

# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

**MAY 2026 - PART 2**



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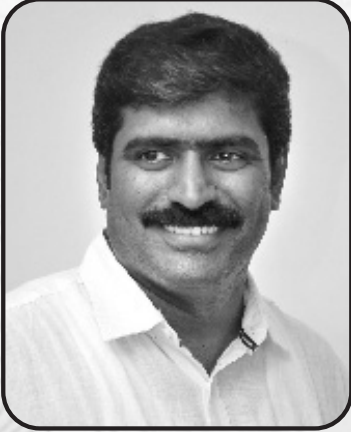
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# Preface



**M. SHUNMUGAM**

Director

Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

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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.

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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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# SCIENCE

## LATEST INVENTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T Cell) Therapy

- The Technology Development Board signed an agreement under an Indo-Singapore joint venture to develop a treatment using CAR-T cell therapy for multiple myeloma, a type of incurable blood cancer.

#### About CAR-T Cell Therapy

- CAR-T cell therapy is often referred to as a “living drug” because it utilizes the patient’s own living immune cells, specifically T-cells.
- This is a **type of immunotherapy in which T-cells are genetically modified and transformed into powerful cancer-fighting cells called CAR-T cells.**
- **T-cells are a type of white blood cell** that plays a vital role in destroying harmful or abnormal cells in the body.
- In this therapy, T-cells are first collected from the patient’s blood and are then modified in a laboratory by inserting a gene that creates a special artificial receptor called a Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR).
- After modification, these engineered CAR-T cells are infused back into the patient’s body to identify and attack cancer cells more effectively.
- CARs are specially designed proteins that help T-cells identify, bind to, and destroy specific proteins found on the surface of cancer cells.

### Creation of Carbon-Free Ferrocene Analogue by Indian Scientists

- **Context:** Researchers from **Indian Institute of Technology Madras and Indian Institute of**

Science have created the first stable carbon-free analogue of ferrocene.

#### About Ferrocene

- Ferrocene is a famous **organometallic compound** discovered over 70 years ago.
- Its discovery led to the development of organometallic chemistry with applications in: Materials science, Catalysis, Medicine

#### It contains:

- One iron atom
- Sandwiched between two flat carbon rings

#### Major Breakthrough

- Scientists successfully **replaced carbon rings with boron rings.**

#### The new compound contains:

- Boron-based rings
- A central osmium atom
- This makes it a fully inorganic “sandwich” compound.

#### Role of Boron and Osmium

- **Boron is chemically similar to carbon** and can form ring structures.

- Computer modelling identified osmium as the best metal to stabilise the boron sandwich structure.

#### Method Used

Researchers reacted:

- A polymeric osmium-bromine precursor
- With a borane-dimethyl sulphide reagent
- The mixture was heated to 100°C for eight hours.
- The final product was isolated as a colourless solid.

#### Significance of the Discovery

- The hydrogen bridges strengthen bonding with the metal.

#### The compound may help develop:

- High-temperature stable catalysts
- Advanced inorganic materials

- The discovery proves that sandwich structures are not limited to carbon-based chemistry.

### Battery energy storage system(BESS)

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) has issued draft regulations for **Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)** and invited comments and suggestions from stakeholders on or before May 30, 2026.
- The proposed regulations aim to promote power procurement and deployment of BESS across the state to strengthen grid stability.

#### About BESS

- Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) are advanced electrochemical devices that store electricity in chemical form and discharge it when required.
- **Working:** Batteries receive electricity from the power grid, straight from the power station, or from a renewable energy source like solar panels or other energy source, and subsequently store it as current to then release it when it is needed.
- **Need:** The National Electricity Plan 2023 estimates that 236 GWh BESS would be required by 2031-32.
- **Main components:**
  - **Batteries:** Store electrical energy (most commonly lithium-ion).
  - **Power Conversion System (PCS):** Converts DC electricity from batteries to AC for use on the grid, and vice versa.
  - **Battery Management System (BMS):** Monitors and controls battery performance, health, and safety.
  - **Energy Management System (EMS):** Coordinates the operation of all components for optimal performance.

