VETRII IAS STUDY CIRCLE
Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

MAY 2025

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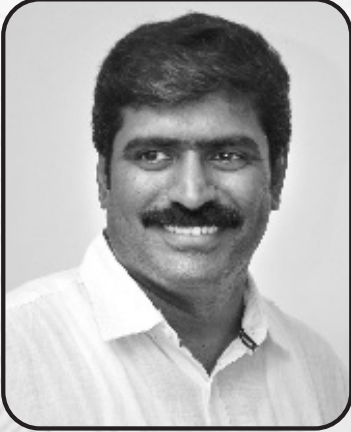**TIRUVANNAMALAI**
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Preface

M. SHUNMUGAM
Director
Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

My Dear Aspirants,

Greetings to all of you! "What we think we become" Gautama Buddha. We all have dreams. To make dreams come into reality it takes a lot of determination, dedication, self discipline and continuous effort.

We at VETRII IAS Study Circle are committed to provide the right guidance, quality coaching and help every aspirants to achieve his or her life's cherished goal of becoming a civil servant.

The class room coaching at VETRII IAS Study Circle is meticulously planned to equip the aspirants with all the relevant facts and fundamentals of the subjects. Further the VETRII IAS Study Circle Study materials aim to support the candidate by providing the most relevant study material in a comprehensive manner.

We also thank other family members of Vetrii for making this effort a reality.

We wish the aspirants ALL THE VERY BEST for their journey in Civil Services !

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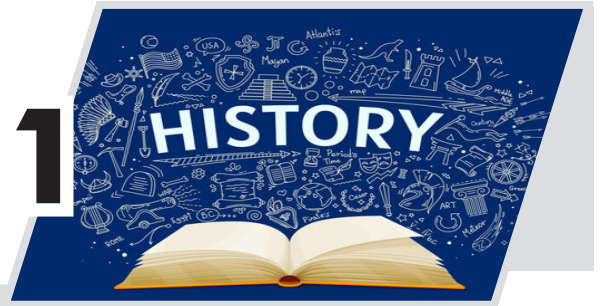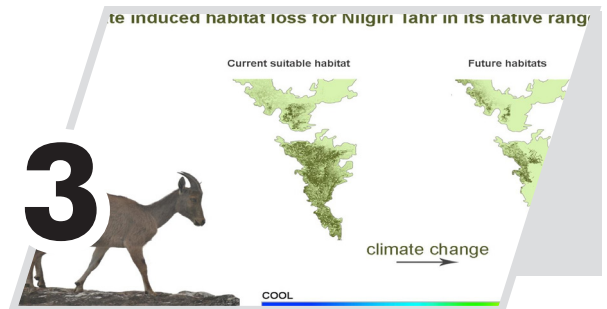
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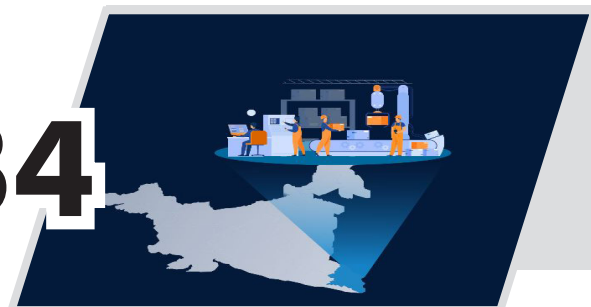
1. HISTORY

1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

2Date	Day	Theme / Remark
May 1	*International Labour Day 2025*	▪ **International Labour Day,** also known as Global Workers Day and May Day, is marked every year globally on **May 1** as a celebration of working-class people, recognising their contribution to society and promoting workers' rights and opportunities. ▪ The first Labour Day in India was held on May 1, 1923, in Chennai under the leadership of the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan. It was led by Malayapura 4 ▪ Singaravelu Chettiar, a prominent communist leader, who petitioned the government to recognise May 1 as a national holiday. ▪ Theme for International Labour Day 2025 · 'Social justice and decent work'.
May 3	*World Press Freedom Day*	▪ **World Press Freedom Day** was celebrated on **May 3** every year since 1993. ▪ It celebrates the 1991 Windhoek Declaration for the Development of a Free, Independent, and Pluralistic Press. ▪ The theme for this year is **"Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media."**

2Date	Day	Theme / Remark
May 8	*World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day*	▪ World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is observed every year on May 8, a tradition that began in 1948. ▪ The day marks the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant (1828–1910), the founder of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the first recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. ▪ The theme for this year (2025) is: **"Keeping Humanity Alive."**
May 11	*National Technology Day 2025*	▪ National Technology Day was observed on May 11, 2025, with the theme: "YANTRA – Yugantar for Advancing New Technology, Research & Acceleration". ▪ This day commemorates significant milestones achieved on May 11, 1998, including: ▪ India's successful nuclear tests under Operation Shakti ▪ The maiden flight of the indigenously developed Hansa-3 aircraft ▪ In recognition of these achievements, former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared May 11 as National Technology Day.
May 12	*International Nurses Day*	▪ International Nurses Day is celebrated on May 12 by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) to honor the compassion and care provided by nurses around the world. ▪ The date marks the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing. ▪ Florence Nightingale was a British nurse, statistician, and social reformer, renowned for her service during the Crimean War (1854–56) where she cared for British and allied soldiers. Her efforts earned her the nickname **"The Lady with the Lamp."** ▪ Theme for 2025: **"Our Nurses. Our Future. Caring for nurses strengthens economies."**

2Date	Day	Theme / Remark
May 17	World Hypertension Day	▪ World Hypertension Day is celebrated every year on 17 May. ▪ This year, the theme of World Hypertension Day is "Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It, Live Longer!" World Hypertension Day was launched by the World Hypertension League in 2005.
May 18	International Museum Day	▪ International Museum Day is celebrated on May 18 every year. It highlights the important role of museums worldwide. ▪ International Museum Day 2025 focuses on the theme "The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities," emphasizing how museums adapt to support education, innovation, and community development in today's fast-changing world.
May 20	World Metrology Day	▪ World Metrology Day, observed globally on May 20, highlights the importance of measurement science in daily life and technological advancement. ▪ The 2025 theme, "Measurements for all times, for all people," emphasizes the role of measurements in history, present, and future innovations. ▪ This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Metre Convention.
May 21	National Anti-Terrorism Day	▪ National Anti-Terrorism Day is observed annually on May 21st in remembrance of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination on May 21st, 1991. ▪ Anti-Terrorism Day in India was established by the VP Singh government in memory of Rajiv Gandhi.

1.2 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

HADR exercise

▪ INS Sharda reached the Maldives' Maafilaafushi Atoll to participate in a joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise. This bilateral exercise with the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) runs until May 10

▪ It highlights operational synergy in humanitarian missions and reflects India's strategic maritime vision, **"MAHASAGAR" – Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.**

Operation Sindoor – India's Counter-Terror Response (2025)

▪ In response to the April 2025 Pahalgam terrorist attack, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, 2025, targeting nine terror infrastructure sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK).

▪ The operation was jointly conducted by the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force from Indian Territory.

Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS)

▪ India's military has recently showcased its Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS).

▪ The IACCS is an automated command and control system developed by Bharat Electronics Limited.

▪ It integrates data from multiple sources. These include ground-based radars, airborne sensors, and communication nodes.

Revamped Multi Agency Centre (MAC)

▪ Union Home Minister inaugurated the revamped Multi Agency Centre (MAC), a common counter-terrorism grid under the Intelligence Bureau (IB) that was conceptualised in 2001 post the Kargil war.

▪ The new MAC network securely connects all police districts in the country and has been built at a cost of Rs.500 crore.

▪ As many as 28 organisations, including the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), armed forces and State police, are part of the platform, and various security agencies share real-time intelligence inputs in the MAC.

Nomadic Elephant

▪ The 17th edition of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise, dubbed Nomadic Elephant, is set to be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

▪ This military collaboration will be held from 31st May to 13th June 2025. It is an annual event alternating between India and Mongolia.

▪ The previous exercise took place in Umroi, Meghalaya, in July 2024.

▪ This exercise aims to enhance interoperability between the two nations' armed forces.

1.3 EMINENT PERSONS

Dr M. R. Srinivasan, pioneering Nuclear Scientist Passes Away

▪ Renowned for his instrumental role in India's nuclear energy programme, he served as the former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and was the founding Chairman of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

▪ In 1959, he was appointed Principal Project Engineer for India's first atomic power station.

1.4 SPORTS AND GAMES

Khelo India Youth Games

▪ Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the seventh edition of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) in Patna, Bihar. This edition, marking a significant milestone for the state, features 27 medal sports and the introduction of esports as a demonstration event.

Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) Debuts and Cricket Retained for Asian Games 2026

▪ The 2026 Asian Games, set to be hosted in Japan's Aichi and Nagoya prefectures from September 19 to October 4.

▪ For the first time, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) will be included, marking a significant milestone in the evolution of combat sports on the international stage.

▪ Additionally, cricket, a beloved sport in Asia, will make its fourth appearance at the Games.

▪ Cricket made its first appearance at the Asian Games in 2010 in Guangzhou and has since been a part of the Games, except for the 2018 edition.

1.5 BOOKS & AUTHORS

New Book Launched - "Ramanujan: Journey of a Great Mathematician"

▪ National Archives of India launched a book titled 'Ramanujan: Journey of a Great Mathematician' in New Delhi.

▪ This book, authored by Arun Singhal and Devendra Kumar Sharma, explores the remarkable life and legacy of Srinivasa Ramanujan, one of India's most celebrated mathematicians.

▪ The book delves into the extraordinary life of Srinivasa Ramanujan, exploring his genius and his significant contributions to mathematics despite facing numerous challenges, including limited formal education.

1.6 AWARDS AND HONORS

Pulitzer prize

▪ The Pulitzer Prize is considered America's most prestigious honor in the field of journalism.

▪ This award was started in the year 1917,

▪ The Pulitzer Prizes for the year 2025 were given in a total of 23 categories, including 15 categories of journalism and 8 categories of books, drama, music etc.

▪ Fiction: Percival Everett won the award for his novel 'James' , which tells the story of 'Huckleberry Finn' from the point of view of a slave.

World press freedom prize

▪ The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize for 2025 was awarded to the Nicaraguan newspaper La Prensa.

▪ This recognition acknowledges La Prensa's resilience and commitment to independent journalism, particularly in the face of government repression and the confiscation of their assets in 2021

▪ The award was announced on World Press Freedom Day, which is celebrated on May 3rd

World Food Prize 2025

▪ Brazilian microbiologist Mariangela Hungria has been announced as the recipient of the 2025 World Food Prize.

▪ The World Food Prize is a prestigious international award recognizing individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food worldwide.

▪ It was founded in 1986 by Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

▪ Often referred to as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture."

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023

▪ Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya felicitated and presented the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023 to badminton champions Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy in New Delhi.

▪ The ace badminton pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who reached the No. 1 rank in the Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings in 2023 and clinched the Asian Games gold medal in Hangzhou, were shortlisted for the Khel Ratna award in 2023.

▪ Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2023: The Khel Ratna Award, also known as the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award (previously Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award), stands as India's prestigious sports recognition, honoring athletes who have brought immense glory to the nation through their exceptional performances in diverse sporting disciplines.

Heart Lamp won the International Booker Prize for 2025

▪ Kannada writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq, 77, began writing about her people, their joys, sorrows and anxieties, over five decades ago.

▪ On Tuesday, Heart Lamp, a collection of 12 short stories selected from her work written

between 1990 and 2023 and translated by Deepa Bhasthi, won the International Booker Prize for 2025 from a shortlist featuring books in French, Italian, Danish, and Japanese.

▪ It's a first win for Kannada, and the first time in the history of the prize that a collection of short stories has been honoured.

▪ The award for an Indian writer comes three years after Geetanjali Shree won the prestigious literary prize for Tomb of Sand, translated from Hindi by Daisy Rockwell.

Dadasaheb Phalke Marathi Sanskrutik Kary Excellence Award

▪ Three eminent personalities, who have made stellar contributions to the field of arts, were honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Marathi Sanskrutik Kary Excellence Award.

▪ Padma Subrahmanyam, veteran bharatanatyam exponent, choreographer and research scholar (for excellence in performing arts); K.N. Ramaswamy, director of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai Kendra (for promoting performing arts); and M. Murali, founder of NKM Trust (for promoting performing arts) received the award

Military Awards

▪ President Droupadi Murmu presented 'Kirti Chakra' and 'Shaurya Chakra' awards to 39 people for their heroic deeds.

▪ Six people received the 'Kirti Chakra' award: Rashtriya Rifles soldier Ravikumar, Colonel Manpreet Singh, Naik Dilwar Khan, Major Manjeet, Major Mallaram Gopal Naidu, and Jammu-Kashmir Police Deputy Superintendent Himayun Musamil Bhat.

▪ Similarly, 33 people from the armed forces and central armed police forces received Shaurya Chakra awards.

▪ Havildar Rohit Kumar Gikon and Vijayan Kutti from the Border Roads Organization also received the 'Shaurya Chakra' award. Among these, Rohit Kumar lost his life in an avalanche in Ladakh while on duty.

Cannes Film Festival

▪ Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi's revenge thriller It Was Just an Accident won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival handing the festival's top prize to a director who had been banned from leaving Iran for more than 15 years.

▪ The Grand Prix, or second prize, was awarded to Joachim Trier's Norwegian family drama Sentimental Value, his lauded follow-up to The Worst Person in the World.

▪ Kleber Mendonça Filho's Brazilian political thriller The Secret Agent won two big awards: best director for Mr. Fihlo and best actor for Wagner Moura. Best actress went to Nadia Melliti for The Little Sister.

1.7 APPOINTMENTS – WHO IS WHO?

Appointment of UPSC Chairman

- Under Article 316(1) of the Constitution, Dr. Ajay Kumar has been appointed as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) by President of India.

- Apart from the Chairman, the Commission can have a maximum of 10 members.

- The UPSC Chairman is appointed for a term of six years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier.

- The Chairman is not eligible for reappointment after the completion of the term.

- Removal (Article 317): The Chairman can be removed by the President.

- Removal can only be done on the grounds of misbehavior.

- Misbehavior must be proved through an inquiry conducted by the Supreme Court and its report.

Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission

- Former Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar took charge as Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Thursday. He was administered the oath of secrecy by Lt. Gen. Raj Shukla (Retd.).

- Mr. Kumar belongs to the 1985 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) of Kerala Cadre.

- 52nd Chief Justice of India.

- Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai was sworn in as the 52nd Chief Justice of India. He is notable for being the first Buddhist and dalit to hold this prestigious position

52nd Chief Justice of India (CJI)

- Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai has been appointed as the 52nd Chief Justice of India (CJI).

- Article 124(2): Empowers the President to appoint the CJI.

- Article 126: Provides for appointment of an Acting Chief Justice when required.

- Tenure: No fixed term but holds office until the age of 65 years (Article 124(2)).

2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

2.1 LATEST COURT VERDICTS

Maternity Leave is Part of Reproductive Rights (K. Umadevi v. Government of Tamil Nadu): SC

- The Supreme Court (SC) ruled that maternity leave is an essential component of a woman's reproductive rights, thereby reinforcing the constitutional and human rights of working women.

- The Court set aside a Madras HC order that had denied maternity leave to a woman on the birth of her 3rd child, based on the State's policy limiting benefits to women with only 2 children.

- Reproductive Rights: Maternity leave is an integral part of maternity benefits and forms a core aspect of a woman's reproductive rights.

- Constitutional Protection: A woman's right to reproductive choices is protected under Article 21, as a part of personal liberty (Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration case).

Presidential Reference under Article 143

- The President has invoked Article 143 of the Indian Constitution to refer a set of 14 constitutional questions to the Supreme Court (SC) for its advisory opinion.

- This move comes after a recent SC judgement which invoked Article 142 in the State of Tamil Nadu v The Governor of Tamil Nadu Case, 2023 imposing timelines on Governors and the President to act on Bills passed by state legislatures.

- The reference raises 14 key questions, primarily concerning Articles 200 and 201, and the justiciability of executive actions before a Bill becomes law.

- Article 143 (Advisory jurisdiction) empowers the President of India to seek the SC's advisory opinion on any question of law or fact that is of public importance and is likely to arise or has already arisen.

- This provision establishes the SC's advisory jurisdiction, which is exclusive to the President.

2.2 PROBLEMS IN CONDUCT OF PUBLIC ELECTIONS

ECINET: Unified Electoral Technology Platform by the ECI

▪ The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched ECINET, a unified digital platform for election technology, serving as a single-point interface for voters, election officials, political parties, and civil society stakeholders.

▪ To integrate and streamline more than 40 existing mobile and web applications of the Election Commission into a user-friendly platform.

▪ To simplify access by eliminating the need for multiple logins.

▪ To ensure data accuracy, as data on ECINET can only be entered by authorized ECI officials.

▪ This new initiative is expected to benefit nearly 1 billion voters and the entire election administration.

