. Both countries agreed to strengthen collaboration in **semiconductors**, **Artificial**

Intelligence, **cybersecurity**, **quantum technologies**, and **critical minerals**.

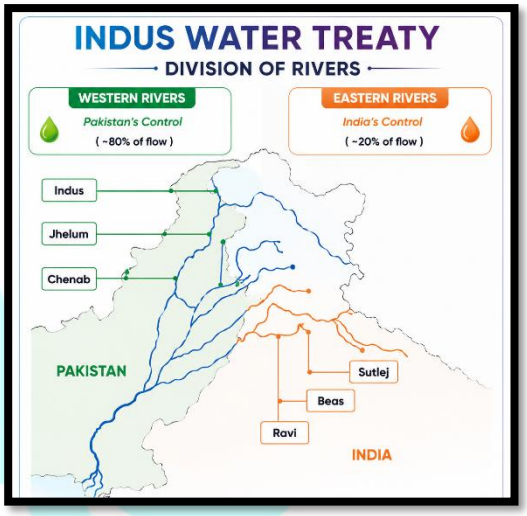
3. The partnership promotes cooperation in **green hydrogen**, **offshore wind energy**, **water management**, and **climate-resilient agriculture**.
4. The Netherlands reaffirmed support for the early conclusion of the **India–European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** and greater investment in India.
5. Maritime cooperation will expand through **port modernization**, **logistics**, **blue economy**, and sustainable shipping initiatives.
6. Both countries agreed to enhance cooperation in **research**, **innovation**, **higher education**, and startup ecosystems.
7. The Action Plan also encourages collaboration in **defence technology**, **supply chain resilience**, and secure digital infrastructure.
8. The partnership strengthens India's engagement with **Europe**, promotes sustainable development, and supports long-term economic growth.

INDIA REJECTS PCA DECISION ON THE INDUS WATERS TREATY

Recent Update: India rejected the **Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** decision regarding the **Indus Waters Treaty**, stating that the tribunal lacked jurisdiction.

About

1. India rejected the **Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** proceedings on the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), 1960**, maintaining that the tribunal was constituted without valid jurisdiction.
2. The dispute primarily relates to India's **Kishanganga** and **Ratle Hydroelectric Projects** on the **Western Rivers** allocated to Pakistan.
3. India argued that treaty disputes should first be resolved through the **Neutral Expert** mechanism before invoking arbitration.
4. The Government maintained that simultaneous proceedings before both the **Neutral Expert** and the **PCA** violate the dispute resolution framework of the Treaty.
5. India emphasized that the Treaty does not permit parallel dispute resolution mechanisms for the same issue.
6. The Government reiterated its commitment to honouring the Treaty while safeguarding India's legitimate rights under its provisions.
7. The issue highlights growing concerns regarding **water security**, treaty interpretation, and transboundary river governance.
8. India continues to support peaceful bilateral resolution of water disputes in accordance with the **Indus Waters Treaty**.



PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION (PCA)

Recent Update: The **Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** remained at the centre of discussions following India's rejection of its jurisdiction in the **Indus Waters Treaty** dispute.

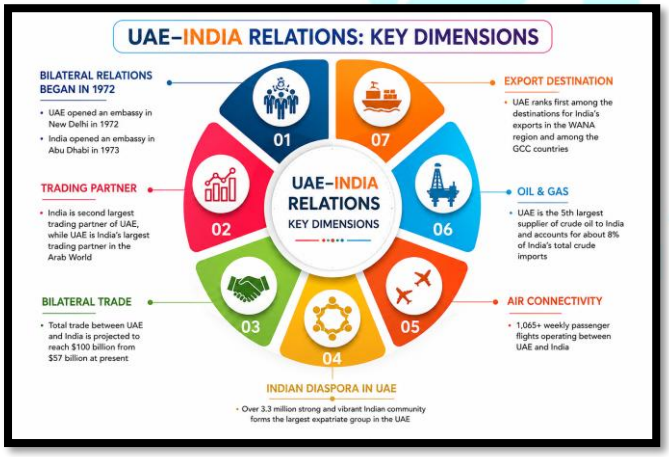
About

1. The **Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** is an intergovernmental organization established under the **1899 Hague Convention** to facilitate peaceful settlement of international disputes.
2. Its headquarters are located at **The Hague**, **Netherlands**, and it functions independently of the **United Nations**.
3. The PCA provides administrative support for arbitration involving **States**, **international organizations**, **private entities**, and **investors**.
4. It does not function as a permanent court with sitting judges but provides arbitral tribunals constituted for specific disputes.

5. The organization administers disputes relating to **territorial boundaries**, **maritime issues**, **investment treaties**, **trade**, and environmental matters.
6. Decisions are binding only when the concerned parties have accepted the tribunal's jurisdiction under the relevant legal framework.
7. The PCA has administered several important international disputes, including maritime and transboundary water disagreements.
8. It remains an important institution for promoting **peaceful dispute resolution**, **international law**, and **rules-based global governance**.

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE UAE

Recent Update: During the Prime Minister's visit, India and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** elevated bilateral relations to a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**.



About

1. India and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** strengthened their bilateral relationship by expanding cooperation across strategic, economic, technological, and defence sectors.
2. Both countries agreed to increase bilateral trade beyond the achievements of the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**.
3. Cooperation was expanded in **Artificial Intelligence**, **digital payments**, **space technology**, **renewable energy**, and **green hydrogen**.
4. The UAE reaffirmed support for the **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** to improve regional connectivity and global trade.
5. Both nations agreed to strengthen collaboration in **counter-terrorism**, **maritime security**, **cybersecurity**, and intelligence sharing.
6. The partnership also promotes investments through the **India–UAE Investment Corridor**, focusing on infrastructure and manufacturing.
7. Greater emphasis was placed on facilitating the mobility of professionals, skilled workers, students, and entrepreneurs between the two countries.
8. The strengthened partnership enhances India's engagement in **West Asia**, improves energy security, and supports long-term economic growth.

BRICS REAFFIRMS TWO-STATE SOLUTION IN THE ISRAEL–PALESTINE CONFLICT

Recent Update: **BRICS** leaders reaffirmed support for a **Two-State Solution** to achieve lasting peace between **Israel** and **Palestine**.

About

1. **BRICS** reiterated its commitment to a **Two-State Solution**, advocating peaceful coexistence between **Israel** and an independent **Palestinian State**.
2. The grouping emphasized that the future Palestinian State should exist peacefully alongside Israel within **secure and internationally recognized borders**.
3. BRICS called for an immediate **ceasefire**, protection of civilians, and unrestricted humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected populations.
4. Leaders stressed the importance of resolving the conflict through **dialogue**, **diplomacy**, and adherence to **international law**.
5. The grouping reiterated support for the **United Nations** as the principal platform for achieving a peaceful settlement.
6. BRICS opposed unilateral actions that could alter the demographic or territorial status of occupied Palestinian territories.

7. India maintained its long-standing policy of supporting a **Two-State Solution** while condemning terrorism and advocating peaceful negotiations.
8. The BRICS position reflects its commitment to **multilateralism**, **regional stability**, and a **rules-based international order**.

INDIA–VIETNAM COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and **Vietnam** expanded their **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**, strengthening cooperation in defence, maritime security, trade, and emerging technologies.



About

1. India and **Vietnam** reaffirmed their **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**, emphasizing stronger cooperation in the **Indo-Pacific** and regional security.
2. Both countries agreed to deepen collaboration in **defence production**, **maritime security**, **cybersecurity**, and **counter-terrorism**.
3. The partnership promotes greater cooperation in **semiconductors**, **Artificial Intelligence**, **digital technologies**, and **critical minerals**.
4. India reiterated support for **ASEAN Centrality** and a **free, open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific**.
5. Both countries emphasized peaceful resolution of disputes in the **South China Sea** in accordance with **UNCLOS, 1982**.
6. Trade, investment, connectivity, and supply-chain resilience remain important pillars of bilateral cooperation.
7. India also supports Vietnam through **capacity building**, **development partnerships**, and **Lines of Credit** for defence and infrastructure.
8. The partnership strengthens India's **Act East Policy**, maritime outreach, and strategic engagement with **Southeast Asia**.

IRAN'S THREAT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

Recent Update: **Iran** warned that it could withdraw from the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** amid escalating tensions over its nuclear programme.

About

1. **Iran** indicated that continued international pressure could lead to its withdrawal from the **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**.
2. The **NPT**, which entered into force in **1970**, seeks to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons while promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
3. The Treaty rests on three pillars—**non-proliferation**, **peaceful use of nuclear energy**, and **nuclear disarmament**.
4. Iran maintains that its nuclear programme is intended for peaceful purposes, while several countries remain concerned about uranium enrichment activities.
5. Withdrawal from the NPT could significantly weaken the global **nuclear non-proliferation regime** and increase regional security concerns.
6. The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** continues to monitor Iran's nuclear facilities under international safeguards.
7. Diplomacy, dialogue, and revival of nuclear agreements remain essential for preventing further escalation.
8. The issue has major implications for **West Asian stability**, **global security**, and the international nuclear order.

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

Recent Update: The **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** remained central to global discussions

following Iran's statements regarding possible withdrawal.

About

1. The **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** entered into force on **5 March 1970** and remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.
2. The Treaty seeks to prevent the spread of **nuclear weapons**, promote **peaceful nuclear technology**, and advance **nuclear disarmament**.
3. It recognizes only **five Nuclear Weapon States (NWS)**—the **United States**, **Russia**, **United Kingdom**, **France**, and **China**.
4. The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** verifies compliance through safeguards and inspections of civilian nuclear facilities.
5. **India**, **Pakistan**, **Israel**, and **South Sudan** are not parties to the Treaty, while **North Korea** withdrew in **2003**.
6. The Treaty has near-universal membership and remains one of the world's most widely accepted arms-control agreements.
7. Critics argue that the NPT creates inequalities by permanently recognizing only five nuclear-weapon states.
8. Despite challenges, the NPT remains essential for **global nuclear security**, **arms control**, and **international peace**.

INDIA–NEPAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: During their May 2026, high-level meetings in New Delhi, India and Nepal reaffirmed their "***Neighbourhood First***" partnership.

About

1. India and **Nepal** share a unique relationship based on **civilizational ties**, an **open border**, and extensive people-to-people interactions.
2. Both countries cooperate closely in **hydropower**, **cross-border connectivity**, **trade**, **education**, and **capacity building**.
3. India remains Nepal's largest trading partner and a major development partner through grants, **Lines of Credit**, and infrastructure projects.
4. Cross-border railway projects, integrated check posts, and petroleum pipelines have significantly improved bilateral connectivity.
5. Cooperation in the energy sector focuses on **hydropower development**, electricity trade, and regional power grid integration.
6. Both countries continue dialogue to resolve outstanding boundary issues through peaceful diplomatic mechanisms.
7. Cultural and religious ties, including the **Ramayana Circuit** and **Buddhist pilgrimage routes**, further strengthen bilateral relations.
8. Stable India–Nepal relations are vital for **regional stability**, **Himalayan security**, and **South Asian cooperation**.

INDIA–NEW ZEALAND RELATIONS

Recent Update: *India and New Zealand signed a historic Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in **New Delhi** on April 27, 2026.*

About

1. India and **New Zealand** are strengthening bilateral relations through expanded cooperation in **trade**, **investment**, **education**, and **technology**.
2. Both countries support a **free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific** founded on international law and freedom of navigation.
3. Cooperation is growing in **agriculture**, **food processing**, **renewable energy**, **digital technologies**, and **innovation**.
4. The two countries are working towards expanding bilateral trade and exploring opportunities for deeper economic engagement.
5. Educational partnerships, research collaboration, and greater mobility of students and skilled professionals remain important priorities.
6. Both nations cooperate in multilateral forums on issues such as **climate change**, **sustainable development**, and **maritime security**.
7. Strong democratic values, respect for international law, and people-to-people exchanges provide a solid foundation for the partnership.

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8. Enhanced India–New Zealand relations contribute to **Indo-Pacific stability**, economic growth, and diversified global partnerships.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FUND (UNDPF)

Recent Update: India and the United Nations recently reviewed the implementation and effectiveness of the **United Nations Development Partnership Fund (UNDPF)**.

About

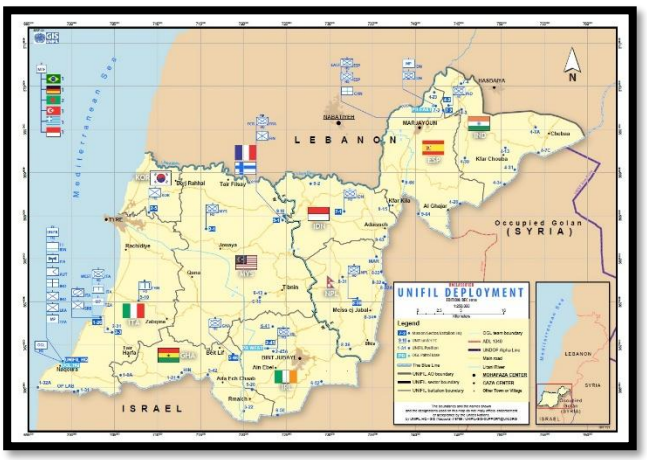
1. **United Nations Development Partnership Fund (UNDPF)** was launched in **2017** by the **Government of India** with a contribution of **US$150 million**.
2. The fund aims to support the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** through **South-South Cooperation** and shared prosperity.
3. It is managed by the **United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)** and implemented by **UN agencies** in partnership with participating governments.
4. The fund primarily supports projects in **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** and **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**.
5. It follows a **country-led** and **demand-driven** approach, ensuring that partner countries determine their own development priorities.
6. The initiative promotes **capacity building**, sustainable development, knowledge sharing and technical cooperation among developing countries.
7. **UNOSSC** is the principal UN body responsible for promoting **South-South and Triangular Cooperation**.

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)

Recent Update: UNIFIL continues to monitor the **Blue Line** and maintain peace amid tensions between **Lebanon and Israel**.

About

1. **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)** is a **United Nations Peacekeeping Mission** established by the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** in **1978** through **Resolutions 425 and 426**.



2. It was created following **Israel's invasion of Lebanon** to oversee Israeli withdrawal and restore international peace and security.
3. The mission monitors the **121-km Blue Line**, which separates **Lebanon** from **Israel and the Golan Heights**, and works to prevent hostilities.
4. UNIFIL is funded through a **separate UN peacekeeping budget** approved annually by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
5. Peacekeepers may use force only in **self-defence** or to **protect civilians** under their mandate.
6. Major troop-contributing countries include **Indonesia, Italy, India, Nepal and China**, while its headquarters is located at **Naqoura, southern Lebanon**.
7. The **Blue Line** is a **UN-demarcated withdrawal line**, **not an internationally recognised international border**.

THE ISLAMABAD TALKS

Recent Update: The Islamabad Talks were held to de-escalate the **US–Israeli conflict with Iran**, marking the **first direct high-level engagement** between the **United States** and **Iran** since the **1979 Islamic Revolution**.

About

1. **The Islamabad Talks** were high-level diplomatic negotiations hosted in **Islamabad, Pakistan**, to reduce tensions arising from the

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US–Israeli war with Iran that began in **February 2026**.

2. **Pakistan** acted as the **mediator**, facilitating dialogue between the concerned parties to promote regional peace and stability.
3. The talks represented the **first direct and highest-level engagement** between the **United States** and the **Islamic Republic of Iran** since the **1979 Iranian Revolution**.
4. Their primary objective was to convert the existing **two-week ceasefire** into a **permanent peace agreement** through diplomatic negotiations.
5. Discussions included the **reopening of the Strait of Hormuz**, ensuring uninterrupted global energy supplies and maritime security.
6. The negotiations also focused on **Iran's nuclear enrichment programme**, commitments against **nuclear weapons development**, and wider regional de-escalation involving the **Axis of Resistance**.
7. The **Strait of Hormuz** is one of the world's most important **oil transit chokepoints**, connecting the **Persian Gulf** with the **Gulf of Oman** and the **Arabian Sea**.

INDIA–SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS (2026)

Recent Update: India and the **Republic of Korea (South Korea)** unveiled a **Joint Strategic Vision (2026–2030)** during the visit of **President Lee Jae Myung** to India.

About

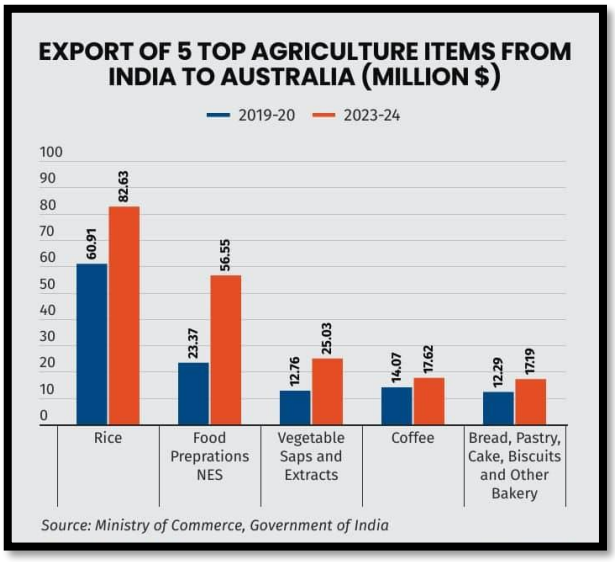
1. India and **South Korea** established a **Special Strategic Partnership** in **2015**, strengthening cooperation in trade, defence, technology and regional security.
2. Bilateral trade stands at around **USD 27 billion**, with the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, operational since **2010**, serving as the principal trade agreement.
3. Defence cooperation includes the **manufacturing of K9 Vajra howitzers** in India through **technology transfer**, along with the **IN-ROKN Naval Exercise** and the **KIND-X Defence Accelerator Initiative**.
4. Under the **Joint Strategic Vision 2026–2030**, both countries agreed to **double bilateral trade to USD 54 billion by 2030** and established an **Economic Security Dialogue**.
5. South Korea joined the **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)** and the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, while India became a member of the **Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)**.
6. Both countries launched the **India–Korea Digital Bridge** for collaboration in **Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors and Information Technology**, besides initiating cooperation under the **VOYAGES** maritime partnership.
7. The years **2028–29** have been designated as the **Year of India–Republic of Korea Friendship** to strengthen people-to-people and strategic relations.

INDIA–AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE AGREEMENT (INDIA–AUSTRALIA ECTA)

Recent Update: India–Australia ECTA completed **four years** in **2026**, with **Australia providing duty-free access to 100% of Indian exports**.

About

1. **India–Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)** was signed in **2022** to strengthen bilateral economic, commercial and investment relations.



2. It is India's **first trade agreement with a developed country** in more than a decade and has significantly expanded bilateral trade.

3. Following ECTA, Indian exports of **apparel, iron & steel and agricultural products** have witnessed substantial growth, while Australian goods have received phased tariff reductions in India.
4. From **1 January 2026**, **Australia provides duty-free access to 100% of Indian exports**, while India continues phased tariff liberalisation for Australian goods.
5. The agreement also strengthens cooperation in **investment, services, supply chains and economic resilience** between the two countries.
6. Australia's **National Defence Strategy (2024)** identifies **India** as a **Top-Tier Security Partner** in the **Indo-Pacific Region**, highlighting growing strategic cooperation.
7. In **FY 2024–25**, **India** was Australia's **8th largest trading partner**, while **Australia** was India's **14th largest trading partner**.

INDIA–NEW ZEALAND FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA)

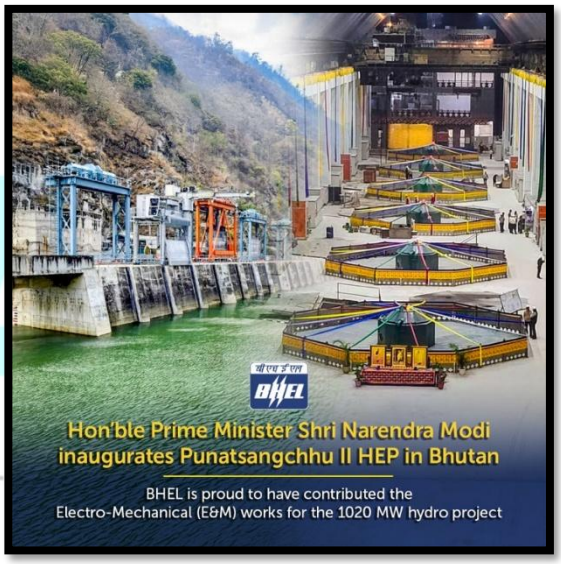
Recent Update: India and New Zealand recently signed a landmark **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** to enhance bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation.

About

1. The **India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** aims to deepen bilateral economic integration by promoting trade, investment and market access between the two countries.
2. **New Zealand** has granted **100% duty-free access** to all **Indian exports**, benefiting sectors such as **textiles, leather, footwear, gems and MSMEs**.
3. New Zealand has committed to invest **USD 20 billion** in India over the next **15 years**, strengthening long-term economic cooperation.
4. India has provided market access across nearly **70% of tariff lines**, while retaining around **30% of tariff lines** under the exclusion list to protect sensitive sectors such as **dairy, sugar and onions**.
5. The agreement includes **Product Specific Rules of Origin (PSRO)** to prevent misuse of trade preferences and ensure genuine value addition.
6. It also provides **5,000 temporary employment visas annually** for skilled Indians and recognises **Ayurveda and Yoga**, besides expanding cooperation in **118 services sectors**.
7. The agreement grants **Most-Favoured Nation (MFN)** treatment across **139 sectors**, while also establishing an **Agricultural Productivity Partnership**.

PUNATSANGCHHU-II HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

Recent Update: Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project continues to strengthen **India–Bhutan hydropower cooperation** under the bilateral Inter-Government Agreement.



About

1. **Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project** is a **1,020 MW run-of-the-river hydropower project** located on the **Punatsangchhu River** in **Bhutan**.
2. The project is being developed by the **Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project Authority** under an **Inter-Government Agreement (IGA)** between **India and Bhutan**.
3. The project is financed by the **Government of India**, with **30% funding as grant** and **70% as loan**.
4. It aims to enhance **clean energy generation**, strengthen **regional energy security**, and deepen bilateral cooperation in the hydropower sector.
5. The **Punatsangchhu River** is formed by the confluence of the **Phochhu** and **Mochhu** rivers in Bhutan.

6. The river flows southwards into **West Bengal** before joining the **Brahmaputra River** system.
7. The project is a **run-of-the-river hydropower project**, which generates electricity without creating a large storage reservoir.

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION (CPA)

Recent Update: The **First Conference of the CPA India Region (Zone–VII)** was recently concluded in **Goa**, highlighting parliamentary cooperation within the Commonwealth.

About

1. The **Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)** was established in **1911** and is one of the **oldest parliamentary associations** in the Commonwealth.
2. It provides a platform for **Parliamentarians** to exchange ideas, strengthen democratic institutions and share **best legislative practices**.
3. The Association comprises over **180 legislatures (Branches)** distributed across **nine geographical regions** of the Commonwealth, with **India** being an active member.
4. The **CPA Secretariat** is located in the **Houses of Parliament, London (United Kingdom)**.
5. The **Commonwealth** is a voluntary association of **56 member countries**, the majority of which were formerly part of the **British Empire**.
6. In India, the **Lok Sabha Speaker** serves as the **Chairperson of the CPA India Region**, and India has **32 CPA Branches**, the second-highest after the Africa Region.
7. **CPA is not an organ of the Commonwealth Secretariat** but an independent association of Commonwealth legislatures.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTION VISITORS' PROGRAMME (IEVP), 2026

Recent Update: The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** launched the **International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) 2026** during the **Legislative Assembly Elections** in **Assam, Kerala and Puducherry**.

About

1. **International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP)** is an international outreach initiative of the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** to showcase India's electoral process.
2. Under the programme, **election officials and delegates** from various countries are invited to **observe Indian elections** and understand electoral management practices.
3. The initiative aims to promote **international cooperation**, transparency and the exchange of **best electoral practices** among democracies.
4. The programme demonstrates the functioning of **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** and the **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)** system.
5. Delegates are also introduced to digital initiatives such as the **cVIGIL App**, which enables citizens to report **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** violations.
6. The programme strengthens India's reputation as the world's **largest democracy** by promoting confidence in its **free, fair and transparent electoral process**.
7. The **cVIGIL App** allows citizens to report election-related violations in **real time** with geo-tagged photographic evidence.

WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY (WADA)

Recent Update: The **Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports** recently addressed the **Final Conference of WADA's Global Anti-Doping Intelligence & Investigations Network (GAIIN)**.

About

1. The **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** was established in **1999** under the **Lausanne Declaration** as an independent international organisation to combat doping in sports.
2. Its primary objective is to promote and coordinate the global movement for **doping-free sport** through harmonised anti-doping policies and regulations.
3. WADA operates through an **equal partnership** between governments and the international sports movement for governance and funding.
4. The organisation is headquartered in **Montreal, Canada**, and its highest policy-making body is the **42-member Foundation Board**, of which **India** is a member.
5. In India, the **National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)**, established in **2005**, implements anti-doping programmes in accordance with the **WADA Code**.
6. Major WADA initiatives include the **World Anti-Doping Code (WADC)** and the **Global Anti-Doping Intelligence and Investigations Network (GAIIN)** to strengthen international cooperation against doping.

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Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

Why in the news?

India hosted the **10th Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD)** under the theme **"Indian Ocean Region in a Transforming World."**



About

- **Established: 1997**
- **Nature:** Inter-governmental organisation.
- **Objective:** Promote **regional cooperation** and **sustainable development** in the Indian Ocean Region.
- **Secretariat: Ebène, Mauritius**
- **Members: 23 Member States** and **12 Dialogue Partners**

Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD)

- Flagship **Track 1.5 Dialogue Platform** under **IORA**.
- Brings together **governments, policymakers, experts, academia, and think tanks** to deliberate on regional issues.

Institutional Mechanism

- **Council of Ministers:** Highest decision-making body.
- **Chair:** Elected by the Council of Ministers for a **2-year term**.
- **India's Chairmanship: 2025–2027**.

Global Network Against Food Crises (GNFC)

Why in the news?

The **Global Network Against Food Crises (GNFC)** released the **10th Global Report on Food Crises, 2026**.

Key Facts:

- **266+ million people** in **47 countries** faced **acute food insecurity** in **2025**.
- **Conflict** overtook **extreme weather** as the **leading driver** of food crises.

About

- **Established by: FAO**, **European Union (EU)** and **World Food Programme (WFP)** at the **World Humanitarian Summit**.
- **Nature:** Multi-stakeholder initiative.
- **Purpose:** Address the **root causes of food crises** and promote **sustainable solutions**.

Related Initiative: Hunger Map

- **Launched by: World Food Programme (WFP)**
- **Purpose:** AI-assisted **real-time food security monitoring** to support humanitarian response against global hunger.

About World Food Programme (WFP)

- **Headquarters: Rome, Italy**
- **Established: 1961** by the **UN General Assembly** and **FAO**.
- **Status:** World's **largest humanitarian agency** combating hunger and responding to emergencies.
- **Presence:** Operates in **120+ countries**.
- **Funding: Voluntary contributions** from governments, corporates, and private donors.

Regions in News

Why in the news?

- **Belgorod Region (Russia):** Came into focus after **Ukrainian missile and drone strikes** targeted Russia's Belgorod region, causing casualties and damaging critical energy infrastructure.
- **Falkland Islands:** In the news after the **United Kingdom rejected any change to its sovereignty** over the Falkland Islands amid a review of the **United States' policy** on the issue.
- **Pratas (Dongsha) Islands:** Came into focus after a **Chinese Coast Guard vessel was spotted near the Taiwan-administered Pratas Islands** in the South China Sea.

Belgorod Region (Russia)

About

- **Location:** Southwestern **Russia**, sharing a border with **Ukraine**.
- **Significance:**
  - Major **industrial hub**.
  - Produces nearly **one-third of Russia's iron ore**.
  - One of Russia's leading **agricultural regions**.

Falkland Islands



About

- **Status:** Self-governing **British Overseas Territory** in the **South Atlantic Ocean**.
- **Composition:** Two major islands (**East Falkland** & **West Falkland**) and several hundred smaller islands.
- **Location:** About **480 km northeast** of the southern tip of **South America** and east of the **Strait of Magellan**.
- **Dispute:** Claimed by **Argentina**; sovereignty dispute led to the **Falklands War (1982)**.

Pratas (Dongsha) Islands

About

- **Location: South China Sea**.
- **Administration:** Governed by **Taiwan**; claimed by **China**.
- **Features:**
  - Coral atoll comprising **three islands**.
  - **Dongsha Island** is the only island above sea level.
  - **North Vereker Bank** and **South Vereker Bank** remain submerged.
- **Other disputed features in the South China Sea: Spratly Islands**, **Paracel Islands**, **Scarborough Shoal**.

B'nei Menashe Community

Why in the news?

The **Government of Israel relocated over 240 members of the B'nei Menashe community from Manipur and Mizoram to Tel Aviv** under its programme facilitating the return of Jewish communities.

About

- **Community:** Jewish-identifying community from **Manipur and Mizoram**.
- **Ethnic Origin:** Belong to the **Mizo-Kuki tribes**.
- **Claim:** Descendants of one of the **Ten Lost Tribes of Israel** (**Tribe of Menashe/Manasseh**).
- **Historical Context:** The **Tribe of Menashe** was exiled by the **Assyrians in 722 BC**.
- **Meaning: B'nei Menashe** means **"Children of Manasseh"** in **Hebrew**.

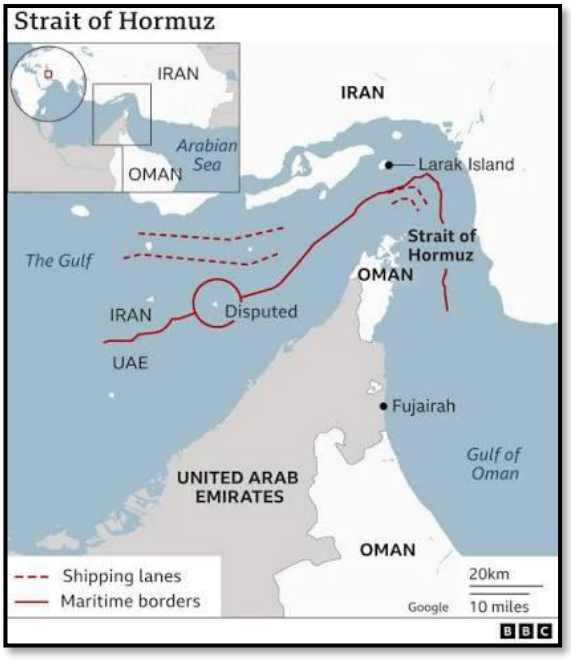
Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA)

Why in the news?

Iran announced the establishment of the Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA) to regulate and manage operations in the strategically important **Strait of Hormuz**.

About

- **Nature:** Iran's regulatory authority for the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- **Mandate:**
  - Monitor developments in the Strait.
  - Coordinate operations related to the vital shipping corridor.
- **Regulatory Powers:**
  - Vessels must **comply with directives** issued by the Authority.
  - Ships are required to obtain **transit permits** before entering the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Transit Toll:** Proposed to administer a **transit toll mechanism**, with operational details yet to be announced by Iran.



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ECONOMY

INDEX

01. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

02. All India Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

03. Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2026-2033

04. Startup India Fund of Funds (FoF) 2.0

05. Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool)

06. Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana (BHAVYA) Scheme

07. Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0

08. Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs)

09. Mizoram Ginger Mission

10. Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA)

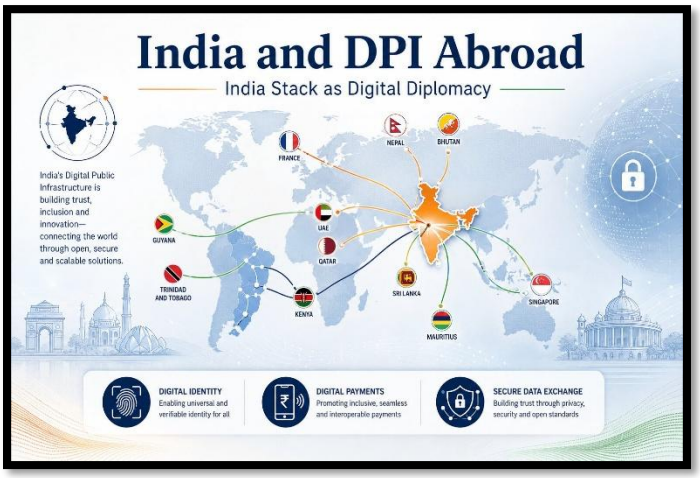
11. EPF Aadhaar-Based Access Portal for Tracking Inoperative Accounts (E-PRAAPTI)

12. LEADS 2025 Report

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

Why in the news?

NITI Aayog launched the **"DPI@2047 for Viksit Bharat"** roadmap to promote **inclusive, livelihood-centric and productivity-led growth**.



About

- **Definition:** Interoperable digital systems built around **Digital Identity, Instant Payments & Consent-based Data Sharing**.
- **Objective:** Deliver secure, inclusive and efficient digital public services.
- **Roadmap:**
  - **DPI 2.0 (2025–2035):** Livelihood-led growth.
  - **DPI 3.0 (2035–2047):** Broad-based prosperity.

Key Features

- **Three Pillars:** Digital Identity • Digital Payments • Data Exchange
- **Characteristics:** Interoperability • Scalability • Inclusivity • Good Governance

JAM Trinity

- **Jan Dhan**
- **Aadhaar**
- **Mobile**

DPI 2.0 – Core Components

Sectoral Transformations: MSMEs, Agriculture, Finance, Education, Health, Energy, Social Protection

System Enablers

- Credit
- Decentralised Energy
- Benefit Delivery

Execution Imperatives

- District-level demand aggregation
- AI adoption
- Technology entrepreneurship
- Cross-sector integration

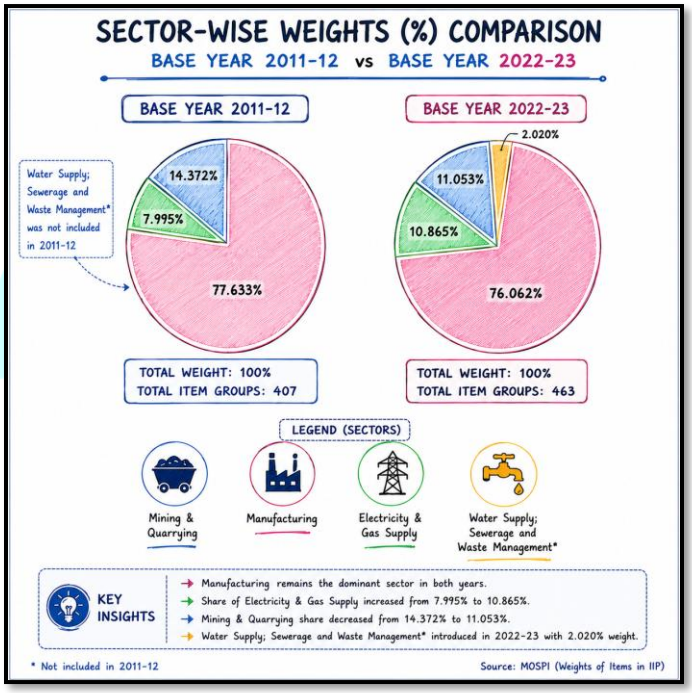
Challenges

- Digital Divide
- Data Privacy & Cybersecurity
- Interoperability
- Digital Literacy
- Regulatory Bottlenecks

ALL INDIA INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP)

Why in the news?

- **MoSPI revised the IIP base year from 2011–12 to 2022–23** to reflect India's current industrial structure and improve the accuracy of industrial statistics.



About IIP

Definition

- Composite index measuring **short-term changes in the volume of industrial production** compared to a base year.

Released by: **National Statistics Office (NSO)** under **MoSPI**.

Frequency: **Monthly** (released with a **28-day time lag**).
Index Formula: **Laspeyres Fixed-Base Volume Index**.
Base Year" **2022–23** (earlier **2011–12**).

Major Changes in IIP (2022–23 Series)

1. Base Year Revision

- 2011–12 → **2022–23**

2. Expanded Coverage

New activities added: Gas Supply, Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management

3. Inclusive Mining Classification

New inclusion: *Minor Minerals, Rare Earth Minerals Mining is now classified into: Fuel Minerals, Metallic Minerals, and Non-Metallic Minerals.*

4. Revamped Product Basket

Added: CCTV Cameras, Aircraft Parts, Stents, Vaccines (other than veterinary), Magnetic Stripe Cards, Non-woven Textile Products

Removed: Kerosene, CFLs, Fluorescent Tubes, Bicycle/Rickshaw Tyre Tubes, Printing Machinery, Sewing Machines

5. Inclusion of n.e.c. Items

- **n.e.c. = Not Elsewhere Classified**
- Captures niche, innovative and diversified products.

6. Enhanced Granularity

Electricity Index now separately tracks: Renewable Power and Non-renewable Power

7. Factory Substitution: Permanently closed factories can be replaced with comparable production units.

8. Chain-Linked Index

- Introduced alongside the traditional fixed-base index.
- Allows annual updating of weights.
- Better captures structural industrial changes.

9. Linking Method

- **Geometric Mean** replaces **Arithmetic Mean** for linking old and new series.

10. Price Deflator

Current: Wholesale Price Index (WPI)

Future: Output Producer Price Index (Output PPI)

Why is IIP Important?

- Measures industrial growth.
- Key indicator of economic activity.
- Helps RBI in monetary policy.
- Assists the government in fiscal policy.
- Useful for business forecasting and investment decisions.
- Tracks performance of industrial sectors.

COUNTRY STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME (COSOP) 2026–2033

Why in the news?

- **Government of India and IFAD launched the Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2026–2033** to strengthen rural livelihoods, climate resilience and inclusive rural development.



About COSOP 2026–2033

Full Form: Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP)

Partners

- Government of India
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**

Duration

- **2026–2033**

Purpose

- Multi-year strategic framework guiding **IFAD's rural development investments** in India.

Major Objectives

1. Build Rural Resilience

- Social resilience
- Economic resilience
- Climate resilience

2. Strengthen Knowledge Systems

- Scale successful rural development models.
- Promote innovation and best practices.

3. Promote Collective Institutions

Focus on:

- Self Help Groups (**SHGs**)
- Farmer Producer Organisations (**FPOs**)

- Rural Cooperatives

Purpose:

- Better access to finance
- Market linkages
- Rural infrastructure
- Value-chain integration

Strategic Partnership with NABARD

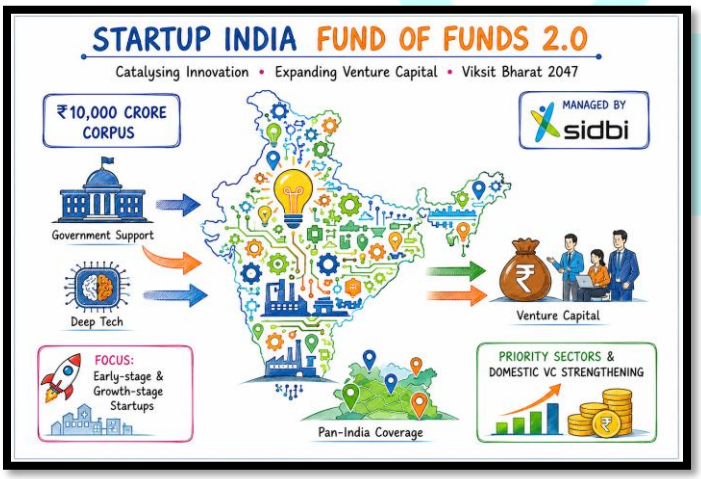
Alongside COSOP, **IFAD partnered with NABARD** to:

- Strengthen rural financial ecosystems.
- Expand inclusive credit.
- Improve access to finance for small and marginal farmers.
- Support women and rural entrepreneurs.

STARTUP INDIA FUND OF FUNDS (FoF) 2.0

Why in the news?

- **DPIIT issued the operational guidelines for the Startup India Fund of Funds (FoF) 2.0 Scheme** to strengthen funding support for India's startup ecosystem.



About Startup India Fund of Funds (FoF) 2.0

Launched By

- **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**

Ministry: **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**

Objective:

- Improve access to capital for **DPIIT-recognised startups** by supporting venture capital funds.

Background:

- Successor to **Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS 1.0)** launched in **2016** under the **Startup India Action Plan**.

Key Features:

Fund Corpus

- **₹10,000 crore**
- Spread across the **16th and 17th Finance Commission** cycles.

Implementing Agency

- **SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India)** as the initial Implementing Agency.
- DPIIT may appoint another domestic Implementing Agency later.

Investment Model

- **No direct investment in startups.**
- Government invests in **SEBI-registered Category I & II Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)**.
- These AIFs, in turn, invest in **DPIIT-recognised startups**.

Funding Norms

- Government contribution in any selected AIF **cannot exceed 50%** of the AIF corpus.

Priority Investment Areas

- Deep-Tech Startups
- Early-stage Startups
- Smaller AIFs
- Technology-driven Manufacturing
- Sector-agnostic Startups

Selection Process

Two-stage selection:

1. Screening by **Venture Capital Investment Committee (VCIC)**
2. Final approval by the **Implementing Agency's Board Sub-Committee**

Monitoring & Governance

- Regular monitoring by **DPIIT** and the Implementing Agency.
- Periodic reviews.
- Annual reports.
- Independent third-party evaluation every **5 years**.