#### Significance:

- This will not only enhance the integration of renewable energy into the electricity grid but also minimize wastage while optimizing the utilization of transmission networks.
- This will reduce the need for costly infrastructure upgrades.
- This scheme is designed to harness the potential of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, the scheme aims to provide clean, reliable, and affordable electricity to the citizens.

### Pumped-storage hydroelectricity (PSH)

- **Context:**The 1,100 MW Velimalai Pumped Storage Hydro Electric Project in Kanniyakumari district has been granted Terms of Reference (ToR) clearance by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The project, proposed by the Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited (TNGECL).

#### About Pumped-storage hydroelectricity (PSH)

- **Pumped Storage Hydropower (PSH), or 'Pumped Hydro Energy Storage' (PHES),** is a method used to store energy within power systems and to balance electricity demand.
- In this method, water is pumped from a lower reservoir to an upper reservoir in order to store energy as 'gravitational potential energy.'
- The electricity required for the water-pumping process is typically utilized during 'off-peak hours'—periods when electricity is inexpensive and demand is low.
- During times of peak electricity demand, the stored water is released to flow through turbines located below, thereby generating electricity.

- Although PSH systems consume more energy than they produce—due to energy losses incurred during the pumping process—they remain highly economically viable because the generated electricity can be sold at a higher price during peak demand periods.
- It can also be used to clean areas contaminated with toxic metals.

### Process

### PSH systems are primarily categorized into two types:

- **Open-loop systems:** Systems that are continuously connected to a natural water source, such as a river.
- **Closed-loop systems:** Standalone systems in which water circulates between two reservoirs without any significant natural inflow of water.
- PSH power plants can be established either by utilizing existing dams or by **constructing two reservoirs at different elevations (including storage facilities situated on mountain peaks)**.
- In India, approximately **120 potential sites suitable for PSH projects** have been identified; it is estimated that these sites could collectively generate approximately **120 Gigawatts (GW) of electricity**.
- Metals are usually trapped within solid mineral rocks.
- Certain **microbes help in oxidizing these metals**, making them soluble in water.
- This allows easier recovery of metals compared to extracting them directly from rocks.
- In some cases, microbes do not dissolve the target metal but instead break down surrounding minerals, making metal extraction easier from the residue.
- When microbes directly dissolve the metal, the process is called bioleaching.
- When microbes help concentrate or expose the metal in the leftover material, it is called biooxidation.

### Benefits of Biomining

### Bio-mining method

- **Context : 94 Acres of Land Reclaimed at Perungudi Dump Site** through Bio-mining Project.
- Work is currently underway—at a cost of Rs.350 crore—to reclaim 225 acres of land at the Perungudi dump site by removing approximately 29.28 lakh cubic meters of accumulated legacy waste using the eco-friendly bio-mining method.
- **Resource recovery:** Biomining helps in recycling waste materials by extracting valuable metals and other useful components, and the remaining material can sometimes be used as compost or fertilizer.
- **Eco-friendly approach:** It is a sustainable and environmentally safe method, and it also helps in cleaning contaminated land, making it suitable for other productive uses.

### Experimental Gene-Editing Therapy Could Put an End to Lifelong Cholesterol Medications

### About Biomining

- Biomining is a method of **extracting metals from ores and solid waste using living organisms such as bacteria, archaea, fungi, or plants**.
- **Context:** Scientists have demonstrated that a one-time gene therapy treatment can significantly reduce levels of “bad” cholesterol for at least one year.
- This could pave the way for a future where certain heart patients no longer require lifelong cholesterol-lowering medications.

### **A Breakthrough in Cholesterol Treatment**

- Scientists have developed a one-time gene therapy treatment.
- This treatment significantly reduces levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol for at least one year, potentially reducing the need for lifelong medication.