Caste Census in India

▪ The Government of India has approved the inclusion of caste data in the delayed 2021 national population census.

▪ This revives a practice that had been discontinued after independence.

▪ Driven by growing political and social demands, this move is expected to have a significant impact on governance, affirmative action, and social justice initiatives.

Recent Developments

▪ The last major exercise involving caste data was the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), which aimed to assess socio-economic conditions along with caste identities.

▪ Recently, states like Bihar, Karnataka, and Telangana have conducted their own caste surveys, highlighting the continued relevance and demand for such data at both state and national levels.

2.3 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Election Commission Unveiled Three New Voter-Centric Reforms

▪ The ECI will now electronically obtain death data from the Registrar General of India.

▪ VIS design updated to highlight serial and part numbers in larger fonts.

▪ BLOs will now be issued standard photo ID cards under Section 13B(2) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Private Member's Bills (PMBs) in India

▪ Recently, the Vice President of India described Private Member's Bills (PMBs) as "visionary, future-oriented, and a goldmine for India's democracy." His remarks underline the declining relevance of PMBs in Parliament despite their potential to strengthen legislative initiative by non-government members.

What Are Private Member's Bills?

▪ PMBs are legislative proposals introduced by Members of Parliament (MPs) who are not ministers (i.e., not part of the government).

▪ They enable MPs to raise issues of public importance and suggest new laws or amendments independently.

- MPs must give at least one month's notice before introducing a PMB.

Enrolment Drop in Government Schools and PM-POSHAN

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) convened a discussion with States and UTs to review the performance, planning, and budget of the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM-POSHAN) scheme, revealing a decline in government school enrolment in 23 States.

What is the PM-POSHAN Scheme?

- About: PM-POSHAN is a centrally sponsored scheme for providing one hot cooked meal to students up to Class 8 Government and Government-aided schools.

- Launched for an initial five-year period (2021–22 to 2025–26), it replaced the earlier midday meal scheme (MDM).

- Launched in 1995, the MDM Scheme is the world's largest school meal programme, aimed at universalizing primary education.

- Cost Sharing: Its cost is shared by the Centre and States on a 60:40 basis, with the Centre supplying foodgrains.

2.4 GOVT – WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT SCHEMES

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, 97% of all claims registered under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) have been settled across India. a

- Goa, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu have achieved 100% claim settlement, while Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, and Sikkim have claim settlement rates ranging from 91% to 51%.

About PMFBY

- Launched in 2016, the PMFBY is a central government scheme designed to provide financial protection to farmers against crop losses caused by natural disasters, pests, or diseases.

- As of 2023–24, based on the number of enrolled farmers and the area covered, PMFBY has become the largest crop insurance scheme in the world.

Cashless Treatment Scheme for Road Accident Victims, 2025

- In a landmark move to ensure swift and hassle-free medical services for road accident victims across the country, the Government of India has launched a revolutionary cashless treatment scheme. Key Highlights

- Under this scheme, any person injured in a road accident involving a motor vehicle on any public road in India is eligible to receive

cashless medical treatment at designated hospitals.

- The maximum benefit under this scheme is capped at Rs.1.5 lakh, and is valid for up to seven days from the date of the accident.

- To ensure seamless implementation, the National Health Authority (NHA) will function as the coordinating agency.

- The scheme will be implemented in coordination with the police, hospitals, and respective state health departments.

- In each State and Union Territory, the State Road Safety Council will act as the nodal agency responsible for implementing the scheme within its jurisdiction.

3. GEOGRAPHY

3.1 POLICY ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

The first phase of the annual tiger census

- The first phase of the annual tiger census in the Gudalur forest division in the Nilgiris has begun.

- "Following the successful completion of the third phase of tiger estimation training using camera traps in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Gudalur Forest Division, the first phase of the annual tiger census will go on from April 28 to May 5.

- As part of the operation, 27 transects have been selected across six forest ranges.

Nilgiri tahr count

- The Forest Department said the census for the State animal — Nilgiri tahr — was successfully completed last month. It was carried out in the Mukurthi National Park.

- Researchers from the Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation and volunteers from the Worldwide Fund for Nature participated in the exercise

Tsarap Chu Conservation Reserve

- The Tsarap Chu Conservation Reserve was officially notified on May 7, 2025. This reserve is located in the **Spiti Valley** of Himachal Pradesh.

- It is now the largest conservation area in India.

- It enhances conservation efforts for species like the **snow leopard.**

India's First Inter-State Cheetah Corridor

- India's First Inter-State Cheetah Corridor Set to Span Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

- The project will connect Palpur Kuno National Park and Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh with the Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan.

Project Cheetah

- It is India's initiative to reintroduce the extinct Asiatic cheetah species in Indian wildlife habitats.

- Originally launched in 2022, the first group of cheetahs was translocated from Namibia and South Africa to Kuno National Park.

- The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) are the key implementing agencies.

India's lion population risen by 32%

- India's lion population, exclusively concentrated in Gujarat, has risen by 32% between 2020 and 2025, with 891 lions reported,

- according to a report from the Gujarat Forest Department The number of adult females – a proxy for future growth – rose by 27% to 330 individuals.

- the highest number of lions – 394 – have been observed in the Gir National Park and Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary

- In March, Prime Minister approved Project Lion, a Rs.2,900-crore project to improve lion habitat and develop new habitat within Gujarat.

- From 2015 to 2020, the territorial range of the lions extended to 30,000 sq. km, reflecting a 36.4% growth. By 2025, the area reached 35,000 sq. km, registering a 16.67% increase.

Survey records 397 wetland bird species in Tamil nadu

- A total of 397 bird species were recorded in the wetland bird survey, while 401 species were identified in the terrestrial bird survey this year, according to the synchronised bird survey report released by Forests Minister during the inaugural of International Biodiversity Day events on Thursday.

- The wetland survey revealed that 397 species are directly or indirectly associated with wetlands. Notably, 136 long-distance migratory species were observed, making up 34% of the total species recorded.

- Key bird species observed in wetlands include the Greylag Goose, Greater Flamingo, Eurasian Curlew, Pied Avocet, and Lesser Crested Tern. Surveys were conducted across 934 wetland sites, with all forest divisions instructed to cover approximately 20 locations per district.

- In terms of species richness, the districts of Coimbatore, Erode, and Dindigul recorded more than 200 species each.

1,093 places covered

- The terrestrial survey covered 1,093 locations across urban, rural, and protected areas, again aiming for around 20 spots per forest division.

- **Bird Census - First Phase**
  - Wetland areas: 934
  - Wetland bird species: 397
  - Total bird count: 5,52,349

- **Bird Census - Second Phase:**
  - Land areas: 1,093
  - Land bird species: 401
  - Total bird count: 2,32,519

- **Areas with Maximum Bird Counts:**
  - Thiruvarur: 70,356
  - Ariyalur: 59,569
  - Nagapattinam: 33,622
  - Sivaganga: 26,326
  - Chennai: 24,048

Ladakh - Worlds highest recorded density of snow leopards

- Recent studies reveal that Ladakh is home to the highest density of snow leopards in the world.

- Approximately 68 percent of India's snow leopard population resides in Ladakh, with Hemis National Park recording about 2.07 individuals per 100 km².

Jenu Kuruba Tribe

- Context : The Jenu Kuruba community had been evicted four decades ago in a bid to boost wildlife protection and tiger conservation in Nagarhole Tiger Reserve, Karnataka. Jenu

Kuruba families recently began their long-awaited re-occupation of their ancestral homes inside the Nagarhole National Park.

- This is the first time Indigenous people in India have asserted their rights in this way

- The Jenu Kuruba is recognized as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), primarily found in the Kodagu and Mysore districts of Karnataka.

Annual climate report

- The United Nations warned on Wednesday that there is a 70% chance that average warming from 2025 to 2029 would exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius international benchmark.

- The planet is therefore expected to remain at historic levels of warming after the two hottest years ever recorded in 2023 and 2024, according to an annual climate report published by the World Meteorological Organization, the UN's weather and climate agency.

- Every fraction of a degree of additional warming can intensify heatwaves, extreme precipitation, droughts, and the melting of ice caps, sea ice and glaciers

4. ECONOMICS

4.1 REPORTS AND INDICES

Enhancing MSMEs Competitiveness in India

- The NITI Aayog has recently released a report titled 'Enhancing MSMEs Competitiveness in India'. It was developed in collaboration with the Institute for Competitiveness

- The report identifies sector-specific challenges and opportunities.