Returns under the Scheme

- Returns deposited into the **Consolidated Fund of India (CFI)**.
- Up to **5% of returns** may be used for:
  - Mentorship

- Workshops
- Capacity building
- Startup ecosystem development

BHARAT MARITIME INSURANCE POOL (BMI Pool)

Why in the news?

- The Government launched the **Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool)** to ensure uninterrupted ***maritime insurance coverage*** and safeguard ***India's maritime trade***.



About BMI Pool

- Government-backed **maritime insurance pool**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.
- **Insurance Capacity: US$ 1.5 Billion**.
- **Sovereign Guarantee: ₹12,980 Crore**.
- **Pool Administrator: General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re).**

Objective

- Ensure uninterrupted maritime insurance.
- Reduce dependence on foreign insurers and reinsurers.
- Strengthen India's maritime trade security and financial sovereignty.

Coverage

BMI Pool covers four major maritime risks:

- **Hull & Machinery (H&M):** Covers physical damage to the ship, machinery and equipment.
- **Cargo Insurance:** Covers loss or damage to goods transported by sea.
- **Protection & Indemnity (P&I):** Covers third-party liabilities such as pollution, crew injury, collision liability and wreck removal.
- **War Risk Insurance:** Covers losses arising from war, piracy, terrorism and hostile acts.

Eligible Vessels

- Indian-flagged vessels.
- Indian-controlled vessels.
- Vessels originating from or destined for India.

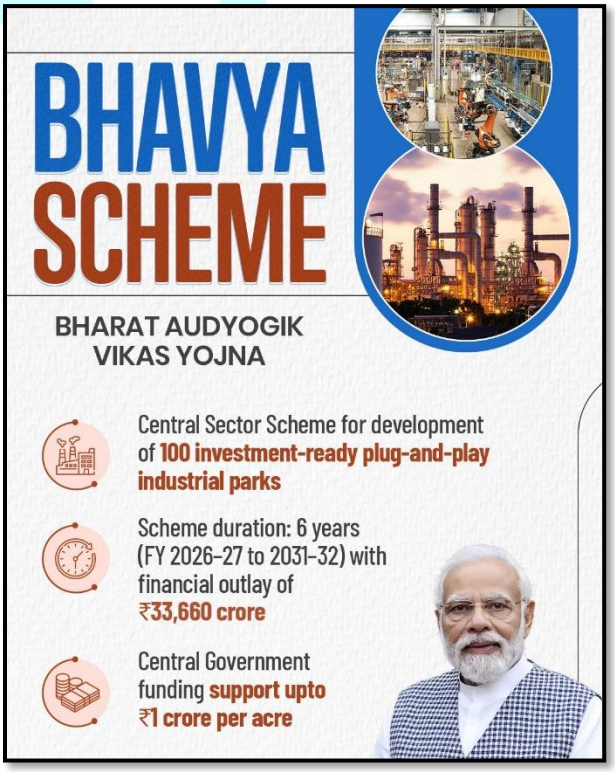
How the Pool Operates

- Domestic insurers issue policies using the combined capacity of pool members.
- Combined underwriting capacity is about **₹950 crore**.
- Claims up to **US$100 million** are paid by the Pool.
- Claims above **US$100 million** are backed by the **Government's Sovereign Guarantee**.

BHARAT AUDYOGIK VIKAS YOJANA (BHAVYA) SCHEME

Why in the news?

- **DPIIT** released the operational guidelines for implementing the **BHAVYA Scheme**.



About BHAVYA

- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme.

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce & Industry (DPIIT).
- **Duration: 2026–27 to 2031–32 (6 years).**
- **Outlay: ₹33,660 crore.**

Objective

- Develop globally competitive manufacturing ecosystems through **Plug-and-Play Industrial Parks**, attract investments, strengthen domestic supply chains and generate employment.

Key Features

- Target to develop **100 Plug-and-Play Industrial Parks**.
- Implemented with **States, CPSUs and Private Sector**.
- Covers **Greenfield** and eligible **Brownfield** industrial parks.
- **Minimum land requirement:**
  - **100 acres** (General States)
  - **25 acres** (Hilly States, NE States, UTs & Smaller States)
- Parks up to **1000 acres** are permitted.

Funding Pattern

- Financial assistance through **National Industrial Corridor Development and Investment Trust (NICDIT)**.
- Support primarily through **equity contribution**.
- Assistance up to **₹1 crore per acre** *(except private developer projects)*.
- Covers:
  - **Core Infrastructure:** Roads, power, ICT, administrative systems.
  - **Value-added Infrastructure:** Factory sheds, warehousing.
  - **Social Infrastructure:** Worker housing and common amenities.
- External infrastructure supports up to **25% of the project cost**.

EMERGENCY CREDIT LINE GUARANTEE SCHEME (ECLGS) 5.0

Why in the news?

- The **Union Cabinet approved ECLGS 5.0** to provide guaranteed emergency credit to businesses affected by the **West Asia Crisis**.

About ECLGS

- **Launched: 2020** under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Package**.
- **Nodal Department: Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance**.
- **Guarantee Agency: National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd. (NCGTC)**.
- **Objective:** Provide **government-backed credit guarantee** to **Member Lending Institutions (MLIs)** for extending additional credit to eligible borrowers facing temporary liquidity stress.
- **ECLGS provides a guarantee to lenders, not direct loans to borrowers.**



- **MLIs** include eligible **Banks, Financial Institutions and NBFCs**.

Key Features of ECLGS 5.0

- Introduced to address liquidity stress arising from the **West Asia Crisis**.
- **Eligible Borrowers:**
  - MSMEs
  - Non-MSMEs with existing working capital limits
  - Scheduled Passenger Airlines
- Borrower's loan account must be **Standard (non-NPA)** as on **31 March 2026**.

Guarantee Coverage

- **100%** for **MSMEs**.
- **90%** for **Non-MSMEs** and **Scheduled Passenger Airlines**.

Loan Tenure

- **MSMEs & Non-MSMEs: 5 years**, including **1-year moratorium**.
- **Airline Sector: 7 years**, including **2-year moratorium**.

ELECTRONIC GOLD RECEIPTS (EGRs)

Why in News?

- The **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** launched **Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs)** to formalise and deepen India's gold market.
- **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)** was the **first exchange** to launch EGRs in **2022**.

About EGRs

- **Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs)** are **dematerialised securities** representing ownership of **physical gold**.
- The underlying gold is stored in **SEBI-accredited vaults** and held electronically through **depositories**.



- **Each EGR is fully backed by physical gold** of assured quality.
- EGRs can be **bought, sold and traded** on recognised stock exchanges.
- They can be **redeemed at any time for physical gold**, unlike **Gold ETFs**, which are generally **cash-settled**.

Key Features

- **Regulator:** Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**).
- **Legal Status:** Recognised as **securities** under the **Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956 (SCRA)**.
- **Market Participants:** Retail investors, jewellers, bullion traders and other eligible investors.
- Integrates **physical gold with the financial market**, improving transparency, liquidity and price discovery.

MIZORAM GINGER MISSION

Why in the news?

- The **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER)** and the **Government of Mizoram** launched the **Mizoram Ginger Mission** to promote cultivation and value addition of **Mizoram's GI-certified ginger**.

About Ginger

- **Scientific Name:** *Zingiber officinale* Rosc.
- **Family: Zingiberaceae**.
- **Status:** India is one of the **largest producers of ginger** globally.

Major Producing States

- Madhya Pradesh
- Gujarat
- Andhra Pradesh



Agro-Climatic Requirements

- **Climate:** Warm and humid; suitable up to **1500 m altitude**.
- **Temperature: 12–35°C**.
- **Rainfall:** Around **1500 mm annually**; moderate rainfall during sowing and dry weather before harvesting.
- **Soil:** Well-drained **sandy loam, clay loam or lateritic loam**, rich in humus.

Importance

- Rich in **antioxidant** and **anti-inflammatory** compounds.
- Used in treating **nausea**, and helps manage **blood sugar (HbA1c)** and **cholesterol** levels.

PAST RISK AND RETURN VERIFICATION AGENCY (PaRRVA)

Why in News?

- **SEBI operationalised the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA)** to standardise and verify performance claims made by regulated market entities.

About PaRRVA:

- A **SEBI-regulated verification framework** to authenticate **past risk and return performance** claimed by regulated financial market entities.
- Brings **standardisation, transparency and accountability** to performance-related disclosures.
- Enables investors to rely on **verified**

performance data instead of unverified marketing claims.

Key Features



- **Launched by:** Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**).
- **Designated PaRRVA: CARE Ratings Limited**.
- **PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC): National Stock Exchange (NSE)**.
- **Verification Scope:**
  - Investment Advisers (IAs)
  - Research Analysts (RAs)
  - Algorithmic Trading Service Providers
- **Advertisements:** Only **PaRRVA-verified performance data** can be used in advertisements, subject to SEBI regulations.
- Provides a **standardised and authenticated format** for reporting past risk and return metrics.

Timeline

- **Framework issued: 4 April 2025**
- **Pilot Phase: 8 December 2025**
- **Operational Launch: May 2026**

Fact: *PaRRVA verifies past performance claims; it does not rate, certify or guarantee future investment returns.*

EPF AADHAAR-BASED ACCESS PORTAL FOR TRACKING INOPERATIVE ACCOUNTS (E-PRAAPTI)

Why in the news?

- **EPFO launched the E-PRAAPTI portal** to help members identify, track and activate old **inoperative EPF accounts** not linked with the **Universal Account Number (UAN)**.

About E-PRAAPTI

- A digital platform that connects **legacy EPF accounts** with the **UAN ecosystem**.
- **Launched by:** Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (**EPFO**).
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- **Objective:** Enable members to securely trace, update and claim deposits lying in old/inoperative EPF accounts.



Key Features

- **Aadhaar-based authentication** for secure identity verification.
- Facilitates **tracking, activation and UAN-linking** of old EPF accounts.
- Allows members to **update their profile details** online before UAN linkage.
- Minimises **physical documentation, employer intervention and EPFO office visits**.

Phased Rollout

- **Phase I:** Tracking through **Member ID**.
- **Phase II:** Tracking even without remembering the old **Member ID**.

Facts: UAN (Universal Account Number) is a **12-digit unique number** allotted by **EPFO** that links multiple EPF Member IDs of an employee under a single account.

LEADS 2025 REPORT

Why in the news?

- **DPIIT released the LEADS 2025 Report**, introducing a new **4-tier performance framework** to assess the logistics ecosystem of States and UTs.

About LEADS

- **Full Form: Logistics Ease Across Different States**.
- **Published by: Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of**

Commerce & Industry.

- **Nature:** Annual assessment and benchmarking report on the logistics performance of States and Union Territories.

LEADS 2025: PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT

STATE/UT CATEGORY	EXEMPLARS (Top Performing States/UTs)	HIGH PERFORMERS (Strong & consistent outcomes)	ACCELERATORS (Notable improvement momentum)	GROWTH-SEEKERS (Foundational stage of development)
Coastal States	Tamil Nadu	Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, Karnataka	West Bengal
Landlocked States	Uttar Pradesh	Haryana, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Bihar	Punjab, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh	Rajasthan
North-Eastern States	Mizoram	Tripura, Meghalaya	Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam	Sikkim
Union Territories	Delhi	Jammu & Kashmir, Puducherry	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Chandigarh, Ladakh, Lakshadweep	Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Objective

- Identify logistics bottlenecks.
- Improve logistics efficiency and reduce logistics costs.
- Promote **competitive and cooperative federalism**.
- Enhance India's global competitiveness.

Key Features of LEADS 2025

- **7th Edition** of the report.
- Introduces a **4-tier performance framework** replacing the earlier **3-tier** framework.
- **59% weightage** assigned to **objective indicators**, reducing dependence on perception-based assessment.
- Aligned with:
  - **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan**
  - **National Logistics Policy (NLP)**

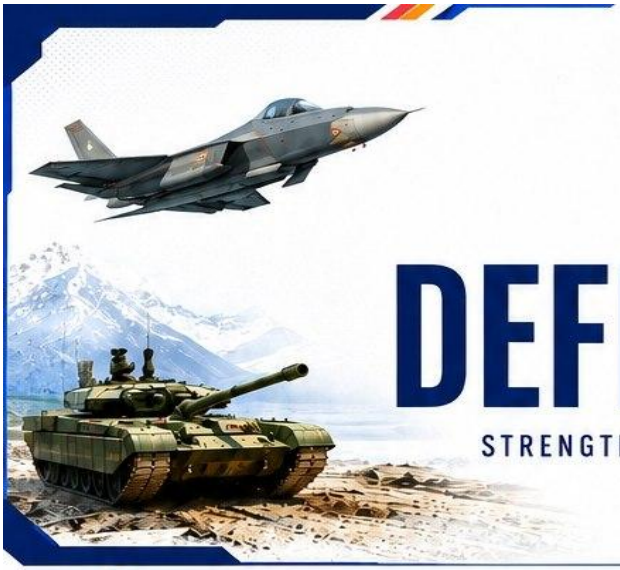
Assessment Parameters

- Policy & Institutional Framework.
- Infrastructure Quality (Road, Rail, Warehousing).
- Reliability of Logistics Services.
- Operating Environment (Safety & Ease of Entry).

Performance Categories

- **Exemplars:** Highest-performing States with sustained excellence.
- **High Performers:** Strong and consistent performers.
- **Accelerators:** States showing rapid improvement and reform momentum.
- **Growth Seekers:** States in the foundational stage of logistics development.

Facts: LEADS is a ranking and benchmarking report, not a government scheme or index prepared by NITI Aayog.



DEFENCE TOPICS

STRENGTH • SECURITY • SELF-RELIANCE • SERVICE

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OP NETRA 1.0

Recent Update: The **Indian Army** successfully conducted **Op Netra 1.0**, a four-day advanced eye



care camp in **Leh, Ladakh**.

About

1. **Op Netra 1.0** was an **Advanced Surgical Eye Camp** organised by the **Indian Army** at **153 General Hospital, Leh**.
2. The initiative aimed to provide **advanced ophthalmic care** to people living in remote and high-altitude regions of **Ladakh**.
3. Around **950 patients** from **seven districts**, including **Chushul, Hanle, Demchok, and Turtuk**, were screened during the camp.
4. A total of **214 surgeries** were successfully performed, including **197 cataract surgeries** and **10 vitreo-retinal procedures**.
5. The camp utilised advanced surgical techniques such as **Glued Intraocular Lens implantation**, **Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery (MIGS)**, and **vitrectomy**.
6. The **Op Netra App** was launched with **QR code-based patient identification** and complete digital management of medical records.
7. The **Indian Air Force** supported the mission by transporting advanced medical equipment to the high-altitude region.
8. The initiative improved **healthcare accessibility**, **digital healthcare delivery**, and humanitarian outreach in border areas.

PROJECT DEEPAK

Recent Update: Project Deepak of **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** celebrates its **66th Raising Day on May 04, 2026, at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.**

About

1. **Project Deepak** is an executive wing of the **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** responsible for strategic infrastructure development in **Himachal Pradesh**.
2. It was established in **1961** and is headquartered in **Shimla, Himachal Pradesh**.
3. The project functions under the **Ministry of Defence** to improve connectivity in remote and strategically important border regions.
4. It is responsible for constructing and maintaining over **1,100 km** of strategic roads across **Shimla, Kinnaur, Kullu, and Lahaul-Spiti**.
5. Project Deepak constructed iconic routes such as the **Hindustan-Tibet Road** and important stretches of the **Manali-Leh Highway**.
6. It ensures **year-round connectivity** for the **Indian Armed Forces** and supports socio-economic development in high-altitude areas.



7. The project also plays a crucial role in **disaster response**, humanitarian assistance, and the restoration of damaged roads after natural disasters.
8. Project Deepak significantly enhances **border infrastructure**, **national security**, and regional development.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL NS RAJA SUBRAMANI APPOINTED AS CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF (CDS)

Recent Update: Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani (Retd.) was appointed as India's new **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)**.

About

1. **Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani** is a retired senior **Indian Army** officer currently serving as **Military Adviser** in the **National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS)**.
2. He was commissioned into the **8th Battalion of the Garhwal Rifles** on **14 December 1985**.
3. He is an alumnus of the **National Defence Academy**, **Indian Military Academy**, **Joint Services Command Staff College (UK)**, and **National Defence College**.
4. The **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** is India's highest-ranking military officer and serves as the **Principal Military Adviser** to the **Defence Minister**.
5. The CDS also functions as the **Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee**

(COSC) and **Secretary of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA)**.

6. The post of **CDS** was created on **24 December 2019**, while the **Department of Military Affairs** was established on **30 December 2019**.
7. The CDS promotes **jointness**, **theatre commands**, **integrated planning**, **indigenous defence procurement**, and military reforms across the three services.
8. The office plays a vital role in strengthening **tri-service integration**, **national security**, and India's defence preparedness.

YARD 3039 (SANGHMITRA)

Recent Update: Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) launched **Yard 3039 (Sanghmitra)**, a **Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV)** for the **Indian Navy**.

About

1. **Yard 3039 (Sanghmitra)** is a state-of-the-art **Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV)** being built for the **Indian Navy**.
2. The vessel is being constructed by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata**, under a joint project with **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)**.
3. Named after **Sanghamitra**, the daughter of **Emperor Ashoka**, the ship symbolizes India's rich maritime heritage.
4. The vessel measures about **113 metres** in length, **14.6 metres** in width, and has a displacement of nearly **3,000 tonnes**.
5. It can attain a maximum speed of **23 knots** and has an operational range of **8,500 nautical miles** at a cruising speed of **14 knots**.
6. The ship is equipped for **maritime surveillance**, **anti-piracy operations**, **Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS)** missions, **mine warfare**, and **special forces deployment**.
7. It is also capable of undertaking **Search and Rescue (SAR)** operations and **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** missions.
8. Sanghmitra significantly strengthens India's **maritime security**, **coastal surveillance**, and **blue-water operational capability**.

HWASONG-11GA MISSILE

Recent Update: North Korea recently showcased the **Hwasong-11Ga** short-range ballistic missile equipped with a **cluster munition warhead**.

About

1. **Hwasong-11Ga**, known in the West as **KN-23**, is a **North Korean short-range ballistic missile (SRBM)**.
2. The missile has an operational range of approximately **600–700 km**, enabling strikes against regional targets.



3. It can carry **nuclear, chemical or conventional warheads** weighing around **500 kg**.
4. The missile is equipped with a **cluster munition warhead**, which disperses numerous smaller submunitions over a wide target area.
5. **Cluster munitions** are often called the **"Devil's Weapon"** because a single missile can release **dozens to hundreds of bomblets** in mid-air.
6. The missile is designed for high battlefield effectiveness against **troops, vehicles and dispersed military infrastructure**.
7. Hwasong-11Ga significantly strengthens **North Korea's tactical missile capability** and regional deterrence posture.

ASTRA MARK-II MISSILE

Recent Update: India is planning to integrate the **Astra Mark-II** missile with the **Mirage-2000** fighter aircraft to enable long-range aerial interception.

About

1. **Astra Mark-II** is an **indigenous Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM)** developed by **DRDO** and manufactured by **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)**.



2. It is a **dual-pulse missile**, providing greater speed, manoeuvrability and engagement range than **Astra Mark-I**.

3. The missile has an operational range of approximately **150–180 km** and travels at speeds of around **Mach 4.5**.
4. **Astra Mark-I**, with a range of **90–100 km**, is already operational with the **Indian Air Force** and integrated with **LCA Tejas** and **Su-30 MKI** aircraft.
5. **Astra Mark-III**, having a range of nearly **340 km**, has been renamed **Gandiva**, after the legendary bow of **Arjuna** in the **Mahabharata**.
6. Astra missiles are designed to destroy **enemy fighter aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles and airborne threats** beyond visual range.
7. The Astra programme strengthens **India's indigenous missile capability** and enhances the combat effectiveness of the **Indian Air Force**.

R-37M MISSILE

Recent Update: Russia recently approved the export of the **R-37M long-range air-to-air missile** to **India**.



About

1. **R-37M** is a **long-range air-to-air missile** developed by **Russia** and is known by its **NATO designation AA-13 Axehead**.
2. It is designed to destroy **fighter aircraft, drones and high-value airborne assets** beyond visual range.
3. The missile is popularly called an **"AWACS Killer"** because it can target **AWACS aircraft, aerial refuelling tankers and electronic warfare aircraft**.
4. It is capable of achieving **hypersonic speeds up to Mach 6** with an operational range of approximately **300–400 km**.
5. The missile follows a **lofted trajectory**, climbing to high altitude before descending towards its target to maximise range and efficiency.
6. It is equipped with advanced guidance systems for engaging highly manoeuvrable aerial targets over long distances.
7. The R-37M significantly enhances **long-range air superiority** and strategic aerial combat capabilities.

ATLAS DRONE SWARM SYSTEM

Recent Update: China recently unveiled the **Atlas Drone Swarm System (Atelasi)** as a next-generation battlefield drone platform.

About

1. **Atlas Drone Swarm System** is a **mobile battlefield platform** developed by **China** for coordinated drone operations.
2. It is capable of launching up to **96 drones simultaneously** in a coordinated swarm from a single platform.



3. The entire swarm can be controlled by **a single operator**, enabling rapid deployment and centralized command.
4. The system is built around the **Swarm-2 combat vehicle**, designed for highly mobile battlefield operations.
5. Atlas performs missions involving **reconnaissance, surveillance, electronic warfare and coordinated precision strikes**.
6. Drone swarm technology overwhelms enemy air defence systems through **large-scale coordinated attacks** by multiple autonomous drones.
7. The Atlas system represents the growing importance of **Artificial Intelligence-enabled autonomous warfare** in modern military operations.

ALH MK-III HELICOPTER

Recent Update: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) recently handed over **four ALH Mk-III Maritime Role helicopters** to the **Indian Coast Guard**.

About

1. **ALH Mk-III** is an **indigenous multi-role twin-engine helicopter** powered by **Shakti engines** and developed by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.

2. It is the **maritime variant** of the **Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) Dhruv**, primarily designed for naval and coastal operations.
3. The helicopter performs **maritime surveillance, search and rescue, casualty evacuation and coastal security missions**.
4. The **Advanced Light Helicopter Programme** was initiated by **HAL** in **1984**, resulting in multiple operational variants.
5. The four major variants are **Dhruv Mk-I, Mk-II, Mk-III and Mk-IV**, designed for different operational requirements.



6. India has exported **Dhruv helicopters** to countries including **Bolivia, Myanmar, Israel, Maldives and Nepal**.
7. ALH Mk-III strengthens India's **maritime surveillance capability**, disaster response and coastal defence preparedness.

MALWAN ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE SHALLOW WATER CRAFT (ASW SWC)

Recent Update: The **Indian Navy** recently inducted **Malwan**, the **second Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC)**, to strengthen coastal defence capabilities.

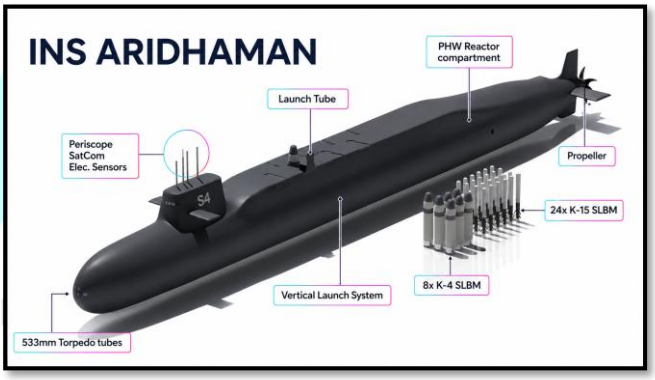


About

1. **Malwan** is a **high-tech Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC)** designed for anti-submarine operations in shallow coastal waters.
2. It is the **second vessel** in a series of **eight ASW SWCs** being inducted into the **Indian Navy**.
3. The vessel has been **indigenously designed and constructed** by **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi**.
4. It is powered by an advanced **waterjet propulsion system**, providing high manoeuvrability and operational efficiency in shallow waters.
5. The primary role of the vessel is to **detect, track and neutralise enemy submarines** operating near India's coastline.
6. The vessel is named after **Malwan**, the historic coastal town in **Maharashtra**, associated with the maritime legacy of **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**.
7. The ASW SWC programme significantly strengthens **India's coastal surveillance, anti-submarine warfare and maritime security**.

INS ARIDHAMAN

Recent Update: INS Aridhaman, India's **third indigenous nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine**, is expected to further strengthen the country's **nuclear deterrence capability**.



About

1. **INS Aridhaman** is **India's third indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN)**.
2. It is the **second submarine** of the **Arihant-class** and has been developed under the **Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) Project**.
3. The submarine has been constructed at the **Ship Building Centre, Visakhapatnam**, using indigenous technologies.
4. **INS Arihant**, commissioned in **2016**, became India's **first indigenous SSBN** and completed the country's **Nuclear Triad**.
5. **INS Arighaat**, commissioned in **2024**, is India's **second Arihant-class SSBN**.
6. India is simultaneously developing **nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs)** and plans to lease one from **Russia** during **2027–28**.

7. INS Aridhaman significantly enhances India's **credible minimum deterrence**, second-strike capability and maritime strategic security.

INS DHRUV

Recent Update: The Indian Navy's strategic **15,000-ton ocean surveillance ship, INS Dhruv (A31)**, was extensively deployed in the Arabian Sea to monitor regional missile testing.

About

1. **INS Dhruv** is **India's first dedicated nuclear missile tracking and ocean surveillance ship**, commissioned in **2021**.
2. The vessel was built by **Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL)** in collaboration with **DRDO** and the **National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO)**.
3. It is a highly strategic platform designed to **track ballistic missiles** and monitor missile tests over long distances.
4. INS Dhruv is equipped with sophisticated sensors capable of collecting **Electronic Intelligence (ELINT)** and radar signatures.
5. The vessel is jointly operated by the **Indian Navy**, **NTRO** and **DRDO** for strategic surveillance missions.
6. It supports India's **Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD)** programme by providing accurate tracking and telemetry data.
7. INS Dhruv significantly strengthens India's **strategic deterrence, maritime domain awareness and national security**.

INS KALPENI

Recent Update: The Indian Navy's fast attack craft ***INS Kalpeni*** was deployed on a prominent maritime engagement and professional exchange mission to the Maldives in late **April 2026.**

About

1. **INS Kalpeni** is a **Waterjet Fast Attack Craft (FAC)** of the **Indian Navy** belonging to the **Car Nicobar-class**.



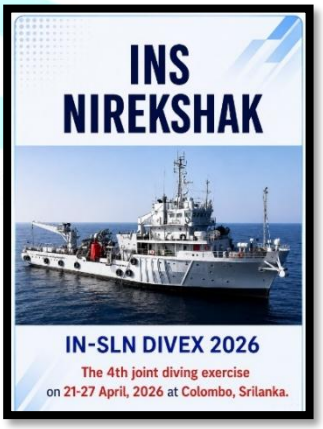
2. It is one among a series of **10 Car Nicobar-class Fast Attack Craft** designed for high-speed maritime operations.
3. The vessel is named after **Kalpeni Island** in the **Lakshadweep Islands**.
4. INS Kalpeni was built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata** for the **Indian Navy**.
5. The vessel specialises in **anti-smuggling operations**, **Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS)** missions and **Search and Rescue (SAR)** operations.
6. It is capable of rapid deployment in coastal waters because of its **high speed, agility and shallow draught**.
7. INS Kalpeni enhances **coastal surveillance, maritime law enforcement and island security** in the Indian Ocean Region.

INS NIREEKSHAK

Recent Update: INS Nireekshak recently participated in the **4th edition of DIVEX 2026 (India–Sri Lanka Diving Exercise)** held in **Colombo**.

About

1. **INS Nireekshak** is a **Dive Support and Submarine Rescue Vessel (DSRV)** of the **Indian Navy**.
2. The vessel was built by **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)** and commissioned into the **Indian Navy in 1995**.
3. It provides specialised support for **deep-sea diving, submarine rescue and underwater salvage operations**.



4. The vessel is equipped with advanced diving systems for conducting complex underwater missions safely.
5. INS Nireekshak plays an important role in **training naval divers** and supporting underwater engineering tasks.
6. It regularly participates in **bilateral and multilateral naval diving exercises**, improving interoperability with friendly navies.
7. INS Nireekshak strengthens India's capability in **submarine rescue, underwater operations and maritime disaster response**.

INMSS-2026

Recent Update: Indian Navy Maritime Security Strategy (INMSS-2026) was released during the **Naval**

Commanders' Conference 2026, replacing the **2015 Ensuring Secure Seas** strategy.

About

1. **INMSS-2026** is the Indian Navy's latest **Maritime Security Strategy**, replacing **Ensuring Secure Seas (2015)**.
2. It provides the strategic framework to protect **India's maritime interests**, **Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs)** and the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
3. The strategy aligns with **Indian Navy Vision 2047**, **Defence Forces Vision 2047** and India's maritime aspirations.
4. It addresses emerging challenges including **grey-zone warfare**, **maritime terrorism**, **cyber threats**, **undersea threats** and **non-state actors**.
5. It emphasises **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)**, **AI-enabled operations**, **network-centric warfare**, **unmanned systems** and advanced surveillance.
6. It promotes interoperability through enhanced cooperation with **Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs)** via bilateral and multilateral maritime exercises.
7. It aims to ensure a **secure, rules-based and resilient Indo-Pacific**, while supporting **Blue Economy**, maritime trade and disaster response.

SIPRI REPORT ON MILITARY EXPENDITURE

Recent Update: SIPRI released **Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2025**, reporting **India as the world's 5th largest military spender** in 2025.

About

1. **SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute)** is an independent research institute established in **1966**, headquartered in **Stockholm, Sweden**.
2. The report analyses **annual military expenditure** of countries using **open-source** government and international data.
3. **Global military expenditure** reached **US$ 2.887 trillion** in **2025**, the **11th consecutive year** of growth.
4. **Top 5 military spenders (2025): USA**, **China**, **Russia**, **Germany** and **India**.
5. **India ranked 5th**, spending **US$ 92.1 billion**, an **8.9% increase** over 2024, accounting for **3.2%** of global military expenditure.
6. India's military expenditure stood at **2.3% of GDP**, reflecting continued emphasis on defence modernisation and capability enhancement.
7. The report noted that rising spending in **Asia** was driven by **regional security concerns** and **military modernisation**, including **India's** focus on **indigenous** defence capabilities.

'DIVYASTRA' MISSILE

Recent Update: Divyastra Mk-1, an indigenous **AI-enabled loitering munition**, successfully completed user-assisted trials, enhancing India's precision strike and ISR capabilities.



About

1. **Divyastra Mk-1** is an indigenous **loitering munition (suicide drone)** developed for **Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR)** and **precision strike** missions.
2. It is designed for **autonomous operations** with **AI-enabled mission planning**, **swarm capability** and **real-time target engagement**.
3. The system has an **operational range of up to 500 km** and an **endurance of up to 5 hours**.
4. It can carry a **15 kg payload** for **high-precision strikes** against enemy assets.
5. It supports multiple missions including **ISR**, **target acquisition**, **precision attack**, **battle damage assessment** and **decoy operations**.
6. It can integrate **EO/IR sensors**, **communication relay systems** and other **mission-specific payloads** for enhanced operational flexibility.
7. **Divyastra Mk-1** strengthens **Atmanirbhar Bharat** by enhancing India's indigenous capability in **network-centric** and **precision warfare**.

VAYU ASTRA-1

Recent Update: Vayu Astra-1, an indigenous **100-km loitering munition**, successfully completed technical trials for the **Indian Army** at **Pokhran** and **Joshimath**.



About

1. **Vayu Astra-1** is an indigenous **loitering munition (suicide drone)** developed by **Nibe Limited** under the **Make in India** initiative.
2. It is designed for **precision strikes**, **Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR)** and **battlefield support** missions.
3. It has a **strike range of 100 km** and demonstrated successful operations in both **desert** and **high-altitude** terrain.
4. The system is available in **anti-personnel** and **anti-armour** variants with **day and night strike** capability.
5. It demonstrated **control handover**, **abort-and-reattack**, **high-altitude loitering** and **reusable recovery** capabilities during trials.
6. The trials were conducted under the **No Cost No Commitment (NCNC)** procurement process of the **Ministry of Defence**.
7. **Vayu Astra-1** strengthens India's indigenous capability in **precision-guided warfare**, **tactical drone operations** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

TARA WEAPONS

Recent Update: DRDO and the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** successfully conducted the **maiden flight trial** of the indigenous **Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA)** weapon.

About

1. **TARA (Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation)** is **India's first indigenous glide weapon system** developed by **DRDO**.
2. It is a **modular range-extension kit** that converts **unguided ("dumb") bombs** into **precision-guided glide weapons**.
3. It significantly enhances the **stand-off strike capability**, allowing aircraft to engage targets from safer distances.
5. The weapon was successfully tested after being released from an **IAF Jaguar aircraft** off the **Odisha coast**.
6. It has been developed primarily by **Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad**, along with other **DRDO laboratories** and Indian industry partners.
7. The system improves **accuracy**, **lethality** and **cost-effectiveness** by upgrading existing bomb inventories instead of developing new munitions.
8. **TARA** strengthens **Atmanirbhar Bharat**, enhances **precision-strike capability** and places India among a select group of countries possessing indigenous **glide weapon technology**.



XIAS EDUCATION | SIMPLIFYING SUCCESS



Environment & Disaster Management

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SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

MANAGING COEXISTENCE IN HUMAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT ZONES

Recent Update: Recent climate reports suggest climate change will aggravate Human-wildlife conflict due to human encroachment into **natural habitats and the fragmentation of wildlife corridors.**



About

1. **Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)** occurs when humans and wild animals negatively interact.
2. **Habitat fragmentation** and **agricultural expansion** push wildlife into human settlements.
3. **Climate change** and **food scarcity** further increase animal movement toward villages.
4. Major challenges include **delayed compensation**, **poor early-warning systems**, and **habitat degradation**.
5. Repeated conflicts reduce public support for **wildlife conservation**.
6. Restoring **wildlife corridors** improves safe animal movement.
7. Faster **digital compensation** and **community participation** strengthen conflict management.
8. Better habitats and scientific planning promote **peaceful coexistence**.

ELECTRIFICATION EMERGES AS COP31 PRIORITY

Recent Update: COP31 identified **economy-wide electrification** as a climate priority.

About

1. **COP31** aims to accelerate **electrification** to reduce **fossil fuel dependence**.



2. **IRENA** targets **35% electricity** in final energy consumption by **2035**.
3. Electrification supports **clean transport**, **green buildings**, and **energy security**.
4. Major barriers include **funding shortages**, **grid constraints**, and **policy differences**.
5. Developing countries require greater **climate finance** and **technology transfer**.
6. Expansion of **HVDC grids** can improve renewable energy sharing.
7. Stronger **battery storage** and modern power grids are essential.
8. Economy-wide electrification supports **climate goals** and **sustainable development**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

PROSOPIS JULIFLORA

Recent Update: Prosopis juliflora remained under focus for its ecological impacts and its emerging use in **bio-energy production**.



About

1. **Prosopis juliflora** is a hardy, thorny tree belonging to the **Fabaceae** family and is one of India's most invasive alien plant species.
2. It was introduced into India in **1877** from **Mexico**, **South America**, and the **Caribbean** to combat desertification and provide fuelwood.
3. The species thrives in **arid**, **semi-arid**, and **saline** environments because of its exceptionally deep root system.
4. Its roots can penetrate up to **50 metres**, enabling it to survive prolonged droughts and extract deep groundwater.
5. The plant exhibits **allelopathy**, releasing chemicals that suppress the growth of surrounding native vegetation.
6. Dense growth of **Prosopis juliflora** degrades grasslands, reduces biodiversity, and lowers fodder availability for livestock.
7. Despite its ecological impacts, it serves as an important source of **fuelwood**, **charcoal**, and **biomass** for bio-energy production.
8. Effective management requires **mechanical removal**, ecological restoration, and replacement with native grassland species.

LEAF SPOT DISEASE (LSD)

Recent Update: Recent news highlights a major outbreak of **arecanut leaf spot disease** in **southern India**, leading agricultural agencies to roll out comprehensive management projects.



About

1. **Leaf Spot Disease (LSD)** is a plant disease that reduces **photosynthesis** by damaging the leaves of trees and shrubs.
2. The disease is mainly caused by **fungi**, although certain bacteria and other pathogens can also produce similar symptoms.
3. It spreads through **wind**, **rain splash**, irrigation water, and infected plant debris under humid conditions.
4. Infected leaves develop **yellow**, **brown**, **black**, or **orange-red** spots that gradually enlarge with disease progression.
5. The pathogens survive in fallen leaves, buds, and young twigs, allowing the disease to reappear in subsequent seasons.
6. Proper sanitation, pruning, balanced nutrition, and improved air circulation are essential cultural control measures.
7. Biological agents such as **Trichoderma** and fungicides like **Propiconazole** and **Tebuconazole** are commonly used for disease management.
8. Integrated disease management helps improve **plant health**, **crop productivity**, and long-term orchard sustainability.

X IAS EDUCATION | SIMPLIFYING SUCCESS

THE INTERNATIONAL BIG CAT ALLIANCE (IBCA)

Recent Update: India to host **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit, on 1st – 2nd June, 2026**, in New Delhi

About

1. The **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** is the world's first intergovernmental alliance dedicated exclusively to **big cat conservation**.
2. It was launched on **9 April 2023**, with its **Secretariat headquartered in India**.
3. The Alliance brings together **95 big cat range countries**, scientific institutions, conservation partners, and international organizations.
4. It focuses on conserving **Tiger**, **Lion**, **Leopard**, **Snow Leopard**, **Cheetah**, **Jaguar**, and **Puma** populations.

5. IBCA promotes **capacity building**, scientific research, policy advocacy, and transboundary conservation cooperation.
6. It also provides **technical and financial support** to countries with limited conservation resources.
7. The Alliance creates a **centralized repository** of successful conservation practices for global knowledge sharing.
8. IBCA aims to strengthen **big cat conservation**, **ecosystem resilience**, and sustainable livelihoods through international collaboration.

METHANE ALERT AND RESPONSE SYSTEM (MARS)

Recent Update: UNEP's MARS expanded monitoring to include **coal mines** and **waste facilities**.



About

1. The **Methane Alert and Response System (MARS)** is the world's first **satellite-based** platform for detecting major methane emissions.
2. It operates under the **International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO)** of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**.
3. The system was announced at **COP27** and officially launched in **January 2023**.
4. MARS identifies large **methane super-emitters**, notifies governments and industries, and tracks mitigation efforts.
5. It uses **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** to analyse thousands of satellite images within minutes.
6. The platform now monitors emissions from the **oil and gas**, **coal mining**, and **waste management** sectors.
7. Detection data is publicly released after **30–45 days**, ensuring transparency and accountability.
8. MARS strengthens **methane mitigation**, **climate action**, and global greenhouse gas monitoring.

THE ASIATIC LION

Recent Update: The **16th Lion Population Estimation** recorded **891 Asiatic Lions**, marking a significant population increase.



About

1. The **Asiatic Lion (Panthera leo persica)** is the only wild lion population found outside **Africa**.
2. Its natural habitat is the **Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary** and the **Greater Gir Landscape** in **Gujarat**.
3. According to the **2025 Lion Census**, the population increased to **891 individuals**, reflecting successful conservation efforts.
4. The species is protected under **Schedule I** of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, **Appendix I of CITES**, and is listed as **Vulnerable** by the **IUCN**.
5. **Project Lion**, launched in **2020**, focuses on habitat restoration, landscape conservation, and population expansion.
6. The **Barda Wildlife Sanctuary** is being developed as a second habitat to reduce risks from disease and natural disasters.
7. Asiatic Lions are distinguished by their **belly fold**, shorter mane, and smaller pride structure compared to African lions.
8. Conservation of the Asiatic Lion represents one of India's greatest **wildlife conservation success stories**.

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THE GANGES SOFT-SHELL TURTLE

Recent Update: India's **first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle (*Nilssonia gangetica*),** an endangered freshwater reptile, was released into the ***Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve*** in ***Assam***, on **Endangered Species Day.**

About



1. The **Ganges Soft-shell Turtle (Nilssonia gangetica)** is a large freshwater turtle belonging to the **Trionychidae** family.
2. It inhabits **deep rivers**, **lakes**, **reservoirs**, and wetlands with **muddy or sandy bottoms**.
3. In India, it is widely distributed across the **Ganga**, **Yamuna**, **Brahmaputra**, **Mahanadi**, **Narmada**, and **Indus** river basins.
4. It is classified as **Endangered** on the **IUCN Red List** and receives the highest protection under **Schedule I** of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
5. The turtle possesses a **soft leathery carapace**, a long **tube-like snout**, and distinct **arrowhead-shaped markings** on its head.
6. It is an **omnivorous scavenger**, feeding on fish, molluscs, amphibians, aquatic plants, and carrion.
7. The species plays an important ecological role by removing **dead organic matter** and maintaining river health.
8. Habitat degradation, illegal hunting, and river pollution remain major threats to its long-term survival.