- **Focus areas include:**
  - Textiles & Apparel
  - Chemical Products
  - Automotive
  - Food Processing

- **Improvement in formal credit access (2020–2024):**
  - Micro & Small Enterprises: 14% → 20%
  - Medium Enterprises: 4% → 9%
  - Despite this, only 19% of total MSME credit demand was met in FY21.

International Economic Report

- According to the International Monetary Fund's global economic report, India will overtake Japan to become the fourth largest economy in terms of economic growth this year.

- India's Gross Domestic Product (nominal GDP) is estimated to reach 4,187,017 billion dollars in 2025, that is, in the current 2025-26 financial year.

- It is expected that by 2028, India will surpass Germany to emerge as the third largest economy in terms of economic growth.

- In the list of top 10 countries with the largest economies, the United States and China have maintained the first two positions this year.

23rd Annual South Asia Press Freedom Report 2024-25.

- The report, titled **'Frontline Democracy: Media and Political Churn'**

- Norway led the list in 2025, as it did last year, followed by Estonia, Netherlands, Sweden and Finland.

- India's rank in the World Press Freedom Index, released by Reporters Without Borders, is 151st,

- The report reviews the state of press freedom in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives.

Human development index

- In the 2025 **Human Development Report, 'A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI'**

- India ranks 130 out of 193 countries, from 133 in 2022.

- It registered an HDI value increase to 0.685 in 2023 from 0.676 in 2022.

- India's life expectancy, at 72 years in 2023, is the highest level it has reached since the inception of the index in 1990 (58.6 years).

NITI Aayog Report on MSMEs in India

- NITI Aayog, in collaboration with the Institute for Competitiveness, has released a comprehensive report identifying key challenges hindering the growth of MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) in India. The report proposes strategic reforms to enhance their competitiveness and economic impact.

Key Highlights from the Report

- Over 90% of MSMEs in India operate in the informal sector.
- Despite efforts like the Udyam Portal (which has 95 lakh registrations compared to the estimated 6.34 crore total MSMEs), high compliance costs and regulatory burdens discourage formalization and restrict access to credit, schemes, and global value chains.

UN Forecasts India's Economic Growth at 6.3% in 2025

- The United Nations has predicted that India's economic growth will be 6.3% in 2025.
- In a report on the economic conditions of world countries released last January, the UN had initially projected India's economic growth at 6.6%, but this has now been reduced to 6.3%.
- Similarly, the UN has stated that India's economic growth in 2026 will be 6.4%.
- Inflation in India, which was at 49% in 2024, is expected to decrease to 4.3% in 2025.

"30 Crore People at Risk of Starvation"

- Geneva, May 16: According to a study report jointly released by 16 voluntary organizations including the UN Food Security Agency, 295.3 crore people worldwide are facing the threat of starvation.
- The report, titled International Food Shortage Report, states:
- Conflicts in 19 countries including Myanmar, Nigeria, and Congo, along with drought in regions like Ethiopia and Afghanistan, have caused food shortages.
- There is a risk of severe nutritional deficiency for 1.4 crore children in Sudan, Yemen, and Haiti.

World Social Report 2025

- The United Nations released the World Social Report 2025, highlighting the urgent need for a new global policy consensus focused on equity, economic security, and solidarity amid rising insecurity, inequality, and declining trust worldwide.
- This edition emphasizes the growing disparities in income, employment, and institutional trust, proposing strategies to realign global efforts toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 60% of the global population experiences economic insecurity, with over 690 million people still in extreme poverty.

Global Wind Report 2025

- This new assessment was released by the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC).
- Status of Wind Energy in India
  - In FY 2024–25, India added 4.15 GW of wind power capacity, up from 3.25 GW in FY 2023–24.
  - **Global Standing**: India ranks 4th globally in terms of total installed wind power capacity, trailing only behind China, the United States, and Germany.

- **State-wise Distribution**: As of 2025, the top wind energy-producing states in India are Gujarat, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.
- **Offshore Wind Energy Potential:** The National Institute of Wind Energy estimates that Gujarat has 36 GW and Tamil Nadu about 35 GW of offshore wind energy potential.

First Artificial Intelligence (AI) Special Economic Zone (SEZ)

- India is set to establish its first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Nava Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
- This landmark project aims to position India as a global technology hub.
- The SEZ will be developed by RackBank Datacenters Pvt. Ltd. with an investment of Rs.1,000 crore.
- It is expected to enhance AI research, development, and deployment across the country.
- The AI SEZ will cover six acres and feature a 1.5 lakh square foot data centre.
- This facility will include advanced servers and systems designed for AI technologies.
- The SEZ aims to support large-scale digital operations and house four high-density data centres with a combined capacity of 80 megawatts.
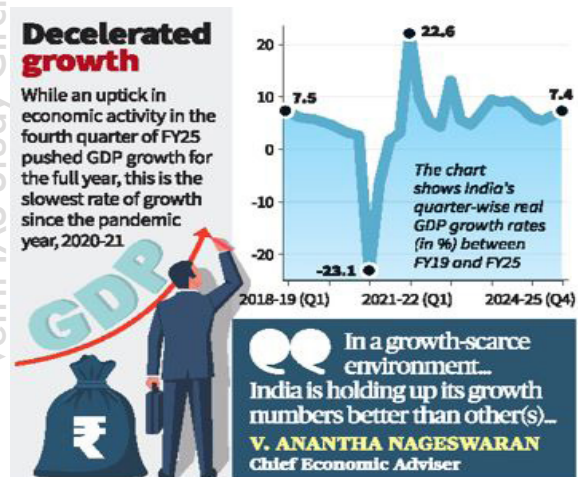
Growth in industrial activity

- Growth in industrial activity in the country slowed to an eight-month low of 2.7% in April 2025, dragged down by lower activity in several sectors according to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for April 2025 released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

- The manufacturing sector also saw a growth of 3.4%, a three-month high.
- The electricity sector saw growth slowing to 1.1% in April, also the slowest since August 2024.
- Similarly, the primary goods category contracted by 0.4% in April, an eight-month low
- The 'Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishing' sector grew 5.4% in Q4 of the year, up from 0.9% in Q4 of 2023-24.
- This helped propel the full year's growth for the sector to 4.6% in 2024-25, up from 2.7% in 2023-24.
- The manufacturing sector's growth stood at 4.8% in Q4 of FY25, the second fastest quarterly growth in the year, on a high base of 11.3% in Q4 of the previous year.

GDP growth in Q4 of 2024-25

- As per data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, real GDP growth in Q4 of 2024-25 accelerated to 7.4%, the fastest quarterly growth in the year.
- It was still slower than 8.4% growth seen in Q4 of the previous financial year.
- Quarterly GDP growth in Q3 stood at 6.4%.

Decelerated growth

While an uptick in economic activity in the fourth quarter of FY25 pushed GDP growth for the full year, this is the slowest rate of growth since the pandemic year, 2020-21

The chart shows India's quarter-wise real GDP growth rates (in %) between FY19 and FY25

22.6   7.5   7.4   -23.1

2018-19 (Q1)   2021-22 (Q1)   2024-25 (Q4)

In a growth-scarce environment... India is holding up its growth numbers better than other(s)...

V. ANANTHA NAGESWARAN Chief Economic Adviser

4.2 MONEY & BANKING

New Development Bank (NDB)

▪ Algeria has formally joined the New Development Bank (NDB)—an institution established by the BRICS nations—on May 19, 2025.

About the NDB

▪ Established in 2015 by BRICS nations: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa.

▪ Headquarters: Shanghai, China.

▪ Current President: Dilma Rousseff (Brazil).

RBI Launches 3 Key Surveys for Monetary Policy Input

▪ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched three important consumer surveys aimed at gathering public perception on inflation, employment, income, and overall economic confidence.

- The Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH)

- The Urban Consumer Confidence Survey (UCCS)

- The Rural Consumer Confidence Survey (RCCS)

5. SCIENCE

5.1 LATEST INVENTIONS ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ICAR developed two genome-edited rice varieties

▪ The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has successfully developed two genome-edited rice varieties,

▪ The ICAR said the development of such seeds was the "first-ever such achievement" in the country using cutting-edge technology.

▪ The first variety, named as DRR Dhan 100 Kamala, was developed from a popular high-yielding green rice Samba Mahsuri

▪ The second variety is from Maharashtra Technology University 1010 (MTU1010), which is also widely used by farmers across the country.

▪ The new variety developed from Samba Mahsuri can be harvested 15-20 days ahead of its original. The yield is almost 25% more. Each panicle of the paddy will give 450 to 500 more grains in this variety than the original crop.

▪ This is climate-friendly as this variety uses water and minerals judiciously. This is tolerant to increase in temperature too

▪ Named as Pusa DST Rice 1, the variety developed from MTU1010 is a 'salinity tension tolerant' crop.

▪ When cultivated under areas that have national average of salinity, the new variety produced 9.66% additional yield than MTU1010. Similarly, in alkaline conditions, the new variety gave 14.66% more yield and under 'salinity tension' conditions, the yield was 30.36% higher.

High-Altitude Pseudo Satellite (HAPS) Platform

▪ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the first flight trial of the High-Altitude Pseudo Satellite (HAPS) platform in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh.

▪ The HAPS platform was developed by DRDO's Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) based in Agra.

▪ It is designed to provide valuable data through internal sensors for the creation of high-reliability simulation models for future high-altitude airship platforms.

▪ This innovation will significantly enhance India's earth observation, surveillance, and intelligence capabilities, positioning India among the few nations globally with such indigenous technologies.

Genetically Edited Rice Varieties

- India has released its first genetically edited rice varieties—DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) and Pusa DST Rice 1—aimed at improving yield, climate resilience, and nutrient-use efficiency without introducing any foreign DNA.

- These varieties have been developed by ICAR using advanced CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing technology.

- Since no foreign DNA is introduced, these varieties are comparable to traditionally cultivated crops.

DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala)

- This variety is based on the popular Samba Mahsuri rice and was edited using Site-Directed Nuclease 1 (SDN1) technology targeting the Cytokinin Oxidase 2 (CKX2) gene (also known as Gn1a) to enhance grain number.

- **Benefits:**

  - Early maturity (harvested 15–20 days earlier)

  - Drought tolerance, and

  - Higher nitrogen-use efficiency.

Pusa DST Rice 1

- Based on the Improved Samba Mahsuri (Maruteru 1010) variety, this rice enhances tolerance to drought and salinity.

- **Benefits:**

  - 30.4% higher yield under coastal salinity,

  - 14.66% higher yield in sodic soils, and

  - 9.67% higher yield in inland saline conditions.

5.2 SPACE

Shiv Shakti Point

- Scientists from the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) have identified the Shiv Shakti point as a valuable site for studying primitive mantle samples on the Moon.

- This site is where India's Chandrayaan-3 mission successfully landed on August 23, 2023.

- The findings suggest that this location may provide vital information about the Moon's early geological history.

- The Shiv Shakti point is situated in the southern high-latitude highlands of the Moon's nearside. It is noteworthy for being the first lunar landing site facilitated by India.

Satellite Bus as a Service (SBaaS) initiative by IN-SPACe

- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) has introduced a new initiative named Satellite Bus as a Service (SBaaS).

- This initiative aims to encourage private companies in India to design and develop satellite-bus platforms.

- The goal is to reduce import dependence and encourage innovation within the Indian space

sector. A satellite bus is the modular structure that forms the core of a satellite. It supports essential systems required for the satellite's operation.

About IN-SPACe

- IN-SPACe functions as an autonomous agency within the Department of Space.

- Established in June 2020, it promotes private sector participation in space activities.

- The agency is responsible for authorising and supervising various space projects, including satellite and launch vehicle development.

EOS-09 (Earth Observation Satellite-09)

- EOS-09 is an Earth Observation Satellite developed to enhance India's surveillance and imaging capabilities, especially in all-weather and daynight conditions.

Features of EOS-09 :

- Equipped with a C-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR).

- SAR technology allows the satellite to capture high-resolution images of the Earth's surface regardless of weather conditions (clouds, rain) or time of day (day or night).

- Key Applications of EOS-09: Disaster monitoring, Flood mapping, Agricultural assessment, Border surveillance, Urban planning.

PSLV C-61

- Sriharikota The PSLV C-61 rocket carrying an Earth observation satellite is scheduled to be launched from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, May 18

- ISRO has been developing and deploying various satellites for Earth observation and remote sensing applications, including Cartosat, Scatsat, RISAT, and others.

- In this series, ISRO has designed the advanced ES-09 (RISAT-B) satellite for Earth observation activities. This satellite is scheduled to be launched on Sunday (May 18) at 5:59 AM from the launch pad at Sriharikota using the PSLV C-1 rocket.

- This technology can be used for military surveillance operations necessary for defense. Additionally, this technology will be useful for disaster management, agriculture, and forest conservation.

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) successfully launched its 100th satellite from Sriharikota last January.

5.3 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

A new sub-variant of Covid-19

- A new sub-variant of Covid-19, named NB.1.8.1, was identified in India. This variant is a descendant of the Omicron lineage JN.1 and has raised concerns due to its potential transmissibility.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) classified it as a 'Variant Under Monitoring' (VUM),

- NB.1.8.1 originated from the recombinant ancestor XDV.1.5.1. Its earliest samples date back to January 22, 2025.
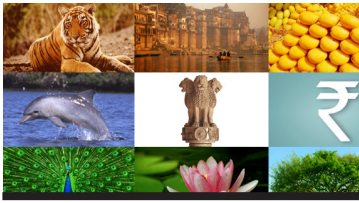
Vizhinjam International Seaport

▪ Leveraging cutting-edge technology, the Vizhinjam port is expected to be a game-changer in South Asia's maritime trade.

▪ Armed with an AI-driven control room and Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMS) developed by IIT-M and Maritime Technology Pvt Ltd,

▪ The port could track ships approaching the port using radar and sensors, providing real-time location and movement updates to nearby vessels and optimising port traffic flow and berthing assignments.

▪ The port is also expected to reduce the dependence of the country on other international ports. Around 75% of the country's transshipment cargo is being handled at international ports, resulting in a loss of up to $200-220 million of potential revenue each year, rendering the Indian industries vulnerable to an increase in costs, potential inefficiencies and congestion issues, and creating long-term risks for India's trade competitiveness.

Protect vulnerable people from summer heat: NHRC to States

▪ Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Thursday asked 11 States to take immediate pre-emptive measures to protect vulnerable people, especially those from poorer communities.

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The National Security Advisory Board, which provides recommendations to the National Security Council Secretariat led by the Prime Minister, has been restructured.

▪ As there are reports suggesting a possibility of a major military operation by India in response to the Pahalgam attack, the central government's restructuring of the National Security Advisory Board has gained significance.

▪ Accordingly, former chief of the Indian Intelligence Agency (RAW), Alok Joshi, has been appointed as the new chairman of the board.

'SWAYAM PLUS'

▪ The Ministry of Education has launched the 'SWAYAM PLUS' platform to provide courses developed in collaboration with industry.

▪ IIT Madras operates the 'SWAYAM PLUS' platform. It aims to enhance employment opportunities for college students and continuing learners.

ECINET

▪ The Election Commission on Sunday announced that it was developing a user-friendly digital interface for voters and other stakeholders such as election officials, political parties, and the civil society.

▪ The new one-stop platform, ECINET, will integrate and reorient over 40 of the EC's existing mobile and Web applications. It will subsume existing apps, such as the Voter Helpline app, Voter Turnout app, cVIGIL, Suvidha 2.0, ESMS, Saksham and the KYC app, which together had clocked over 5.5 crore downloads.

'Simple user experience'

▪ The ECINET will have an aesthetic user interface and a simplified user experience by providing a singular platform for all election-related activities, the EC said.

▪ It is being developed after an elaborate consultative exercise involving 36 Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all the States and Union Territories, 767 District Election Officers (DEOs) and 4,123 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) of their States and UTs

▪ The new digital interface will enable users to access relevant electoral data on their desktops and smartphones.

▪ The platform was proposed by the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar during a recent conference of CEOs, EC sources said.

ECINET APP

▪ The Election Commission of India (ECI) is launching a new single-point app called ECINET for all stakeholders involved in electoral processes.

▪ This app will consolidate over 40 existing mobile and web applications into one platform, simplifying the experience for users.

▪ The data provided through ECINET will be strictly aligned within the legal framework established by the Representation of People Act 1950, 1951, Registration of Electoral Rules, 1960 Conduct of Election Rules, 1961

Operation Sindoor

▪ On May 7, 2025, the Indian Armed Forces launched Operation Sindoor, a series of precision air and missile strikes targeting Nine Terror Linked Sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir

▪ This operation was a direct response to the Pahalgam Terror Attack on April 22

Total Fertility Rate remains constant at 2.0 in 2021

▪ According to the Sample Registration System (SRS) report for 2021 released by the Registrar General of India (RGI) The Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the average number of children per woman, in the country has remained constant at 2.0

Elderly population

▪ Kerala recorded the highest percentage of population in the age group of 60 and above with 14.4% of the total population falling under this category. Tamil Nadu 12.9% and Himachal Pradesh 12.3%

MMR, U5R, NMR

▪ Three States in India Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu have attained the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets in MMR, U5MR, NMR.