NILGIRI TAHR

Recent Update: Tamil Nadu launches third synchronised Nilgiri Tahr survey across Western Ghats



About

1. The **Nilgiri Tahr (Nilgiritragus hylocrius)** is the only **mountain ungulate** endemic to the **Western Ghats** of southern India.
2. It inhabits **high-altitude montane grasslands** and rocky slopes at elevations ranging from **1,200 to 2,600 metres**.
3. Its present distribution is restricted to a **400-km stretch** of the **Western Ghats**, from the **Nilgiris** to the **Kanyakumari Hills**.
4. The largest population is found in **Eravikulam National Park**, while important populations also occur in the **Nilgiri** and **Anamalai Hills**.
5. The species is classified as **Endangered** on the **IUCN Red List** due to habitat fragmentation and historical hunting.
6. Nilgiri Tahrs are **sure-footed mountain herbivores** specially adapted to steep rocky cliffs and grassland ecosystems.
7. Modern population surveys use the **Varudai mobile application** for standardized monitoring and real-time reporting.
8. Conserving the Nilgiri Tahr is vital for protecting the fragile **shola-grassland ecosystem** of the Western Ghats.

SPERM WHALE

Recent Update: Scientists discovered new insights into the complex **acoustic communication** of **Sperm Whales**.

About

1. The **Sperm Whale (Physeter macrocephalus)** is the **largest toothed whale** and possesses

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the **largest brain** of any known animal.



2. It inhabits **deep offshore waters** across all the world's oceans, particularly in regions deeper than **1,000 metres**.
3. The whale is recognized by its massive **square-shaped head**, which contains the oil-filled **spermaceti organ**.
4. It is one of the world's deepest-diving mammals, capable of diving up to **2,000 metres** in search of **giant squid**.
5. Sperm Whales live in highly organised **matriarchal social groups** and communicate using rhythmic clicking sounds called **codas**.
6. Recent studies show that whales modify their click frequencies in ways comparable to **human vowel sounds**, indicating advanced communication.
7. They play an important ecological role in maintaining the balance of **deep-sea marine ecosystems**.
8. The species is protected under international conservation frameworks due to threats from **whaling**, **marine pollution**, and **ship strikes**.

THE KALI NIGHT FROG

Recent Update: Researchers identified the **Kali Night Frog** as a **new cryptic amphibian species** from the **Western Ghats**.



Nyctibatrachus kali, or the Kali night frog, has been identified in Karnataka's Western Ghats, thanks to a citizen-led effort in which forest department members also took part.

About

1. The **Kali Night Frog** belongs to the ancient **Nyctibatrachus** genus, which is **endemic to the Western Ghats**.
2. It inhabits **fast-flowing forest streams** and moist leaf litter within the **Kali River catchment**.
3. The species is considered **cryptic** because it closely resembles the **Kumbara Night Frog** in appearance.
4. Scientists confirmed it as a distinct species using **DNA sequencing** and advanced genetic analysis.
5. Its unique **bioacoustic mating calls** also distinguish it from closely related night frog species.
6. The frog is **nocturnal**, remaining active around shaded streams and rocky habitats during the night.
7. It has an extremely **restricted geographical distribution**, making it highly vulnerable to habitat disturbance.
8. The discovery highlights the rich **endemism**, **biodiversity**, and conservation significance of the **Western Ghats**.

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THE CONOCARPUS PLANT

Recent Update: Ecologists raised concerns over the large-scale plantation of **Conocarpus** along highways in **Tamil Nadu**.



About

1. **Conocarpus** is a fast-growing evergreen tree belonging to the **Combretaceae** family, native to coastal and mangrove ecosystems.

2. It is widely planted for **ornamental landscaping**, roadside plantations, and urban greening because of its rapid growth.
3. The species is highly tolerant to **saline soils**, drought, and harsh climatic conditions, making it suitable for coastal regions.
4. It produces **button-like flowers** and cone-shaped fruits whose seeds are dispersed mainly through water.
5. The tree develops an aggressive root system that can damage **roads**, **water pipelines**, **sewage lines**, and underground utility cables.
6. Heavy pollen production during winter may trigger **allergies**, **asthma**, and other respiratory problems in sensitive individuals.
7. Large-scale plantations may reduce **groundwater availability**, suppress native vegetation, and negatively affect local biodiversity.
8. Ecologists recommend replacing **Conocarpus** with **native tree species** to ensure sustainable urban and ecological development.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

PROJECT TIGER

Recent Update: **Project Tiger** was highlighted as a major conservation initiative balancing tiger protection with mitigation of **human–wildlife conflict**.

About

1. **Project Tiger** was launched in **1973** by the **Government of India** to ensure the long-term survival of the **Bengal Tiger** through habitat conservation.
2. The programme follows a **Core–Buffer Strategy**, where strictly protected core areas are surrounded by buffer zones supporting sustainable human activities.
3. It is implemented under the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** established under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
4. Regular **All India Tiger Estimation** exercises using **camera traps**, **GIS**, and scientific monitoring help assess tiger populations.
5. The **Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation** and **Tiger Conservation Plan** strengthen habitat management and community participation.
6. The **Status of Tigers, Co-predators and Prey (STOTR)** report indicates that nearly **30% of India's tigers** now live outside notified tiger reserves.
7. Rising tiger populations have increased the need for landscape-level conservation and better management of human–wildlife interactions.



8. Project Tiger remains one of the world's most successful wildlife conservation programmes, significantly improving **biodiversity conservation** and **ecosystem protection**.

PROJECT ELEPHANT

Recent Update: Supreme Court Clears Way for Adani Coal Project in MP Elephant Corridor.

About

1. **Project Elephant** was launched in **1992** by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** to conserve wild elephants and their habitats.
2. The project seeks to protect **elephant populations**, secure **migration corridors**, and reduce conflict between elephants and local communities.
3. It provides financial and technical assistance to **elephant range states** for habitat management, anti-poaching, veterinary care, and conflict mitigation.
4. Identification and restoration of **elephant corridors** help maintain genetic diversity and reduce accidental encounters with human settlements.

5. The project encourages construction of **solar fences**, **early warning systems**, **underpasses**, and **overpasses** along transport corridors.
6. Compensation for crop loss, property damage, and human casualties helps improve community participation in elephant conservation.
7. Advanced technologies such as **AI-based sensors**, **GPS collars**, and the **Gajraj System** are increasingly used for elephant monitoring.
8. Project Elephant promotes **landscape-level conservation**, **community participation**, and sustainable coexistence between humans and elephants.

GAJRAJ SYSTEM

Recent Update: The **Gajraj System** continued to strengthen railway safety by preventing **elephant–train collisions** using advanced AI-based technology.

About

1. The **Gajraj System** is an **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**-based early warning system developed by **Indian Railways** to reduce elephant–train collisions.
2. It uses **Distributed Acoustic Sensing (DAS)** through **fiber-optic cables** to detect elephant movements near railway tracks.
3. The system immediately alerts railway authorities whenever elephant herds approach vulnerable railway sections.
4. Timely alerts enable train drivers to reduce speed, thereby minimizing accidents involving elephants.
5. The technology is especially useful in elephant movement corridors located across **Odisha**, **Assam**, **West Bengal**, and other range states.
6. The initiative combines **AI**, **real-time monitoring**, and railway infrastructure to improve wildlife conservation.
7. It complements other measures such as **underpasses**, **speed restrictions**, and wildlife corridor management.
8. The Gajraj System demonstrates how modern technology can effectively support **human safety**, **wildlife conservation**, and **sustainable infrastructure development**.

TRAILGUARD AI

Recent Update: **TrailGuard AI** was recognized as an innovative conservation technology for detecting **poaching** and unauthorised entry into protected areas.



About

1. **TrailGuard AI** is an **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**-enabled smart camera system designed to strengthen wildlife conservation and anti-poaching efforts.
2. The system captures images of wildlife and suspicious human activity using highly energy-efficient hidden cameras.
3. AI algorithms instantly identify potential threats and transmit real-time alerts to forest officials through mobile communication networks.
4. The technology helps detect **poachers**, **illegal logging**, and unauthorized entry into protected forests before serious damage occurs.
5. TrailGuard AI minimizes false alarms while improving the speed and efficiency of wildlife monitoring.
6. It is particularly useful in remote forests where continuous human surveillance is difficult and resource-intensive.
7. The system supports scientific wildlife monitoring, biodiversity conservation, and evidence-based forest management.
8. TrailGuard AI demonstrates the growing role of **Artificial Intelligence**, **digital conservation**, and **smart surveillance** in protecting India's wildlife and forests.

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DELHI RIDGE

Recent Update: Around **670 hectares** of the **Central Ridge** in Delhi was declared a **Reserved Forest** under **Section 20 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927**, strengthening legal protection for the city's ecological lifeline.

About

1. The **Delhi Ridge** is the **northernmost extension of the Aravalli Range**, stretching for nearly **35 km** across the **National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi**.
2. It acts as the **green lungs of Delhi**, serving as a major **carbon sink**, **oxygen source**, and natural barrier against the hot **Loo winds** blowing from Rajasthan.
3. The Ridge is divided into **Northern Ridge**, **Central Ridge**, **South-Central Ridge**, and **Southern Ridge**, each possessing distinct ecological and historical significance.
4. Its natural vegetation mainly consists of **Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests** and **Thorny Scrub Forests**, supporting species such as **jackals**, **nilgai**, **porcupines**, numerous bird species, and diverse soil organisms.
5. The ecosystem is under severe pressure from **urban encroachment**, **roads**, **institutional construction**, habitat fragmentation, and the spread of invasive species such as **Vilayati Kikar (Prosopis juliflora)**.
6. Unsuitable plantation drives involving **water-intensive tree species** and the **Miyawaki model** have also been criticized for disturbing the Ridge's naturally dry ecosystem.
7. Past **quartzite** and **badarpur sand mining** have left lasting ecological scars, particularly in the **Southern Ridge**, despite mining now being prohibited.
8. Effective conservation requires **native species restoration**, strict control of encroachments, invasive species management, and scientific ecosystem-based planning.

RESERVED FOREST

Recent Update: The **Central Ridge** in Delhi was officially notified as a **Reserved Forest**, providing it with the **highest statutory protection** under Indian forest laws.

About

1. A **Reserved Forest** is the category of forest receiving the **highest level of legal protection** under the **Indian Forest Act, 1927**, or corresponding State Forest Acts.
2. Such forests are notified under **Section 20** only after settlement or extinguishment of existing rights claimed by local communities.
3. Activities such as **grazing**, **hunting**, **timber extraction**, and collection of forest produce are prohibited unless specifically permitted by the Government.
4. Reserved Forests constitute nearly **55.1% of India's recorded forest area**, making them the largest legally protected forest category.
5. They are declared and managed exclusively by **State Governments**, unlike **National Parks** and **Wildlife Sanctuaries**, which are governed under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
6. Many Reserved Forests have subsequently been upgraded into **National Parks**, **Wildlife Sanctuaries**, or **Tiger Reserves** because of their ecological significance.
7. These forests play an important role in conserving **biodiversity**, **watersheds**, **wildlife habitats**, and maintaining ecological balance.
8. Strong legal protection, scientific forest management, and community participation remain essential for safeguarding Reserved Forests.

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (IAS)

Recent Update: India intensified efforts to control **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)** after studies highlighted their growing impact on biodiversity, agriculture, and rural livelihoods.

About

1. **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)** are non-native organisms that spread rapidly outside their natural habitat and cause significant ecological, economic, or social damage.
2. Many invasive species, including **Lantana camara**, **Prosopis juliflora**, **Parthenium hysterophorus**, and **Water Hyacinth**, were introduced intentionally or accidentally into India.

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3. Habitat fragmentation, infrastructure development, excessive grazing, agricultural expansion, and global trade have accelerated the spread of invasive species.
4. IAS reduce native biodiversity by outcompeting indigenous plants, altering soil chemistry, disrupting food chains, and degrading wildlife habitats.
5. They also impose heavy economic costs through reduced agricultural productivity, fisheries losses, increased management expenses, and damage to ecosystem services.
6. Certain invasive species pose serious health risks, with **Parthenium** causing allergies and dermatitis, while dense vegetation creates breeding grounds for disease-carrying insects.
7. India addresses IAS through the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, **National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP)**, **NAPINVAS**, and strict plant quarantine measures.
8. Effective management requires **early detection**, **rapid response**, **ecological restoration**, **community participation**, and scientific monitoring.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ACT, 2002

Recent Update: India reiterates commitment to Biodiversity Conservation and Community-led action on **International Day for Biological Diversity 2026**, themed **'Acting Locally for Global Impact'** by highlighting the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

About

1. The **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** was enacted to implement India's obligations under the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992**.
2. Its primary objectives are the **conservation of biodiversity**, **sustainable use of biological resources**, and **fair and equitable sharing of benefits** arising from biological resources.
3. The Act established the **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)**, **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**, and **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** at the local level.
4. It regulates access by foreign individuals and organizations to India's biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.
5. The Act promotes preparation of **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** to document local biodiversity and indigenous knowledge.
6. It also supports measures for controlling **Invasive Alien Species**, conserving ecosystems, and protecting endemic flora and fauna.
7. Amendments to the Act seek to balance biodiversity conservation with research, innovation, and sustainable utilization of biological resources.
8. The Act forms the cornerstone of India's legal framework for **biodiversity conservation**, **environmental governance**, and **sustainable development**.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (NAPINVAS)

Recent Update: The **National Action Plan on Invasive Alien Species (NAPINVAS)** was highlighted as India's comprehensive strategy to prevent and manage biological invasions.

About

1. The **National Action Plan on Invasive Alien Species (NAPINVAS)** provides a coordinated national framework for preventing, detecting, controlling, and managing **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)**.
2. The plan focuses on **risk assessment**, **early detection**, **rapid response**, and long-term ecological restoration of invaded landscapes.
3. It encourages stronger coordination among **Central Ministries**, **State Governments**, research institutions, and local communities.
4. NAPINVAS promotes scientific monitoring, surveillance, and development of national databases for invasive species management.
5. The framework supports strict **quarantine regulations**, biosecurity measures, and monitoring of international trade pathways introducing invasive species.
6. Restoration of native ecosystems through replantation of indigenous species forms an important component of the Action Plan.
7. Community participation, citizen reporting, and traditional ecological knowledge are

recognized as valuable tools for successful invasive species control.

8. NAPINVAS strengthens India's capacity to conserve **biodiversity**, protect **ecosystem services**, and improve **ecological resilience** against biological invasions.

ARAVALLI RANGE

Recent Update: Conservation of the **Aravalli Range** gained renewed attention following enhanced legal protection for parts of the **Delhi Ridge**, its northernmost extension.

About

1. The **Aravalli Range** is one of the **oldest fold mountain systems in the world**, extending for nearly **692 km** from **Gujarat** through **Rajasthan** and **Haryana** to **Delhi**.
2. It separates the **Thar Desert** from the fertile plains of northern India and plays a crucial role in preventing the eastward expansion of desertification.
3. The highest peak of the Aravallis is **Guru Shikhar (1,722 m)**, located in the **Mount Abu** region of Rajasthan.
4. The range serves as an important watershed, giving rise to rivers such as the **Banas**, **Luni**, **Sahibi**, and **Sakhi**, while also supporting groundwater recharge.
5. Rich biodiversity, including **leopards**, **sloth bears**, **hyenas**, numerous bird species, and dry deciduous forests, makes the Aravallis an ecologically significant landscape.
6. The ecosystem faces severe threats from **illegal mining**, **urbanization**, **deforestation**, habitat fragmentation, and invasive species like **Prosopis juliflora**.
7. Various judicial interventions and conservation programmes seek to restore degraded hills, regulate mining, and protect ecologically sensitive zones.
8. Conservation of the Aravallis is essential for **climate regulation**, **water security**, **biodiversity conservation**, and sustainable development in north-western India.

PEOPLE'S BIODIVERSITY REGISTER (PBR)

Recent Update: **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** were highlighted as important tools for documenting local biodiversity and traditional ecological knowledge.

About

1. A **People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)** is a comprehensive document that records local **biological resources**, associated **traditional knowledge**, and conservation practices.
2. It is prepared by **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** under the provisions of the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.



3. The register documents information relating to **flora**, **fauna**, **microorganisms**, agricultural diversity, medicinal plants, and indigenous knowledge systems.
4. Preparation of PBRs encourages active participation of **local communities**, **tribal groups**, and traditional knowledge holders in biodiversity conservation.
5. The registers assist governments in planning conservation strategies, regulating access to biological resources, and ensuring equitable benefit sharing.
6. PBRs also help identify rare, endemic, and threatened species while supporting scientific research and sustainable resource management.
7. Digital documentation and periodic updating improve the usefulness of PBRs for environmental governance and policy formulation.
8. People's Biodiversity Registers strengthen **community-based conservation**, **traditional knowledge protection**, and **sustainable biodiversity management**.

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AUTHORITY (NBA)

Recent Update: The National **Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has realised Rs. 21.26 crore under the Access** and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism during the financial year 2025–26. The amount was generated from ***approvals granted for research, commercial utilisation, intellectual property rights, bio-survey and bio-utilisation of biological resources***.

About

1. The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** is a statutory body established in **2003** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
2. It functions under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** with its headquarters in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
3. The NBA regulates access by foreign individuals and organizations to India's biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.
4. It ensures **fair and equitable sharing of benefits** arising from the commercial utilization of biological resources.
5. The Authority advises the Central Government on biodiversity conservation, sustainable utilization, and implementation of international obligations.
6. It coordinates with **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** and **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** for effective biodiversity governance.
7. The NBA also promotes documentation through **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** and supports conservation of threatened and endemic species.
8. The Authority plays a central role in protecting India's **biological diversity**, **traditional knowledge**, and **ecological security**.

STATE BIODIVERSITY BOARD (SBB)

Recent Update: **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** were encouraged to strengthen biodiversity governance through improved coordination with local institutions.

About

1. **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** are statutory bodies constituted by **State Governments** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
2. Their primary responsibility is to regulate access to biological resources by Indian individuals and organizations for commercial purposes.
3. SBBs advise State Governments on biodiversity conservation, sustainable utilization, and protection of ecological resources.
4. They coordinate with **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** established at local body levels for decentralized biodiversity governance.
5. State Biodiversity Boards support preparation of **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** and documentation of traditional ecological knowledge.
6. They also promote awareness, capacity building, research, and conservation programmes across different ecological regions.
7. SBBs play an important role in implementing national biodiversity policies while addressing state-specific conservation priorities.
8. Effective functioning of SBBs strengthens **federal environmental governance**, **community participation**, and **biodiversity conservation**.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Recent Update: Environmental experts emphasized stronger **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)** to balance infrastructure development with biodiversity conservation in ecologically sensitive regions.

About

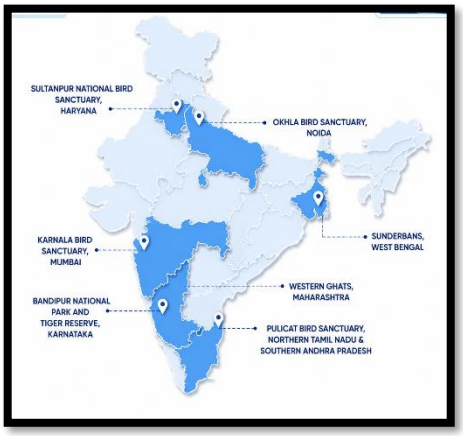
1. **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** is a systematic process used to identify, predict, and evaluate the likely environmental impacts of proposed development projects before approval.
2. In India, the EIA framework is governed under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, and the **EIA Notification, 2006**, issued by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.

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3. The assessment examines the potential impacts of projects on **forests**, **wildlife**, **water resources**, **air quality**, **soil**, and the livelihoods of local communities.
4. Key stages of the EIA process include **screening**, **scoping**, **public consultation**, **impact assessment**, **appraisal**, and **environmental clearance**.
5. Public participation ensures that affected communities, environmental experts, and civil society organizations can present their concerns before project approval.
6. Effective EIA helps identify mitigation measures, minimize ecological damage, and promote environmentally sustainable infrastructure development.
7. Challenges include inadequate baseline data, weak monitoring, poor compliance, and delays in implementing environmental safeguards.
8. A robust EIA framework strengthens **sustainable development**, **environmental governance**, and long-term conservation of natural resources.

ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE ZONES (ESZs)

Recent Update: Authorities accelerated efforts to finalize boundaries for over 56,000 square kilometers in the Western Ghats as an Eco-Sensitive Area (ESA) to stop further ecological degradation.



About

1. **Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZs)** are buffer areas notified around **National Parks** and **Wildlife Sanctuaries** to minimize adverse impacts of human activities.
2. They are notified by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
3. ESZs function as transition zones that regulate developmental activities while protecting wildlife habitats and ecological integrity.
4. Activities such as **mining**, **polluting industries**, and large-scale commercial construction are generally prohibited or strictly regulated within ESZs.
5. Sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, rainwater harvesting, and community-based conservation are usually encouraged in these zones.
6. ESZs help maintain **wildlife corridors**, reduce habitat fragmentation, and minimize **human–wildlife conflict** around protected areas.
7. The extent of each ESZ is determined based on ecological significance, biodiversity value, and local geographical conditions.
8. Effective implementation of ESZs strengthens **ecosystem conservation**, **biodiversity protection**, and sustainable regional development.

WILDLIFE (PROTECTION) ACT, 1972

Recent Update: The **Chief Wildlife Warden** of Punjab filed a status report confirming that the habitat of the **Indus River Dolphin in the River Beas** is being legally protected and secured as a **Conservation Reserve** under the WPA.

About

1. The **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** provides the primary legal framework for the protection of wild animals, birds, and plants across India.
2. The Act empowers governments to establish **National Parks**, **Wildlife Sanctuaries**, **Conservation Reserves**, and **Community Reserves**.
3. It classifies protected species under different **Schedules**, prescribing varying degrees of legal protection and penalties.
4. The Act prohibits hunting of protected species except under limited circumstances specifically permitted by law.

5. It established important institutions such as the **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)**, **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)**, and later enabled the creation of the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**.
6. Amendments have strengthened provisions relating to wildlife crime control, regulation of invasive alien species, and implementation of **CITES** obligations.
7. The legislation forms the legal basis for flagship programmes such as **Project Tiger** and **Project Elephant**.
8. The Act remains central to **wildlife conservation**, **biodiversity protection**, and ecological security in India.

NATIONAL BOARD FOR WILDLIFE (NBWL)

Recent Update: The **Standing Committee of the NBWL (SC-NBWL)** directed the Tamil Nadu state government to rationalise the boundaries of the Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary.

About

1. The **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)** is the apex statutory body for wildlife conservation constituted under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
2. It is chaired by the **Prime Minister of India**, while the **Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change** serves as the Vice-Chairperson.
3. The Board advises the Government on policies relating to wildlife conservation, habitat protection, and management of protected areas.
4. NBWL examines proposals involving diversion of forest land or developmental activities within **National Parks**, **Wildlife Sanctuaries**, and **Eco-Sensitive Zones**.
5. The **Standing Committee of NBWL** considers project proposals and recommends appropriate conservation safeguards wherever necessary.
6. The Board promotes scientific wildlife management, habitat restoration, and protection of endangered species across the country.
7. It also coordinates with State Governments and conservation agencies to strengthen wildlife governance.
8. NBWL plays a crucial role in balancing **developmental needs** with **ecological conservation** and **biodiversity protection**.

CENTRAL ZOO AUTHORITY (CZA)

Recent Update: The **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** continued strengthening scientific zoo management, captive breeding, and wildlife conservation programmes across India.

About

1. The **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** is a statutory body established in **1992** under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
2. It functions under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** to regulate and improve the management of zoos across India.
3. The Authority grants recognition to zoos based on prescribed standards relating to animal welfare, veterinary care, enclosure design, and visitor management.
4. CZA promotes **scientific captive breeding** of endangered species to support long-term wildlife conservation and species recovery.
5. It coordinates national breeding programmes and maintains studbooks for several threatened animal species.
6. The Authority also supports zoo modernization, wildlife education, research, and capacity building of zoo personnel.
7. Regular inspections ensure compliance with prescribed standards for animal care, conservation, and ethical management.
8. The Central Zoo Authority plays an important role in **ex-situ conservation**, **wildlife education**, and **biodiversity preservation**.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

BLACKBUCK

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Chhattisgarh** reported a steady increase in its **Blackbuck** population following a

successful **reintroduction programme** initiated in **2018**.



About

1. The **Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra)**, also known as the **Indian Antelope**, is a medium-sized antelope species native to **India** and **Nepal**.
2. It is regarded as the **epitome of Indian grasslands** and is considered one of the **fastest land mammals**, second only to the **Cheetah**.
3. Blackbucks are **diurnal animals**, remaining active mainly during the daytime while inhabiting open grasslands, scrublands, and semi-arid ecosystems.
4. It has been declared the **State Animal** of **Punjab**, **Haryana**, and **Andhra Pradesh**, highlighting its ecological and cultural significance.
5. The species holds religious importance in **Hinduism**, where its skin and horns are considered sacred, and is also regarded as a symbol of good fortune in **Buddhism**.
6. The **Bishnoi community** of Rajasthan reveres the Blackbuck as the reincarnation of **Guru Bhagwan Jambeshwar (Jambaji)** and has played a significant role in its conservation.
7. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Least Concern**; **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 – Schedule I**; **CITES – Appendix II**.
8. The Blackbuck serves as an important **indicator species** for healthy grassland ecosystems and remains a flagship species for **grassland conservation** in India.

CARIBOU

Recent Update: April 2026 – Conservation experts highlighted the ecological importance of the **Caribou** amid growing concerns regarding habitat loss and climate change in Arctic ecosystems.



About

1. **Caribou** belong to the **deer family (Cervidae)** and are known as **Reindeer** in **Eurasia**, where they have been domesticated for centuries.
2. They inhabit **Arctic**, **Sub-Arctic**, **tundra**, **boreal forests**, and mountainous regions across **Canada**, **Alaska**, **Greenland**, **Scandinavia**, and **Russia**.
3. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Vulnerable**.
4. Unlike most deer species, **both male and female Caribou grow antlers**, which are shed and regenerated annually.
5. Caribou possess the remarkable ability to **detect ultraviolet light**, enabling them to identify predators and locate food beneath snow-covered landscapes.
6. They are among the very few mammals capable of efficiently digesting **lichen**, which forms a major part of their winter diet.
7. Caribou undertake some of the **longest terrestrial migrations** in the world, travelling thousands of kilometres annually between breeding and feeding grounds.
8. They are considered a **keystone species** in Arctic ecosystems and play an essential role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting indigenous livelihoods.

SLOTH BEAR

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **Sloth Bear** was recommended for inclusion under the **Species Recovery Programme** of the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme – Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (CSS-IDWH)**.

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About

1. The **Sloth Bear (Melursus ursinus)** is one of the **eight bear species** found worldwide and is distributed across **India**, **Sri Lanka**, and **southern Nepal**.
2. Nearly **90% of the global Sloth Bear population** is found in **India**, making the country critically important for its long-term conservation.
3. The species inhabits **dry deciduous forests**, **moist forests**, and **tall grasslands**, where it primarily forages during the **night**.
4. Sloth Bears are **myrmecophagous**, feeding mainly on **ants**, **termites**, **honey**, fruits, and other insects using their elongated lips and specialized palate.
5. **Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Gujarat**, popularly known as the **Ratanmahal Sloth Bear Sanctuary**, supports the highest Sloth Bear population in the state.
6. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Vulnerable**; **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 – Schedule I**; **CITES – Appendix I**.
7. Habitat fragmentation, human-bear conflict, poaching, and degradation of forest ecosystems remain major threats to the species.
8. The Sloth Bear is an important **umbrella species**, whose conservation contributes significantly to protecting India's forest biodiversity.

BARBARY MACAQUE

Recent Update: April 2026 – Researchers observed **geophagy (soil consumption)** among **Barbary Macaques** in **Gibraltar**, providing new insights into their behavioural ecology.

About

1. The **Barbary Macaque (Macaca sylvanus)** is the **only macaque species naturally occurring outside Asia** and the only non-human primate native to both **North Africa** and **Europe**.
2. It naturally inhabits the **Atlas Mountains** of **Morocco** and **Algeria**, while an introduced population exists in **Gibraltar**.
3. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Endangered**.
4. Unlike most monkey species, the Barbary Macaque **lacks a tail**, which is why it is sometimes referred to as the **Barbary Ape**.
5. The species occupies **cedar forests**, rocky cliffs, mountain gorges, and high-altitude ecosystems while remaining **diurnal** and **omnivorous**.
6. Barbary Macaques display remarkable **alloparental care**, with both males and females participating in raising and protecting young offspring.
7. Habitat degradation, illegal wildlife trade, tourism pressure, and climate change continue to threaten wild populations.
8. The species serves as an important flagship primate for conservation efforts across the **Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot**.

MADRAS HEDGEHOG

Recent Update: April 2026 – Scientists completed the **first complete mitochondrial genome analysis** of the **Madras Hedgehog**, strengthening future genetic and conservation research.

About

1. The **Madras Hedgehog (Paraechinus nudiventris)**, also known as the **Bare-bellied Hedgehog** or locally as **Mulleli**, is a small mammal **endemic to peninsular India**.
2. It is mainly distributed across **Tamil Nadu**, **Kerala**, **Andhra Pradesh**, and parts of **Karnataka**.
3. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Least Concern**.
4. The species prefers **dry scrublands**, **thorn forests**, **grasslands**, and agricultural field margins where it feeds on insects and small invertebrates.

5. It is a **nocturnal** mammal that curls itself into a tight ball using its sharp spines as protection against predators.
6. The Madras Hedgehog has a relatively short lifespan of about **five to six years** under natural conditions.
7. Genetic studies of its mitochondrial genome will improve understanding of its evolutionary history, genetic diversity, and long-term conservation needs.
8. Conservation of the Madras Hedgehog contributes to maintaining **ecological balance** by naturally controlling insect populations in dry ecosystems.

HONEY BADGER

Recent Update: April 2026 – A **Honey Badger** was photographed for the first time in the **Terai East Forest Division, Uttarakhand**.



About

1. The **Honey Badger**, also called the **Ratel**, belongs to the **weasel family (Mustelidae)**.
2. It is found across **Africa**, **Southwest Asia**, and the **Indian subcontinent**.
3. In India, it occurs in **Bannerghatta National Park**, **Chilika Lagoon**, and **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve**.
4. It is an **omnivorous** and mainly **nocturnal** mammal with exceptional digging ability.
5. The species is famous for its **fearless behaviour** and thick skin that protects it from predators.
6. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Least Concern**; **WPA, 1972 – Schedule I**.
7. Habitat loss and human disturbance remain important conservation challenges.
8. The Honey Badger is an important predator that helps maintain ecosystem balance.

INDIAN SOFTSHELL TURTLE

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **Indian Softshell Turtle** remained in focus due to conservation efforts in major river systems.



About

1. The **Indian Softshell Turtle** is also known as the **Ganges Softshell Turtle**.
2. It is one of the **largest freshwater turtles** found in the world.
3. It inhabits **deep rivers**, **lakes**, **ponds**, and **canals** with sandy or muddy bottoms.
4. In India, it is found in the **Ganga**, **Yamuna**, **Brahmaputra**, **Narmada**, and **Mahanadi** river basins.
5. The turtle is **omnivorous**, feeding on fish, insects, plants, and aquatic organisms.
6. It is also maintained in several **temple ponds of Odisha**.
7. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Endangered**; **WPA, 1972 – Schedule I**.
8. Major threats include **poaching**, habitat degradation, and river pollution.

OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLE

Recent Update: April 2026 – **Operation Olivia** continued protecting **Olive Ridley Turtles**, while the **Union Budget 2026–27** announced **Turtle Trails** for eco-tourism.

About



1. The **Olive Ridley Turtle** is the **second smallest** and **most abundant** sea turtle species.

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2. It is named after its **olive-green coloured shell (carapace)**.
3. The species is famous for **Arribada**, where thousands nest simultaneously on the same beach.
4. **Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary** in **Odisha** is the world's largest nesting site.
5. Other nesting sites include **Rushikulya** and **Devi River mouth** in Odisha.
6. **Operation Olivia** is an annual mission of the **Indian Coast Guard** to protect nesting turtles.
7. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Endangered**; **WPA, 1972 – Schedule I**; **CITES – Appendix I**.
8. Major threats include fishing nets, coastal development, marine pollution, and climate change.

SRI LANKA DOME

Recent Update: April 2026 – Scientists highlighted the **Sri Lanka Dome** as a key marine feeding ground for **Olive Ridley Turtles**.

About

1. The **Sri Lanka Dome** is one of the **most productive marine regions** in the **Indian Ocean**.
2. It forms due to **seasonal upwelling** of cool, nutrient-rich waters.
3. Upwelling triggers **plankton blooms**, attracting turtles, fish, whales, and seabirds.
4. The phenomenon usually begins in **May**, peaks in **July**, and declines by **September**.
5. Olive Ridley turtles migrate here to feed before returning to nesting beaches.
6. The Dome supports rich **marine biodiversity** and productive fisheries.
7. It is ecologically important for ocean productivity in the northern Indian Ocean.
8. Climate variability can significantly influence its productivity.

APIS MELLIFERA

Recent Update: April 2026 – Scientists at **CSIR-IIIM** demonstrated that **Apis mellifera** can survive **sub-zero temperatures**.

About

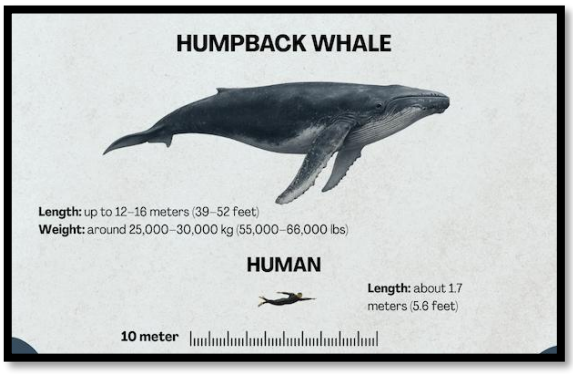
1. **Apis mellifera** is commonly known as the **Western Honey Bee** or **European Honey Bee**.
2. It is the **most widely domesticated honey bee** species in the world.
3. The species is commercially important for **honey**, **wax**, and **propolis** production.
4. It is native to **Europe**, **Western Asia**, and **Africa**, but is now found globally.
5. Honey bees are **eusocial insects** living in colonies with a queen, workers, and drones.



6. They play a crucial role in **pollination** and global food security.
7. The species has high economic importance in **apiculture** and agriculture.
8. Climate resilience studies help improve sustainable beekeeping practices.

ANTARCTIC SPECIES IN NEWS

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **IUCN Red List** revised the conservation status of several important Antarctic species.



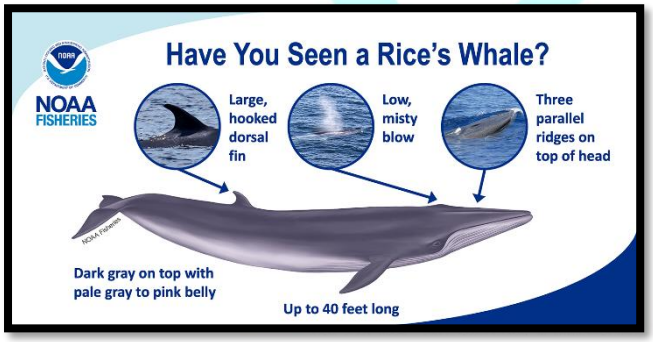
About

1. The **Emperor Penguin** was upgraded to **Endangered** from **Near Threatened**.
2. The **Antarctic Fur Seal** was upgraded to **Endangered** from **Least Concern**.
3. The **Southern Elephant Seal** was listed as **Vulnerable** from **Least Concern**.

4. Climate change and **sea-ice loss** are the major causes of population decline.
5. Antarctica remains one of the most climate-sensitive ecosystems on Earth.
6. The **Antarctic Treaty (1959)** promotes peaceful scientific cooperation on the continent.
7. Long-term monitoring is essential for conserving Antarctic biodiversity.
8. These changes highlight the growing impact of global warming on polar wildlife.

RICE'S WHALE

Recent Update: A federal panel exempted **Gulf of Mexico oil drilling** from the Endangered Species Act. NOAA also announced an ESA status review to consider stripping the whale's protections, raising fears among scientists that the species' ~51 remaining members face extinction.



About

1. **Rice's Whale** belongs to the **baleen whale family (Balaenopteridae)**.
2. It was officially recognised as a **new species in 2021**.
3. It is closely related to **Bryde's Whale**.
4. The species occurs only in the **northern Gulf of America**.
5. It is the **only whale** living there throughout the year.
6. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Critically Endangered**.
7. Ship strikes, oil exploration, and underwater noise threaten its survival.
8. It is among the **rarest whale species** in the world.

HUMPBACK WHALE

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **Humpback Whale** continued to attract scientific attention for its unique **bubble-net feeding** behaviour.

About

1. The **Humpback Whale** is a large **baleen whale** found in all major oceans.
2. **Conservation Status: IUCN – Least Concern**.
3. It uses **bubble-net feeding** to trap schools of fish.
4. Humpback whales are famous for their **complex songs**.
5. Their songs can travel up to **20 miles** underwater.
6. They undertake some of the **longest migrations** among mammals.
7. Adults generally live for **80–90 years**.
8. Marine pollution and ship collisions remain major threats.

EULOPHIA PICTA

Recent Update: April 2026 – The rare orchid **Eulophia picta** was recently documented, highlighting India's rich orchid diversity.

About



1. **Eulophia picta** is commonly called the **Nodding Swamp Orchid** or **Pink Nodding Orchid**.
2. It is found from **India** to **Southeast Asia** and **Australia**.
3. The species grows in **semi-deciduous** and **deciduous lowland forests**.
4. It is also found at elevations up to **1,000 metres**.
5. The plant possesses **underground spherical pseudobulbs**.

6. It flowers during favourable seasonal conditions.
7. Habitat degradation is the major conservation concern.
8. The species contributes to the rich **orchid diversity** of tropical Asia.

SENTINEL SPECIES

Recent Update: April 2026 – The **IUCN** recognised the **Emperor Penguin** as an **Endangered Sentinel Species** due to climate change impacts.

About

1. **Sentinel Species** are organisms whose health reflects the condition of an ecosystem.
2. They are among the **first to respond** to environmental stress or pollution.
3. These species usually occupy a **fixed habitat** and accumulate environmental toxins.
4. Their decline provides an **early warning** of ecological degradation.
5. Sentinel species help monitor **climate change**, pollution, and habitat loss.
6. Common examples include **frogs**, **honey bees**, **polar bears**, and **Emperor Penguins**.
7. They are widely used in **ecological monitoring** and conservation planning.
8. Protecting sentinel species helps safeguard entire ecosystems.

NAGARJUNASAGAR–SRISAILAM TIGER RESERVE (NSTR)

Recent Update: April 2026 – **Indian Gaur** was sighted in **NSTR** after several decades, while the reserve ranked **first in India** for **leopard population**.



About

1. **NSTR** is located in the **Nallamala Hills** of the **Eastern Ghats** in **Andhra Pradesh**.
2. It is the **largest Tiger Reserve in India** with an area of **5,937 sq. km**.
3. The **Krishna River** flows through the reserve.
4. **Nagarjuna Sagar Dam** and **Srisailam Dam** are situated within the reserve.
5. It includes **Rajiv Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary** and **Gundla Brahmeswaram Wildlife Sanctuary**.
6. **Ahobilam Temple** is located inside the Tiger Reserve.
7. Tropical **dry** and **moist deciduous forests** dominate the vegetation.
8. It recorded about **360 leopards**, the highest among India's tiger reserves.



KANHA TIGER RESERVE

Recent Update: April 2026 – Tiger monitoring gained attention following **back-to-back cub deaths** in **Kanha Tiger Reserve**.

About

1. **Kanha Tiger Reserve** is located in **Madhya Pradesh** in the **Maikal Range**.
2. It is the **largest National Park** in Madhya Pradesh.
3. It introduced India's first tiger reserve mascot, **"Bhoorsingh the Barasingha."**
4. The **Banjar River**, a tributary of the **Narmada**, flows through the reserve.
5. The forests inspired **Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book."**
6. It has an important wildlife corridor with **Pench Tiger Reserve**.
7. **Asiatic Wild Buffaloes** are proposed to be translocated from **Kaziranga**.

8. The reserve is famous for successful **Barasingha conservation**.

KALESAR NATIONAL PARK

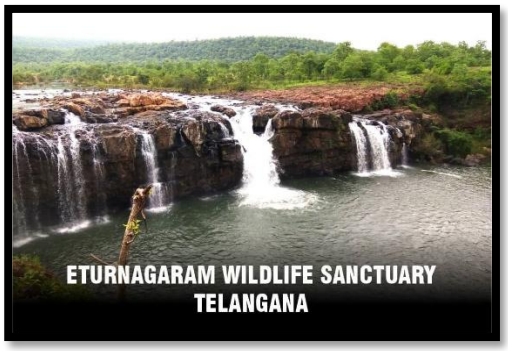
Recent Update: April 2026 – **Kalesar National Park** remained in focus for its important **Shivalik wildlife corridor**.