▪ The targets in Maternal Mortality Rate or MMR are <=70 by 2030); Under-Five Mortality Rate or U5MR are <=25 by 2030); and Neonatal Mortality Rate or NMR are <=12 by 2030).

- Eight States have already attained the MMR SDG target, including Kerala (20), Maharashtra (38), Telangana (45), Andhra Pradesh (46), Tamil Nadu (49), Jharkhand (51), Gujarat (53), and Karnataka (63).

- India's MMR had shown a marked reduction, declining by 37 points from 130 per lakh live births in 2014-16 to 93 in 2019-21.

- India's Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) declined from 39 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 27 per 1,000 live births in 2021.

National Super Computing Mission

- The National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), a flagship initiative launched by the Indian government, has been extended to December 2025.

- As of March 2025, the NSM has deployed 34 supercomputers with a combined capacity of 35 Petaflops across various institutions and research organizations

- Jointly steered by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), with implementation by C-DAC, Pune, and IISc, Bengaluru

- The mission focuses on developing indigenous hardware and software, including "Rudra" HPC servers and the "Trinetra" high-speed network.

Global Space Exploration Conference (GLEX) 2025

- India will host the 12th Global Space Exploration Conference (GLEX 2025) from May 7 to 9, 2025, in New Delhi.

- The theme of GLEX 2025 is: "Expanding Frontiers: A Space Exploration Renaissance."

- This conference marks a milestone in India's expanding global leadership in space exploration.

- It also highlights India's transformation from a regional space power to a significant international space force.

Organizers of GLEX 2025

- International Astronautical Federation (IAF) – The world's leading space advocacy organization.

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) – The primary host.

- Astronautical Society of India (ASI) – Co-organizer

Kozhikode Recognized as an Age-Friendly City by WHO

- Kozhikode has received global recognition by becoming a member of the World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC).

- In 2022, Kozhikode was also included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network under the literature category, making it the first Indian city to be designated as a "City of Literature" by UNESCO.

What is an Age-Friendly City?

- An age-friendly city ensures that urban environments, infrastructure, and services are accessible and inclusive for elderly citizens.

- It aims to address challenges such as accessible public spaces (parks, transportation, buildings) , affordable and appropriate housing, access to healthcare, and social support, age-appropriate

communication tools, Opportunities for participation in community activities.

Birth Rate in Delhi, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu Significantly Lower Than National Average

- The annual birth rates in Tamil Nadu, Delhi, and Kerala have declined to less than half the national average, according to the 2021 Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report, released by the Registrar General of India.

- The SRS is the largest demographic survey in India, providing annual estimates of fertility and mortality indicators, including birth rates and death rates.

Major Findings from the Report:

- India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) remained constant at 2.0 in both 2020 and 2021.The replacement level fertility rate is 2.1, considered ideal for a stable population.

- The national average birth rate in 2021 was 19.3, and it has been declining at an average annual rate of 1.12% from 2016 to 2021.

- States with Fastest Decline in Birth Rate: Tamil Nadu - Decline of 2.35% per year, Delhi -Decline of 2.23% per year, Kerala - Decline of 2.05% per year.

50th Statehood Day of Sikkim

- On May 16, 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of India under the leadership of its first Chief Minister, Lhendup Dorjee Khangsarpa.

- Prior to this, Sikkim was known as the Kingdom of Sikkim, ruled by the Chogyal dynasty.

- Sikkim is located in the north-eastern part of India, in the eastern Himalayas.

- It shares its borders with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China to the north and northeast, Bhutan to the southeast, the Indian state of West Bengal to the south, and Nepal to the west.

- India's highest peak, Kanchenjunga, is situated in Sikkim.

Judicial services examination

- The Supreme Court has reinstated a pivotal eligibility criterion for aspirants of the judicial services examination.

- The candidates must possess a minimum of three years of legal practice to qualify for entry-level judicial positions, such as Civil Judge (Junior Division) posts.

- This decision overturns the 2002 ruling that allowed fresh law graduates to directly enter the judiciary without prior courtroom experience.

Revamped Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) portal

- The Government of India has launched a revamped Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) portal. This initiative aims to improve immigration facilities for OCI cardholders.

- The OCI scheme was established in 2005 through an amendment to the Citizenship Act, 1955.

- It allows Persons of Indian Origin who were citizens of India post-26 January 1950 to register as Overseas Citizens.

▪ However, individuals with Pakistani or Bangladeshi ancestry are excluded from eligibility.

World Health Organization's 78th Assembly

▪ In Geneva, Switzerland, Prime Minister Modi addressed the ongoing 78th assembly of the World Health Organization via video conference.

▪ The theme of this year's World Health Organization assembly is **"One World for Health."**

▪ Ayushman Bharat, the world's largest health insurance scheme, covers 580 million people and provides them with free treatment. Recently, this program was expanded to include all those over 70 years of age.

▪ Yoga Day Theme The 11th International Yoga Day will be celebrated on June 21. This year, the theme "One Earth. Yoga for One Health" will be followed.

PLI Scheme for Pharmaceuticals

▪ The Government of India has renewed its Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to boost domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing.

▪ This initiative focuses on increasing the production of critical pharmaceutical products.

▪ The Department of Pharmaceuticals has invited applications from manufacturers for 11 essential products.

Swachh Survekshan

▪ Swachh Survekshan, an annual cleanliness survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). The survey evaluates urban local bodies (ULBs) on multiple parameters

▪ The top 10 cleanest cities for 2025, along with their states, are:

- Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- Surat, Gujarat
- Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
- Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh
- Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- Rajkot, Gujarat
- Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- Pune, Maharashtra

World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES), 2025

▪ At the inaugural WAVES Summit 2025 in Mumbai, the Prime Minister highlighted India's creative economy as a powerful driver of future GDP growth, innovation, and inclusive development.

▪ The first edition of the World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025 is being hosted by India at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai from May 1 to 4, 2025.

What is Creative Economy?

▪ Definition: The creative economy (orange economy) is an evolving concept based on the contribution and potential of creative assets to economic growth and development.

▪ It includes Media & Entertainment, Advertising and Marketing, Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR), etc.

▪ The United Nations declared 2021 the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, emphasizing its global importance.

India Becomes World's 4th Largest Economy

▪ India has overtaken Japan to become the world's 4th largest economy, with its GDP surpassing $4 trillion, as announced by NITI Aayog in early 2025.

▪ This is a significant milestone in India's economic journey, positioning it behind only the United States, China, and Germany.

▪ The IMF's World Economic Outlook for April 2025 estimates India's growth rate at 6.2% for 2025, down slightly from previous forecasts but still robust.

▪ The nation is set to surpass Germany to become the third-largest economy by 2030.

▪ Global economic growth is projected at just 2.8%, with significant challenges posed by trade tensions and policy uncertainty.

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Operation Kagar

▪ Operation Kagar, launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

▪ This operation, aimed at eliminating Maoist insurgents in Chhattisgarh, has sparked criticism for its heavy-handed approach, especially with allegations of the killing of tribals and youths.

▪ The Union Home Minister announced that the central government is working towards a Naxal-free India, setting a target to eliminate Naxalism by 31st March 2026, ensuring that no citizen has to lose their life because of it.

India Becomes the Third-Largest Vehicle Manufacturer in the World

▪ India's automotive sector has made remarkable progress in recent years.

▪ The country has firmly positioned itself as the third-largest vehicle manufacturer globally, trailing only behind China and the United States.

▪ The automobile sector contributes 7.1% to India's GDP and accounts for approximately 4.7% of the country's total exports.

Indore Becomes India's First Beggar-Free City

▪ Indore, Madhya Pradesh, has been declared India's first beggar-free city under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's Bhiksha Vriti Mukta Bharat (begging-free India) initiative.

▪ The achievement, also recognised by the World Bank, follows sustained rehabilitation efforts

under the "Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in the Act of Begging", a sub-scheme of SMILE scheme.

About SMILE Scheme: Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in Begging

▪ Launched in 2022, the SMILE scheme includes 2 sub-schemes: Rehabilitation of Persons Engaged in Begging and Empowerment of Transgender Persons.

▪ The goal is to rehabilitate at least 8,000 individuals from FY 2023–24 to FY 2025–26.

Bharat Forecast System

▪ The Bharat Forecast System improves weather prediction resolution from 12 km to 6 km.

▪ This enhancement allows for precise and location-specific forecasts for every village in India.

▪ Developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) in Pune.

India's coastline length.

▪ In December 2024, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs announced revision of India's coastline length.

▪ The new measurement reveals an increase from 7,516.6 km to 11,098.8 km. This change is not due to territorial expansion or geological shifts.

▪ Instead, it stems from advancements in measurement technology and an understanding of the coastline paradox.

▪ The original coastline length was recorded in the 1970s using maps at a resolution of 14,500,000.

▪ This coarse scale failed to capture the intricate features of India's coastline. Features like

estuaries, tidal creeks, and coastal ridges were overlooked.

- The last coastal state to join India was Goa in 1961, with Sikkim being landlocked.

Quantum Technology Research Centre (QTRC)

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) inaugurated the Quantum Technology Research Centre (QTRC) at Metcalfe House, Delhi, aiming to accelerate India's indigenous research in quantum technologies for strategic and defence applications

- the centre is equipped with cutting-edge infrastructure for developing quantum communication, sensing, and timekeeping technologies, placing India at the forefront of quantum innovation.

Key Objectives of QTRC

- To develop and test indigenous quantum technologies for national security.

- Enhance secure quantum communications through Quantum Key Distribution (QKD).

- Strengthen India's strategic edge in post-quantum cryptography and quantum sensing.

International Recognition for AYUSH Medicine

- An agreement has been signed between the World Health Organization and the Central Ministry of AYUSH as a major milestone in efforts to gain global recognition for traditional Indian AYUSH medical systems.

- This agreement was signed last Saturday to begin work on creating a dedicated traditional

medicine module under the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI).

- According to the AYUSH Ministry statement, with the inclusion of the traditional medicine module in the ICHI classification, treatments from medical branches including Siddha, Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, and Homeopathy will now be recognized as globally standardized treatment methods.

Life expectancy in India drops for the first time in five decades

- Expectation of life at birth for India has dropped for the first time in 50 years, registering a decrease of 0.2 years in a year.

- Life expectancy at birth has been estimated at 69.8 years between 2017 and 2021, compared to 2016-2020.

- For rural and urban areas, life expectancy has declined by 0.1 years and 0.3 years respectively for the same time period.

- Life expectation at birth was registered highest in Delhi at 73 years for males and Kerala for females at 77.9 years. The lowest was noted in Chhattisgarh with 62.8 years for males and 66.4 years for females.

- The report was published by Registrar General of India (RGI), under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

BrahMos Missile Production unit

- The BrahMos missile production unit was officially inaugurated at the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor, Lucknow.

- This facility is a key part of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor.

About BrahMos Missile

- It is a long range supersonic cruise missile system.

- It is developed by BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture between DRDO and NPOM of Russia.

EC's single-point dashboard

- The new integrated dashboard developed by the Election Commission is set to become operational during the current round of Assembly byelections and the upcoming Bihar Assembly election.

- The dashboard, named ECINET, is aimed at providing all services for stakeholders at a single point, instead of the over 40 apps or websites that exist now.

- Some of the other initiatives taken by the EC since then include direct integration of death registration data from the Registrar General of India to enable timely and verified removal of deceased electors from the rolls and training of grassroots polling officers to streamline poll management.

- The EC has also revised the maximum number of electors per polling station from 1,500 to 1,200. Additional polling booths will be established in densely populated areas such as gated communities and high-rise buildings.
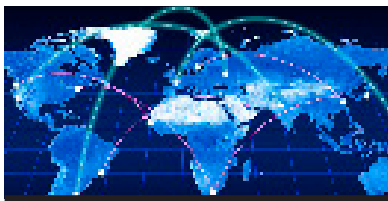
7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India's Commitment to UN Peacekeeping

▪ At the United Nations Peacekeeping (UNPK) Ministerial 2025 meeting in Berlin, 74 member states pledged to enhance the effectiveness and adaptability of peace operations amid evolving global challenges.

▪ India pledged a Quick Reaction Force (QRF), One male armed police (Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) or mixed armed police (CRPF), Women-led Police Unit, among others.

▪ As per UNPK data, India is currently the 4th largest troop-contributing nation with 5,375 personnel after Nepal, Rwanda and Bangladesh.

▪ **About UNPK:** The first UNPK mission, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), was established in May 1948 to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors with a small team of military observers.

AIM4NatuRe Initiative

▪ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Earth Day (22nd April) launched Accelerating Innovative Monitoring for Nature Restoration (AIM4NatuRe).

▪ It aims to improve monitoring and reporting of global ecosystem restoration efforts.

▪ It is part of FAO's AIM4Forests Programme, expanding the scope beyond forests to provide a holistic approach to nature restoration

Tamil Nadu Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched the Tamil Nadu Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme, which aims to promote the production of electronic components across the State.

- In an effort to attract companies that benefit from the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme of the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the Tamil Nadu government would offer incentives that match the subsidies announced under the Union government's scheme.

- The State government formulated the Tamil Nadu Semiconductor and Advanced Electronics Policy 2024, which paved the way for the State to emerge as a frontrunner in the production of electronic goods,

- **"Tamil Nadu becomes the first State in the country to launch a dedicated Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme."**

- Tamil Nadu recorded its highest-ever electronics exports of $14.65 billion in FY2025, accounting for 41.2% share of India's total electronics exports

- This would enable us in achieving our target of $100 Billion in electronic exports

9-Point Action Plan to Control Stray Dogs

- 500 doctors will be trained to perform sterilization surgeries for dogs, and 500 people in local bodies will be trained in catching dogs.

- Infrastructure will be improved in 100 government veterinary hospitals across Tamil Nadu to create facilities for animal birth control surgeries.

- 72 shelters will be established for abandoned, sick, injured, aged, and disabled dogs. The land for these shelters will be provided by local bodies.

- Additional surgery centers and dog shelters with veterinary facilities will be established in areas where animal birth control surgery facilities are not available.

- Additional funds will be allocated for dog population control and rabies vaccination programs at the district level through government and private hospital doctors.

- As per the notification of the Animal Welfare Board of India, a state-level Animal Birth Control Monitoring Committee has been recently ordered under the chairmanship of the Principal Secretary of Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department. Further, all local bodies have been instructed to form local monitoring committees to intensify dog birth control activities.

- The implementation of animal birth control surgeries by local bodies and NGOs will be monitored.

- In Greater Chennai Corporation, where 5 centers are already operational, work to establish 10 new dog birth control centers will be completed quickly. The Corporation has also been instructed to start 10 new veterinary hospitals.

▪ Chief Minister has announced that additional dog-catching vehicles will be immediately purchased to expedite birth control surgeries, considering the increasing number of dogs.

Tamil Week

▪ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister is set to take part in the valedictory event of 'Tamil Week', which is being observed to mark the birth anniversary of late Tamil poet Pavendhar Bharathidasan..

▪ During the event, the Chief Minister is also set to announce the nationalisation of the literary works of five Tamil scholars and hand over royalty to their families.

Literary works of late Tamil scholars nationalised

▪ The literary works of late Tamil scholars 'Kavikko' S. Abdul Rahman, Merwin and A. Palani, and poets Ku. Ma. Kothandam and Ilama Tamilnavan were nationalised.

▪ Chief Minister M.K. Stalin handed over the royalties at the valedictory of the 'Tamil Week', which was observed to celebrate the birth anniversary of Tamil poet 'Pavendhar' Bharathidasan.

"Five Free AI Courses in the 'SWAYAM PLUS' Education Program"

▪ Chennai IIT has introduced five online courses related to Artificial Intelligence (AI) through the **"SWAYAM PLUS"** education program. These online courses, ranging from 25 to 45 hours in duration, are being offered completely free of charge.

Suvadugal- Digital Repository

▪ The Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department has initiated steps for an ambitious project to create a digital repository titled 'Suvadugal' to document and preserve the traditional performing arts of Adi Dravidar and tribal communities across Tamil Nadu.

▪ The project aims to digitally archive thousands of indigenous art forms and oral traditions that are gradually fading with time.

▪ Tamil Nadu is home to a vibrant array of artistic expressions — from folk dances and musical traditions to the crafting of unique instruments and costumes — all of which are deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of these communities.

▪ Over 560 art forms are still performed by these communities across the State.

▪ Some notable examples include Singari Melam from Dindigul, Radha Kavadi from Nagapattinam, Kaniyan Koothu from Tirunelveli, Periya Melam from Tiruvannamalai, Perum Parai from Anthiyur and Malai Koothu from Dharmapuri.

▪ Bootha Kabala Aatam is a unique ritualistic performance seen only at specific temples in Dharmapuri district.