About

1. **Kalesar National Park** is located in **Haryana** in the **Shivalik foothills**.
2. It borders **Himachal Pradesh**, **Uttarakhand**, and **Uttar Pradesh**.
3. The **Yamuna River** forms its eastern boundary.
4. It forms a continuous corridor with **Rajaji** and **Simbalbara National Parks**.
5. Dense **Sal** and **Khair** forests dominate the vegetation.
6. The historic **Kalesar Fort** lies inside the park.
7. The park supports elephants, leopards, and diverse bird species.
8. It is an important part of the **Shivalik Elephant Landscape**.

ETURNAGARAM WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Recent Update: April 2026 – **Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary** continued to be highlighted as one of **Telangana's oldest protected areas**.



About

1. **Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary** is located in **Telangana**.
2. It was established in **1952**, making it one of the state's oldest sanctuaries.
3. The **Godavari River** flows through the sanctuary.
4. **Dayyam Vagu** divides the sanctuary into two parts.
5. The famous **Sammakka–Saralamma Temple** lies within the sanctuary.
6. Vegetation mainly consists of **tropical dry deciduous forests**.
7. Dominant trees include **Teak**, **Bamboo**, **Madhuca**, and **Terminalia**.
8. It is an important biodiversity hotspot of the **Deccan Plateau**.

GANGOTRI NATIONAL PARK

Recent Update: April 2026 – **Gangotri National Park** remained in focus due to its ecological importance in the **upper Bhagirathi basin**.

About

1. **Gangotri National Park** is located in **Uttarakhand**.
2. It lies along the upper catchment of the **Bhagirathi River**.
3. The park shares its boundary with **Tibet (China)**.
4. It adjoins **Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary** and **Govind National Park**.
5. The famous **Gangotri Glacier** lies within the park.
6. Major peaks include **Chaukhamba**, **Satopanth**, and **Kedarnath Main**.
7. Vegetation ranges from **sub-alpine conifer forests** to **alpine shrubs**.
8. It is one of India's most important **high-altitude Himalayan protected areas**.

COAL GASIFICATION PROJECT

Recent Update: The **Union Cabinet** approved the **Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects** with a financial outlay of **₹37,500 crore**.

About

1. **Coal gasification** converts **coal/lignite** into **syngas (CO + H_2)** through partial oxidation at high temperature.

2. **Syngas** is used to produce **methanol**, **ammonia**, **urea**, **Synthetic Natural Gas (SNG)** and other chemicals.



3. The scheme has a **financial outlay of ₹37,500 crore** to promote **surface coal/lignite gasification projects**.
4. It targets **gasification of 75 million tonnes** of coal/lignite under the scheme, supporting the national goal of **100 million tonnes by 2030**.
5. The scheme provides **financial assistance up to 20%** of **Plant & Machinery** cost through a **competitive bidding** process.
6. It aims to reduce imports of **LNG**, **methanol**, **ammonia** and **urea**, while strengthening **energy security** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
7. The Government has extended **coal linkage tenure to 30 years** for eligible gasification projects, ensuring long-term fuel security.

SAUDI ARABIA JOINED IBCA

Recent Update: Saudi Arabia became the **26th Member Country** of the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**, strengthening global cooperation for big cat conservation.

About

1. **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** is a **treaty-based international alliance** launched by **India** in **2023** for the conservation of **seven big cat species**.
2. Its **headquarters** is located in **New Delhi, India**.
3. It aims to conserve **Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar** and **Puma** through global cooperation.
4. Membership is open to **95 range countries**, **non-range countries**, **conservation partners**, **scientific organisations** and other stakeholders.
5. The Alliance promotes **habitat conservation**, **anti-poaching measures**, **capacity building**, **research** and **technology sharing** among member countries.
6. With Saudi Arabia's accession, **IBCA** expanded to **26 Member Countries** and **5 Observer Nations**.
7. **IBCA** supports global efforts to combat **illegal wildlife trade**, enhance **biodiversity conservation** and achieve **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

AI ENABLED WEATHER FORECASTING(MoES)

Recent Update: MoES launched **AI-enabled weather forecasting systems**, including **AI-based Monsoon Advance Forecast** and **1-km rainfall forecast**, under **Mission Mausam**.



About

1. The initiative is led by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** through the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** under **Mission Mausam**.
2. It uses **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** to deliver **hyper-local**, **impact-based** and **high-accuracy** weather forecasts.
3. The **AI-based Monsoon Advance Forecast System** predicts **monsoon progression up to 4 weeks** in advance across **16 States** and **3,000+ sub-districts**.

4. A **1-km High Spatial Resolution Rainfall Forecast** has been launched as a **pilot service** for **Uttar Pradesh** to improve localized rainfall prediction.
5. The system is powered by **ARKA**, **ARUNIKA** supercomputers and a dedicated **1.9-petaflop AI/ML platform** for advanced weather modelling.
6. It supports **agriculture**, **disaster management**, **aviation**, **water resources**, **urban planning** and **early warning systems** through real-time weather intelligence.
7. The initiative aims to make India **"Weather-Ready and Climate-Smart"** by enhancing **forecast accuracy**, **lead time** and **last-mile dissemination** of weather services.

SEHAT INITIATIVE

Recent Update: The **ICMR** and **ICAR** jointly launched the **SEHAT Mission** to integrate **agriculture**, **nutrition** and **public health** through scientific collaboration.

About

1. **SEHAT** stands for **Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation**.
2. It is a **joint initiative** of the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**.
3. It aims to strengthen convergence between **agriculture**, **nutrition** and **public health**, promoting a shift from **curative** to **preventive healthcare**.
4. The mission prioritises **biofortified crops**, **nutrient-dense foods**, **integrated farming systems**, **occupational health** and **Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)** prevention.
5. It promotes the concept of **"Food as Medicine"** by linking agricultural research with evidence-based nutritional interventions.
6. The initiative supports the **One Health** approach by integrating **human**, **animal** and **environmental health** for better health outcomes.
7. **SEHAT** aims to improve **nutrition security**, reduce **micronutrient deficiencies** and strengthen **evidence-based policymaking** for a **Healthy Food, Healthy Farms and Healthy India**.

17th PETERSBERG CLIMATE DIALOGUE(PCD)

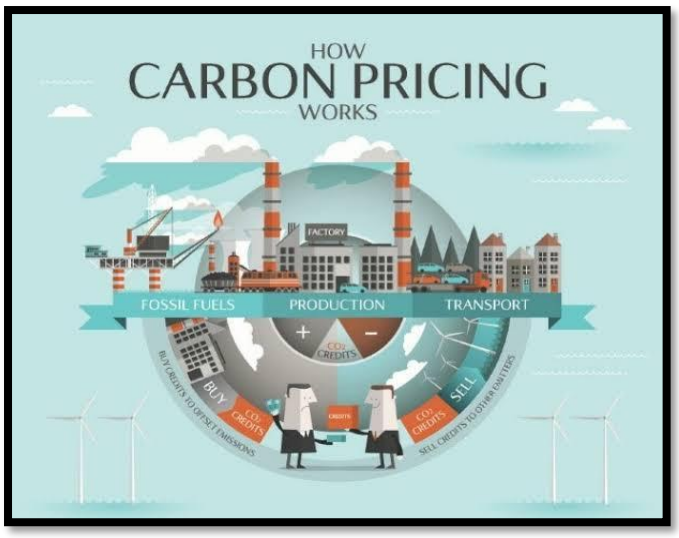
Recent Update: The **17th Petersberg Climate Dialogue (PCD)** was held in **Berlin, Germany (21–22 April 2026)** to build political momentum ahead of **COP31**.

About

1. **Petersberg Climate Dialogue (PCD)** is an **annual high-level informal ministerial meeting** on climate change, convened by **Germany** since **2010**.
2. It serves as a **preparatory platform** for the annual **UN Climate Change Conference (COP)** under the **UNFCCC**.
3. The Dialogue is **co-hosted by Germany** and the **incoming COP Presidency**; the **17th edition** was co-hosted with the **COP31 Presidency (Türkiye)**.
4. It facilitates **informal political discussions** on **climate mitigation**, **adaptation**, **climate finance**, **just transition** and implementation of the **Paris Agreement**.
5. The Dialogue helps build **consensus**, **trust** and **political convergence** before formal negotiations under the **UNFCCC**.
6. The **17th PCD** focused on **accelerating implementation**, enhancing **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** and mobilising **climate finance** ahead of **COP31**.
7. It strengthens **multilateral climate cooperation** and supports global efforts to achieve the **Paris Agreement** goals and limit global warming to **1.5°C**.

STATE AND TRENDS OF CARBON PRICING 2026

Recent Update: The **World Bank** released **State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2026**, highlighting **India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)** as one of the world's largest emerging carbon markets.



About (India Focus)

1. **India** launched the **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)** in **2026**, creating one of the world's largest new **compliance carbon markets**.
2. The **CCTS** is implemented under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001** (as amended in **2022**) through a **national carbon market**.
3. India's carbon market follows an **Emissions Intensity Trading System (EITS)**, setting **sector-specific emission intensity benchmarks** instead of absolute emission caps.
4. The initial compliance phase covers **high-emission industries**, with gradual expansion to additional sectors.
5. The report identifies India as a major contributor to the global expansion of **carbon pricing**, supporting **Net Zero 2070** and **NDC** commitments.
6. The carbon market aims to promote **low-carbon technologies**, **energy efficiency**, **green investment** and **cost-effective emission reductions**.
7. Globally, **87 carbon pricing instruments** now cover **~29% of greenhouse gas emissions**, with India's **CCTS** recognised as a significant new addition.

INDIA'S FIRST GEOTHERMAL POWER PLANT

Recent Update: The **Ladakh Administration** extended its **MoU with ONGC** to establish **India's first geothermal power plant** at **Puga Valley**.



About

1. The project is being developed by **ONGC Energy Centre** at **Puga Valley, Ladakh**, located at an altitude of about **14,000 feet**.
2. It will be **India's first geothermal power plant**, with an initial **1 MWe pilot capacity**.
3. The plant harnesses **geothermal energy** by utilizing **underground heat**, **hot water** and **steam** to generate electricity.
4. The project includes **deepening existing wells**, drilling **new geothermal wells** and preparing a **Detailed Project Report (DPR)** for commercial expansion.
5. **Puga Valley** is India's most promising **high-enthalpy geothermal field**, identified by the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)**.
6. Geothermal power provides **24×7 baseload renewable energy** with **low carbon emissions** and minimal dependence on weather conditions.
7. The project will enhance **clean energy access** in Ladakh, strengthen **energy security** and support India's **Net Zero 2070** and **renewable energy** goals.

GLOBAL FOREST GOALS (GFG) REPORT 2026

Recent Update: The **United Nations** released the **Global Forest Goals (GFG) Report 2026**, reviewing global progress under the **UN Strategic Plan for Forests (2017–2030)**.

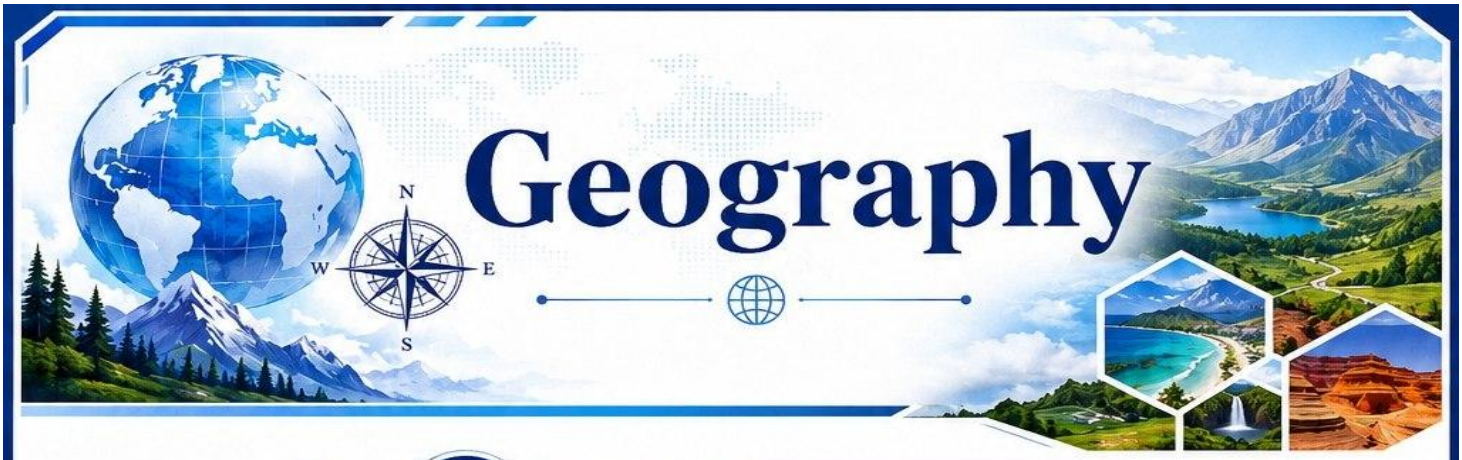
About (India Focus)

1. The report identifies **India** among the countries whose **Voluntary National Reports (VNRs)** contributed to an **increase in forest cover in Asia**.
2. India's progress is supported by the **India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023**, which

recorded **827,357 sq km** of **forest and tree cover** (**25.17%** of the geographical area).

3. The report highlights **India's Voluntary National Report (VNR)** as a key source for assessing national progress under the **UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030**.
4. It recognises India's efforts in **afforestation**, **forest restoration** and **sustainable forest management**, contributing to regional forest gains in **Asia**.
5. The report does **not assign any global ranking** to India for forest performance or achievement of the **Global Forest Goals**.
6. Globally, the report notes that **over 40 million hectares** of forests were lost during **2015–2025**, mainly due to **agricultural expansion** and **fuelwood demand**.
7. The report concludes that **reversing forest loss** and **eliminating extreme poverty among forest-dependent people** remain **off track** globally.

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THE ATLANTIC MERIDIONAL OVERTURNING CIRCULATION (AMOC)

Recent Update: New research warns that **AMOC** could weaken by **59% by 2100**.

About

1. **AMOC** is a major **Atlantic Ocean current** regulating the Earth's climate.
2. It carries **warm surface water** northwards and returns **cold deep water** southwards.
3. The circulation is driven by differences in **temperature** and **salinity**.
4. AMOC helps regulate **Europe's climate** and global **rainfall patterns**.
5. It also supports **carbon sequestration** and nutrient circulation in oceans.
6. A weaker AMOC may reduce **Indian monsoon rainfall** and increase **dry spells**.
7. It can also intensify **El Niño events** and raise **sea levels**.
8. Protecting the climate is essential to maintain a stable **AMOC**.

ANDHI

Recent Update: **Andhi** events increased across **North India** during the pre-monsoon season.

About

1. **Andhi** is a severe **dust storm** common in **North India**.
2. It mainly occurs during the **pre-monsoon summer** months.
3. It is common across **Punjab**, **Haryana**, **Delhi**, **Rajasthan**, and **Uttar Pradesh**.
4. Extreme **surface heating** creates low pressure and strong convection.
5. Moist winds from the **Bay of Bengal** trigger thunderstorms and heavy rainfall.
6. Andhi brings **dust clouds**, **strong winds**, **lightning**, and sudden cooling.
7. It reduces **visibility**, damages crops, and disrupts transport.
8. **Climate change** may increase the frequency and intensity of **Andhi** events.

MAYON VOLCANO

Recent Update: **Mayon Volcano** in the **Philippines** entered **Strombolian activity**, prompting **Alert Level 3** and large-scale evacuations.



About

1. **Mayon Volcano** is a highly active **stratovolcano (composite volcano)** located in **Albay Province** on **Luzon Island**, Philippines.
2. It is part of the **Pacific Ring of Fire**, a highly active tectonic belt characterized by frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.
3. The volcano was formed through repeated layers of **lava flows** and **volcanic ash** produced by continuous eruptions over thousands of years.
4. It is globally renowned for its **near-perfect symmetrical cone**, making it one of the world's most iconic volcanoes.
5. Mayon has erupted nearly **50 times** since its first recorded eruption in **1616**, making it the most active volcano in the Philippines.
6. Its eruptions are typically **Strombolian**, producing intermittent lava explosions along with dangerous **Pyroclastic Density Currents (PDCs)**.
7. Authorities maintain a **Permanent Danger Zone (PDZ)** extending **6 kilometres** around the volcanic crater to safeguard nearby communities.

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8. Mayon remains an important site for studying **volcanology**, **disaster management**, and tectonic activity in the Pacific region.

KENYA

Recent Update: **Kenya** remained in focus due to its strategic role in **East Africa** and regional economic integration.

About

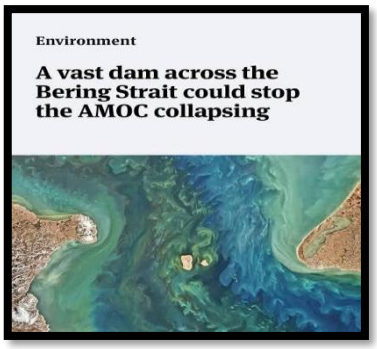
1. **Kenya** is a **unitary multiparty republic** located in **East Africa**, with **Nairobi** as its capital city.
2. It is bordered by **South Sudan**, **Ethiopia**, **Somalia**, **Tanzania**, **Uganda**, and the **Indian Ocean**.
3. The country is bisected by the **Equator** and features diverse landscapes ranging from mountains to deserts and coastal plains.
4. The **Great Rift Valley** divides Kenya's highlands and contains important lakes such as **Lake Turkana** and **Lake Naivasha**.
5. **Mount Kenya**, rising to **5,199 metres**, is the country's highest peak and Africa's second-highest mountain.
6. **Lake Victoria**, Africa's largest freshwater lake, occupies Kenya's western region and forms part of the **Nile River Basin**.
7. The country also contains fertile **highlands**, **semi-arid plains**, the **Chalbi Desert**, and an extensive **Indian Ocean coastline**.
8. Kenya plays a significant role in **African trade**, **wildlife conservation**, and regional economic development.

BERING STRAIT DAM

Recent Update: Scientists renewed discussions on the proposed **Bering Strait Dam** as a large-scale **geoengineering** solution for climate change.

About

1. The **Bering Strait Dam** is a proposed geoengineering project intended to regulate ocean currents and influence the global climate system.
2. It would be constructed across the **Bering Strait**, between **Alaska (USA)** and **Russia**, linking the **Arctic Ocean** and the **Pacific Ocean**.
3. The project aims to stabilize the **Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)** by modifying the exchange of Arctic and Pacific waters.
4. The **Bering Strait** is approximately **85 km wide**, **30–50 metres deep**, and contains the **Diomede Islands**.



5. During the **Ice Age**, the Strait formed the **Beringia Land Bridge**, enabling migration of humans, animals, and plants between Asia and North America.
6. The proposal faces major engineering challenges because of the region's harsh climate, remoteness, and lack of supporting infrastructure.
7. Scientists also warn that altering ocean circulation could seriously affect **marine ecosystems**, **salinity**, and migration routes of marine mammals.
8. The project remains a theoretical concept with significant **environmental**, **geopolitical**, and **engineering** challenges.

SOMALIA

Recent Update: **Somalia** remained in focus due to its strategic location in the **Horn of Africa** and regional security developments.

About

1. **Somalia** is a **federal republic** situated in the **Horn of Africa**, with **Mogadishu** as its capital city.
2. It is bordered by **Djibouti**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, the **Gulf of Aden**, and the **Indian Ocean**.
3. The country is largely covered by **plateaus**, **semi-deserts**, and **thornbush savannas**, with limited permanent water resources.
4. The northern region contains the **Guban coastal plain** and mountain ranges, including **Surud Cad**, the country's highest peak.

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5. The **Jubba** and **Shabeelle** rivers, originating in the Ethiopian Highlands, are Somalia's only permanent rivers.
6. Fertile **alluvial plains** along these rivers support irrigation-based agriculture and human settlements.
7. Somalia also possesses a long coastline with extensive **sand dunes** stretching over **1,000 kilometres** along the Indian Ocean.
8. The country's geography plays a crucial role in its **agriculture**, **water security**, and strategic importance in the Horn of Africa.

CANADA

Recent Update: **Canada** continued to play a major role in global climate action, natural resource management, and Arctic affairs.

About

1. **Canada** is the **second-largest country** in the world by land area, with **Ottawa** as its capital.
2. It shares the world's longest **unpatrolled international border** with the **United States**.
3. The **Canadian Shield**, composed of ancient Precambrian rocks, occupies nearly half of the country's land area and is rich in minerals.
4. The **Western Cordillera** contains the **Canadian Rockies** and **Mount Logan (5,959 m)**, Canada's highest peak.
5. The **Interior Plains** contain extensive reserves of **petroleum**, **natural gas**, and **coal**, forming Canada's energy backbone.
6. The **Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands** are Canada's most densely populated and industrialized region.
7. Canada possesses nearly **one-seventh of the world's freshwater resources**, including the **Great Lakes** and the **Mackenzie River**.
8. Its diverse geography supports strong **agriculture**, **hydropower**, **mining**, and environmental conservation.

UZBEKISTAN

Recent Update: **Uzbekistan** strengthened its strategic partnership with **India** through enhanced regional connectivity and economic cooperation.

About

1. **Uzbekistan** is a **doubly landlocked** country in **Central Asia**, with **Tashkent** as its capital city.
2. It is bordered by **Kazakhstan**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Tajikistan**, **Afghanistan**, and **Turkmenistan**.
3. Nearly **80%** of its territory consists of arid plains, deserts, and semi-desert landscapes.
4. The **Kyzylkum Desert** dominates the central region, while the **Ustyurt Plateau** occupies the northwest.
5. The eastern part of the country is occupied by the **Tien Shan** and **Gissar-Alay** mountain ranges, with **Beshtor Peak** as the highest point.
6. Uzbekistan lies between the **Amu Darya** and **Syr Darya** rivers, which have historically supported agriculture and civilization.
7. The shrinking **Aral Sea** represents one of the world's most severe environmental disasters caused by excessive river diversion.
8. Uzbekistan is an important partner for India in **Central Asia**, particularly in trade, connectivity, and regional security.

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

Recent Update: The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** continued strengthening its position as a global hub for **finance**, **technology**, and **clean energy**.

About

1. The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** is a **constitutional federation** of **seven emirates**, with **Abu Dhabi** as its capital.
2. It is located in the **southeastern Arabian Peninsula** and shares land borders with **Saudi Arabia** and **Oman**.
3. The country overlooks the **Persian Gulf**, **Gulf of Oman**, and lies close to the strategically important **Strait of Hormuz**.
4. Most of the UAE consists of vast **desert landscapes**, including parts of the **Rub' al-Khali (Empty Quarter)** and the **Liwa Oasis** region.
5. The **Hajar Mountains** in the east form the country's principal mountainous region, rising to nearly **2,000 metres**.

6. The coastline contains numerous **sabkhahs (salt flats)**, islands, and important ports supporting international trade.
7. The UAE experiences an **extreme desert climate**, with summer temperatures often exceeding **46°C** along the coast.
8. The country relies heavily on **desalination technology** to meet its freshwater requirements due to the absence of perennial rivers.

UGANDA

Recent Update: **Uganda** remained significant for its rich biodiversity and strategic role in the **Nile River Basin**.

About

1. **Uganda** is a **landlocked republic** in **East-Central Africa**, with **Kampala** as its capital city.
2. It shares borders with **South Sudan**, **Kenya**, **Tanzania**, **Rwanda**, and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**.
3. Most of the country lies on a broad **interior plateau**, giving it a relatively moderate tropical climate.
4. Uganda is home to the **Ruwenzori Mountains**, where **Margherita Peak** is the country's highest point and supports permanent glaciers.
5. **Lake Victoria**, the world's second-largest freshwater lake by surface area, dominates Uganda's southeastern region.
6. The **Victoria Nile** originates from **Lake Victoria**, flows through **Murchison Falls**, and later becomes the **Albert Nile**.
7. Uganda possesses fertile **lateritic soils**, making it one of Africa's leading producers of **coffee** and other agricultural products.
8. The country is renowned for its abundant **lakes**, **wildlife**, and significant contribution to the **Nile River system**.

LUZON ISLAND

Recent Update: **Luzon Island** remained in focus following increased volcanic activity at **Mayon Volcano**.

About

1. **Luzon** is the **largest** and most economically important island of the **Philippines**, housing more than half of the country's population.
2. It is bounded by the **Philippine Sea**, **South China Sea**, and the **Luzon Strait**, which separates it from **Taiwan**.
3. The island contains the national capital **Manila** along with major cities such as **Quezon City**, **Baguio**, and **Batangas**.
4. Major mountain ranges include the **Cordillera Central**, **Sierra Madre**, and **Zambales Mountains**, with **Mount Pulog** as the highest peak.
5. Luzon is home to several active volcanoes, including the famous **Mayon Volcano**, known for its nearly perfect cone.
6. Important water bodies include **Laguna de Bay**, the largest lake in the Philippines, and major rivers such as the **Cagayan** and **Pampanga**.
7. The island was significantly affected by the **1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo**, one of the largest volcanic eruptions of the twentieth century.
8. Luzon serves as the political, economic, and cultural centre of the **Philippines**, making it the country's most strategic island.

CYPRUS

Recent Update: **Cyprus** remained strategically important due to its location in the **Eastern Mediterranean** and continuing geopolitical developments.

About

1. **Cyprus** is an island nation in the **Eastern Mediterranean Sea**, with **Nicosia** as its capital city.
2. It became independent from **Britain** in **1960** but has remained politically divided since **1974**.
3. The internationally recognized **Republic of Cyprus** controls the southern part, while the **Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus** controls the northern region.

4. The **Kyrenia (Pentadaktylos) Range** forms the northern mountain belt and represents the southern extension of the **Alpine-Himalayan mountain system**.
5. The **Troodos Mountains**, composed mainly of **igneous rocks**, contain **Mount Olympus (1,951 m)**, the island's highest peak.
6. The fertile **Mesaoria Plain**, located between the two mountain ranges, serves as Cyprus' principal agricultural region.
7. Rivers such as the **Pedieos** originate in the **Troodos Mountains** but generally dry up during the hot Mediterranean summer.
8. Cyprus occupies a strategically significant position connecting **Europe**, **Asia**, and the **Middle East**.



ETHIOPIA

Recent Update: **Ethiopia** remained central to discussions on the **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)** and regional water security.

About

1. **Ethiopia** is a **landlocked country** in the **Horn of Africa**, with **Addis Ababa** serving as both its capital and the headquarters of the **African Union (AU)**.
2. It shares borders with **Eritrea**, **Djibouti**, **Somalia**, **Kenya**, **South Sudan**, and **Sudan**.
3. The **Ethiopian Highlands** dominate the country's landscape and include **Ras Dashen (4,550 m)**, Ethiopia's highest peak.
4. The **Great Rift Valley** traverses the country from northeast to southwest, creating numerous volcanic lakes and escarpments.
5. The **Danakil Depression**, located in the **Afar Triangle**, is among the **hottest**, **lowest**, and most geologically active places on Earth.
6. **Lake Tana**, situated in the Ethiopian Highlands, is the principal source of the **Blue Nile River**.
7. The **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)** on the **Blue Nile** is Africa's largest hydroelectric power project.
8. Ethiopia plays a crucial role in **African diplomacy**, **regional water security**, and the **Nile River Basin**.

NORWAY

Recent Update: **Norway** continued leading global efforts in **renewable energy**, **maritime industries**, and **Arctic governance**.

About

1. **Norway** is a **unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy** located in **Northern Europe**, with **Oslo** as its capital.
2. It shares land borders with **Sweden**, **Finland**, and **Russia**, while possessing an extensive coastline along the **North Atlantic Ocean** and **Barents Sea**.
3. Norway is world-famous for its spectacular **fjords**, which were carved by glaciers during successive Ice Ages.
4. The **Scandinavian Mountains** extend across the country and include **Galdhøpiggen (2,469 m)**, the highest peak in Northern Europe.
5. Norway exercises sovereignty over important Arctic territories, including the **Svalbard Archipelago** and **Jan Mayen Island**.
6. Fast-flowing rivers and waterfalls enable the country to generate over **95%** of its electricity from **hydropower**.
7. The unique **Strandflat** coastal landscape supports extensive **fisheries**, **aquaculture**, and maritime settlements.

8. Norway is recognised globally for its **green energy leadership**, **maritime economy**, and sustainable natural resource management.

KANHA TIGER RESERVE (KTR)

Recent Update: **Kanha Tiger Reserve** remained in focus for its successful **tiger conservation** and rich **Central Indian biodiversity**.

About

1. **Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR)** is one of India's most renowned protected areas, located in the **Maikal Hills** of the **Satpura Range** in **Madhya Pradesh**.
2. It spans **2,074.32 sq. km** across the **Mandla** and **Balaghat** districts and is globally recognised for its rich floral and faunal diversity.
3. Initially declared a **Reserve Forest** in **1879**, it became a **National Park** in **1955** and was included among the first **nine Project Tiger reserves** in **1973**.
4. The reserve consists of a **Core Area (940 sq. km)** of critical tiger habitat and a **Buffer Zone (1,134.32 sq. km)** supporting sustainable activities.
5. It also includes the **Phen Wildlife Sanctuary**, which functions as a satellite core area under the reserve's integrated management.
6. The forests are dominated by **Sal (Shorea robusta)**, mixed deciduous vegetation, extensive meadows, and bamboo, providing ideal wildlife habitat.
7. Kanha supports important species such as the **Bengal Tiger**, **Barasingha (Hard-ground Swamp Deer)**, **Leopard**, **Gaur**, **Wild Dog**, and **Sloth Bear**.
8. The reserve serves as a flagship model for **tiger conservation**, **grassland management**, and **ecosystem restoration**.

KAILASH MANSAROVAR YATRA (KMY)

Recent Update: **Nepal** objected to the proposed **India–China Kailash Mansarovar Yatra** through the **Lipulekh Pass**, citing sovereignty concerns.

About

1. The **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra (KMY)** is an annual high-altitude pilgrimage organised by the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India**.
2. The pilgrimage takes devotees to **Mount Kailash** and **Lake Mansarovar** in the **Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)** of **China**.
3. The yatra is conducted through two routes—the traditional **Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand)** and the **Nathu La Pass (Sikkim)**.
4. **Mount Kailash** is revered as the abode of **Lord Shiva**, while **Lake Mansarovar** is considered one of the holiest freshwater lakes in Asia.
5. The pilgrimage is generally conducted between **June and August/September**, subject to weather and bilateral arrangements.
6. Only **Indian citizens aged 18–70 years** possessing a valid passport and meeting strict medical fitness standards are eligible.
7. Due to the extreme altitude of over **15,000 feet**, pilgrims must successfully clear comprehensive medical examinations before participation.
8. The yatra promotes **religious tourism**, **people-to-people exchanges**, and **cultural diplomacy** between **India** and **China**.

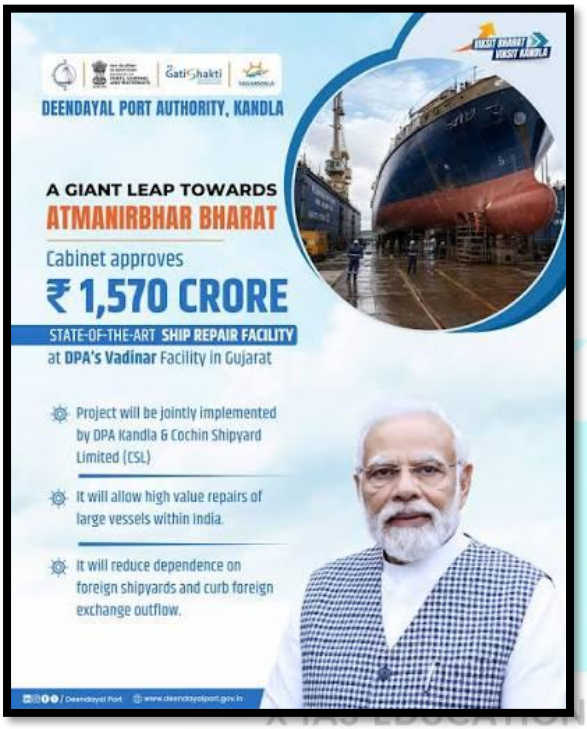
THE VADINAR SHIP REPAIR FACILITY

Recent Update: The **Vadinar Ship Repair Facility** advanced India's vision of becoming a global **ship repair hub**.

About

1. The **Vadinar Ship Repair Facility** is a major **brownfield maritime infrastructure project** being developed at **Vadinar, Gujarat**.
2. It is being jointly developed by the **Deendayal Port Authority (DPA)** and **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)**.
3. The facility aims to provide world-class repair services for **large commercial**, **naval**, and **foreign-flagged vessels**.
4. It will feature a **650-metre jetty**, specialized workshops, and advanced marine engineering infrastructure.

5. Two large **floating dry docks** will enable repairs of ships up to **300 metres** in length, exceeding India's existing repair capacity.
6. Its strategic location near **Mundra** and **Kandla** ports provides excellent connectivity to major international shipping routes.
7. The project is expected to promote **maritime MSMEs**, generate employment, and strengthen India's marine engineering ecosystem.



8. The facility supports the objectives of **Maritime India Vision 2030** and **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.

KUNO NATIONAL PARK

Recent Update: **Kuno National Park** remained in focus as the world's first **intercontinental cheetah reintroduction site** under **Project Cheetah**.

About

1. **Kuno National Park** is a premier protected area located in the **Sheopur** and **Morena** districts of **Madhya Pradesh**, within the **Vindhyan hill range**.
2. It was initially established as a **Wildlife Sanctuary** in **1981** and upgraded to a **National Park** in **2018** to support the reintroduction of **Asiatic Lions**.
3. The park presently covers **748 sq. km** and forms part of a larger **1,235 sq. km** wildlife division.
4. Historically, the region was known for its rich wildlife, and **Emperor Akbar's** records as well as **Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari** mention the presence of lions.
5. Under **Project Cheetah**, the first batch of African cheetahs from **Namibia** was released here in **September 2022**, followed by additional cheetahs from **South Africa**.
6. The **Kuno River** flows through the park, providing an important perennial water source for wildlife throughout the year.
7. The park contains extensive **grasslands**, **river valleys**, **rocky hills**, and forests dominated by **Kardhai**, **Khair**, and **Salai** trees, creating ideal habitats for large carnivores.
8. Kuno National Park plays a crucial role in **big cat conservation**, **grassland ecosystem restoration**, and India's wildlife conservation efforts.

D'ERING MEMORIAL WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Recent Update: **D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary** remained significant for conserving **riverine grassland ecosystems** in **Arunachal Pradesh**.

About

1. **D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary** is a unique **riverine protected area** located in the **East Siang district** of **Arunachal Pradesh**, near **Pasighat**.
2. It was established in **1978** and is named after **Daying Ering**, a prominent leader associated with the **Ering Commission** on Panchayati Raj reforms.
3. The sanctuary covers about **190 sq. km** and is characterized by nearly **100 km** of interconnected river channels and riverine islands.
4. Nearly **75–80%** of the sanctuary consists of **alluvial grasslands**, while the remaining area supports riverine forests, bamboo, and secondary woodlands.
5. The sanctuary has a low elevation ranging between **135 and 140 metres above Mean**

Sea Level, gradually sloping from north to south.

6. It supports diverse wildlife including **Tiger**, **Leopard**, **Asian Elephant**, **Asiatic Buffalo**, **Chinese Pangolin**, **Gangetic Dolphin**, and the endangered **Hispid Hare**.
7. The sanctuary is also an important bird habitat, supporting species such as the **Bengal Florican**, **Black-breasted Parrotbill**, and numerous migratory birds.
8. D'Ering plays a vital role in conserving **riverine biodiversity**, **grassland ecosystems**, and endangered wildlife in northeastern India.

BINSAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Recent Update: Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary continued to attract attention for its rich **oak forests** and Himalayan biodiversity.

About

1. **Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary** is a protected area located in the **Almora district** of the **Kumaon region** in **Uttarakhand**.
2. Established in **1988**, it primarily aims to conserve the **broad-leaved oak forests** and Himalayan biodiversity of the Central Himalayas.
3. Historically, **Binsar** served as the **summer capital** of the **Chand rulers**, while later the British developed the area as a hill retreat.
4. The sanctuary is characterized by **rugged ridges**, **deep gorges**, dense **Oak**, **Deodar**, and blooming **Rhododendron** forests.
5. **Zero Point (Jhandi Dhar)** offers panoramic views of Himalayan peaks including **Nanda Devi**, **Kedarnath**, **Trisul**, **Panchachuli**, and **Shivling**.
6. The sanctuary supports mammals such as the **Leopard**, **Himalayan Goral**, **Musk Deer**, **Serow**, **Red Fox**, and **Wild Boar**.
7. It is also a paradise for birdwatchers, with over **200 bird species**, including the **Monal**, **Kalij Pheasant**, **Koklass Pheasant**, and **Eurasian Jay**.
8. Binsar is an important centre for **Himalayan biodiversity conservation**, **eco-tourism**, and environmental education.

PALAMU TIGER RESERVE (PTR)

Recent Update: Palamu Tiger Reserve established an **AI Research Centre** to study elephant behaviour and reduce **human-elephant conflict**.



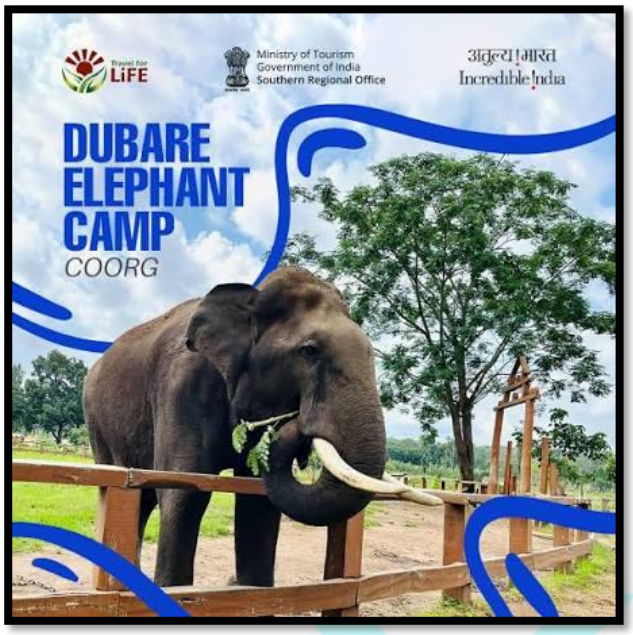
About

1. **Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR)** is a historic protected area located in the **Chhotanagpur Plateau** of **Jharkhand** and is one of India's oldest tiger reserves.
2. It was initially declared a **Protected Forest** in **1947** and became one of the **first nine Tiger Reserves** under **Project Tiger** in **1973**.
3. The reserve covers **1,129.93 sq. km**, comprising a **Core Area (414.08 sq. km)**, including **Betla National Park**, and a **Buffer Area (715.85 sq. km)**.
4. The newly established **AI Research Centre** uses **Machine Learning (ML)** to decode elephant vocalizations, monitor migration patterns, and generate early warning systems for nearby villages.
5. The reserve is geologically dominated by **gneissic formations**, along with **laterite**, **quartzite**, **amphibolite**, and extensive **alluvial deposits**.
6. It is sustained by the **North Koel** and **Burha Rivers**, besides seasonal streams such as the **Auranga**, **Satnadi**, and **Sukri**.
7. The reserve supports rich biodiversity with over **970 plant species**, **174 bird species**, and mammals such as **Tiger**, **Elephant**, **Leopard**, **Gaur**, **Sloth Bear**, and **Wolf**.
8. Palamu Tiger Reserve plays a vital role in **tiger conservation**, **elephant management**, and technology-driven wildlife conservation.

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DUBARE ELEPHANT CAMP

Recent Update: Dubare Elephant Camp continued promoting **elephant conservation**, eco-tourism, and public awareness in **Karnataka**.