Nammazhvar Award for Excellence in Organic Farming

▪ Three farmers, one each from Coimbatore, Tiruppur, and Nagapattinam districts, received the Tamil Nadu government's Nammazhvar award for excellence in organic farming for this year.

▪ G. Sampathkumar from Coimbatore district secured the first prize, while T. Jagadeesh from Tiruppur district and V. Kalidoss from Nagapattinam district received the second and third prizes, respectively.

▪ The Nammazhvar award encourages and honours farmers who practice and promote

organic farming and handhold fellow organic farmers.

▪ The Tamil Nadu government has been promoting organic farming in the State, and awareness campaigns were launched as part of its efforts to ensure chemical-free foodgrain production.

▪ It may be recalled that the Tamil Nadu government had also launched the Chief Minister's Mannuyir Kaathu Mannuyir Kaappom scheme to promote organic farming, enhance soil fertility, and ensure pesticide residue-free food, and to encourage farmers to transition to sustainable agricultural practices.

Chola Era Inscription of Parantaka Cholan Found in Shiva Temple

▪ The Tamil Nadu government has reported that an inscription of Parantaka Cholan I has been discovered in a Shiva temple in Ootathur, Trichy district.

▪ A total of 13 new inscriptions were discovered in Ootathur, which was called Thiruvurathur in ancient inscriptions. Of these, 5 inscriptions are complete while the other 7 are fragmentary.

▪ These inscriptions contain partial historical information about the victories of Raja Raja I and Rajendra I. Of the 5 complete inscriptions, 4 belong to the Chola period. The other one is reported to be from the Pandya period.

Space Sector Policys

▪ Tamil Nadu has officially joined the league of Indian states with dedicated space sector policies by unveiling its Space Industrial Policy in April 2025.

▪ Aimed at boosting economic growth and job creation, the policy seeks to attract Rs.10,000 crore in investments over the next five years.

▪ The move places Tamil Nadu alongside Karnataka and Gujarat as states with targeted plans to promote the private space sector.

Tamil Nadu Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme

▪ Chief Minister launched the Tamil Nadu Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS).

▪ The scheme aims to promote the production of electronic components in the State.

▪ "Tami Nadu becomes the first State in India to launch a dedicated state Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme."

▪ Tamil Nadu recorded its highest-ever electronics exports of $14.65 billion in FY2025, accounting for 41.2% share of India's total electronics exports.

▪ This initiative will attract investments worth Rs.30,000 crore and generate employment opportunities for 60,000 individuals.

▪ Recalling that it formulated the Tamil Nadu Semiconductor and Advanced Electronics Policy 2024, which had paved the way for the State to emerge as a frontrunner in the production of electronic goods, the government said the Chief Minister launched this special scheme to strengthen the State's electronics manufacturing ecosystem.

Thozhi' working women's hostels

▪ Hostels for women will be constructed at a cost of Rs.176.93 crores in Chennai Taramani,

Cheppaakkam, Madurai, Coimbatore, Nagapattinam, Krishnagiri, Kanchipuram, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Theni, Sivaganga, Erode, Ranipet, and Karur.

Nutrition Program

- The Social Welfare Department has reported that 74% of children have recovered from severe malnutrition to normal condition.

- The "Ensure Nutrition" program was launched in 2022 by the Social Welfare and Women's Rights Department. The department announced this program to create a prosperous and healthy future for children under six years of age, keeping their health in consideration.

- In the first phase of the "Ensure Nutrition" program, the growth status of 37,79,407 children across Tamil Nadu was monitored.

- The second phase of the **"Ensure Nutrition"** program was launched in Ariyalur district in November last year

TN sets sail in shipbuilding with first-ever policy

- Tamils have a rich tradition in shipbuilding dating to the Sangam period, said finance minister Thangam Thennarasu as he unveiled the state's first 'maritime transport manufacturing policy 2025', which the govt believes will position Tamil Nadu as a global shipbuilding hub.

- This policy aims to promote investment and innovation in ship and boat design, ship hull fabrication and ship engine production as well as generate 30,000 jobs in districts such

as Cuddalore and Tuticorin, while developing the MSME sector.

- The policy is part of the state's efforts to capture a sizable share of the pie in India's shipbuilding market, which is projected to cross $8 billion by 2033.

Tamil Nadu government lists its achievements in the past four years

- An official release listed out the sectors in which Tamil Nadu has excelled, all of which together, have made the State achieve an economic growth of 9.69%.

- The export from Tamil Nadu which stood at 26.16 billion USD in 2020-21 has since been increased to 52.07 USD in 2024-25.

- By exporting electronic goods worth 14.65 billion USD, Tamil Nadu stood number one in the country surpassing Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Karnataka.

- As for employment opportunities created both in public and private sectors, the government said that the number of workers increased from 2.9 crore in 2020-21 to 3.87 crore by 2024-25.

- Programmes such as Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam, Illam Thedi Kalvi, Naan Mudhalvan and Kalaignar Kanavu Illam implemented by the government have propelled Tamil Nadu to record levels of development, making it the top State among all Indian States.

- Tamil Nadu's higher education enrolment rate stood at 51.3% in 2023-2024, while the national average was 26%.

▪ While the crime rate against women was 66.4 per lakh population nationally, it was 24 in Tamil Nadu — a significant reduction, ensuring the safety and well-being of women.

▪ As for global skill centres, Chennai, with a growth rate of 24.5% and 94,121 skill centres, has surpassed Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and other cities in the country.

Special Pulse Examination Center and Telemedicine Center

▪ Central AYUSH Minister Prataprao Jadhav inaugurated the newly established Special Pulse Examination Center and Telemedicine Center at the Tambaram National Siddha Research Center Hospital on Monday.

Municipal Bonds

▪ The event to list Chennai Corporation's urban financial bonds worth Rs. 200 crores on the National Stock Exchange took place in Chennai on Monday. The Chief Minister inaugurated this event by ringing the bell.

▪ This will reduce interest payments on loans and improve the corporation's financial position while raising funds for essential infrastructure works including rainwater drainage.

▪ What are Financial Bonds for?

▪ Why are Chennai Corporation's financial bonds being listed on the National Stock Exchange for the first time in Tamil Nadu?

▪ He mentioned that similar activities will be followed by Tirupur, Coimbatore, and Trichy corporations, which are also planning to list financial bonds.

In Tamil Nadu comprehensive nutritional, immunisation services pay off with steadily decreasing deaths among under-fives

▪ Tamil Nadu has been making steady progress in reducing deaths among children under the age of five over the past few years.

▪ Data from the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine showed that the under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) has been falling steadily in the past few years -- from 10.9 during 2022-2023, it dropped to 8.2 during 2024-2025.

Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu attain U.N. Sustainable Development Goals in MMR, U5MR, NMR

▪ According to the Sample Registration System Report 2021 released by the Registrar General of India, three States in India — Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu — have attained the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets in Maternal Mortality Rate or MMR (<=70 by 2030); Under-Five Mortality Rate or U5MR (<=25 by 2030); and Mortality Rate or NMR (<=12 by 2030).

▪ According to the report, eight States have already attained the MMR SDG target, including Kerala (20), Maharashtra (38), Telangana (45), Andhra Pradesh (46), Tamil Nadu (49), Jharkhand (51), Gujarat (53), and Karnataka (63).

▪ Twelve States/Union Territories have already attained the U5MR SDG target — Kerala

(eight), Delhi (14), Tamil Nadu (14), Jammu & Kashmir (16), Maharashtra (16), West Bengal (20), Karnataka (21), Punjab (22), Telangana (22), Himachal Pradesh (23), Andhra Pradesh (24), and Gujarat (24).

▪ Six States/Union Territories have already attained the NMR SDG target — Kerala (four), Delhi (eight), Tamil Nadu (nine), Maharashtra (11), Jammu & Kashmir (12), and Himachal Pradesh (12).

▪ India has continued to see significant improvement in key maternal and child health indicators.

▪ India's Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) declined from 39 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 27 per 1,000 live births in 2021.

▪ The NMR declined from 26 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 19 per 1,000 live births in 2021.

▪ The U5MR declined from 45 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 31 per 1,000 live births in 2021.

▪ The Sex Ratio at Birth improved from 899 in 2014 to 913 in 2021.

▪ The Total Fertility Rate has remained consistent at 2.0 in 2021, a significant improvement from 2.3 in 2014.

▪ India is among the top performing countries with reduction in Child Mortality Rates.

▪ As per the [Sample Registration System] report, India achieved a 78% decline in the U5MR surpassing the global reduction of 61%, 70% decline in the NMR compared to 54% globally, and 71% decline in the IMR compared to 58% globally, over the past 33 years from 1990 to 2023.