About

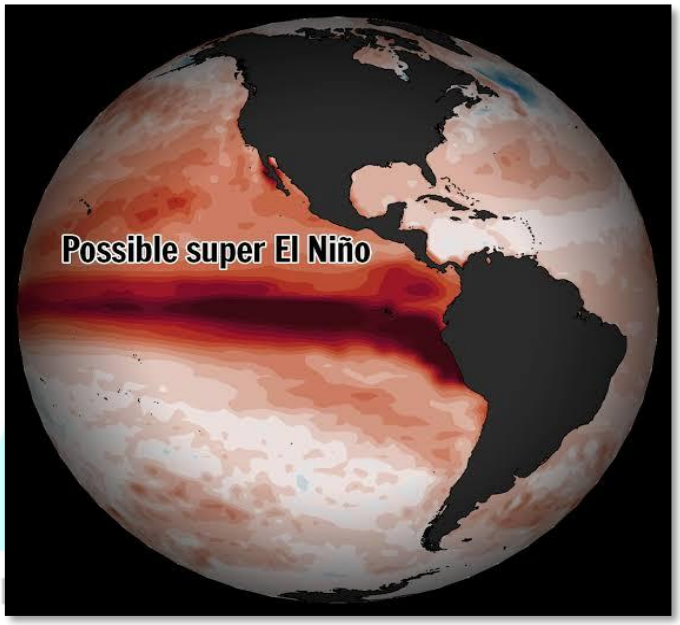
1. **Dubare Elephant Camp** is an eco-tourism and elephant conservation centre jointly managed by the **Karnataka Forest Department** and **Jungle Lodges & Resorts (JLR)**.
2. It is located on the banks of the **Kaveri River** in the **Kodagu (Coorg)** district of **Karnataka**.
3. The camp houses **captive elephants** that are trained, cared for, and managed by experienced **mahouts** and wildlife experts.
4. Visitors can actively participate in elephant care activities, including **feeding**, **bathing**, and observing the daily routine of the elephants.
5. Trained **naturalists** educate visitors about elephant behaviour, forest ecology, wildlife conservation, and human-elephant interactions.
6. The camp plays an important role in sensitizing tourists about the challenges faced by **Asian Elephants** and the importance of habitat conservation.
7. It also supports scientific research and awareness programmes related to **elephant management** and biodiversity conservation.
8. Dubare Elephant Camp serves as an important centre for **eco-tourism**, **environmental education**, and **wildlife conservation** in southern India.

SUPER ELNINO

Recent Update: INCOIS, **WMO** and global climate agencies have warned that the ongoing **2026–27 El Niño** could intensify into a **"Super El Niño"**, with possible impacts on global temperatures and monsoon patterns.

About

1. **Super El Niño** is an **informal (non-official)** term for an **extremely strong El Niño**; agencies like **NOAA** classify events as **Weak, Moderate, Strong** and **Very Strong**, not "Super".



2. It generally refers to **Niño 3.4 sea surface temperature anomalies ≥ +2°C** sustained during an El Niño episode.
3. It occurs due to **weakening of easterly trade winds**, allowing **warm Pacific waters** to spread eastward, disrupting the **El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**.
4. **India** may experience **below-normal Southwest Monsoon rainfall**, **heatwaves**, **higher temperatures**, and **stress on agriculture** during a strong El Niño, though impacts depend on factors like the **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)**.
5. Globally, it can trigger **droughts**, **floods**, **wildfires**, **marine ecosystem disruptions**, and **record global temperatures**.

6. Historic **Super El Niño** events include **1982–83**, **1997–98**, and **2015–16**, all associated with severe worldwide climatic and economic impacts.
7. The **2026–27 event** is being closely monitored as it could become **one of the strongest on record**, with significant implications for **food security**, **water resources**, and **inflation**.

HEAT DOME

Recent Update: A **Heat Dome** has been cited by weather agencies as a key factor behind the **extreme heat episodes** witnessed across parts of **India**, **Europe**, and **North America** in **2026**.

About

1. A **Heat Dome** is a meteorological



phenomenon where a **stationary high-pressure system** traps **hot air** over a region for an extended period.

2. The sinking air (**subsidence**) compresses and warms the atmosphere while suppressing **cloud formation** and **rainfall**, intensifying surface temperatures.
3. It is often associated with **blocked jet stream** patterns that prevent the high-pressure system from moving, allowing heat to accumulate.
4. A **Heat Dome** can trigger or intensify **heatwaves**, but it is **not synonymous** with a heatwave; the former is the atmospheric cause, while the latter is the extreme weather event.
5. In **India**, **Skymet** attributed the **April 2026** spell of extreme heat across parts of **Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana** and **Delhi** to a **Heat Dome** effect.
6. Heat Domes increase the risk of **wildfires**, **drought**, **crop stress**, **power demand**, and **heat-related illnesses**.
7. **Climate change** is increasing the **frequency**, **intensity**, and **duration** of Heat Dome-related extreme heat events worldwide.

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SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

INDIA'S ENERGY SECURITY AMID CONFLICTS

Recent Update: Rising **West Asia conflicts** have intensified concerns over **India's Energy Security**.



About

1. **Energy Security** refers to ensuring **affordable**, **reliable**, and **uninterrupted energy supplies** by strengthening diversification, resilience, and supply-chain stability.
2. India has diversified its **crude oil imports**, including increased purchases from **Russia**, but remains heavily dependent on imported energy due to limited domestic production.
3. Major global conflicts such as the **Russia–Ukraine War** and tensions in the **Strait of Hormuz** have exposed vulnerabilities in global energy supply chains and maritime transport routes.
4. India's energy security is also challenged by dependence on imported **critical minerals** such as **lithium**, **cobalt**, and **rare earth elements**, which are essential for the clean energy transition.
5. Rising energy prices increase **inflation**, weaken **industrial competitiveness**, create **macroeconomic instability**, and enhance the bargaining power of major energy-exporting nations.
6. The way forward includes expanding **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)**, strengthening **maritime security**, accelerating **Green Energy** adoption, securing **critical mineral supply chains**, and reducing **oil intensity**.
7. India should continue diversifying energy imports while strengthening **Operation Sankalp**, enhancing domestic processing capacity, and investing in resilient energy infrastructure.
8. A resilient energy ecosystem based on **diversification**, **strategic reserves**, **clean energy**, and **maritime security** is essential for India's long-term economic and strategic stability.

India's EV AMBITION NEEDS A GRID STRATEGY

Recent Update: Experts emphasised an integrated **Electric Vehicle (EV) Grid Strategy** to support India's clean mobility transition.

About

1. An **Electric Vehicle (EV) Grid Strategy** integrates **transport electrification** with **power generation**, **transmission**, and **distribution systems** to ensure reliable electricity supply.
2. India has achieved significant progress through initiatives such as the **PM E-DRIVE Scheme**, **National Electricity Plan**, **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)**, and **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** charging standards.
3. Expanding **EV adoption**, especially in **commercial vehicles** and **freight transport**, is essential for reducing dependence on imported crude oil and improving energy security.
4. Major challenges include weak **Distribution Company (DISCOM)** finances, dependence on **coal-based electricity**, lack of **smart charging infrastructure**, regional disparities, and rising peak electricity demand.
5. The transition also requires greater integration of **renewable energy**, **Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)**, and modern transmission infrastructure.
6. Suggested reforms include mandatory **smart charging**, **dynamic time-of-use tariffs**, coordinated **power-transport planning**, linking **RDSS funding** to EV readiness, and expanding **energy storage hubs**.
7. India should prioritize **bidirectional charging**, strengthen freight charging corridors, and

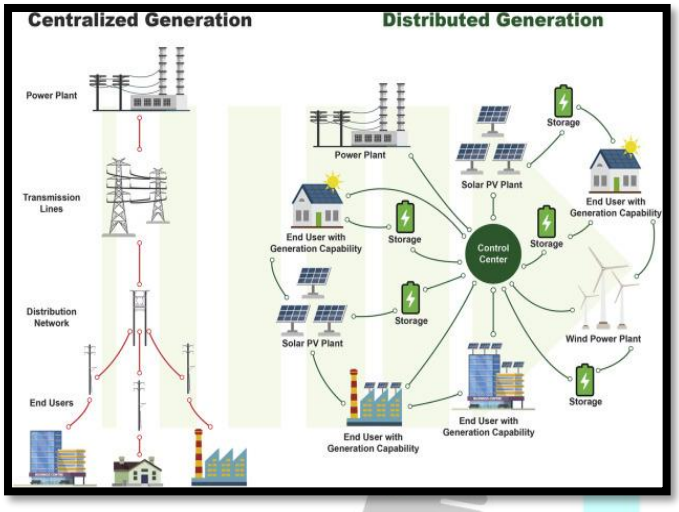
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improve grid resilience to support large-scale electrification.

8. A robust **EV Grid Strategy** will enable sustainable mobility, strengthen **energy security**, reduce emissions, and accelerate India's transition towards **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

DECENTRALIZED BIOENERGY SYSTEMS

Recent Update: The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** prioritised Decentralised **Bioenergy Systems** to strengthen India's energy resilience.



About

1. **Bioenergy** is renewable energy produced from **biomass** such as agricultural residues, municipal waste, animal manure, sewage sludge, and food waste through **thermal**, **chemical**, and **biological** conversion processes.

2. The two major conversion systems are **Gasification**, which converts dry biomass into **Syngas** and **Biochar**, and **Anaerobic Digestion**, which converts wet organic waste into **Biogas**, **Compressed Biogas (CBG)**, and **organic digestate**.

3. Decentralized bioenergy enhances **energy security**, reduces dependence on imported fossil fuels, promotes **circular agriculture**, improves **air quality**, and creates opportunities for **carbon credits**.

4. Bioenergy also supports **stubble management**, reduces **greenhouse gas emissions**, strengthens **rural livelihoods**, and improves sustainable waste management.

5. Major challenges include **seasonal biomass availability**, **poor feedstock quality**, **lack of source segregation**, **high transportation costs**, and limited **institutional financing**.

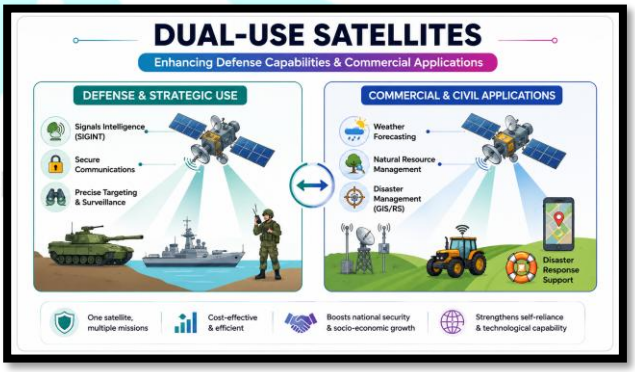
6. The government proposes strengthening **biomass storage facilities**, expanding **NABARD credit support**, enforcing **waste segregation**, promoting long-term **CBG procurement**, and encouraging **Green Hydrogen** production.

7. Greater investment in decentralized bioenergy infrastructure can significantly improve **rural energy access**, **resource efficiency**, and **environmental sustainability**.

8. **Decentralized Bioenergy Systems** represent a sustainable solution for enhancing **energy security**, reducing waste, and supporting India's clean energy transition.

DUAL-USE SATELLITES ARE BLURRING THE LINES OF MODERN SPACE WAR

Recent Update: Growing use of **Dual-Use Satellites** as evident by USA's targeted used against Iran, has raised concerns over **space security** and **international humanitarian law**.



About

1. **Dual-Use Satellites** are space assets that simultaneously support **civilian applications** such as **navigation**, **weather forecasting**, and **internet connectivity**, while also performing **military functions** including surveillance, reconnaissance, intelligence gathering, and secure communications.

2. These satellites reduce costs by sharing **civilian and defence infrastructure**, enable **real-time data processing**, utilize **shared communication frequencies**, and provide resilient **commercial satellite networks**.

3. The rapid growth of **commercial satellite constellations** has strengthened military

logistics, improved **disaster management**, enhanced **navigation services**, and accelerated technological innovation.

4. Major challenges include the collapse of distinctions between **civilian and military targets**, difficulties in **cyber attribution**, rising **space debris**, legal ambiguities under **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**, and dependence on foreign commercial satellite services.
5. Destruction or cyberattacks on dual-use satellites can disrupt essential civilian services such as **GPS**, **telecommunications**, **banking**, and **emergency response systems**.
6. The way forward includes adopting **Secure-by-Design** satellite architecture, strengthening **international attribution mechanisms**, updating the **Outer Space Treaty**, recognizing functional satellite disruption under international law, and creating resilient **terrestrial backup systems**.
7. Greater international cooperation is necessary to regulate **commercial satellite constellations**, establish norms for responsible behaviour in outer space, and prevent unintended military escalation.
8. Effective governance of **Dual-Use Satellites** is essential for ensuring **space security**, protecting civilian infrastructure, and preserving the peaceful use of outer space.

CYBER WARFARE AND THE LEGAL VACUUM

Recent Update: Amid escalating geopolitical tensions involving the **US, Israel, and Iran**, security analysts highlighted a critical governance vacuum: cyber warfare is rapidly outpacing global legal accountability frameworks.

About

1. **Cyber Warfare** refers to politically or militarily motivated **digital operations** conducted by states or state-sponsored actors to infiltrate, disrupt, sabotage, or destroy another nation's **critical information infrastructure**.



2. The rapid growth of cyber warfare is driven by **low-cost asymmetric capabilities**, **plausible deniability**, integration with conventional military operations, weaponization of **dual-use digital infrastructure**, and weak international legal deterrence.
3. Modern cyberattacks increasingly target **power grids**, **banking systems**, **communication networks**, **healthcare infrastructure**, and other **critical national assets**.
4. Major legal challenges include difficulties in **attributing cyberattacks**, ambiguity regarding the **use of force** under international law, **state sovereign immunity**, inadequacy of existing treaties such as the **Budapest Convention**, and concerns over intelligence disclosure.
5. Existing international legal frameworks remain insufficient to effectively regulate **state-sponsored cyber operations** or impose accountability for cyber aggression.
6. The proposed reforms include adopting an **International Digital Geneva Convention**, establishing a **United Nations-backed cyber attribution body**, implementing **Zero-Trust security architecture**, introducing **automated international sanctions**, and strengthening **Global South cyber cooperation**.
7. Countries must invest in **cyber resilience**, advanced **digital forensics**, **critical infrastructure protection**, and international intelligence-sharing mechanisms to address evolving cyber threats.
8. A comprehensive global legal framework is essential to strengthen **cybersecurity**, enhance **international accountability**, and safeguard critical digital infrastructure in the era of modern cyber warfare.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

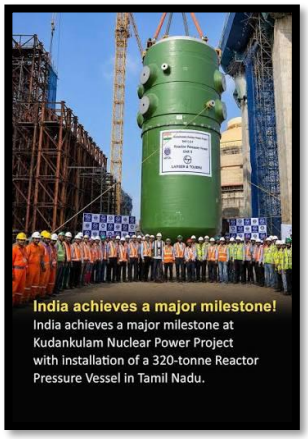
ATOMIC ENERGY REGULATORY BOARD (AERB)

Recent Update: **AERB** approved the erection of major equipment for **Units 5 and 6** of the **Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP)**.

About

1. The **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)** is India's apex regulatory authority for **nuclear and radiation safety**.

2. It was established on **15 November 1983** to regulate nuclear and radiation-related activities across the country.



3. The Board grants **licences and regulatory clearances** for various stages of nuclear power projects.
4. It conducts detailed **safety reviews** of nuclear plant design, construction, and operational performance.
5. The AERB enforces **radiological protection standards** for both **DAE** and **non-DAE** radiation facilities.
6. It also assists the Government in framing rules under the **Atomic Energy Act** and the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
7. The **Safety Review Committee for Operating Plants (SARCOP)** monitors the safety of operational nuclear facilities.
8. The AERB ensures the **safe, secure, and peaceful use** of nuclear energy in India.

PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS (PCB)

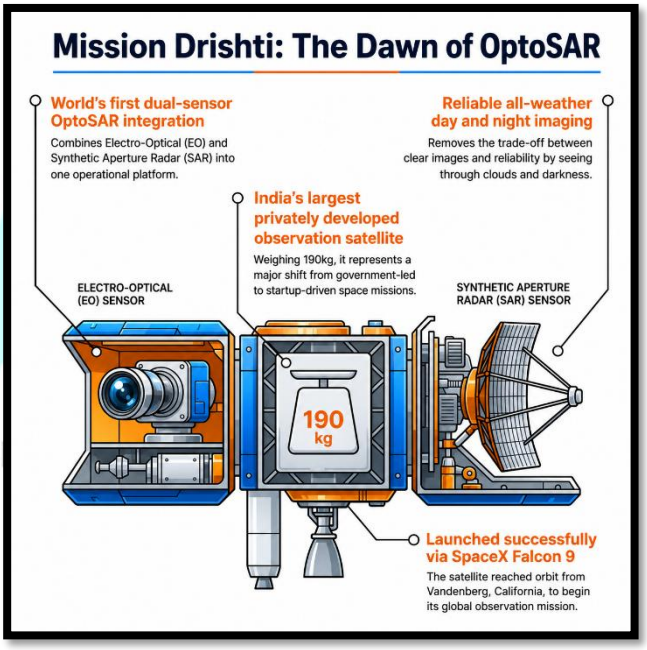
Recent Update: The conflict in the Middle East triggered a global supply chain crisis, causing printed circuit board (PCB) prices to surge by as much as **40% in April 2026** due to the disruption of critical **raw materials like PPE resin.**

About

1. A **Printed Circuit Board (PCB)** is a board that electrically connects and mechanically supports electronic components.
2. It is manufactured using **copper foil**, **epoxy resin**, and **glass fibre** to provide strength and conductivity.
3. The manufacturing process includes **lamination**, **etching**, and **multi-layer stacking** for complex circuits.
4. Advanced PCBs use **high-purity substrates** to maintain signal integrity in high-speed electronic devices.
5. They offer excellent **thermal resistance**, reliability, and long operational life under demanding conditions.
6. PCBs are available in **single-layer**, **double-layer**, and highly complex **multi-layer** configurations.
7. They are widely used in **smartphones**, **computers**, **AI servers**, and industrial automation systems.
8. PCBs form the backbone of modern **semiconductor**, **electronics**, and digital technology industries.

MISSION DRISHTI BY GALAXEYE

Recent Update: **GalaxEye** successfully launched **Mission Drishti**, the world's first **OptoSAR satellite**.



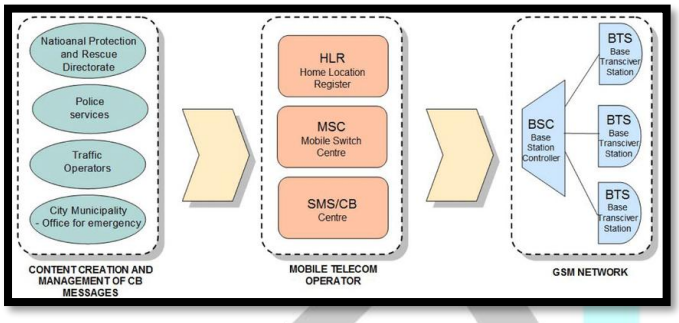
About

1. **Mission Drishti** is the world's first **OptoSAR Earth Observation Satellite**, integrating **Optical** and **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** technologies.
2. The satellite was developed by **GalaxEye** with support from **IN-SPACe** and launched aboard **SpaceX Falcon 9**.
3. It operates in a **Sun-synchronous Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** at an altitude of approximately **500 km**.
4. The satellite provides **all-weather**, **day-and-night** Earth observation by combining optical and radar imagery.

5. It offers a **1.2–3.6 metre spatial resolution**, the highest among Indian private Earth observation satellites.
6. The system revisits the same location every **four days** for continuous monitoring and analysis.
7. It supports applications in **national security**, **agriculture**, **disaster management**, and environmental monitoring.
8. Mission Drishti marks a major milestone in India's **private space sector** and advanced Earth observation capabilities.

CELL BROADCAST SYSTEM (CBS)

Recent Update: C-DOT developed the indigenous **Cell Broadcast System (CBS)** for real-time emergency alerts.

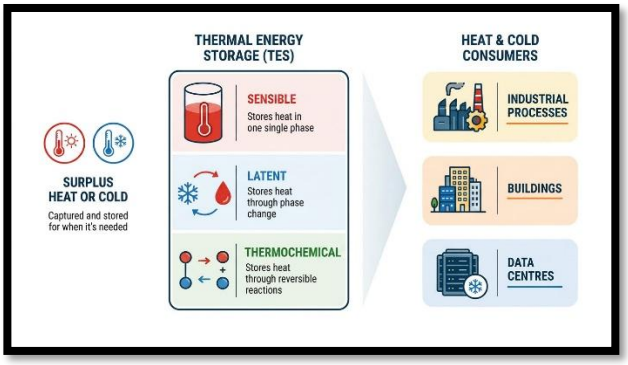


About

1. The **Cell Broadcast System (CBS)** is a mobile communication technology that sends emergency alerts to all devices within a specific geographical area.
2. It was developed by the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** to strengthen India's disaster management system.
3. Unlike **SMS**, CBS is a **one-to-many** communication service that functions even during network congestion.
4. The system broadcasts alerts through **Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs)** to every mobile phone connected to the targeted cell towers.
5. It supports **precise geo-targeting**, allowing alerts to be issued for a neighbourhood, district, state, or the entire country.
6. CBS provides **multilingual alerts**, loud emergency tones, pop-up notifications, and read-aloud features for accessibility.
7. It is designed to deliver timely warnings during **earthquakes**, **flash floods**, **gas leaks**, cyclones, and other public emergencies.
8. The system strengthens **disaster preparedness**, **public safety**, and **early warning communication** across India.

THERMAL ENERGY STORAGE (TES) SYSTEMS

Recent Update: ARCI developed an advanced **Thermal Energy Storage (TES)** material with significantly higher heat storage capacity.



About

1. A **Thermal Energy Storage (TES)** system stores heat energy for later use, functioning as a **thermal battery**.
2. It stores excess heat generated from **solar energy** or industrial processes and releases it when required.
3. TES systems commonly use **Phase Change Materials (PCMs)**, **molten salts**, or **thermal oils** as storage media.
4. The latest breakthrough uses **spinel-type metal oxide nanoparticles** to enhance the heat storage capacity of conventional PCMs.
5. The new material improves **specific heat capacity** by about **45%** with only a small nanoparticle addition.
6. TES systems are widely used in **Concentrated Solar Power (CSP)** plants and industrial waste heat recovery.
7. They also support **grid-scale thermal batteries**, green buildings, and energy-efficient heating systems.
8. TES technology improves **energy efficiency**, **renewable energy integration**, and long-term energy sustainability.

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THE APNOEA TEST

Recent Update: Recently, the **Supreme Court** agreed to examine a plea questioning the reliability of the apnoea test in determining **brain death**, directing an expert review.

About

1. The **Apnoea Test** is a mandatory clinical procedure used to confirm **brainstem death** in critically ill patients.
2. It determines whether the brainstem can initiate spontaneous breathing when **carbon dioxide (CO_2)** levels rise.
3. Before the test, the patient receives **100% oxygen** to maintain adequate oxygen reserves.
4. Doctors temporarily disconnect the ventilator while continuously monitoring breathing efforts and vital signs.
5. A positive test is confirmed when there is **no spontaneous breathing** despite a significant rise in **CO_2 levels**.
6. The procedure is immediately stopped if blood pressure falls dangerously or oxygen saturation drops below safe limits.
7. A positive Apnoea Test is an essential legal requirement for the certification of **brain death** and **organ donation**.
8. The test plays a crucial role in ensuring **ethical organ transplantation** and accurate neurological assessment.

AI-ENABLED MONSOON FORECASTING PLATFORMS

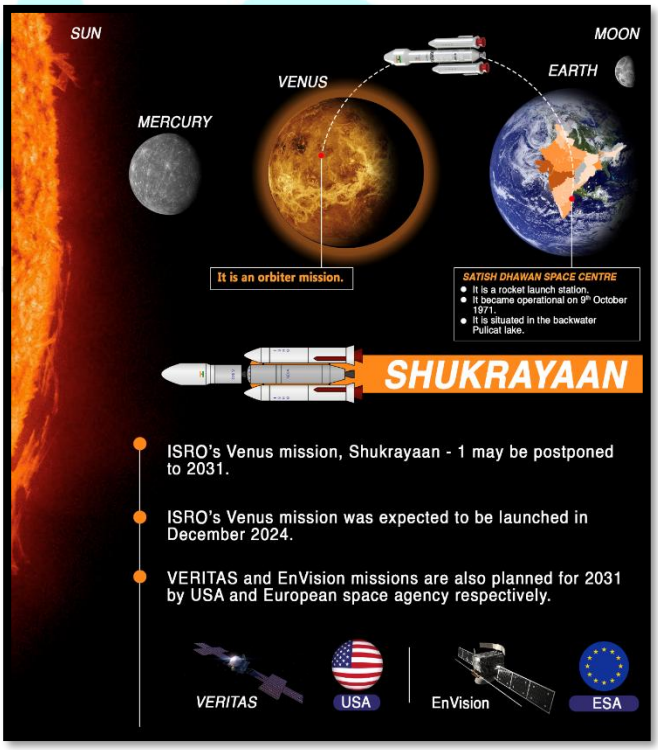
Recent Update: **IMD**, **IITM**, and **NCMRWF** launched **AI-enabled Monsoon Forecasting Platforms** for hyper-local weather prediction.

About

1. The platforms use **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** to generate highly accurate weather forecasts.
2. They were jointly developed by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, **IITM Pune**, and **NCMRWF**.
3. The systems provide **block-level** probabilistic forecasts of monsoon advancement up to **four weeks** in advance.
4. A new **1-km resolution rainfall forecasting model** delivers highly localized rainfall predictions up to **10 days** ahead.
5. The forecasting models combine **historical IMD data**, satellite observations, weather radars, and global climate models.
6. The platforms support **precision agriculture**, disaster management, water resource planning, and urban flood forecasting.
7. Weather advisories generated by these systems are integrated with the **Ministry of Agriculture** for timely farmer guidance.
8. The initiative strengthens **climate resilience**, **early warning systems**, and evidence-based weather forecasting.

SWEDEN JOINS INDIA'S SHUKRAYAAN MISSION

Recent Update: **Sweden** joined **ISRO's Shukrayaan Mission** by contributing the **Venusian Neutrals Analyser (VNA)** instrument.



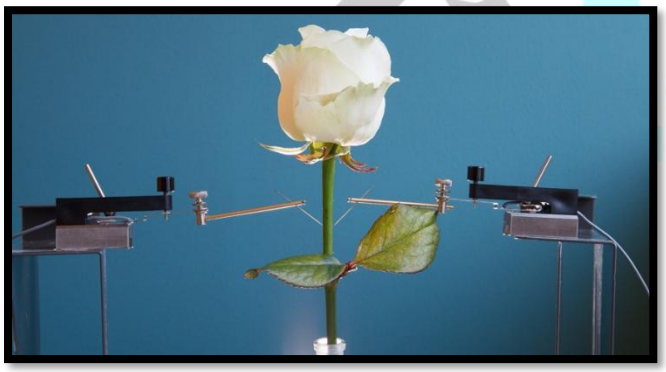
About

1. **Shukrayaan** is India's first dedicated **Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)** for exploring the planet **Venus**.
2. The mission is scheduled for launch on **29 March 2028** aboard the **LVM-3** launch vehicle.

3. It aims to study **Venus' atmosphere**, **surface geology**, **volcanic activity**, and climate evolution.
4. Sweden is contributing the **Venusian Neutrals Analyser (VNA)**, integrated into the **VISWAS** scientific payload.
5. The VNA will study **Energetic Neutral Atoms (ENAs)** and interactions between the **solar wind** and the Venusian atmosphere.
6. The mission also includes scientific collaborations with **Germany** and **Russia**, strengthening international cooperation.
7. Scientists hope to understand how **atmospheric escape** transformed Venus into an extreme greenhouse planet.
8. Shukrayaan will significantly enhance knowledge of **planetary evolution**, **space science**, and comparative planetology.

CYBORG BOTANY

Recent Update: Scientists advanced research in **Cyborg Botany** to enable plants to communicate their health digitally.

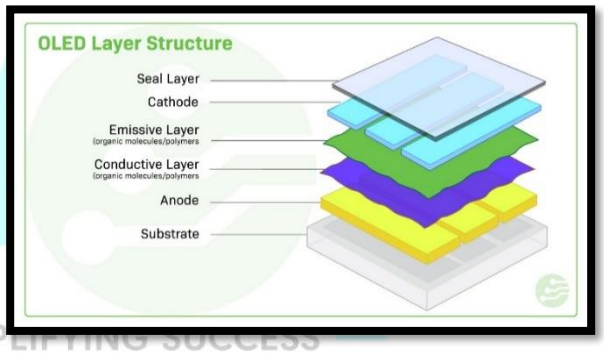


About

1. **Cyborg Botany** combines **plant biology**, **electronics**, and **materials science** to create bio-electronic plants.
2. Scientists embed **nanowires**, **biosensors**, and conductive materials directly into plant tissues.
3. These sensors convert internal biological signals into **digital information** for continuous monitoring.
4. The technology enables early detection of **water stress**, **nutrient deficiency**, **diseases**, and pest attacks.
5. Conductive polymers such as **PEDOT** transmit electrical signals from plant cells to external devices.
6. The system provides **real-time monitoring** through mobile phones and computer-based dashboards.
7. Researchers are also exploring plants as **self-powered biological sensors** using their natural electrical activity.
8. Cyborg Botany supports **precision agriculture**, environmental monitoring, and sustainable crop management.

OLED (ORGANIC LIGHT EMITTING DIODES)

Recent Update: Recently Cabinet approved two more semiconductor manufacturing units under ISM. It includes country's **first commercial Mini/Micro-LED display facility based on GaN (Gallium Nitride) Technology in Dholera, Gujarat**.



About

1. **OLED (Organic Light Emitting Diode)** is a self-emissive display technology that uses **organic carbon-based compounds** to produce light.
2. Unlike **LCDs**, OLED displays do not require a separate **backlight**, as each pixel emits its own light.
3. OLED panels consist of thin organic layers placed between an **anode** and a **cathode**, which emit light when electric current passes through them.
4. They provide **true black levels**, superior contrast, wider viewing angles, and excellent colour reproduction.
5. OLED displays are **ultra-thin**, lightweight, flexible, and can be manufactured as foldable or rollable screens.

6. They consume less power because inactive pixels remain completely switched off during operation.
7. OLED technology is widely used in **smartphones**, **televisions**, **smartwatches**, **wearable devices**, and automotive displays.
8. The technology supports **high refresh rates**, better energy efficiency, and next-generation flexible electronics.

POLYENDOCRINE METABOLIC OVARIAN SYNDROME (PMOS)

Recent Update: Medical experts proposed renaming **PCOS** as **Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS)** to better reflect its systemic nature.

About

1. **PMOS** is the updated medical term for **Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)**, recognizing it as a **multisystem metabolic disorder**.
2. The condition affects the **endocrine**, **metabolic**, **reproductive**, and **psychological** systems rather than only the ovaries.
3. Major causes include **insulin resistance**, **hormonal imbalance**, **genetic predisposition**, and chronic low-grade inflammation.
4. Common symptoms include **irregular menstruation**, **infertility**, **weight gain**, **acne**, **hirsutism**, and thinning scalp hair.
5. Women with PMOS have a higher risk of **Type 2 Diabetes**, **hypertension**, **fatty liver disease**, and cardiovascular disorders.
6. The new terminology emphasizes early screening for **metabolic diseases** instead of focusing only on fertility issues.
7. Management includes **lifestyle modification**, weight reduction, medications, and long-term metabolic monitoring.
8. PMOS provides a more accurate understanding of the condition and supports **holistic patient care**.

HANTAVIRUS

Recent Update: Health authorities monitored rising concerns over **Hantavirus** infections in affected regions.

About

1. **Hantavirus** is a group of viruses transmitted mainly by **rodents**, causing severe respiratory and kidney diseases in humans.
2. It causes two major illnesses—**Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS)** and **Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS)**.
3. Humans usually become infected by inhaling virus particles from **rodent urine**, **droppings**, or **saliva**.
4. Early symptoms include **fever**, **muscle pain**, **fatigue**, **headache**, and gastrointestinal disturbances.
5. Severe HPS progresses to **breathing difficulty**, fluid accumulation in the lungs, and respiratory failure.
6. HFRS mainly affects the **kidneys**, causing low blood pressure, bleeding disorders, and acute kidney injury.
7. There is **no specific antiviral treatment**, and management mainly involves intensive supportive care in hospitals.
8. Preventing rodent exposure remains the most effective strategy for controlling **Hantavirus** infections.

THE JANANI PLATFORM

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** launched the upgraded **JANANI Platform** for digital maternal and child healthcare.



About

1. **JANANI** is an upgraded digital platform developed to maintain **comprehensive maternal and child health records**.
2. It replaces the existing **Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Portal** with a more integrated healthcare system.
3. The platform tracks the complete healthcare journey from **antenatal care** to **family planning** services.
4. It introduces **QR-enabled Mother and Child Health (MCH) Cards** for easy access to health records anywhere in India.
5. The system automatically identifies **high-risk pregnancies** and generates alerts for timely medical intervention.
6. JANANI integrates with national platforms such as **U-WIN**, **POSHAN**, and **ABHA** for seamless healthcare delivery.
7. It enables **self-registration**, real-time dashboards, and automated reminders for immunization and antenatal visits.
8. The platform strengthens **maternal healthcare**, **child health monitoring**, and digital health governance.

THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

Recent Update: **WHO** declared the **Ebola outbreak** in **DR Congo** and **Uganda** a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)**.

About

1. **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)** is a severe viral hemorrhagic fever caused by viruses of the **Ebolavirus** genus.
2. The **2026 outbreak** involves the **Bundibugyo Virus Disease (BVD)** strain, for which no approved vaccine is currently available.
3. The virus is believed to originate from **fruit bats** and spreads to humans through infected animals or bodily fluids.
4. Human-to-human transmission occurs through direct contact with **blood**, **secretions**, and other infected body fluids.
5. Symptoms include **high fever**, **fatigue**, **vomiting**, **diarrhoea**, **rash**, internal bleeding, and multi-organ failure.
6. Healthcare workers remain at high risk because of exposure to infected patients and inadequate infection control.
7. There is **no specific cure**, and treatment mainly consists of supportive care, hydration, and symptom management.
8. Early detection, **contact tracing**, safe burials, and infection prevention remain the most effective control measures.

THE SMILE MISSION

Recent Update: The **ESA** and the **Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)** are making advanced preparations for the **SMILE Mission**.

About

1. **SMILE (Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer)** is a joint space mission of the **European Space Agency (ESA)** and the **Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)**.
2. The mission aims to study the interaction between the **solar wind** and Earth's **magnetosphere** using advanced imaging instruments.
3. It will operate in a highly elliptical orbit at about **1.21 lakh kilometres** above Earth's North Pole.
4. The mission carries four major payloads, including the **Soft X-ray Imager (SXI)** and **Ultraviolet Aurora Imager (UVI)**.
5. It will provide the first global images of Earth's magnetosphere responding to **solar storms** and **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)**.
6. Scientists will use the mission to understand **space weather**, auroral activity, and magnetic field disturbances.
7. The satellite is designed for a **three-year mission** to generate continuous scientific observations.
8. SMILE will significantly improve knowledge of **solar-terrestrial interactions**, **space weather forecasting**, and magnetospheric science.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM (ECLSS)

Recent Update: **ISRO** continued developing the **Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS)** for the **Gaganyaan Mission**.

About

1. The **Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS)** is a mission-critical system that creates a safe and habitable environment inside a spacecraft.
2. It has been developed by **ISRO** to support astronauts during India's **Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Mission**.
3. The system continuously regulates **oxygen**, **carbon dioxide**, **temperature**, **humidity**, and cabin pressure.
4. The **Air Revitalization System (ARS)** supplies oxygen while removing carbon dioxide and harmful contaminants from the cabin air.
5. It maintains constant air circulation and Earth-like atmospheric conditions to ensure astronaut safety in **microgravity**.
6. The ECLSS also manages **drinking water**, **human waste**, temperature control, and emergency fire suppression inside the spacecraft.
7. For **Gaganyaan**, it functions as an **open-loop system**, carrying all essential life-support supplies from Earth.
8. The ECLSS is essential for ensuring **crew survival**, **mission safety**, and successful long-duration human space missions.

AI AGENTS

Recent Update: Indian agentic artificial intelligence startups are experiencing significant funding momentum, **with investments reaching $60 million in the first four-and-a-half months of 2026.**

About

1. **AI Agents** are advanced software systems that use **Large Language Models (LLMs)** to perform tasks autonomously.
2. Unlike traditional chatbots, they can **reason**, **plan**, **remember**, and execute complex multi-step workflows independently.
3. AI Agents combine **memory systems**, **decision-making**, and external tools such as APIs, databases, and web services.
4. They observe their environment, analyze information, and continuously adapt their actions based on changing conditions.
5. AI Agents may operate as **Single-Agent Systems** or **Multi-Agent Systems**, depending on task complexity.
6. They are widely used in **software development**, **cybersecurity**, **customer support**, and enterprise automation.
7. Modern AI Agents can collaborate with humans and other AI systems while continuously improving their own performance.
8. AI Agents are transforming **digital productivity**, **automation**, and the future of intelligent computing.

CANINE DISTEMPER VIRUS (CDV)

Recent Update: Wildlife authorities intensified surveillance of **Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)** in protected forest landscapes.

About

1. **Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)** is a highly contagious viral disease caused by a **single-stranded RNA virus** of the **Paramyxoviridae** family.
2. The disease affects the **respiratory**, **digestive**, and **nervous systems** of domestic and wild carnivores.
3. Domestic dogs serve as the primary reservoir, with transmission occurring through **respiratory droplets** and infected body fluids.
4. Common symptoms include **fever**, **cough**, **eye discharge**, **vomiting**, **diarrhoea**, and severe neurological disorders.
5. Advanced infection may cause **muscle twitching**, **seizures**, **paralysis**, and permanent nervous system damage.
6. There is **no specific antiviral treatment**, and management mainly focuses on supportive care and controlling secondary infections.

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7. Vaccination of domestic dogs remains the most effective strategy for preventing transmission to wildlife populations.
8. CDV poses a serious threat to **tigers**, **lions**, and other endangered carnivores through wildlife spillover events.

PROSOPIS JULIFLORA

Recent Update: **Prosopis juliflora** remained in focus due to its growing ecological impact on India's grasslands and biodiversity.



About

1. **Prosopis juliflora** is an invasive alien tree species introduced into India for **afforestation**, **fuelwood**, and desert reclamation.
2. It is native to **Mexico**, **South America**, and the **Caribbean**, and was introduced into India in **1877**.
3. The species thrives in **arid**, **semi-arid**, and **saline environments**, making it highly adaptable to degraded landscapes.
4. It spreads rapidly through **large seed production**, with seeds dispersed mainly by **livestock** and wild animals.
5. Dense thickets suppress the growth of **native grasses**, reducing biodiversity and degrading natural ecosystems.
6. In India, it has extensively invaded the **Banni Grasslands** of **Gujarat** and several dryland ecosystems.
7. Despite its invasive nature, the tree provides **fuelwood**, **charcoal**, and helps stabilize sandy soils in dry regions.
8. Effective management requires **mechanical removal**, ecological restoration, and the revival of **native grassland species**.

THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

Recent Update: **WHO** declared the Ebola outbreak in **DR Congo** and **Uganda** a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)**.

About

1. **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)** is a severe viral **haemorrhagic fever** caused by viruses belonging to the **Ebolavirus** genus.
2. The **2026 outbreak** involves the **Bundibugyo Virus Disease (BVD)** strain, for which no approved vaccine is currently available.
3. **Fruit bats** are considered the natural reservoir, while transmission to humans occurs through infected wild animals and bodily fluids.
4. Human-to-human transmission occurs through direct contact with **blood**, **secretions**, or contaminated materials used by infected persons.
5. Symptoms include **high fever**, **vomiting**, **diarrhoea**, **rash**, **internal bleeding**, and multi-organ failure in severe cases.
6. Healthcare workers remain highly vulnerable due to exposure to infected patients and gaps in infection control practices.
7. There is **no specific cure**, and treatment mainly focuses on **supportive care**, hydration, and management of complications.
8. **Early detection**, **contact tracing**, safe burials, and strict infection prevention measures remain the most effective strategies for controlling Ebola outbreaks.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

NEURO-SYMBOLIC ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (NSAI)

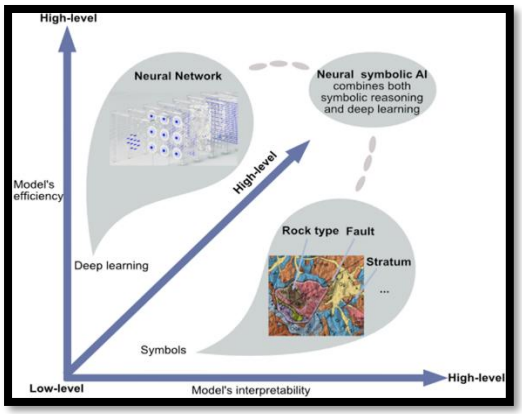
Recent Update: Experts highlighted **Neuro-Symbolic Artificial Intelligence (NSAI)** as a more reliable and explainable AI framework than traditional **Large Language Models (LLMs)** for India's education system.

About

1. **Neuro-Symbolic Artificial Intelligence (NSAI)** is a **hybrid AI architecture** that combines

deep learning-based neural networks with **rule-based symbolic reasoning** to improve accuracy and explainability.

2. The **neural component** processes unstructured information such as **handwriting**, **speech**, **images**, and regional languages through advanced pattern recognition techniques.



3. The **symbolic component** applies **human-readable logic rules**, **knowledge graphs**, and **ontologies** to perform structured reasoning and generate verifiable conclusions.
4. By integrating perception with logical reasoning, NSAI significantly reduces **hallucinations**, improves factual accuracy, and produces transparent decision-making processes.
5. The technology supports applications in **education**, **healthcare**, **robotics**, **autonomous vehicles**, **cybersecurity**, and advanced scientific research.
6. NSAI requires comparatively **less computational power** than large generative AI models because reasoning is supported through predefined logical frameworks.
7. It aligns well with India's emphasis on **human-centric AI**, **responsible AI**, and inclusive digital transformation under the **IndiaAI Mission**.
8. NSAI represents the next generation of **trustworthy**, **explainable**, and **context-aware Artificial Intelligence** suitable for complex real-world applications.

LIMITATIONS OF TRADITIONAL LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS (LLMs) IN EDUCATION

Recent Update: Researchers highlighted major limitations of **Large Language Models (LLMs)** in addressing India's diverse educational needs.

About

1. Traditional **Large Language Models (LLMs)** rely mainly on statistical next-word prediction rather than logical reasoning, limiting conceptual understanding.
2. Their massive computational and energy requirements make deployment difficult in **rural schools** with limited internet connectivity and digital infrastructure.
3. LLMs often perform poorly in **Indian regional languages** because of insufficient contextual training data and linguistic diversity.
4. They may generate **hallucinations**, producing factually incorrect historical events, scientific formulas, or academic references with high confidence.
5. Western-trained datasets may introduce **cultural biases**, reducing the relevance of AI-generated content for India's diverse educational environment.
6. The **black-box nature** of LLMs prevents teachers and students from understanding how specific answers or mistakes are generated.
7. Ready-made answers may encourage **rote learning** instead of promoting conceptual clarity, analytical thinking, and problem-solving skills envisioned under **NEP 2020**.
8. These limitations highlight the need for more **explainable**, **curriculum-aligned**, and **context-aware AI systems** such as NSAI.

SIGNIFICANCE OF NSAI FOR INDIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Recent Update: Education experts recommended adopting **Neuro-Symbolic AI** to support personalised, multilingual, and explainable learning across India.

About

1. **Neuro-Symbolic AI (NSAI)** can build **curriculum-based knowledge graphs** aligned

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with **NCERT** and State Board syllabi, ensuring factually accurate responses.

2. The technology generates **verified answers** by combining AI-based understanding of student queries with rule-based reasoning from structured educational content.
3. NSAI provides superior **vernacular language support** by integrating neural translation with symbolic grammar frameworks such as **Paninian grammar**.
4. It enables **knowledge tracing**, identifying the exact conceptual mistakes made by students during multi-step problem-solving exercises.
5. Lightweight architecture allows NSAI to operate efficiently on **low-cost smartphones** and under limited internet connectivity, supporting digital inclusion.
6. The technology acts as an intelligent tutor by offering **step-by-step explanations** instead of merely generating final answers.
7. NSAI promotes the objectives of the **National Education Policy (NEP), 2020**, including conceptual learning, critical thinking, and personalized education.
8. Its adoption can significantly improve **learning outcomes**, **teacher effectiveness**, and equitable access to high-quality education across India.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING NSAI IN INDIA

Recent Update: Experts identified several technological, linguistic, and governance challenges affecting the large-scale implementation of **Neuro-Symbolic AI (NSAI)** in India.

About

1. Building detailed **knowledge graphs** and **educational ontologies** for India's diverse curricula is highly complex, time-consuming, and resource-intensive.
2. India's linguistic diversity requires symbolic reasoning systems for numerous regional languages and dialects, many of which lack sufficient digital resources.
3. Unequal access to **electricity**, **internet connectivity**, and digital devices continues to hinder deployment in rural and remote schools.
4. NSAI cannot adequately understand students' **emotional**, **psychological**, and **socio-economic** challenges that influence academic performance.
5. Excessive dependence on AI may reduce the importance of **teacher mentorship**, classroom interaction, and holistic child development.
6. Uneven implementation could widen educational inequalities between **urban and rural schools** and between government and private institutions.
7. Ensuring **data privacy**, **algorithmic fairness**, and freedom from **gender**, **caste**, or **regional bias** remains a major governance challenge.
8. Successful implementation requires strong institutional capacity, continuous teacher training, and robust digital infrastructure across the country.

MEASURES TO MAKE NSAI INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE

Recent Update: Policymakers proposed several reforms to ensure the inclusive, secure, and effective deployment of **Neuro-Symbolic AI (NSAI)** in Indian education.

About

1. **NSAI-powered tutoring systems** should be integrated with **DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)** to provide personalized learning across India.
2. The **IndiaAI Mission** should support creation of an open-source **"Bharat Ontology"** by collaborating with **IITs**, **IIITs**, and educational institutions.
3. AI systems should be lightweight, offline-compatible, and optimized for **low-cost devices** to bridge the rural digital divide.
4. Teacher training programmes such as **NISHTHA** should be upgraded to help educators effectively interpret AI-generated learning diagnostics.
5. NSAI should automate routine administrative tasks, allowing teachers to focus on mentoring and students' socio-emotional development.
6. Student data must be processed in accordance with the **Digital Personal Data**

Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, ensuring privacy and responsible AI usage.

7. Independent audits should regularly evaluate AI systems to eliminate **gender**, **caste**, **regional**, and other algorithmic biases.
8. These measures will help build an **inclusive**, **ethical**, **trustworthy**, and **future-ready AI-driven education ecosystem** aligned with national priorities.

INDIA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT (IMD)

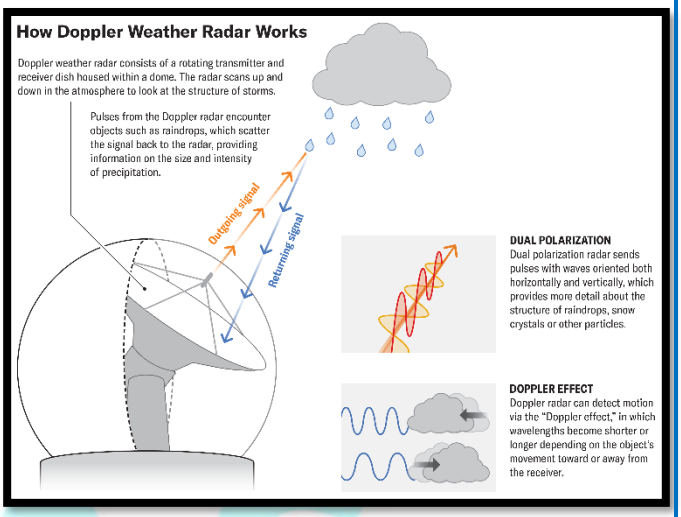
Recent Update: The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** expanded its **AI-enabled forecasting services** through **Mission Mausam**, improving high-resolution weather prediction and early warning systems.

About

1. The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** is the **national meteorological service** of India responsible for weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and disaster early warning.
2. It was established in **1875** and functions under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**, with its headquarters located in **New Delhi**.
3. IMD provides forecasts for **weather**, **monsoon**, **cyclones**, **heatwaves**, **thunderstorms**, **fog**, and **heavy rainfall** across the country.
4. The Department operates an extensive observational network comprising **Automatic Weather Stations (AWS)**, **Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs)**, **rain gauges**, **upper-air observatories**, and **meteorological satellites**.
5. IMD collaborates with institutions such as **IITM Pune**, **NCMRWF**, **ISRO**, and **INCOIS** to strengthen weather prediction and climate research.
6. It has adopted advanced technologies including **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **Machine Learning (ML)**, and **High Performance Computing (HPC)** to improve forecasting accuracy.
7. Through initiatives such as **Mission Mausam** and **Bharat Forecasting System (BharatFS)**, IMD now provides highly localized and impact-based weather forecasts.
8. IMD plays a crucial role in **disaster risk reduction**, **agricultural planning**, **aviation safety**, **marine services**, and **climate resilience**.

DOPPLER WEATHER RADAR (DWR)

Recent Update: The **IMD** expanded the use of **Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs)** to improve localized rainfall forecasting and early warnings for severe weather events.



About

1. A **Doppler Weather Radar (DWR)** is a remote sensing instrument used to detect, monitor, and forecast precipitation, thunderstorms, cyclones, and other severe weather events.
2. The radar works by transmitting **microwave radio waves** and analysing the reflected signals from raindrops, hail, clouds, and other atmospheric particles.
3. It uses the **Doppler Effect** to measure both the **location** and **velocity** of moving precipitation systems.
4. DWRs provide real-time information on **rainfall intensity**, **storm movement**, **wind speed**, and **wind direction**, improving forecast accuracy.
5. The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** operates a nationwide network of Doppler Weather Radars covering most vulnerable regions.
6. These radars play a critical role in forecasting **cyclones**, **cloudbursts**, **flash floods**, **hailstorms**, and **lightning** events.

7. Radar observations are integrated with **satellite imagery**, **weather stations**, and **numerical weather prediction models** for comprehensive forecasting.
8. DWR technology significantly strengthens **early warning systems**, **disaster preparedness**, and **weather-based decision-making** across India.

HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTING (HPC)

Recent Update: India's advanced **High Performance Computing (HPC)** systems continued supporting **AI-driven weather forecasting** under **Mission Mausam**.

About

1. **High Performance Computing (HPC)** refers to the use of **supercomputers** capable of processing enormous volumes of data at extremely high computational speeds.
2. In India, HPC systems such as **Arka** and **Arunika** power advanced **numerical weather prediction** and climate modelling.
3. These systems process massive datasets generated from **satellites**, **weather radars**, **automatic weather stations**, and **ocean observations**.
4. HPC enables rapid execution of complex atmospheric models, significantly improving the accuracy of weather and climate forecasts.
5. Integration of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** with HPC enhances prediction of extreme weather events.
6. Beyond meteorology, HPC supports research in **space science**, **genomics**, **artificial intelligence**, **defence**, and **engineering simulations**.
7. The development of indigenous supercomputing capability contributes to **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and strengthens India's scientific infrastructure.
8. High Performance Computing has become a critical pillar of **weather forecasting**, **climate research**, and **national technological advancement**.

NUMERICAL WEATHER PREDICTION (NWP)

Recent Update: India strengthened its **Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP)** capability through **BharatFS**, **Mithuna**, and AI-enabled forecasting models.

About

1. **Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP)** is the scientific process of forecasting weather by solving mathematical equations that describe atmospheric behaviour.
2. NWP models use observational data from **satellites**, **weather stations**, **Doppler Weather Radars**, **radiosondes**, and **ocean buoys** as initial conditions.
3. Powerful **High Performance Computing (HPC)** systems process these observations to simulate future atmospheric conditions over different time periods.
4. Modern NWP models generate forecasts for rainfall, temperature, wind, humidity, cyclones, and other weather parameters.
5. Continuous **data assimilation** improves model accuracy by regularly incorporating new real-time observations into forecast calculations.
6. Artificial Intelligence is increasingly being integrated with NWP models to reduce forecast errors and improve localized predictions.
7. Accurate Numerical Weather Prediction supports agriculture, aviation, shipping, disaster management, water resources, and renewable energy planning.
8. NWP forms the scientific foundation of **modern weather forecasting** and **early warning systems** worldwide.

AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATION (AWS)

Recent Update: The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** expanded its network of **Automatic Weather Stations (AWS)** to strengthen real-time weather monitoring and localized forecasting.

About

1. An **Automatic Weather Station (AWS)** is an automated system that continuously records meteorological parameters without requiring constant human intervention.

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2. AWS measures important weather variables such as **temperature**, **humidity**, **rainfall**, **wind speed**, **wind direction**, **air pressure**, and **solar radiation**.



3. The collected information is transmitted automatically to forecasting centres through **satellite**, **radio**, or **mobile communication networks**.
4. Real-time AWS observations improve the accuracy of **weather forecasts**, **climate monitoring**, and **early warning systems**.
5. The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** has deployed thousands of AWS units across urban, rural, coastal, and mountainous regions.
6. AWS data are integrated with **satellite observations**, **Doppler Weather Radars**, and **Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP)** models.
7. The system plays an important role in **agriculture**, **aviation**, **disaster management**, **water resources**, and **renewable energy forecasting**.
8. Automatic Weather Stations significantly strengthen **real-time weather observation**, **climate services**, and **disaster preparedness** across India.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

PACE SATELLITE

Recent Update: Researchers recently found that **NASA's PACE Satellite** can detect **Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)** pollution at a much finer spatial resolution.

About

1. **PACE (Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud and ocean Ecosystem)** is a **NASA Earth observation satellite** launched in **2024** to study oceans, aerosols and clouds.
2. The satellite was placed in a **Sun-synchronous orbit**, enabling consistent global observations under similar lighting conditions.
3. It provides the world's first **hyperspectral global coverage** every **one to two days**, significantly improving Earth observation capabilities.
4. Its primary instrument is the **Ocean Color Instrument (OCI)**, an advanced spectrometer that measures ocean colour from **ultraviolet to shortwave infrared wavelengths**.
5. The satellite also carries **SPEXone** and **HARP2 polarimeters**, which analyse the polarization of sunlight after interacting with clouds, aerosols and oceans.
6. PACE helps monitor **marine ecosystems, phytoplankton blooms, air quality, climate change and atmospheric aerosols** at the global scale.
7. The mission provides valuable scientific data for improving **weather prediction, climate models and sustainable management of marine resources**.

MISSION MITRA

Recent Update: ISRO recently launched **Mission MITRA** to assess the **mental, physical and operational readiness** of astronauts for future **Gaganyaan** missions.

About

1. **Mission MITRA (Mapping of Interoperable Traits and Response Assessment)** was launched by **ISRO** in **2026** to evaluate astronaut preparedness for human spaceflight.

2. The mission studies the **mental, physical and crew interoperability capabilities** required for long-duration human space missions.
3. It is conducted jointly by **ISRO** and the **Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM)** of the **Indian Air Force**.
4. The study was carried out in **Leh, Ladakh**, where the harsh environment closely resembles conditions expected on the **Moon and Mars**.
5. The mission evaluates **behavioural performance, teamwork, physiological responses and operational efficiency** under extreme environmental conditions.
6. Findings from Mission MITRA will support the successful execution of **India's Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Programme**.
7. The mission strengthens India's capabilities in **human space exploration**, astronaut training and future interplanetary missions.

HLVM3 G1/OM1 MISSION

Recent Update: ISRO is preparing the **HLVM3 G1/OM1 Mission**, the first **uncrewed flight** under the **Gaganyaan Human Spaceflight Programme**.



About

1. **HLVM3 G1/OM1 Mission** is the first **uncrewed test mission** of **India's Gaganyaan Programme**, developed by **ISRO**.
2. The mission will test the **Human-Rated Launch Vehicle (HLVM3)**, **Orbital Module (OM1)**, **Crew Escape System (CES)** and re-entry and recovery operations.
3. **HLVM3** is the human-rated version of the **Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3/GSLV Mk III)**, modified to ensure astronaut safety.
4. Instead of astronauts, the **Crew Module** will carry **Vyommitra**, life-support mock-ups and environmental control system experiments.
5. The mission will validate the safety and reliability of all critical systems before India's first crewed spaceflight mission.
6. Successful completion will significantly reduce mission risks and enhance confidence in India's human spaceflight capabilities.
7. The mission is a major milestone towards making India one of the few nations capable of **independent human spaceflight**.

ARTEMIS ACCORDS

Recent Update: Jordan recently became the **63rd country** to sign the **Artemis Accords**, expanding international cooperation in space exploration.



About

1. **Artemis Accords** were launched in **2020** under **NASA's Artemis Programme** to establish principles for peaceful exploration of outer space.
2. The Accords promote **peaceful, transparent and cooperative exploration** of the **Moon, Mars and other celestial bodies**.
3. They are based on the principles of the **Outer Space Treaty, 1967**, ensuring responsible use of outer space.
4. **India** signed the **Artemis Accords** in **2023**, becoming the **27th signatory** to the initiative.
5. The Artemis Programme includes **Artemis-I** (Uncrewed Moon Mission), **Artemis-II**

(Crewed Lunar Flyby) and **Artemis-III** (Human Return to the Moon).

6. The Accords encourage cooperation in **scientific research, resource utilization, interoperability, emergency assistance and preservation of space heritage**.
7. The initiative strengthens international collaboration for the **long-term sustainable exploration of outer space**.

INTERNET PROTOCOLS

Recent Update: Internet Protocols continue to play a crucial role in ensuring secure and reliable communication across the rapidly expanding global internet ecosystem.

About

1. **Internet Protocols (IPs)** are a standardized set of rules that govern how **digital data** is transmitted and received across computer networks.
2. They ensure that data packets are correctly **addressed, routed and delivered** from the source to the intended destination.
3. During internet communication, information is divided into **small packets**, each carrying **source and destination IP addresses**.
4. **Routers and switches** forward these packets through different networks before they are reassembled in the correct order at the destination.
5. **DNS (Domain Name System)** converts human-readable website names into machine-readable **IP addresses**.
6. **HTTP/HTTPS**, **TLS** and **TCP** enable secure web communication, authentication, encryption and reliable transmission of data over the internet.
7. Internet Protocols form the foundation of modern **web browsing, cloud computing, online communication and digital services** worldwide.

QUANTUM COMPUTING

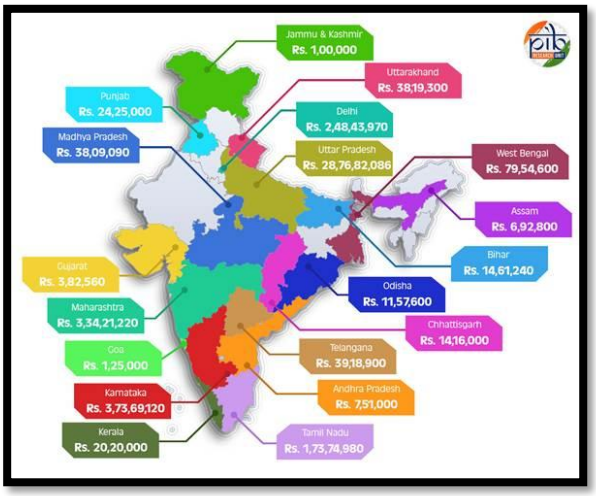
Recent Update: India's **first Quantum Computing Testing Facility** was recently inaugurated at **SRM University, Amaravati**, on **World Quantum Day (14 April)**.

About

1. **Quantum Computing** is an emerging field of computer science that utilizes the principles of **quantum mechanics** to solve problems beyond the capability of classical computers.
2. Unlike classical computers that use **bits (0 or 1)**, quantum computers use **qubits**, which can exist in a **superposition** of both states simultaneously.
3. Quantum computers can perform multiple calculations simultaneously, enabling **exponentially faster computation** for complex scientific and mathematical problems.
4. They consume significantly **less energy** while solving optimization, simulation and cryptographic problems compared to conventional computers.
5. Quantum computing has applications in **drug discovery, climate modelling, artificial intelligence, financial modelling and material science**.
6. India is promoting quantum technologies through the **National Quantum Mission (2023–2031)** to build indigenous capabilities in quantum research and innovation.
7. **World Quantum Day** is observed on **14 April**, representing the first three digits of **Planck's Constant (4.14 × 10^{-15} eV·s)**, a fundamental constant of quantum physics.

QUANTUM COMMUNICATION

Recent Update: The **National Hub for Quantum Communication** was recently launched at **IIT Madras** under the **National Quantum Mission**.



About

1. **Quantum Communication** is a secure communication technology that uses the principles of **quantum mechanics** to protect information during transmission.
2. It transmits information using **qubits** instead of classical bits, making communication significantly more secure against interception.
3. A major application of quantum communication is **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**, where encryption keys are transmitted using quantum states while data travels through conventional communication channels.
4. Any attempt to intercept a quantum communication channel disturbs the quantum state, immediately revealing the presence of an intruder.
5. **Quantum Communication** is one of the **four thematic pillars** of India's **National Quantum Mission (2023–2031)**.
6. **Micius**, launched by **China** in **2016**, is the world's first **quantum communication satellite**, while IIT Delhi and DRDO have successfully demonstrated free-space quantum communication in India.
7. Quantum communication has strategic applications in **defence, banking, cybersecurity, government communications and critical digital infrastructure**.

MYTHOS

Recent Update: The **Union Finance Minister** recently constituted a committee under the **Chairman of SBI** to assess the cybersecurity risks associated with **Anthropic's Mythos AI Model**.

About

1. **Mythos** is an advanced **frontier Artificial Intelligence model** developed by the AI company **Anthropic**.
2. The model possesses highly advanced **cybersecurity capabilities**, enabling sophisticated vulnerability assessment and threat analysis.
3. Anthropic has released **Mythos Preview** under **Project Glasswing** only to a limited number of trusted organisations for controlled testing.
4. The model is capable of identifying and exploiting **Zero-day Vulnerabilities** across major operating systems and web browsers.
5. A **Zero-day Vulnerability** is a software or hardware flaw unknown to developers, leaving no time for security patches before exploitation.
6. Owing to its advanced capabilities, Mythos has raised concerns regarding **cybersecurity, responsible AI development and national digital security**.
7. The development highlights the growing need for **AI governance, ethical safeguards and robust cybersecurity frameworks** worldwide.

PRAJNA SYSTEM

Recent Update: The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs** recently received the indigenous **Prajna System** to strengthen real-time intelligence and national security operations.



About

1. **Prajna System** is an **AI-enabled indigenous satellite imaging system** developed to provide real-time decision support for security agencies.
2. It has been developed by **DRDO's Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR)**.
3. The system integrates **satellite imagery** with advanced **Artificial Intelligence-driven analytics** for rapid interpretation of geospatial information.

4. It provides **real-time actionable intelligence** to support surveillance, border management and strategic security operations.
5. AI-based image processing significantly improves the speed and accuracy of identifying potential threats and critical events.
6. The system strengthens India's capabilities in **geospatial intelligence, national security, disaster response and strategic planning**.
7. Prajna represents another major step towards achieving **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in advanced defence technologies and Artificial Intelligence.

CYBORG BOTANY

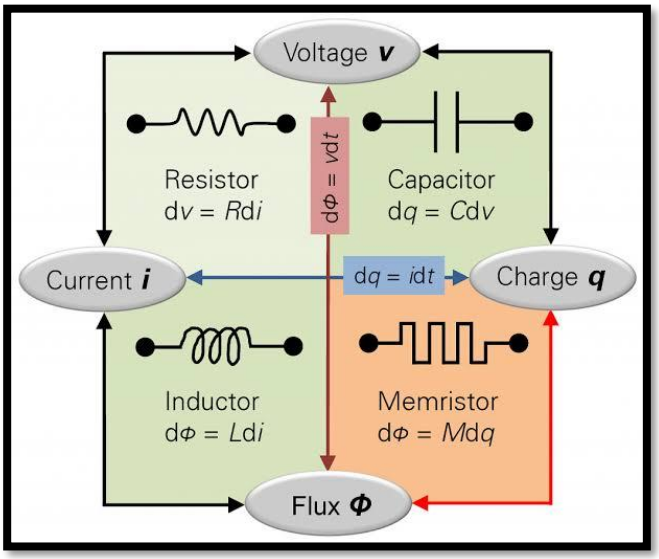
Recent Update: Scientists are increasingly using **Cyborg Botany** to develop intelligent plants capable of detecting **pests, diseases and environmental stress** in real time.

About

1. **Cyborg Botany** is an emerging interdisciplinary field that combines **living plants** with **electronic components** to create intelligent biological systems.
2. It integrates the natural biological functions of plants with advanced electronic sensing and communication technologies.
3. **Nanowires** and **electronic transistors** are embedded into plant cell walls, enabling continuous monitoring of biological activities.
4. These embedded electronic components function as **biosensors**, capable of detecting biochemical changes within plants in real time.
5. Cyborg Botany can identify **plant stress**, including pest attacks, diseases, drought and nutrient deficiencies at an early stage.
6. The technology has significant applications in **precision agriculture, environmental monitoring, food security and sustainable farming**.
7. It represents a promising convergence of **biology, nanotechnology, electronics and Artificial Intelligence** for future agricultural innovation.

MEMRISTOR

Recent Update: Researchers recently developed a **Hafnium-Oxide Memristor**, a brain-inspired nanodevice capable of significantly reducing the energy consumption of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** systems.

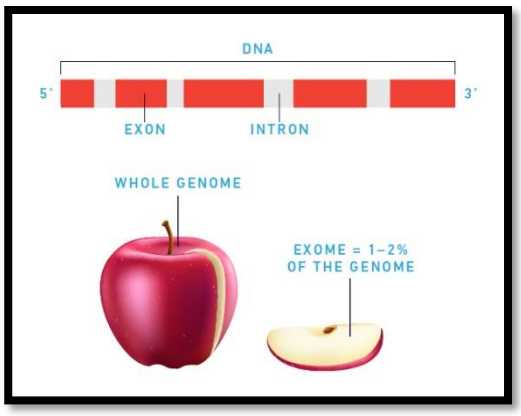


About

1. **Memristor** is a next-generation electronic device whose name is derived from the words **"Memory"** and **"Resistor"**.
2. It is inspired by the functioning of **biological synapses**, which transmit signals between neurons while retaining information.
3. Unlike conventional computers, a memristor performs **data storage and data processing** at the same physical location.
4. This integrated architecture eliminates the constant transfer of data between memory and processor, thereby improving computational efficiency.
5. Memristors can reduce the **energy consumption** of AI and advanced computing systems by more than **70%**.
6. They are considered a key technology for **neuromorphic computing**, which attempts to mimic the functioning of the human brain.
7. Memristors have promising applications in **Artificial Intelligence, robotics, edge computing and next-generation high-performance computing**.

WHOLE-EXOME SEQUENCING (WES)

Recent Update: Scientists recently used **Whole-Exome Sequencing (WES)** to identify a **new rare genetic disease**, demonstrating its importance in modern medical research.



About

1. **Whole-Exome Sequencing (WES)** is a genetic sequencing technique that analyses only the **protein-coding regions** of the human genome.
2. These protein-coding regions are called **Exons**, and together they constitute the **Exome**.
3. Although exons account for **less than 2%** of the human genome, they contain nearly **85% of disease-causing genetic variants**.
4. WES focuses exclusively on exons, making it more **targeted, faster and cost-effective** than **Whole-Genome Sequencing (WGS)**.
5. It is widely used for diagnosing **rare genetic disorders**, inherited diseases and identifying disease-causing mutations.
6. Whole-Exome Sequencing supports **personalized medicine, precision healthcare and biomedical research** by enabling accurate genetic analysis.
7. The technology plays an important role in understanding **genetic disease mechanisms**, developing targeted therapies and improving patient care.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED (GM) MOSQUITOES

Recent Update: Recent research confirmed that **Genetically Modified (GM) Mosquitoes** can effectively suppress **malaria parasites** under real-world conditions.

About

1. **Genetically Modified (GM) Mosquitoes** are mosquitoes whose DNA has been deliberately altered to reduce disease transmission or suppress mosquito populations.
2. The technology primarily uses **Gene Drive** systems to ensure that modified genes are inherited by a very high proportion of future generations.
3. **CRISPR-Cas9** gene-editing technology is commonly used to introduce and spread the desired genetic traits within mosquito populations.
4. The modified mosquitoes either reduce the reproductive capacity of disease-carrying mosquitoes or block the transmission of pathogens.
5. The technology is being explored to control diseases such as **malaria, dengue, Zika and chikungunya**.
6. GM mosquitoes can significantly reduce dependence on chemical insecticides, thereby lowering environmental and public health risks.
7. Their deployment requires careful **biosafety assessment, ecological monitoring and ethical regulation** before large-scale implementation.

GLUFOSINATE

Recent Update: Glufosinate is increasingly being used as an effective alternative to **Glyphosate-based herbicides** for weed management in agriculture.

About

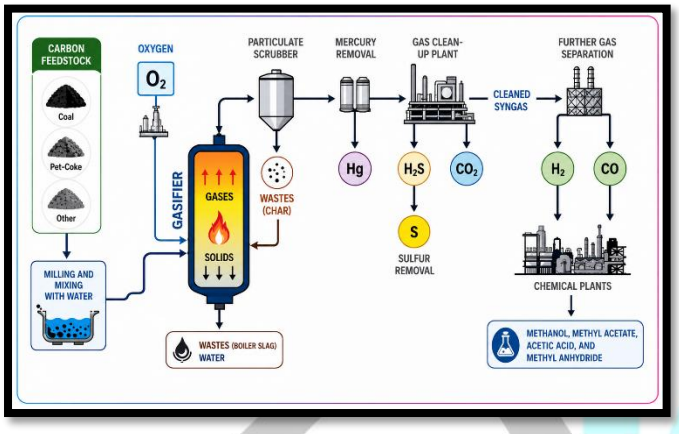
1. **Glufosinate** is a **broad-spectrum, non-selective contact herbicide** widely used for controlling weeds in agricultural fields.
2. It is considered an important alternative to **Glyphosate**, especially where herbicide resistance has become a major concern.
3. The herbicide works by permanently inhibiting the enzyme **Glutamine Synthetase**, which is essential for nitrogen metabolism in plants.
4. Inhibition of this enzyme results in the accumulation of toxic ammonia within plant tissues, eventually causing plant death.

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5. Glufosinate is effective against a wide range of **annual and perennial broadleaf weeds and grasses**.
6. It is commonly used in **orchards, plantations, field crops and genetically modified herbicide-tolerant crops**.
7. Judicious use of Glufosinate is essential to prevent **environmental contamination, herbicide resistance and adverse ecological impacts**.

COAL GASIFICATION INCENTIVE SCHEME

Recent Update: The Government recently announced plans to extend **financial incentives** to foreign companies investing in **India's Coal Gasification** sector.



About

1. The **Coal Gasification Incentive Scheme** was launched in **2024** with a total financial outlay of **₹8,500 crore**.
2. The scheme aims to accelerate **Coal Gasification** and support the **National Coal Gasification Mission**, which targets **100 Million Tonnes** of coal gasification by **2030**.
3. It is implemented by the **Ministry of Coal** to reduce dependence on imported **petroleum, ammonia and fertilizers**.
4. The scheme encourages both **public and private sector enterprises** to establish coal gasification projects across the country.
5. Coal gasification converts coal into **Synthetic Gas (Syngas)**, which can be used to manufacture fertilisers, fuels, chemicals and electricity.
6. Compared to direct coal combustion, coal gasification is a **cleaner and more efficient technology** with lower environmental pollution.
7. The scheme promotes **energy security, import substitution, industrial growth and cleaner utilization of India's abundant coal resources**.

ATLAS DRONE SWARM SYSTEM

Recent Update: China's **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** recently showcased the **Atlas Drone Swarm System**, an AI-enabled mobile platform capable of deploying and coordinating large-scale drone swarms for reconnaissance, electronic warfare and precision strikes.



About

1. The **Atlas Drone Swarm System** is a **mobile drone swarm operations platform** developed for the **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** by the **China Electronics Technology Group Corporation (CETC)**.
2. The system comprises **three vehicles**—a **Swarm-2 ground combat vehicle**, a **command vehicle**, and a **support vehicle**.
3. A single **Swarm-2** vehicle can carry and launch **48 fixed-wing drones**, while one command vehicle can simultaneously control **up to 96 drones**.
4. It integrates **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **swarm intelligence**, **mesh networking**, and **autonomous mission planning** for coordinated operations with minimal human intervention.
5. The drones can be configured for **reconnaissance**, **electronic jamming**, **precision strikes**, **target saturation**, and **air-defence suppression**.

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6. The system is designed to **overwhelm enemy air-defence systems** through **mass drone attacks**, enhancing China's capabilities in **algorithmic** and **network-centric warfare**.
7. The demonstration has heightened concerns over **swarm warfare**, prompting countries, including **India**, to accelerate the development of **indigenous counter-drone** and **anti-swarm defence systems**.

PATHFINDER

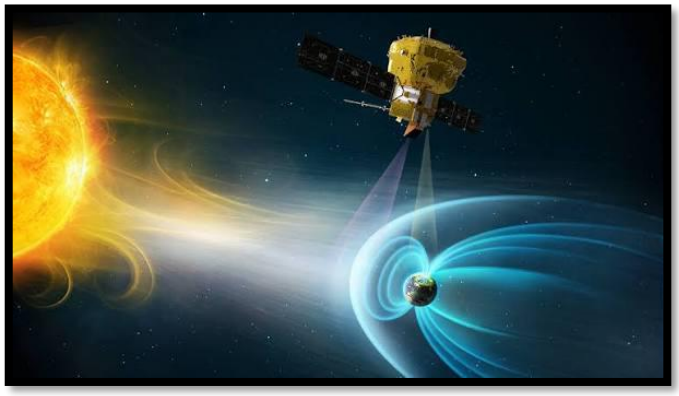
Recent Update: Pixxel and **Sarvam AI** announced **Pathfinder**, India's first **AI-enabled Orbital Data Centre (ODC) satellite**, targeted for launch in **Q4 2026**.

About

1. **Pathfinder** is a **200 kg-class** experimental satellite designed to function as an **Orbital Data Centre (ODC)** by processing data directly in space using **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.
2. It is being jointly developed by **Pixxel** (space-tech startup) and **Sarvam AI** (AI startup).
3. The satellite will integrate **data centre-class GPUs**, **edge computing**, and **Large Language Models (LLMs)** for **on-orbit AI inference**.
4. It aims to process **Earth observation** and other satellite data in orbit, reducing **latency**, **bandwidth requirements**, and dependence on terrestrial data centres.
5. Onboard AI will enable **real-time analytics**, **autonomous decision-making**, and **secure processing** of sensitive data before transmission to Earth.
6. The mission supports applications in **disaster management**, **climate monitoring**, **precision agriculture**, **defence surveillance**, and **space-based intelligence**.
7. **Pathfinder** aligns with India's **Indian Space Policy 2023**, promoting **private-sector participation**, **AI integration**, and next-generation **space infrastructure**.

SMILE MISSION

Recent Update: The **SMILE (Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer)** mission was successfully launched on **19 May 2026** aboard a **Vega-C** rocket to study **space weather** and the interaction between the **solar wind** and Earth's magnetic field.



About

1. **SMILE** stands for **Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer**, a **joint mission** of the **European Space Agency (ESA)** and the **Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)**.
2. It is the **first mission** to image Earth's **magnetosphere** simultaneously in **soft X-rays** and **ultraviolet**, enabling global observation of solar wind interactions.
3. The mission aims to understand how the **solar wind**, **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)** and **geomagnetic storms** affect Earth's magnetic shield and drive **space weather**.
4. It carries **four scientific instruments**: **Soft X-ray Imager (SXI)**, **Ultraviolet Imager (UVI)**, **Light Ion Analyser (LIA)** and **MAG Magnetometer**.
5. The satellite operates in a **highly elliptical Earth orbit**, reaching about **121,000 km** at apogee, enabling continuous observation of the **dayside magnetosphere**.
6. The mission will improve **space weather forecasting**, helping protect **satellites**, **communication systems**, **navigation**, **power grids**, and **astronauts** from solar storms.
7. **SMILE** is a flagship example of **international scientific collaboration** in **heliophysics** and **space weather research**.

MISSION DRISHTI

Recent Update: GalaxEye, a Bengaluru-based space-tech startup, successfully launched **Mission Drishti**, the world's first **OptoSAR** Earth observation satellite, aboard **SpaceX Falcon 9** on **3 May 2026**.



About

1. **Mission Drishti** is the **world's first OptoSAR satellite**, integrating **Optical (Multispectral Imaging)** and **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** on a single platform.
2. It is developed by **GalaxEye**, making it **India's largest privately built Earth observation satellite** (≈**190 kg**).
3. The satellite employs **SyncFusion™** technology to generate **co-registered**, **analysis-ready** imagery under **all-weather**, **day-and-night** conditions.
4. It operates in a **Sun-Synchronous Low Earth Orbit (SSO)** at an altitude of about **500 km**, carrying a **3.5 m deployable X-band SAR antenna** and a **7-band multispectral imager**.
5. The satellite features **AI-on-the-edge processing** using **NVIDIA Jetson Orin**, enabling onboard data processing and faster geospatial intelligence.
6. Applications include **defence surveillance**, **disaster management**, **agriculture**, **maritime domain awareness**, **urban planning**, and **environmental monitoring**.
7. Although communication with **Mission Drishti** was later lost following a spacecraft anomaly, the mission successfully validated key **OptoSAR** technologies and will guide the development of future satellite constellations.

ZWON WOLF EFFECT

Recent Update: Scientists using **NASA's MAVEN (Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution)** mission reported the **first detection of the Zwan–Wolf Effect in the Martian ionosphere**, following a **Coronal Mass Ejection (CME)**.

About

1. The **Zwan–Wolf Effect** is a **plasma physics phenomenon** in which **pressure gradients** along **magnetic flux tubes** squeeze charged particles, helping deflect the **solar wind**.
2. It was first identified in **Earth's magnetosphere** and has now been observed for the **first time in a planetary atmosphere**—the **Martian ionosphere**.
3. **Mars** lacks a **global dipole magnetic field** and instead possesses an **induced magnetosphere** created by interactions between the **solar wind** and its ionosphere.
4. The effect became detectable when a **Coronal Mass Ejection (CME)** compressed Mars' induced magnetic field, producing strong **magnetic pressure gradients**.
5. It redistributes **ionospheric plasma**, influencing **atmospheric escape** and the interaction of **space weather** with Mars.
6. The discovery improves understanding of **planetary magnetospheres**, **space weather**, and the long-term **evolution of planetary atmospheres**.
7. The observation was made using data from **NASA's MAVEN** mission, dedicated to studying the **Martian upper atmosphere**, **ionosphere**, and **solar wind interactions**.

GODDARD ASTRONUATICS AWARD 2026

Recent Update: ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 received the **2026 Goddard Astronautics Award** from the **American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)** for its outstanding achievements in lunar exploration.

About

1. The **Goddard Astronautics Award** is one of the **highest honours** of the **American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)**, established in **1957**.
2. It is named after **Dr. Robert H. Goddard**, widely regarded as the **father of modern rocketry**.
3. The award recognises **outstanding achievements** in the field of **astronautics**, including significant contributions to **space**

science, **space technology**, and **space exploration**.



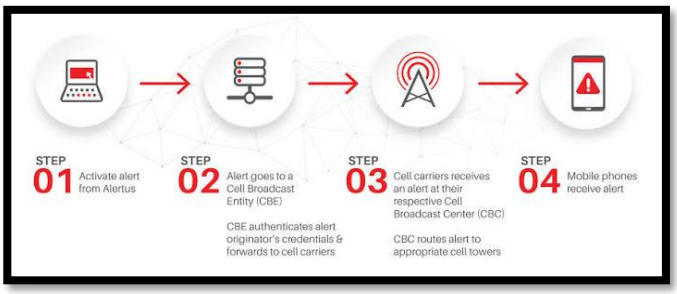
4. In **2026**, the award was conferred on the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** for the success of the **Chandrayaan-3** mission.
5. **Chandrayaan-3** achieved the **first-ever soft landing near the Moon's south polar region** on **23 August 2023**, making **India** the **fourth country** to achieve a soft lunar landing.
6. The mission demonstrated **indigenous landing technologies**, **rover mobility**, and **in-situ scientific experiments**, advancing India's deep-space capabilities.
7. The award highlights **India's growing leadership in global space exploration** and recognises **ISRO's** contribution to advancing **planetary science** and **cost-effective space missions**.

CELL BROADCAST SYSTEM

Recent Update: The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** launched India's indigenous **Cell Broadcast System (CBS)** for **real-time disaster alerts**, developed by **C-DOT** in collaboration with **NDMA** and the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

About

1. **Cell Broadcast System (CBS)** is a **location-based public warning technology** that simultaneously transmits emergency alerts to **all compatible mobile devices** within a defined geographic area.



2. It has been developed indigenously by the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** in collaboration with **NDMA** and the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
3. Unlike **SMS**, CBS delivers **near real-time**, **network-congestion-free** alerts without requiring users' phone numbers, making it suitable for mass emergency communication.
4. The system issues alerts for **earthquakes**, **tsunamis**, **cyclones**, **lightning**, **flash floods**, **heatwaves**, **gas leaks**, and other natural or man-made disasters.
5. CBS works alongside the **Integrated Alert System (SACHET)**, which is based on the **Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)** recommended by the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**.
6. Alerts can be broadcast in **English**, **Hindi**, and **regional languages**, ensuring wider accessibility across the country.
7. The system strengthens India's **disaster risk reduction**, **last-mile connectivity**, and **early warning** capabilities under the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030)**.

AYUSH GRID INITIATIVE

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Ayush** launched the **Ayush Anudan Portal** under the **Ayush Grid Initiative**, strengthening digital governance, transparency, and paperless grant management in the AYUSH sector.

About

1. **Ayush Grid** is a flagship **digital public infrastructure** of the **Ministry of Ayush**, launched in **2018** to create an integrated digital ecosystem for all **AYUSH** systems.

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2. It covers **Ayurveda**, **Yoga & Naturopathy**, **Unani**, **Siddha**, **Sowa-Rigpa**, and **Homoeopathy**, integrating healthcare, education, research, drug regulation, and medicinal plants.
3. The platform is **ABDM-compliant**, enabling interoperability with the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** and standardized digital health records.
4. It includes digital platforms such as **Ayush Health Management Information System (AHMIS)**, **NAMASTE**, **SAHI**, **Ayush Research Portal**, and the **Ayush Anudan Portal**.
5. The initiative supports **telemedicine**, **e-learning**, **e-governance**, **research databases**, and **AI-enabled citizen services** across the AYUSH ecosystem.
6. It promotes **paperless governance**, **real-time service delivery**, **transparency**, **standardization**, and **evidence-based traditional medicine**.
7. The initiative advances the objectives of **Digital India**, **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**, and the global promotion of **traditional medicine** through digital technologies.

VENUS ORBITER MISSION

Recent Update: The **Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM/Shukrayaan-1)** completed its **Preliminary Design Review (PDR)**, with **Science Working Group (SWG)** constituted and international payload collaborations approved ahead of the planned **March 2028** launch.

About

1. **Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)** is **ISRO's first dedicated mission** to **Venus**, approved by the **Union Cabinet** in **September 2024**.
2. The mission is planned for **March 2028** using the **LVM-3** launch vehicle, with an approved cost of **₹1,236 crore**.
3. Objectives include studying **Venusian atmosphere**, **surface**, **subsurface**, **ionosphere**, and **solar wind interaction** to understand the planet's evolution.
4. The mission will carry **16 Indian payloads**, **2 collaborative payloads**, and **1 international payload** covering atmospheric, geological, and plasma studies.



5. After **Venus Orbit Injection**, the spacecraft will use **aerobraking** for **6–8 months** to achieve a **200 × 600 km** near-polar science orbit.
6. It will demonstrate advanced technologies such as **aerobraking**, **thermal management**, and long-duration operations in Venus' extreme environment.
7. The mission supports **international collaboration** and will help explain why **Venus**, despite being Earth's **"twin planet"**, evolved into an extremely hot, hostile world.



History & Culture

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HANAMKONDA'S THOUSAND PILLAR TEMPLE

Recent Update: **ASI** completed the **42-year restoration** of the temple's **Kalyana Mandapam**.



About

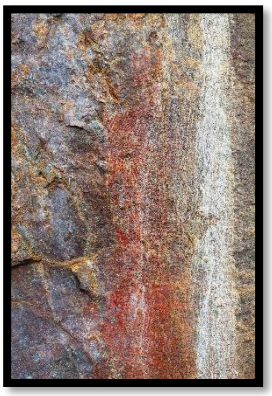
1. The **Thousand Pillar Temple** is a **12th-century** temple at **Hanamkonda, Telangana**.
2. It was built by **Rudra Deva** of the **Kakatiya dynasty** in **1163 AD**.
3. It is a **Trikutalaya**, dedicated to **Shiva, Vishnu, and Surya**.
4. The temple follows the **Chalukya architectural style** with a **star-shaped design**.
5. It houses a **monolithic Nandi** carved from a single **black basalt stone**.
6. The temple is famous for its **intricately carved pillars** and sculptures.
7. It was restored using ancient **Kakatiya Sandbox Technology**.
8. It is an important example of **medieval engineering** and **heritage conservation**.

PREHISTORIC ROCK PAINTING SITE IN NILGIRIS

Recent Update: Recently, the **Yaakai Heritage Trust** reported the rediscovery of a **prehistoric rock painting** site called **Oor Pare** in the Nilgiris district of **Tamil Nadu**.

About

1. The site is located near **Vellarikombai**, **Nilgiris**, **Tamil Nadu**.
2. The paintings are made entirely using **red ochre** pigments.
3. Around **30 figures** include humans, symbols, and anthropomorphic forms.
4. The paintings indicate **prehistoric rituals** and **supernatural beliefs**.
5. The site is locally known as **Oor Pare** by tribal communities.
6. It is considered sacred by the **Irula** and **Kurumba** tribes.
7. The **Irulas** are known for **snake catching** and **herbal medicine**.
8. The **Kurumbas** are famous for **honey collection** and forest traditions.



THE CHOLA COPPER PLATES

Recent Update: The **Leiden Copper Plates** were repatriated to **India** from the **Netherlands**.



About

1. **Chola Copper Plates** were official **royal grants** issued by **Chola rulers**.
2. They recorded **land grants**, **tax exemptions**, and **religious endowments**.
3. The inscriptions were written in **Sanskrit** and **Tamil**.
4. They carried the **Chola royal seal** with the **Tiger**, **Fish**, and **Bow**.
5. The famous **Leiden Plates** relate to **Rajaraja Chola I** and **Rajendra Chola I**.
6. They highlight **maritime diplomacy** with the **Srivijaya Kingdom**.
7. Other important plates include **Karandai**, **Tiruvalangadu**, and **Anbil Plates**.
8. They are valuable sources for **Chola administration**, **history**, and **culture**.

TATHAGATA BUDDHA

Recent Update: **The** Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of Tathagata Buddha is being held in **Ladakh (1st–14th May 2026).**

About

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1. **Tathagata** is a title used for the **Buddha**, meaning **"Thus Come"** or **"Thus Gone."**
2. It symbolises **complete enlightenment** and freedom from the **cycle of birth and death**.
3. **Mahayana** and **Vajrayana Buddhism** recognize **Five Wisdom Buddhas**.
4. **Vairocana** represents the **Wisdom of Ultimate Reality**.
5. **Akshobhya**, **Ratnasambhava**, **Amitabha**, and **Amoghasiddhi** symbolize different forms of wisdom.
6. Each Buddha transforms a **negative emotion** into **enlightened wisdom**.
7. **Vairocana** occupies the **central position** in the Buddhist **Mandala**.
8. The **Five Tathagatas** represent **wisdom**, **compassion**, and **spiritual balance**.

THE SOMNATH TEMPLE

Recent Update: **The Somnath Temple in Gujarat** celebrated the **"Somnath Amrit Parv".** This historic 5-day festival marked the 75th anniversary of the temple's 1951 reconstruction and 1,000 years since its initial attack in 1026.

About

1. **Somnath Temple** is the **first Jyotirlinga** dedicated to **Lord Shiva**.
2. It is located at **Prabhas Patan**, **Veraval**, **Gujarat**.



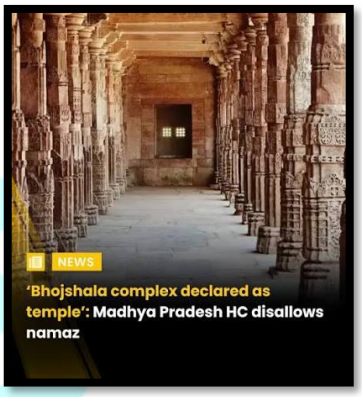
3. The temple stands near the **Triveni Sangam** of **Hiran**, **Kapila**, and **Saraswati** rivers.
4. It was repeatedly attacked, including by **Mahmud of Ghazni** in **1024 AD**.
5. The present temple was rebuilt after Independence under **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.
6. It follows the **Māru-Gurjara (Chaulukya)** style of architecture.
7. The famous **Baan Stambh** points directly toward the **South Pole**.
8. Somnath symbolises India's **cultural resilience** and **spiritual heritage**.

THE BHOJSHALA COMPLEX

Recent Update: **ASI** surveys renewed focus on the **Bhojshala Complex**.

About

1. **Bhojshala** is an **11th-century** monument located at **Dhar**, **Madhya Pradesh**.
2. It was founded by **Raja Bhoja** as a **centre of Sanskrit learning**.
3. The site was originally dedicated to **Goddess Saraswati (Vagdevi)**.
4. Later, parts of the structure became the **Kamal Maula Mosque**.
5. The monument contains **Hindu temple pillars**, **Prakrit inscriptions**, and **Sanskrit grammar slabs**.



6. It is protected under the **Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904**.
7. A **2003 ASI order** allows **puja** and **namaz** on designated days.
8. Bhojshala reflects India's **shared cultural**, **religious**, and **architectural heritage**.

THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT

Recent Update: The City of Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia observed ***Guru Nanak Jahaz Remembrance Day.***

About

1. The **Komagata Maru Incident** occurred in **1914** involving **376 Indian passengers**.
2. The ship was chartered by **Gurdit Singh** to challenge Canada's immigration laws.
3. Canada denied entry under the **Continuous Journey Regulation**.
4. Passengers remained stranded at **Vancouver** for nearly **two months**.
5. Only **22 passengers** were allowed to enter Canada.

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6. On returning to India, the **Budge Budge** clash led to several deaths.
7. The incident strengthened the **Ghadar Movement** and anti-British sentiments.
8. It became an important milestone in India's **freedom struggle**.

GURUDEV RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Recent Update: Recently, the Prime Minister paid tribute to ***Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on Pochishe Boishakh,*** which fell on **9th May in 2026.**

About

1. **Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941)** was a **poet**, **philosopher**, **artist**, and **educationist**.
2. He became the **first Asian Nobel Laureate** in **Literature (1913)**.
3. He composed **India's National Anthem** and **Bangladesh's National Anthem**.
4. He founded **Santiniketan** and later **Visva-Bharati University**.
5. His famous works include **Gitanjali**, **Gora**, and **Ghare-Baire**.
6. He renounced his **Knighthood** after the **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**.
7. He promoted **education**, **humanism**, and **rural reconstruction**.
8. Tagore remains a global symbol of **Indian culture** and **universal humanism**.

MAHARANA PRATAP

Recent Update: Recently, the Prime Minister paid tributes to **Maharana Pratap on his Jayanti on 9th May 2026,** remembering him as an immortal symbol of bravery, patriotism and self-respect.

About

1. **Maharana Pratap (1540–1597)** was the **Sisodia ruler** of **Mewar**.
2. He refused to accept the **suzerainty of Akbar**.
3. The famous **Battle of Haldighati** was fought in **1576**.
4. He later adopted effective **guerrilla warfare** against the Mughals.
5. Pratap recaptured large parts of **Mewar** except **Chittorgarh**.
6. He also promoted the **Chavand School of Art**.
7. His horse **Chetak** symbolizes bravery and loyalty.
8. Maharana Pratap remains an icon of **courage**, **freedom**, and **self-respect**.



THE REVOLT OF 1857

Recent Update: Meerut, regarded as the **epicentre of the 1857 uprising**, commemorated the ***169th anniversary of India's First War of Independence***.

About

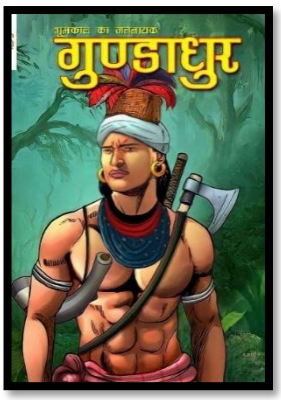
1. The **Revolt of 1857** was the first large-scale uprising against **British rule**.
2. It began at **Meerut** on **10 May 1857** and soon spread across North India.
3. The immediate cause was the **greased cartridges** of the **Enfield Rifle**.
4. **Bahadur Shah Zafar** was declared the symbolic **Emperor of India**.
5. Major leaders included **Rani Lakshmibai**, **Nana Saheb**, **Tantia Tope**, and **Begum Hazrat Mahal**.
6. The revolt ended with the **Government of India Act, 1858**.
7. British rule shifted from the **East India Company** to the **British Crown**.
8. The revolt laid the foundation for **Indian nationalism** and future freedom movements.

SHAHEED VEER GUNDADHUR

Recent Update: Union Home Minister inaugurated the **Shaheed Veer Gundadhur Seva Dera Jan Suvidha Kendra** in **Bastar, Chhattisgarh.**

About

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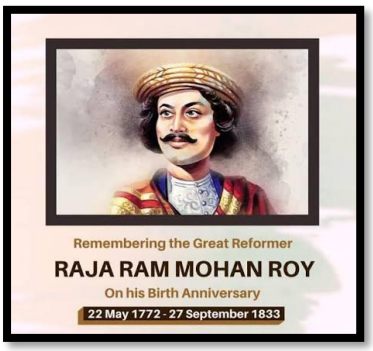


1. **Veer Gundadhur** was a tribal leader from **Bastar**, **Chhattisgarh**.
2. He led the **Bhumkal Rebellion** against **British rule** in **1910**.
3. He belonged to the **Dhurwa Tribe** and was originally known as **Baga Dhurwa**.
4. The rebellion opposed **forest laws**, **resource exploitation**, and colonial policies.
5. He used **red chillies**, **bows**, and **mango branches** as secret messages.
6. Gundadhur successfully used **guerrilla warfare** in Bastar forests.
7. He was never captured and became a symbol of **tribal resistance**.
8. **Chhattisgarh** honours him through the **Shaheed Gundadhur Award**.

RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY

Recent Update: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh pays tributes to social reformer **Raja Rammohan Roy on his birth anniversary on May 22, 2026.**

About



1. **Raja Rammohan Roy (1772–1833)** led the **Bengal Renaissance** and social reforms.
2. He campaigned against **Sati**, **child marriage**, and **social inequalities**.
3. He founded the **Brahmo Samaj** in **1828** to promote **monotheism**.
4. He supported **women's rights**, **education**, and **press freedom**.
5. He established institutions like **Vedanta College** and promoted **English education**.
6. His journals included **Samvad Kaumudi** and **Mirat-ul-Akbar**.
7. He demanded **civil liberties**, **judicial reforms**, and **Indianisation of services**.
8. He remains one of India's greatest **social and religious reformers**.

WORLD METROLOGY DAY

Recent Update: World Metrology Day was celebrated on **20 May 2026** with the theme **"Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making."**

About

1. **World Metrology Day** is observed annually on **20 May** to commemorate the signing of the **Metre Convention (1875)** in **Paris**, which laid the foundation for the global measurement system.
2. The celebration was first initiated in **1999** by the **International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM)** and is jointly coordinated by the **International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)** and the **International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML)**.



3. **Metrology** is the scientific study of **measurement**, while **Legal Metrology** ensures that measuring instruments used in trade and public services are accurate, standardised, and legally verified.
4. The **Metre Convention** established internationally accepted measurement standards and later became the basis for the modern **International System of Units (SI Units)**.
5. The **2026 theme**, **"Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making,"** emphasises the importance of accurate measurements in evidence-based governance, scientific research, industry, healthcare, and consumer protection.

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6. Reliable metrology strengthens **fair trade**, **industrial quality control**, **innovation**, **international commerce**, and public confidence in regulatory systems.
7. It also supports several **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **SDG 3 (Good Health)**, **SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)**, **SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)**, and **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**.
8. World Metrology Day highlights the indispensable role of standardised measurements in promoting **scientific progress**, **economic development**, and **global interoperability**.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S METROLOGY ECOSYSTEM

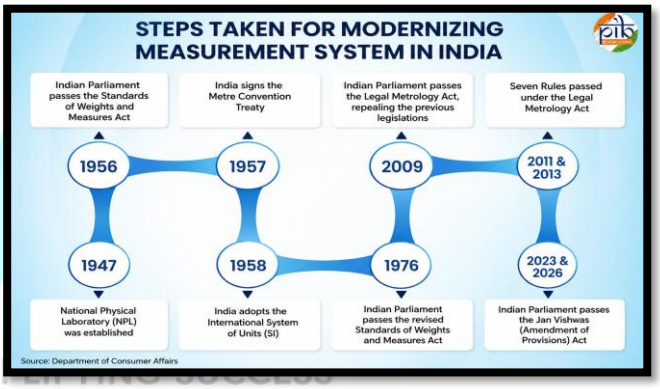
Recent Update: Government Strengthens Legal Metrology Infrastructure with **40 GATC Certificates** and **Launch of e-Maap Digital Portal.**

About

1. India's metrology tradition dates back to the **Indus Valley Civilisation**, where standardized **cubical chert weights**, **ivory scales**, **shell scales**, and **bronze measuring rods** ensured precision in trade, architecture, and urban planning.
2. During the **Mauryan Empire**, organized systems of **weights and measures** supported efficient taxation, commerce, and state administration across the empire.
3. Traditional Indian commercial units included **Rati**, **Masha**, **Tola**, **Seer**, **Maund**, and **Candy**, reflecting sophisticated indigenous systems of measurement.
4. The **National Physical Laboratory (NPL)**, established in **1947**, serves as India's national custodian of measurement standards, while **Regional Reference Standard Laboratories (RRSLs)** maintain uniformity across states.
5. India adopted the **International System of Units (SI Units)** through the **Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1956**, followed by further modernization under the **1976 Act**.
6. The **Legal Metrology Act, 2009** strengthened consumer protection by mandating metric units, regulating pre-packaged commodities, and empowering enforcement authorities.
7. Recent initiatives include the **eMaap Portal**, **One Nation, One Time Initiative**, **OIML international certification**, and decriminalization of minor offences through the **Jan Vishwas Acts**.
8. India's modern metrology ecosystem promotes **consumer protection**, **industrial competitiveness**, **digital governance**, and seamless integration with international measurement standards.

LEGAL METROLOGY ACT, 2009

Recent Update: The **Legal Metrology Act, 2009** continued to strengthen consumer protection through digital reforms and simplified compliance mechanisms.



About

1. The **Legal Metrology Act, 2009** provides the legal framework for regulating **weights**, **measures**, and **measuring instruments** used in trade and commerce across India.
2. The Act mandates the exclusive use of the **metric system (SI Units)** for commercial transactions and public measurements.
3. It requires manufacturers, importers, and packers to provide accurate declarations on **pre-packaged commodities**, including quantity, price, manufacturer details, and other mandatory information.
4. The legislation empowers **Legal Metrology Officers** to inspect, verify, seize, and prosecute violations involving inaccurate or fraudulent measuring instruments.

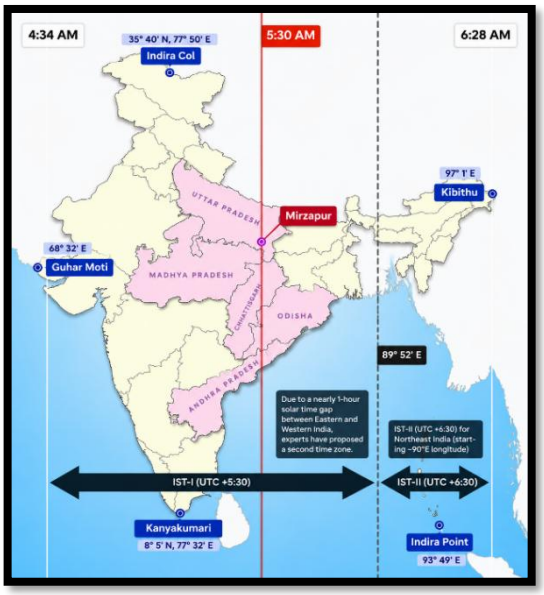
5. The **Jan Vishwas Acts (2023 and 2026)** decriminalized several minor offences by replacing imprisonment with monetary penalties and introducing **improvement notices** for MSMEs.
6. The **eMaap Portal** has digitized registration, licensing, and compliance processes for manufacturers, dealers, and importers of weighing and measuring instruments.
7. The Act promotes **fair trade practices**, **consumer confidence**, **market transparency**, and harmonization with international legal metrology standards.
8. It remains the cornerstone of India's framework for **consumer protection**, **measurement accuracy**, and **commercial integrity**.

ONE NATION, ONE TIME INITIATIVE

Recent Update: India accelerated implementation of the **One Nation, One Time Initiative** to deliver highly precise **Indian Standard Time (IST)** across critical sectors.

About

1. The **One Nation, One Time Initiative** aims to disseminate highly accurate **Indian Standard Time (IST)** across the country with **millisecond-to-microsecond precision**.
2. The initiative is jointly implemented by the **Department of Consumer Affairs**, **National Physical Laboratory (NPL)**, and **ISRO**.
3. It seeks to establish a secure and standardized national time dissemination system for all critical infrastructure sectors.
4. Accurate synchronization is essential for **telecommunications**, **financial transactions**, **power grids**, **Artificial Intelligence**, **navigation**, and **digital governance**.
5. The initiative reduces dependence on foreign time synchronisation services, thereby enhancing **technological sovereignty** and **national security**.
6. It supports emerging technologies such as **5G**, **6G**, **Internet of Things (IoT)**, **smart grids**, and autonomous systems.
7. Uniform national time standards also improve



cybersecurity, forensic investigations, scientific research, and high-frequency financial trading.

8. The initiative strengthens India's **digital infrastructure**, **precision metrology**, and **self-reliance in strategic technologies**.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY (NPL)

Recent Update: The **National Physical Laboratory (NPL)** efforts were showcased on **World Metrology Day.**

About

1. The **National Physical Laboratory (NPL)** was established in **1947** as India's premier institute for **measurement science** and national standards.
2. It functions under the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** and serves as the national custodian of **SI measurement standards**.
3. NPL maintains India's primary standards for **length**, **mass**, **time**, **temperature**, **electricity**, and other physical quantities.
4. The laboratory supports industries by providing **calibration services**, **testing**, **certification**, and precision measurement facilities.

5. It plays a central role in maintaining the accuracy and traceability of measurements across **Regional Reference Standard Laboratories (RRSLs)**.
6. NPL is a key implementing agency for the **One Nation, One Time Initiative**, ensuring precise dissemination of **Indian Standard Time (IST)**.
7. The institution also undertakes advanced research in **nanotechnology**, **materials science**, **quantum metrology**, and emerging measurement technologies.
8. NPL contributes significantly to **industrial quality**, **scientific research**, **international competitiveness**, and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** through world-class metrology infrastructure.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S LABOUR MOVEMENTS

Recent Update: On May 8, 2026, the Ministry of Labour and Employment notified the central rules for all four Labour Codes.

About

1. India's labour movement evolved from **philanthropic welfare initiatives** during the colonial period into organized trade unionism and later gained constitutional and legal protection after Independence.
2. The early phase (**1850–1900**) was closely associated with industrialization in **textile** and **jute mills**, where social reformers highlighted poor working conditions rather than forming formal unions.
3. The **Bombay Mill-Hands Association (1890)**, founded by **N.M. Lokhande**, is regarded as India's first labour association, while the **Factories Act, 1881** became the first labour welfare legislation.
4. The **Madras Labour Union (1918)**, established by **B.P. Wadia**, marked the beginning of organized trade unionism, followed by the formation of the **All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)** in **1920**.
5. The **Trade Unions Act, 1926** granted legal recognition to trade unions and protected them from certain civil and criminal liabilities, although colonial repression continued through laws like the **Trade Disputes Act, 1929**.
6. After Independence, labour unions became increasingly aligned with political parties, leading to the formation of organizations such as **INTUC**, **HMS**, **BMS**, and **CITU**.
7. Liberalization after **1991** resulted in outsourcing, contractual employment, and expansion of the informal and gig economy, weakening the bargaining power of traditional trade unions.
8. Today, India's labour movement faces new challenges involving **gig workers**, **platform workers**, implementation of the **Labour Codes**, and protection of collective bargaining rights.

TRADE UNIONS ACT, 1926

Recent Update: On **May 1, 2026 (May Day),** widespread protests were recorded in industrial hubs like **Noida, Manesar, and Barauni.** Highlighting the relevance and need of Trade Unions Act, 1926.

About

1. The **Trade Unions Act, 1926** was enacted to provide legal recognition to **trade unions** and regulate their registration, administration, and functioning.
2. The Act granted registered trade unions the status of a **legal entity**, enabling them to own property, enter contracts, and sue or be sued.
3. It provided immunity from certain **civil** and **criminal liabilities** arising from legitimate trade union activities conducted in good faith.
4. The legislation established procedures for **registration**, maintenance of accounts, auditing, and democratic functioning of trade unions.
5. It protected workers' rights to organize collectively and negotiate with employers for better wages, working conditions, and welfare measures.
6. The Act addressed legal uncertainties exposed by earlier cases where trade unions had been treated as **criminal conspiracies** under colonial law.

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7. Although several labour laws have now been consolidated under the **Industrial Relations Code, 2020**, the Trade Unions Act remains a landmark in India's labour history.
8. The legislation laid the foundation for **collective bargaining**, **industrial democracy**, and protection of workers' constitutional rights.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CODE, 2020

Recent Update: Notified on May 8, 2026, these establish the operational framework for the Code, outlining procedural mechanisms for negotiating councils, grievance redressal, and fixed-term employment.

About

1. The **Industrial Relations Code, 2020** consolidates three earlier labour laws, namely the **Trade Unions Act, 1926**, the **Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946**, and the **Industrial Disputes Act, 1947**.
2. The Code seeks to simplify labour laws while promoting industrial harmony, ease of doing business, and faster resolution of industrial disputes.
3. It provides that a trade union must have the support of at least **51% of workers** to be recognized as the **negotiating union** in an establishment.
4. Workers are required to provide a **60-day prior notice** before commencing a strike in industrial establishments.
5. The Code expands provisions relating to **fixed-term employment**, allowing employers greater flexibility in workforce management.
6. Critics argue that the stricter conditions for strikes may weaken **collective bargaining** and reduce workers' negotiating power.
7. The legislation also establishes mechanisms such as **Industrial Tribunals** for quicker settlement of industrial disputes.
8. The Industrial Relations Code seeks to balance **labour welfare**, **industrial productivity**, and **economic competitiveness**, although its implementation remains a subject of debate.

GIG AND PLATFORM WORKERS

Recent Update: India's **gig workforce** is projected to reach **23.5 million by 2030**, highlighting the need for stronger labour protections and social security reforms.

About

1. **Gig workers** are individuals engaged in temporary, task-based, or freelance work, while **platform workers** obtain such work through digital platforms and online applications.
2. Rapid growth of digital platforms has expanded employment opportunities in sectors such as **transport**, **food delivery**, **e-commerce**, **healthcare**, and professional services.
3. Most gig workers are classified as **independent contractors** rather than employees, limiting their access to labour protections and social security benefits.
4. They generally lack statutory rights relating to **minimum wages**, **paid leave**, **collective bargaining**, and employment security.
5. The **Code on Social Security, 2020** introduced legal recognition of gig and platform workers and provides a framework for extending social security schemes.
6. Experts recommend portable social security benefits, accident insurance, health coverage, and grievance redressal mechanisms for these workers.
7. Regulation must balance **labour rights**, **innovation**, and the growth of India's digital platform economy.
8. Protecting gig workers is increasingly important for promoting **inclusive growth**, **decent work**, and achievement of **SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**.

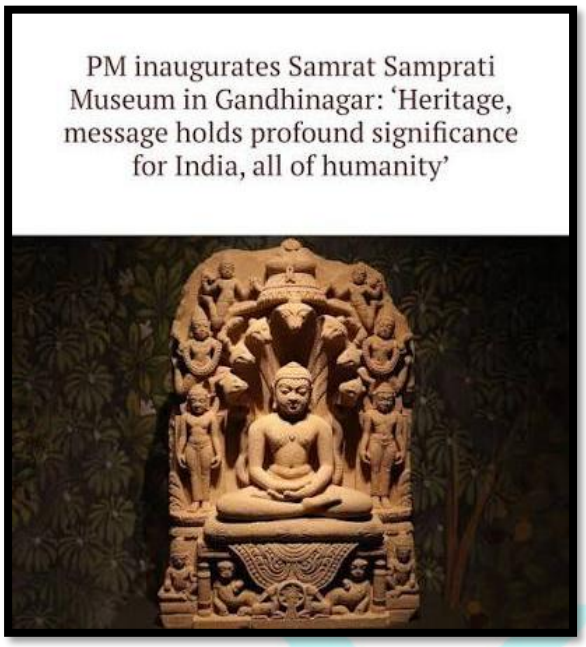
ALL INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS (AITUC)

Recent Update: In May 2026, the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and other central unions **observed** "National Demands Day" on May 12.

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About

1. The **All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)** was established in **1920** as India's first national-level trade union federation.



2. Its first President was **Lala Lajpat Rai**, and one of its principal objectives was to represent Indian workers at the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**.
3. AITUC united workers from different industries to demand improved wages, better working conditions, and legal recognition of trade unions.
4. The organization actively participated in the **Indian freedom movement**, linking labour rights with the broader struggle against British colonial rule.
5. AITUC played a significant role in campaigning for enactment of the **Trade Unions Act, 1926**, which granted legal recognition to trade unions.
6. Ideological differences later led to the emergence of other labour organizations such as **INTUC**, **HMS**, **BMS**, and **CITU**.
7. The federation continues to advocate workers' rights, social security, labour welfare, and protection against unfair labour practices.
8. AITUC remains a pioneering institution in India's history of **organized labour**, **collective bargaining**, and **industrial democracy**.

SAMRAT SAMPRATI

Recent Update: The **Prime Minister** recently inaugurated the **Samrat Samprati Museum** at **Koba, Gandhinagar (Gujarat)** on the occasion of **Mahavir Jayanti**.

About

1. **Samrat Samprati** was a **Mauryan Emperor (224–215 BCE)** and the **grandson of Emperor Ashoka**, born to **Prince Kunal** and **Kanchanmala**.
2. He was popularly known as **"Jain Ashoka"** and was also referred to by the names **Indrapalit, Sangat and Vigatashok**.
3. His life and achievements are described in important **Jain texts** such as **Sampratikatha, Parishistaparva and Prabhavakcharita**.
4. Samrat Samprati played a crucial role in spreading **Jainism** and the principle of **Ahimsa (Non-violence)** across the Indian subcontinent.
5. He is credited with constructing **thousands of Jain temples**, monasteries and pilgrimage centres across **Western and Southern India**.
6. He also established important **Jain cultural centres** in **Iran** and several **Arab countries**, promoting Jain philosophy beyond India.
7. Samrat Samprati is regarded as one of the greatest royal patrons of **Jainism**, whose contributions greatly strengthened the religion's spread and cultural influence.

MAHATMA JYOTIRAO PHULE

Recent Update: India recently celebrated the **200th Birth Anniversary** of **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**, one of the country's greatest social reformers.

About

1. **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule** was born on **11 April 1827** in **Maharashtra** into the **Mali community** and completed his education at the **Scottish Missionary High School, Pune**, in **1841**.
2. His philosophy was based on **Liberty, Equality and Social Justice**, and he was deeply

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influenced by **Thomas Paine's** book **The Rights of Man**.

3. He believed that the upliftment of **women** and **lower castes** through education was the most effective solution to social discrimination.
4. In **1848**, he educated **Savitribai Phule** and established **India's first school for girls** in **Pune**.
5. He founded the **Satyashodhak Samaj** in **1873** to secure social and economic justice for the oppressed sections of society.
6. Phule established the **Bal Hatya Pratibandhak Griha (1863)**, advocated **widow remarriage**, opposed **Brahmin orthodoxy**, and demanded **free and compulsory primary education** before the **Hunter Commission (1882)**.
7. His notable works include **Gulamgiri, Shetkaryacha Asud, Tritiya Ratna, Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak, Brahmananche Kasab** and **Powada: Chatrapati Shivaji Raje Bhosle Yancha**, while he received the title **"Mahatma"** on **11 May 1888**.

RONGALI BIHU (BOHAG BIHU)

Recent Update: Rongali Bihu was recently celebrated across **Assam**, marking the beginning of the **Assamese New Year**.

About

1. **Rongali Bihu**, also known as **Bohag Bihu**, is the most important **harvest festival** celebrated in **Assam**.



2. It marks the beginning of the **Hindu Solar Calendar** and is celebrated as the **Assamese New Year** during **April**.
3. It is the most prominent among the **three Bihu festivals**, the other two being **Kati Bihu** (October) and **Magh Bihu** (January).
4. The festival celebrates the arrival of **spring**, the beginning of the **agricultural season** and prosperity for farmers.
5. Traditional celebrations include the vibrant **Bihu Dance**, **Bihu songs**, community feasts and cultural performances.
6. People wear traditional Assamese attire such as **Mekhela Chador** and **Gamosa**, symbolising Assamese identity and culture.
7. Rongali Bihu reflects the rich **agricultural heritage, cultural traditions and community harmony** of Assam.

BAISAKHI FESTIVAL

Recent Update: Baisakhi was recently celebrated across **Northern India**, especially by the **Sikh community**, with great religious and cultural enthusiasm.

About

1. **Baisakhi**, also known as **Vaisakhi**, is an important **spring harvest festival** celebrated mainly in **Punjab and Northern India**.
2. It is observed on the **first day of Vaishakha** in the **Hindu Solar Calendar**, usually falling on **13 or 14 April** every year.
3. The festival marks the **Sikh New Year** and holds immense religious significance for the **Sikh community**.
4. On **13 April 1699**, **Guru Gobind Singh**, the **10th Sikh Guru**, established the **Khalsa Panth** at **Anandpur Sahib**.
5. Devotees celebrate the occasion through **Nagar Kirtans, prayers, community feasts (Langar)** and visits to **Gurdwaras**.
6. The festival coincides with the **Solar New Year** celebrated in different regions as **Pohela Boishakh, Vishu, Bohag Bihu** and **Puthandu**.

7. Baisakhi symbolises **harvest prosperity, courage, equality, faith and the rich cultural heritage of Sikhism**.

SUWORI FESTIVAL

Recent Update: The **Suwori Festival** was recently celebrated in **Boko, Assam**, showcasing the cultural traditions of several indigenous communities.

About

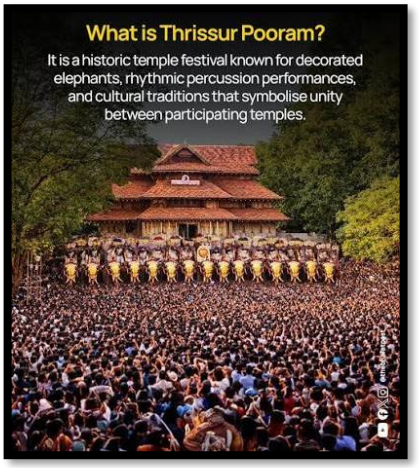
1. **Suwori Festival** is a **century-old spring and harvest festival** celebrated primarily in **Boko, Assam**.
2. It is observed on the **seventh day of Rongali Bihu**, marking the beginning of the new agricultural season.
3. The festival highlights the rich traditions of indigenous communities such as the **Rabha, Bodo, Garo, Gorkha and Koch-Rajbongshi**.
4. It serves as an important platform for preserving the cultural identity and folk traditions of these communities.
5. Traditional performances include **Hana Ghora, Paro Bah, Bihu Dance, Farkanti, Bogejari, Dhwimali, Mawsaglang** and **Garo Wangala Dance**.
6. The festival promotes **community participation, cultural exchange and preservation of indigenous heritage**.
7. Suwori Festival reflects the **cultural diversity, agrarian traditions and communal harmony** of Assam.

THRISSUR POORAM

Recent Update: Thrissur Pooram was recently celebrated in **Kerala**, attracting thousands of devotees and tourists from across the country.

About

1. **Thrissur Pooram** is an annual **Hindu temple festival** celebrated in **Thrissur, Kerala**, and is regarded as one of India's grandest temple festivals.
2. It is celebrated when the **Pooram** star coincides with the **Malayalam month of Medam (April–May)**.
3. The festival was initiated by **Raja Rama Varma**, popularly known as **Sakthan Thampuran**, the **Maharaja of Cochin (1790–1805)**.
4. The festival brings together **ten temples** in and around **Thrissur** to offer homage to **Lord Shiva** at the **Vadakkunnathan Temple**.



5. Major attractions include the **Kudamattom (colourful umbrella display)**, **Panchavadyam**, **Pandimelam** and spectacular **fireworks**.
6. Thrissur Pooram is popularly known as the **"Mother of All Poorams"** because of its grandeur, cultural significance and unique traditions.
7. The **seventh and final day** of the festival is known as **Pakal Pooram (Day Pooram)**, marking the conclusion of the celebrations.

KHASI AND GARO LANGUAGES

Recent Update: Meghalaya recently declared **Khasi** and **Garo** as **official languages** of the State in addition to **English**.

About

1. **Meghalaya** has recognised **Khasi** and **Garo** as official languages for use in government communication across the State.
2. Following amendments to relevant State laws, legislators can now **speak and debate in Khasi and Garo** during **Legislative Assembly** proceedings.
3. **Part XVII (Articles 343–351)** of the **Constitution of India** deals with **Official Languages**.
4. **Article 345** empowers **State Legislatures** to adopt one or more official languages through legislation.

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5. **Khasi** belongs to the **Khasian branch** of the **Mon-Khmer language family**, which forms part of the Austroasiatic language family.
6. **Garo** is one of the principal languages spoken in the **Garo Hills** region of **Meghalaya**.
7. **Khasi** and **Garo** are **not included** in the **Eighth Schedule** of the Constitution of India.

TATHAGATA RELICS OF LORD BUDDHA

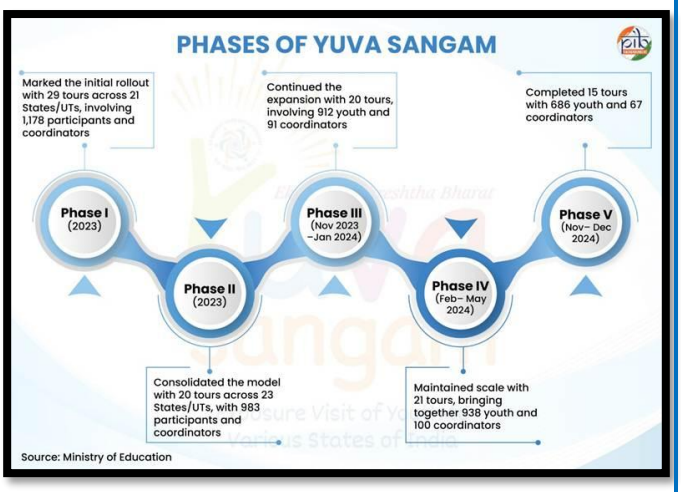
Recent Update: A sacred exposition of the **Tathagata Relics of Lord Buddha** is scheduled to be held in **Ladakh**.

About

1. **Tathagata Relics** refer to the **physical remains of Gautama Buddha** and sacred memorial objects associated with him.
2. The term **"Tathagata"** was frequently used by **Gautama Buddha** to refer to himself in the **Tripitaka of the Pali Canon**.
3. The word **Tathagata** is commonly interpreted as **"The One Thus Come"** or **"The One Thus Gone."**
4. These relics are revered by Buddhists as sacred symbols of the Buddha's teachings and enlightenment.
5. Relic expositions attract thousands of devotees and play an important role in preserving **Buddhist heritage and traditions**.
6. In **Mahayana** and **Vajrayana Buddhism**, **Tathagata** is an important philosophical concept associated with **textual and realization lineages**.
7. The exposition promotes **Buddhist pilgrimage, cultural heritage and international spiritual tourism**.

YUVA SANGAM

Recent Update: Yuva Sangam continues to promote **youth exchange and cultural integration** under the **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Initiative**.



About

1. **Yuva Sangam** is a **youth exchange programme** launched under the **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Initiative**.
2. It brings together young people from different regions of India to strengthen **national integration** and **cultural understanding**.
3. The programme is open to youth aged **18–30 years**, including **students, NSS volunteers, NYKS volunteers and young professionals**.
4. It is based on the **Five Ps—Paryatan, Parampara, Pragati, Paraspar Sampark** and **Prodyogiki**.
5. The programme is **anchored by the Ministry of Education** and implemented through **Higher Educational Institutions**.
6. Participants experience the culture, language, traditions, governance models and development initiatives of partner States.
7. Yuva Sangam promotes **people-to-people connections, national unity and the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**.

INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS (ICCR)

Recent Update: The **Minister of State for External Affairs** attended a community reception in Yangon, Myanmar and underscored the **Indian Council for Cultural Relations'** efforts in strengthening cultural ties.

About

1. The **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** is an **autonomous organisation** established in **1950** by **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**.

2. It functions under the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**.
3. ICCR promotes India's cultural relations with foreign countries through **cultural exchanges, festivals and international collaborations**.
4. It operates an extensive network of **Indian Cultural Centres** across different countries.
5. ICCR administers **more than 3,000 scholarships annually** under **21 scholarship schemes**.
6. Students from nearly **180 countries** benefit from ICCR scholarship programmes to pursue higher education in India.
7. ICCR plays a significant role in strengthening **India's soft power, cultural diplomacy and global people-to-people relations**.

EK BHARAT SHRESHTHA BHARAT (EBSB) INITIATIVE

Recent Update: In May 2026, the **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)** initiative focused heavily on **Phase VI of the Yuva Sangam** youth exchange program.

About

1. **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)** was launched in **2015** on **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** to strengthen national unity through cultural integration.
2. The initiative aims to enhance **mutual understanding, emotional bonding and cultural exchange** among different **States and Union Territories**.
3. Under the programme, **States and Union Territories are paired** for sustained interaction in areas such as **language, culture, tourism, cuisine, sports and governance**.
4. The initiative encourages people to appreciate the **linguistic, cultural and geographical diversity** of India while promoting national identity.
5. **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** is observed annually on **31 October** to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**.
6. Several programmes such as **Yuva Sangam, language learning initiatives, student exchanges and cultural festivals** are organised under EBSB.
7. The initiative promotes **cooperative federalism, national integration and the spirit of "Unity in Diversity"** across the country.

SHRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

Recent Update: The **Chinmaya Mission** set a global milestone on **May 9, 2026**, when over **108,000 participants** worldwide gathered online to collectively chant Chapter 15 of the Gita, attempting a Guinness World Record.

About

1. **Shrimad Bhagavad Gita** is a sacred **Hindu scripture** forming part of the **Bhishma Parva** of the **Mahabharata**.
2. It consists of **700 Sanskrit verses** presented as a dialogue between **Lord Krishna** and **Arjuna** on the battlefield of **Kurukshetra**.
3. The text primarily explains the concepts of **Dharma (duty), Karma (action), Bhakti (devotion) and Jnana (knowledge)**.
4. The Bhagavad Gita advocates **Nishkama Karma**, which means performing one's duty **without attachment to the results**.
5. It is regarded as one of the most influential philosophical and spiritual texts in **Indian civilisation**.
6. The teachings of the Gita have inspired leaders such as **Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Swami Vivekananda**.
7. The Bhagavad Gita continues to guide people on **ethical living, leadership, self-discipline and spiritual growth**.

MAHAVIR JAYANTI

Recent Update: Mahavir Jayanti was recently celebrated across India, commemorating the **birth anniversary of Lord Mahavira**, the **24th Tirthankara of Jainism**.

About

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1. **Mahavir Jayanti** is one of the most important festivals of **Jainism**, celebrating the birth of **Lord Mahavira**.
2. **Lord Mahavira** was born in **599 BCE** at **Kundagrama** near **Vaishali** in present-day **Bihar**.
3. He was the **24th and last Tirthankara** of the present **Avasarpini (descending cycle)** according to Jain tradition.
4. At the age of **30**, Mahavira renounced worldly life and attained **Kevala Jnana (omniscience)** after years of penance.
5. His core teachings include **Ahimsa (Non-violence), Satya (Truth), Asteya (Non-stealing), Aparigraha (Non-possession)** and **Brahmacharya (Celibacy)**.
6. The festival is observed through **prayers, processions, charitable activities, lectures and recitation of Jain scriptures**.
7. Mahavir Jayanti promotes the universal values of **peace, compassion, non-violence and ethical living**.

SATYASHODHAK SAMAJ

Recent Update: The contribution of **Satyashodhak Samaj** was recently highlighted during the celebrations of the **200th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**.

About

1. **Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers)** was founded by **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule** in **1873** in **Pune**.
2. The organisation aimed to secure **social justice, equality and dignity** for the **Shudras, Atishudras and other oppressed communities**.
3. It opposed **caste discrimination, untouchability, priestly domination and social inequality**.
4. The Samaj strongly promoted **women's education, widow remarriage and universal access to education**.
5. It conducted **simple marriage ceremonies** without the involvement of Brahmin priests to reduce social discrimination and unnecessary expenditure.
6. Members believed that **truth, equality and rational thinking** were essential for building a just society.
7. Satyashodhak Samaj became one of the earliest organised **social reform movements** advocating equality and social transformation in modern India.

SAVITRIBAI PHULE

Recent Update: Savitribai Phule was recently remembered during programmes commemorating the **200th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**.



About

1. **Savitribai Phule** was India's **first woman teacher** and one of the country's foremost **social reformers and educationists**.
2. She was educated by **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule** and later became a pioneer of **women's education** in India.
3. In **1848**, she co-founded **India's first school for girls** at **Pune** along with Jyotirao Phule.
4. She worked tirelessly for the education of **girls, Dalits and other socially disadvantaged communities**.
5. Savitribai played a leading role in establishing the **Bal Hatya Pratibandhak Griha**, which provided shelter to widows and abandoned children.
6. She opposed **child marriage, caste discrimination, untouchability and gender**

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inequality through education and social activism.

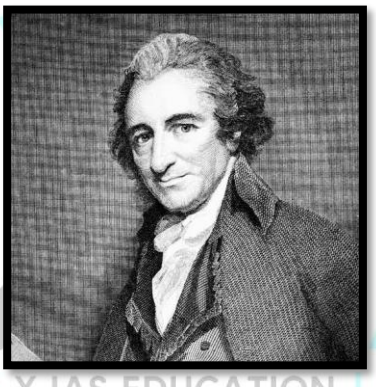
7. Savitribai Phule is remembered as a pioneering champion of **women's empowerment, social justice and inclusive education**.

THOMAS PAINE

Recent Update: Thomas Paine's ideas were recently highlighted during the **200th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**, who was deeply influenced by his writings.

About

1. **Thomas Paine** was an **English-born political philosopher, writer and revolutionary thinker** of the eighteenth century.
2. He is regarded as one of the leading intellectual figures of the **American** and **French Revolutions**.



3. His famous work **"The Rights of Man" (1791–92)** defended the ideals of **liberty, equality, democracy and popular sovereignty**.
4. The book strongly criticised hereditary monarchy and advocated **representative government** based on the consent of the people.
5. His ideas significantly influenced reformers such as **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**, who adopted the principles of **social equality and human rights**.
6. Thomas Paine also authored influential works including **Common Sense**, **The Age of Reason** and **The American Crisis**.
7. He is remembered as a pioneer of **modern democratic thought**, **individual rights** and **social justice**.

HUNTER COMMISSION (1882)

Recent Update: The contribution of the **Hunter Commission (1882)** was recently recalled during discussions on the educational reforms advocated by **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**.

About

1. The **Hunter Commission (Indian Education Commission)** was appointed in **1882** by **Lord Ripon** under the chairmanship of **Sir William Wilson Hunter**.
2. The Commission was constituted to review the progress of **Wood's Despatch (1854)** and assess the development of education in British India.
3. It recommended that **primary education** should receive greater attention and be managed largely by **local bodies**.
4. The Commission encouraged the expansion of **secondary education** through private participation aided by government grants.
5. It recommended improvement in **teacher training**, inspection systems and financial support for educational institutions.
6. **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule** urged the Commission to introduce **free and compulsory primary education** for all children.
7. The Hunter Commission laid the foundation for the **decentralisation and expansion of primary education** in colonial India.

DOWNWARD FILTRATION THEORY

Recent Update: The **Downward Filtration Theory** was recently discussed while revisiting the educational reforms advocated by **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**.

About

1. The **Downward Filtration Theory** was introduced by the **British Government** as an educational policy during colonial rule in India.
2. The theory proposed that education should first be provided to the **upper and educated classes**, who would subsequently spread knowledge to the lower sections of society.

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3. It was formally associated with **Lord Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835)** and the early British education policy.
4. The policy primarily promoted **English education** among the elite rather than universal education for the masses.
5. The theory neglected the educational needs of **women, lower castes and economically weaker sections**.
6. **Mahatma Jyotirao Phule** strongly opposed the theory and demanded **free, compulsory and universal primary education**.
7. The limitations of the Downward Filtration Theory eventually led to greater emphasis on **mass education and educational inclusion**.

VAISAKHA

Recent Update: Vaishakha was recently observed across India through various regional festivals marking the **Solar New Year** and the beginning of the harvest season.

About

1. **Vaishakha** is the **second month** of the **Hindu lunar calendar** and the **first month** of the **Hindu solar calendar** in several Indian regions.
2. The beginning of **Vaishakha** usually falls on **13 or 14 April**, coinciding with the **Solar New Year**.
3. The month is considered highly auspicious in **Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism** because of several important religious observances.
4. Major festivals associated with Vaishakha include **Baisakhi**, **Vishu**, **Bohag Bihu**, **Puthandu** and **Pohela Boishakh**.
5. The month marks the beginning of the **harvest season** in many parts of India and is celebrated with cultural and agricultural festivities.
6. Devotees observe **charity, fasting, pilgrimage and religious rituals** throughout the month, considering them especially meritorious.
7. Vaishakha symbolises **prosperity, renewal, agricultural abundance and spiritual purification** in Indian traditions.

VADAKKUNNATHAN TEMPLE

Recent Update: Vadakkunnathan Temple recently became the focal point of the grand **Thrissur Pooram Festival** in **Kerala**.

About

1. **Vadakkunnathan Temple** is an ancient **Lord Shiva** temple situated at **Thrissur** in **Kerala**.
2. The temple is regarded as one of the **oldest and most revered Shiva temples** in South India.
3. It is believed to have been established by **Parashurama**, according to **Kerala temple traditions**.



4. The temple is built in the traditional **Kerala architectural style**, featuring magnificent murals and wooden craftsmanship.
5. It serves as the principal venue for the world-famous **Thrissur Pooram Festival**, where participating temples pay homage to **Lord Shiva**.
6. The temple complex has been included in **UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites** for its outstanding cultural significance.
7. Vadakkunnathan Temple is an important centre of **Shaivism, Kerala's cultural heritage and classical temple traditions**.

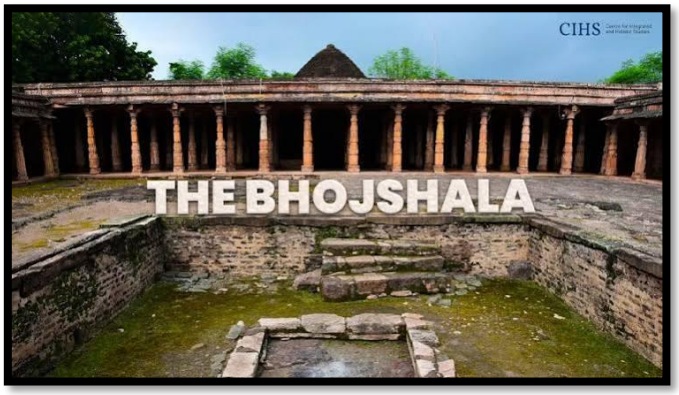
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BHOJSHALA TEMPLE

Recent Update: The **Madhya Pradesh High Court** declared **Bhojshala** a **Temple dedicated to Goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati)**, setting aside the **2003 ASI order** permitting Friday namaz.

About

1. **Bhojshala** is an **ASI-protected monument** located in **Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh**.
2. It is traditionally associated with **King Bhoja** (Paramara dynasty) and revered as a **Temple of Goddess Saraswati (Vagdevi)**.
3. The site is also associated with the **Kamal Maula Mosque**, making it a long-standing **religious and legal dispute**.
4. It is protected under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958**, with conservation by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.
5. An **ASI scientific survey (2024–25)** used techniques such as **Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)**, **GPS mapping**, **3D documentation** and **epigraphic analysis**.
6. The **Madhya Pradesh High Court (2026)** recognised the site as a **Temple**, while directing **ASI** to continue managing and preserving the protected monument.



SOMNATH TEMPLE

Recent Update: The **75th anniversary** of the reopening of **Somnath Temple** was commemorated through **Somnath Amrut Parv/Swabhiman Parv** in **May 2026**.

About

1. **Somnath Temple** is located at **Prabhas Patan**, **Gir Somnath district**, **Gujarat**, and is the **first of the 12 Jyotirlingas** of **Lord Shiva**.
2. The present temple was reconstructed under the leadership of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** after Independence and was **consecrated on 11 May 1951** by **Dr. Rajendra Prasad**, the first President of India.
3. The temple is built in the **Chaulukya (Maru-Gurjara)** style of architecture and is managed by the **Shree Somnath Trust**.
4. The **75th anniversary (2026)** also coincided with **1,000 years** since the **1026 CE attack** on the temple by **Mahmud of Ghazni**.



5. The temple symbolises **India's civilisational resilience**, **cultural revival** and **spiritual continuity** after repeated destruction and reconstruction.
6. **Somnath Swabhiman Parv** was organised to commemorate these milestones through **cultural**, **religious** and **heritage** events.
7. **Somnath Temple** remains one of India's most important **pilgrimage centres** and a significant symbol of the country's **cultural heritage**.

RETURNING OF CHOLA COPPER PLATES

Recent Update: The **Netherlands** returned the **11th-century Chola Copper Plates (Leiden Plates)** to **India** after nearly **200 years** during the Prime Minister's visit in **May 2026**.

About

1. The **Chola Copper Plates (Leiden Plates)** are **11th-century copper plate inscriptions** issued during the reign of **Rajaraja Chola I** and **Rajendra Chola I**.
2. They comprise **21 large** and **3 small copper plates**, weighing about **30 kg**, inscribed in **Tamil** and **Sanskrit (Grantha script)**.
3. The plates record **royal grants** to the **Buddhist Chudamani Vihara** at **Nagapattinam** and document the **genealogy**, **administration** and **maritime relations** of the Chola Empire.
4. They were excavated at **Nagapattinam** during



Dutch works in the **17th century** and later transferred to **Leiden University**, Netherlands.

5. The repatriation was facilitated through cooperation between the **Government of India**, the **Government of the Netherlands** and **Leiden University**.
6. The plates are among the **most significant epigraphic records** of the **Chola dynasty**, providing evidence of **trade**, **religious patronage** and **overseas diplomatic links**.
7. Their return strengthens India's efforts to **repatriate cultural heritage** and preserve historically significant artefacts.

INDIAN WAR MEMORIAL IN S. KOREA

Recent Update:

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the **first Indian War Memorial** in **South Korea** at **Imjingak Peace Park, Paju**, commemorating India's contribution during the **Korean War**.

About

1. The memorial is located at **Imjingak Peace Park**, **Paju**, near the **Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)** between **North Korea** and **South Korea**.
2. It honours the **60 Para Field Ambulance** and the **Custodian Force of India (CFI)** for their service during and after the **Korean War (1950–53)**.
3. The **60 Para Field Ambulance** provided **medical care** to soldiers and civilians under



the **United Nations Command** during the war.

4. The **Custodian Force of India (CFI)** supervised the **repatriation of Prisoners of War (PoWs)** under the **Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC)** after the 1953 Armistice.
5. The memorial was jointly established by **India** and **South Korea** as part of the **75th anniversary** of the **Korean War**.
6. It symbolises the enduring **India–South Korea Special Strategic Partnership**, reflecting shared values of **peace**, **humanitarian service** and **international cooperation**.
7. It is the **first dedicated Indian War Memorial in South Korea**, recognising India's significant humanitarian and peacekeeping contribution to the Korean War.

Miscellaneous

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THE BAIGA TRIBE

Recent Update: **13 Baiga children** were rescued from **human trafficking** in **Chhattisgarh**.



About

1. The **Baiga** are a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)** of Central India.
2. They mainly inhabit **Madhya Pradesh**, with smaller populations in **Chhattisgarh**, **Uttar Pradesh**, and **Jharkhand**.
3. The name **Baiga** means **sorcerer** or **medicine man**.
4. They traditionally practice **shifting cultivation** called **Bewar** or **Dahiya**.
5. Baigas consider **ploughing the land** a sin against **Mother Earth**.
6. Their society accepts **live-in relationships** and follows **reverse dowry** customs.
7. **Baiga women** are famous for their **traditional tattoos**.
8. The tribe is known for its rich **forest knowledge** and **traditional healing practices**.

NATIONAL FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AWARDS 2026

Recent Update: **President Droupadi Murmu** conferred the prestigious **National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026 to 15** outstanding nursing professionals on International Nurses Day (May 12, 2026) at **Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.**

About

1. It is the **highest national award** for **nurses** in India.
2. The award was instituted in **1973** by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
3. It recognizes **Registered Nurses**, **ANMs**, and **Lady Health Visitors**.
4. It is presented every year on **12 May**, the birth anniversary of **Florence Nightingale**.
5. Awardees receive a **Certificate**, **Medal**, and **₹50,000 cash prize**.



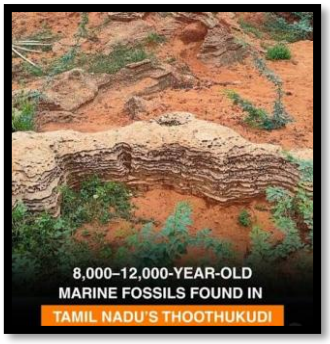
6. **Florence Nightingale** is known as the **Founder of Modern Nursing**.
7. She improved **hospital sanitation** during the **Crimean War**.
8. She founded the **Nightingale Training School** in **1860**.

FOSSIL BED OF THE HOLOCENE PERIOD DISCOVERED IN TAMIL NADU

Recent Update: A **Holocene fossil bed** was discovered in **Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu**.

About

1. The fossil site was discovered at **Panaiyur** in **Thoothukudi district**.
2. It dates back to the **Holocene Epoch**, around **8,000–12,000 years** ago.
3. The **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** studied and documented the site.



4. The **Holocene** is the present geological epoch of the **Quaternary Period**.
5. It began after the **last Ice Age**, about **11,700 years ago**.
6. The period witnessed **global warming**, **sea-level rise**, and **human settlements**.

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7. Many **megafauna disappeared**, while modern species adapted to new environments.
8. The discovery enriches India's **Quaternary fossil record** and prehistoric studies.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON DIABETES MELLITUS IN CHILDREN

Recent Update: The Government released a **national guidance document** for managing **Diabetes Mellitus in children**.

About

1. **Diabetes Mellitus** is a chronic metabolic disease caused by **high blood glucose** due to inadequate or ineffective insulin.
2. The disease is classified into **Type 1**, **Type 2**, and **Gestational Diabetes**, each with different causes and treatment.
3. The guidance mandates **universal screening** of children from birth to **18 years** through schools and community health centres.
4. Public health facilities will provide **free insulin**, **glucometers**, **test strips**, and diagnostic services to eligible children.
5. It introduces a **standardized national protocol** for early diagnosis, treatment, and long-term disease management.
6. The framework establishes an **integrated referral system** from community screening to district hospitals and medical colleges.
7. It also trains **parents**, **teachers**, and caregivers in insulin administration and emergency management of hypoglycaemia.
8. The initiative aims to reduce **childhood complications**, improve early detection, and ensure continuous diabetes care.

BAKSA HONEY

Recent Update: **APEDA** facilitated the first export of **20 MT of Baksa Honey** from **Assam** to the **USA**.

About

1. **Baksa Honey** is a premium **near-organic honey** produced in the **Baksa district of Assam**.
2. It has been identified as the district's flagship product under the **One District One Product (ODOP)** initiative.
3. The honey is collected from **pesticide-free forests** and diverse natural flora of the **Bodoland Territorial Region**.
4. It is valued for its **high nutritional content**, medicinal properties, and traditional use by the **Bodo community**.
5. **APEDA-supported laboratories** ensure that the honey meets international food safety and export standards.



6. The **ODOP initiative** promotes district-specific products through branding, value addition, and export promotion.
7. The programme also supports **skill development**, infrastructure creation, and financial assistance for local producers.
8. Baksa Honey strengthens **rural livelihoods**, **exports**, and the vision of making every district an **export hub**.

THE NATIONAL JUTE BOARD (NJB)

Recent Update: The **National Jute Board** expanded the **Jute Crop Information System (JCIS)** with **ISRO** support.

About

1. The **National Jute Board (NJB)** is the apex body under the **Ministry of Textiles** for the development of the jute sector.
2. It was established under the **National Jute Board Act, 2008**, and became operational in **2009**.

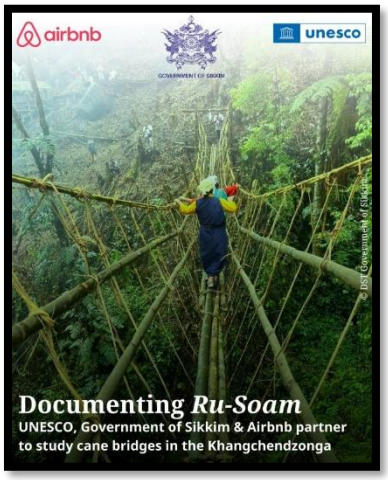
3. The Board promotes **research**, **technology adoption**, and modernization of the Indian jute industry.
4. It provides financial and technical support for **jute mills**, machinery upgradation, and product diversification.
5. The Board also promotes Indian jute through **international exhibitions**, trade fairs, and export initiatives.
6. The **Jute Crop Information System (JCIS)** uses **ISRO satellite imagery** for accurate crop monitoring and yield estimation.
7. It integrates **weather analytics**, geo-tagged field data, and disaster assessment for better policy decisions.
8. NJB strengthens **jute production**, **farmer welfare**, and the global competitiveness of Indian jute products.

RU-SOAM ENGINEERING

Recent Update: **UNESCO** and the **Government of Sikkim** began documenting the **Ru-Soam engineering** practices of the **Lepcha community**.

About

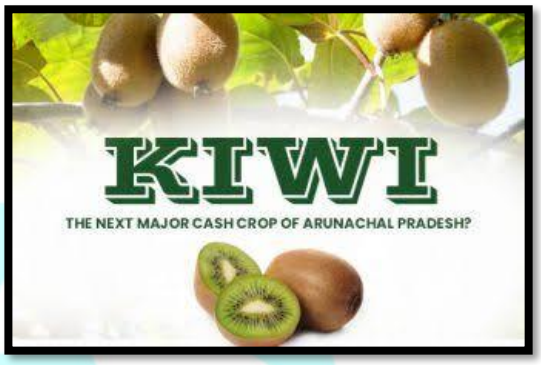
1. **Ru-Soam** refers to traditional **cane and bamboo suspension footbridges** built by the **Lepcha tribe** of **Sikkim**.
2. These bridges are mainly found in the **Dzongu region** within the **Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve**.
3. They are constructed entirely from **renewable bamboo and cane**, without using steel or concrete.
4. The bridges use **main support cables**, **suspender loops**, and **bamboo decks**, similar to modern suspension bridges.
5. Bamboo provides **high tensile strength**, flexibility, durability, and natural resistance to corrosion.



6. A Ru-Soam bridge can span up to **100 metres** and safely carry two or three people at a time.
7. UNESCO is studying these bridges for their value in **climate-resilient infrastructure** and disaster-prone regions.
8. Ru-Soam engineering showcases **indigenous knowledge**, **sustainable construction**, and eco-friendly engineering practices.

THE KIWI FRUIT

Recent Update: The Government launched the **Arunachal Kiwi Mission** to promote premium **organic kiwi** production.



About

1. **Budget Outlay:** A dedicated fund of ₹167 crore implemented via a multi-department convergence model.
2. **Production Dominance:** Supports Arunachal Pradesh's status as **India's largest kiwi producer**, generating over 50% of national output.
3. **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Focuses on setting up six integrated post-harvest hubs and adding 2,000 metric tonnes of cold chain capacity.
4. **Organic Certification:** Prioritizes restoring the state's National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) certification.
5. **Traceability Integration:** Features QR-enabled packaging to trace single-origin premium fruits directly back to local orchards.
6. **Global Target:** Sets an explicit goal to position **"Arunachal Organic Kiwi"** in international export markets across ***Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Middle East by FY 2028.***

7. **Arunachal Pradesh** is India's largest producer, contributing over **50%** of the country's kiwi production.
8. The state also became the **first** to receive **organic kiwi certification** under **MOVCD-NER**.
9. Kiwi cultivation provides a sustainable alternative to **jhum cultivation** while improving farmers' incomes.

SCHEDULE H1 OF THE DRUGS RULES

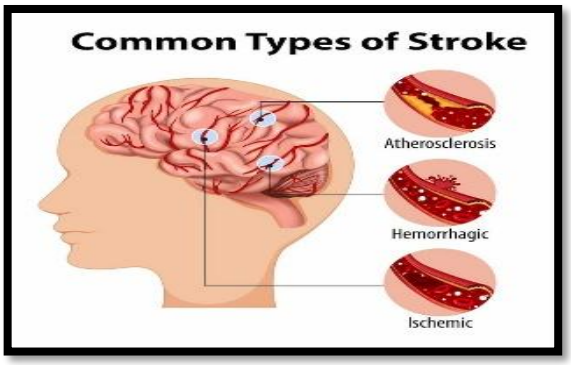
Recent Update: The Government brought **Pregabalin** under the stricter provisions of **Schedule H1**.

About

1. **Schedule H1** is a category of highly regulated **prescription medicines** under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945**.
2. It was introduced in **2013** to curb **drug abuse** and reduce **antimicrobial resistance**.
3. Medicines under Schedule H1 can be sold only with a valid prescription from a **Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP)**.
4. Pharmacists must maintain a detailed **sales register** containing patient, doctor, and medicine details.
5. These records must be preserved for **three years** for inspection by drug authorities.
6. Schedule H1 medicines carry a **red warning label** and **red Rx symbol** on their packaging.
7. Repeat sales are not permitted without a **fresh medical prescription**.
8. The regulations strengthen **drug monitoring**, prevent misuse, and improve **patient safety**.

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY (WHA) DECLARES STROKE A PUBLIC HEALTH PRIORITY

Recent Update: The **World Health Assembly (WHA)** adopted its first dedicated resolution declaring **Stroke** a global public health priority.



About

1. A **Stroke** is a medical emergency caused by an interruption of blood supply to the **brain**.
2. It is broadly classified into **Ischemic Stroke** and **Hemorrhagic Stroke** based on the underlying cause.
3. **Ischemic Stroke** occurs due to a **blood clot**, while **Hemorrhagic Stroke** results from a **ruptured blood vessel**.
4. Major risk factors include **hypertension**, **diabetes**, **obesity**, **smoking**, **alcohol use**, and **physical inactivity**.
5. The **B.E. F.A.S.T.** method helps identify stroke symptoms such as **Balance**, **Eyes**, **Face**, **Arm**, **Speech**, and **Time**.
6. Early treatment with **Thrombolytic Therapy (tPA)** within the **4.5-hour golden window** greatly improves survival.
7. **Mechanical thrombectomy** and emergency surgery are important treatments for selected severe stroke cases.
8. The WHA resolution promotes **early diagnosis**, **timely treatment**, and stronger **stroke prevention strategies** worldwide.

THE PADMA AWARDS

Recent Update: The Government announced the latest recipients of the prestigious **Padma Awards**.

About

1. The **Padma Awards** are among the **highest civilian honours** conferred by the **Government of India**.
2. They are presented in three categories—**Padma Vibhushan**, **Padma Bhushan**, and **Padma Shri**.
3. The awards were instituted in **1954** and reorganized into the present three-tier structure in **1955**.
4. They recognize **exceptional achievements** and distinguished public service across diverse fields.
5. Nominations are **open to the public**, and even **self-nominations** are permitted.
6. The **Padma Awards Committee**, headed by the **Cabinet Secretary**, scrutinizes all nominations.
7. The final recommendations are approved by the **Prime Minister** and the **President of India**.

CRIME IN INDIA REPORT 2024

Recent Update: The **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, released the **Crime in India 2024** report, highlighting a decline in overall crime but a sharp rise in **cybercrime**.

About

1. **NCRB** recorded **58.86 lakh cognisable crimes** in **2024**, a **6% decline** from **2023**; the crime rate fell to **418.9 per lakh population** from **448.3**.
2. **Cybercrime** increased by **17.9%**, with **online financial fraud** accounting for nearly **73%** of all cybercrime cases.
3. **Economic offences** rose by **4.6%**, driven mainly by **cheating**, **forgery**, and **fraud**.
4. **Crimes against women** declined by **1.5%**, with **cruelty by husband or relatives** remaining the largest category (about **42%** of cases).
5. **Crimes against children** increased by **5.9%**, while **crimes against senior citizens** rose by **16.9%**, mainly involving **theft** and **fraud**.
6. **Crimes against Scheduled Castes (SCs)** decreased by **3.6%**, and **crimes against Scheduled Tribes (STs)** declined by **23.1%** compared with **2023**.
7. The report is the **first** to incorporate offences under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023**, including the new category of **"Offences against Women and Child"**.

JANANI PLATFORM

Recent Update: The **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** launched **JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care)** to strengthen digital tracking of maternal and child healthcare across India.



About

1. **JANANI** is an upgraded version of the **Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Portal**, creating **longitudinal digital health records** for women during their reproductive years.
2. It tracks the complete continuum of care, including **antenatal care**, **delivery preparedness**, **institutional delivery**, **postnatal care**, **newborn care**, **HBNC/HBYC**, and **family planning**.
3. It introduces **QR-enabled Digital Mother & Child Health (MCH) Cards** for portable and paperless health records.
4. The platform features **automated high-risk pregnancy alerts**, **due-list generation**, and **real-time dashboards** for timely monitoring and interventions.
5. It is interoperable with **ABHA**, **U-WIN**, and **POSHAN**, enabling seamless data exchange across national health programmes.
6. Beneficiaries can register using **ABHA**, **Aadhaar (OTP/Biometric)**, or **mobile number**, with **self-registration** available through web and mobile applications.
7. The platform improves **continuity of care**, **digital governance**, and **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)** and **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** reduction through real-time monitoring.

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QUESTIONS TO PRACTICE

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Anti-Defection Law:

1. It was added to the Constitution through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985.
2. Paragraph 4 of the Tenth Schedule allows for exemption in case of a merger of political parties.
3. A Speaker's decision on disqualification under the Tenth Schedule cannot be subject to judicial review.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Answer: B

2. With reference to the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026, consider the following statements:

1. They introduce a fully digital framework, including e-OCI registration, replacing the paper-based system.
2. A minor holding an Indian passport can simultaneously hold the passport of another country under the new Rules.
3. Appeals against rejected OCI applications are heard by an authority one rank higher than the original decision-maker.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 1 and 3 only
C. 2 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B

3. With reference to Ordinance-making power in India, consider the following statements:

1. Article 123 empowers the President and Article 213 empowers the Governor to promulgate Ordinances.
2. An Ordinance can amend the Constitution if immediate legislative action is required.
3. Every Ordinance must receive Parliamentary approval within six weeks of the reassembly of Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 3 only
B. 2 only
C. 1 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

4. The Union Cabinet recently approved increasing the Supreme Court's sanctioned judge strength. In this context, consider the following statements:

1. The sanctioned strength will increase from 33 to 37 judges, excluding the Chief Justice of India.
2. Article 124(1) empowers Parliament to increase the number of Supreme Court judges by law.
3. Including the CJI, the Supreme Court's total strength will become 38 judges.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

5. The Judges Inquiry Committee, which recently submitted its report on allegations against a High Court Judge, is constituted under which of the following?

A. The Judges (Protection) Act, 1985
B. The Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968
C. Article 124(4) directly, without any statute
D. The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971

Answer: B

6. With reference to the removal process of a Supreme Court or High Court Judge in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Judges Inquiry Committee consists of a Supreme Court Judge, a Chief Justice of a High Court, and an eminent jurist.
2. The Committee exercises powers similar to those of a Civil Court while framing charges and recording evidence.
3. Parliament can initiate the removal process only after the Committee finds the charges proved.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

7. Consider the following statements regarding "President's Rule":

1. It is imposed under Article 356 of the Constitution when constitutional machinery fails in a State.
2. The Proclamation of President's Rule must be approved by both Houses of Parliament within two months.
3. In the S.R. Bommai case (1994), the Supreme Court held that Article 356 is not subject to judicial review.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 3 only
C. 1 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

8. Regarding a "post-election stalemate" where a sitting Chief Minister refuses to resign despite losing majority, which of the following is/are correct?

1. Under Article 164(1), the Chief Minister holds office during the Governor's pleasure.
2. A Floor Test, as clarified through S.R. Bommai (1994) and Shivraj Singh Chouhan (2023), is the only constitutional method to determine majority.
3. If no government can be formed, the Governor may recommend President's Rule under Article 356.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

9. With reference to NITI Aayog, consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 2015 through a Cabinet Resolution, replacing the Planning Commission.
2. The Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairperson, and appoints the Vice-Chairperson.
3. Its Governing Council is the highest decision-making body and includes Chief Ministers and Lieutenant Governors.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

10. Consider the following statements about the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992:

1. It came into force on 24 April 1993 and inserted Part IX along with the Eleventh Schedule into the Constitution.
2. It mandates a three-tier Panchayati Raj structure in every State, without exception.
3. It provides for reservation of seats for SCs, STs, and at least one-third for women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 3 only
B. 2 only
C. 1 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

11. The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) is a statutory body constituted under which of the following?

A. Section 6A of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956
B. Article 262 of the Constitution directly
C. The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal Award, 1990
D. The River Boards Act, 1956

Answer: A

12. With reference to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, consider the following statements:

1. Section 12(1)(c) mandates 25% reservation for children from Economically Weaker Sections in private unaided schools.
2. The RTE (Amendment) Act, 2019 allows States to conduct examinations for Classes V and VIII.
3. The Act operationalises Article 21A, making elementary education a fundamental right for children aged 6–14 years.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

13. Consider the following statements regarding Section 124A (Sedition Law):

1. It was replaced by Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).
2. In S.G. Vombatkere (2022), the Supreme Court kept the operation of Section 124A in abeyance.

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3. Section 124A was introduced in 1870 and was extensively used against freedom fighters.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

14. With reference to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971, consider the following statements:

1. The upper gestation limit is 20 weeks for general cases and 24 weeks for specified categories of women.
2. Pregnancy up to 20 weeks requires the opinion of two Registered Medical Practitioners.
3. The Act extends the ground of contraceptive failure to both married and unmarried women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 3 only
B. 2 only
C. 1 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

15. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in India is built upon which three core pillars?

A. Aadhaar, UPI, and GSTN
B. Digital Identity, Real-Time Payments, and Data Exchange with User Consent
C. Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile (JAM Trinity)
D. CoWIN, DigiLocker, and UMANG
Answer: B

16. Consider the following statements about India's water resources:

1. India supports nearly 18% of the global population but possesses only about 4% of the world's freshwater resources.
2. Per capita water availability has declined from over 5,000 cubic metres in 1947 to nearly 1,400 cubic metres today.
3. Agriculture consumes nearly 85–90% of India's freshwater resources.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

17. The "VB-GRAM G" (Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission), announced as the successor to MGNREGA, guarantees how many days of unskilled wage employment to every eligible rural household?

A. 100 days
B. 150 days
C. 125 days
D. 200 days
Answer: C

18. With reference to the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0, consider the following statements:

1. It is India's first data-driven assessment framework for Gram Panchayats and Traditional Local Bodies.
2. It measures performance using 150 indicators across nine themes aligned with the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 only
B. 2 only
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2
Answer: C

19. BHAVYA (Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana), recently launched by the Union Government, is aimed at:

A. Developing world-class plug-and-play industrial parks/smart cities
B. Providing critical mineral recycling incentives
C. Promoting coal/lignite gasification
D. Expanding rural marketing platforms for SHG products
Answer: A

20. Consider the following statements about the Incentive Scheme for Promotion of Critical Mineral Recycling:

1. It is implemented under the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) by the Ministry of Mines.
2. It provides both Capital Expenditure (Capex) and Operating Expenditure (Opex) incentives.
3. It supports only Greenfield recycling projects and excludes Brownfield projects.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

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21. The "Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects" targets gasification of how many million tonnes (MT) of coal/lignite by 2030, as per the given financial allocation?

A. 50 MT
B. 75 MT
C. 100 MT
D. 125 MT
Answer: B

22. With reference to the "Mission for Cotton Productivity," consider the following statements:

1. It follows the Government's "5F Vision" – Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign.
2. India occupies the first position in the world in cotton acreage.
3. Kasturi Cotton Bharat is promoted as a premium, traceable Indian cotton brand under the Mission.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

23. ECLGS 5.0 (Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme) is implemented by which agency?

A. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
B. National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)
C. Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)
D. National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)
Answer: B

24. Consider the following statements regarding the "COSOP" (Country Strategic Opportunities Programme) 2026–2033:

1. It is a partnership between India and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
2. It focuses on strengthening Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 only
B. 2 only
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2
Answer: C

25. The SHE-MART Initiative, aimed at strengthening women-led rural enterprises, is implemented under which programme?

A. National Rural Livelihoods Mission's DAY-NRLM
B. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
C. Stand-Up India Scheme
D. Mahila Samman Bachat Patra Scheme
Answer: A

26. With reference to the "One Case One Data" Initiative, launched by the Supreme Court of India, which of the following best describes it?

A. A single digital database integrating judicial records across all levels of courts
B. A biometric identity verification system for litigants
C. An AI-based sentencing prediction tool
D. A centralized fee-payment gateway for courts
Answer: A

27. Consider the following statements on the recently released "NCRB's Crime in India 2024 Report":

1. It recorded an overall decline in cognisable crimes compared to 2023, partly due to the implementation of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.
2. Cybercrime emerged as the fastest-growing crime category, with digital frauds accounting for over 70% of reported incidents.
3. Crimes against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes registered a sharp increase in 2024.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

28. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was established in 1986 based on the recommendations of which of the following?

1. Tandon Committee
2. National Police Commission
3. Ministry of Home Affairs Task Force

Select the correct answer:

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

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29. Consider the following statements about the 11th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):

1. The NPT recognizes only countries that tested nuclear weapons before 1 January 1967 as Nuclear Weapon States.
2. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitors civilian nuclear activities under the Treaty.
3. The 11th Review Conference concluded with a unanimously adopted consensus declaration.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

30. With reference to the United Nations Secretary-General election, consider the following statements:

1. The Secretary-General is appointed by the UN General Assembly on the recommendation of the UN Security Council.
2. Any of the five permanent members of the Security Council can veto a candidate during selection.
3. By convention, the post rotates among different regional groups of the United Nations.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

31. OPEC+ was formed in 2016 by including major non-OPEC oil producers. Which of the following countries is NOT among its founding non-OPEC additions mentioned in this context?

A. Russia
B. Mexico
C. Kazakhstan
D. Norway

Answer: D

32. Consider the following statements about the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):

1. It was established in 1948 and is a global membership union comprising governments, NGOs, and Indigenous organizations.
2. Its membership is open only to national governments and cannot include sub-national authorities or NGOs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 only
B. 2 only
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

33. With reference to the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1947 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) represents India as its national standards body.
3. ISO TC 20/SC 14 is a subcommittee responsible for developing standards on Space Systems and Operations.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

34. The Common Criteria Development Board (CCDB), of which India recently assumed the Chairmanship (2026–2028), manages global standards related to:

A. Space debris mitigation
B. IT security evaluation under the CCRA (Common Criteria Recognition Arrangement)
C. Maritime pollution control
D. Nuclear non-proliferation verification

Answer: B

35. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF):

1. It was established in 2000 under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
2. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which supports UNFF, is chaired by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
3. It has limited membership restricted to countries with significant forest cover.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

36. The FAO Agricola Medal, recently received by the Prime Minister of India, was earlier received by which Indian leader in 2008?

A. Atal Bihari Vajpayee
B. Dr. Manmohan Singh
C. M.S. Swaminathan
D. Pranab Mukherjee
Answer: B

37. With reference to the Kimberley Process (KP), of which India recently assumed the Chairship, consider the following statements:

1. It was launched in 2003 following the adoption of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.
2. Its objective is to eliminate the trade in conflict diamonds.
3. Member countries can trade rough diamonds with both Kimberley Process participants and non-participants equally.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

38. The Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) is the flagship Track 1.5 forum of which organisation?

A. BIMSTEC
B. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
C. Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)
D. SAARC
Answer: B

39. Consider the following statements regarding INS Aridhaman:

1. It is India's third indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN).
2. It is the second submarine of the Arihant-class, developed under the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) Project.
3. INS Arihant, commissioned in 2016, completed India's Nuclear Triad.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

40. With reference to Yard 3039 (Sanghmitra), consider the following statements:

1. It is a Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) being built for the Indian Navy.
2. It is being constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) jointly with Goa Shipyard Limited.
3. It is named after Sanghamitra, the daughter of Emperor Ashoka.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

41. Consider the following statements about the Astra series of air-to-air missiles:

1. Astra Mark-I is already operational with the Indian Air Force and integrated with LCA Tejas and Su-30 MKI.
2. Astra Mark-III has been renamed "Gandiva."
3. Astra missiles are developed by DRDO and manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

42. The R-37M missile, which Russia recently approved for export to India, is popularly known by which nickname due to its capability against airborne early warning aircraft?

A. "Devil's Weapon"
B. "AWACS Killer"
C. "Sky Hammer"
D. "Silent Hunter"
Answer: B

43. With reference to the Malwan-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), consider the following statements:

1. It has been indigenously designed and constructed by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL).
2. It is powered by an advanced waterjet propulsion system.
3. It is named after a coastal town in Maharashtra associated with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's maritime legacy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

44. Consider the following statements about the Ganges Soft-shell Turtle (Nilssonia gangetica):

1. It is classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
2. It receives the highest protection under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
3. It is found exclusively in the Ganga river basin and nowhere else in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

45. Consider the following statements about the Nilgiri Tahr (Nilgiritragus hylocrius):

1. It is the only mountain ungulate endemic to the Western Ghats.
2. Its largest population is found in Eravikulam National Park.
3. It is classified as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

46. The "Kali Night Frog," recently identified as a new cryptic amphibian species, belongs to which genus, endemic to the Western Ghats?
A. Nyctibatrachus
B. Rhacophorus
C. Micrixalus
D. Raorchestes
Answer: A

47. With reference to the Methane Alert and Response System (MARS), consider the following statements:

1. It was announced at COP27 and is operated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. It uses Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to analyse satellite images to identify large methane super-emitters.
3. It monitors emissions only from the oil and gas sector.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

48. Consider the following statements about the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC):

1. It carries warm surface water northwards and returns cold deep water southwards.
2. A weaker AMOC may reduce Indian monsoon rainfall and increase dry spells.
3. It is driven primarily by wind patterns rather than temperature and salinity differences.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: A

49. Neuro-Symbolic Artificial Intelligence (NSAI), highlighted as a more reliable alternative to traditional LLMs for India's education system, combines which two elements?
A. Deep learning-based neural networks with rule-based symbolic reasoning
B. Quantum computing with blockchain-based verification
C. Generative adversarial networks with reinforcement learning
D. Cloud computing with edge computing architectures
Answer: A

50. Consider the following statements about the India Meteorological Department (IMD):

1. It was established in 1875 and functions under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
2. It operates through initiatives such as Mission Mausam to expand AI-enabled forecasting.
3. Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs) operated by IMD use the Doppler Effect to measure both location and velocity of precipitation systems.

Which of the statements given above are correct?
A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3
Answer: D

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