### **Verve-102 Shows Promising Results**

- This experimental therapy, known as **Verve-102**, has reduced LDL cholesterol levels by up to 62% in patients suffering from hereditary high cholesterol and early-onset heart disease.

### **Heart Disease Remains a Major Global Threat**

- Heart disease continues to be one of the leading causes of death worldwide.
- In India, nearly 28% of all deaths are attributed to heart disease.

### **Application of Advanced Base-Editing Technology**

- This therapy relies on “base editing” a highly precise and advanced gene-editing technology designed to make targeted DNA modifications within the body.

### **Significant Reduction in LDL Cholesterol**

- At the highest dosage tested, patients experienced an average reduction of 78 mg/dL in LDL cholesterol, representing a decline of nearly 62%.

### **‘CLEAR’ Technology for Advanced Protein Imaging in Cancer Research**

- **Context:** Scientists at JNCASR have developed the ‘CLEAR’ imaging platform for advanced protein mapping.

### **About Proteins**

- Proteins play a crucial role in biological processes and in the diagnosis of diseases.

- However, using conventional imaging methods, it has remained challenging to accurately map the spatial organization of numerous proteins within tissues and cells while preserving their structural integrity.

### **About ‘CLEAR’ Technology**

- Researchers at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) have developed a novel imaging platform that can significantly enhance the visualization and mapping of proteins within biological samples.
- This could aid in research and diagnostics related to cancer and neurological disorders.
- This technology, termed ‘**Cleavable, Light-Erasable Antibody Reporter**’ (CLEAR), overcomes a major challenge in spatial protein mapping, enabling scientists to visualize a large number of proteins within a single biological sample using just one fluorescent marker.
- According to the **Ministry of Science and Technology**, the ‘CLEAR’ platform will enable high-resolution and high-plex imaging across cells and tissues.
- After imaging a batch of proteins, the fluorescent signal can be erased using a gentle pulse of 365-nanometer LED light.
- This allows researchers to label and image a new batch of proteins within the very same cell.
- Unlike existing multimodal imaging techniques, CLEAR integrates high multimodal capability, speed, spatial resolution, and compatibility with delicate biological samples including living cells.

## SPACE

### IN-SPACE and Indian Space Partnerships

- **Context:** Nine Indian space technology companies, part of a delegation led by the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE)**, recently signed agreements for various partnerships and joint ventures at the 'Space Meetings **Veneto 2026**' event held in Venice, Italy.

#### About IN-SPACE

- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE) is an autonomous nodal agency operating under the **Department of Space**, serving as a 'single-window' platform for space-related activities.
- It was established as part of India's space sector reforms to encourage and support the **participation of private entities** in the space domain.
- IN-SPACE has been entrusted with the responsibilities of promoting, facilitating, authorizing, and supervising space activities undertaken by **Non-Governmental Entities (NGEs)**.
- IN-SPACE is headquartered in Ahmedabad.

#### Key Functions

- Supporting private entities in the development of launch vehicles and satellites, as well as in the provision of space-based services. Facilitating the sharing of infrastructure and facilities controlled by the Department of Space and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- Assisting in the creation of new space infrastructure and related facilities within the country.

#### Role of the Agency

- IN-SPACE acts as a bridge between ISRO and private sector participants to ensure the

optimal utilization of India's space resources and the expansion of space-related activities.

- It assesses the requirements of private industries, educational institutions, and research organizations, and works in collaboration with ISRO to fulfill those needs.

### Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)-Shukrayaan

- **Context:** During Prime Minister official visit to Sweden, the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** and the **Swedish National Space Agency** signed a **MoU formalizing Sweden's participation in India's upcoming Venus Orbiter Mission**.

#### About Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM)

- Officially called the Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM), Indian Space Research Organisation's **Shukrayaan** (which translates to "Venus Craft") will be **India's first exclusive mission to explore Venus**.
- The mission has been cleared by the Union Cabinet with an estimated cost of **₹1,236 crore**. The orbiter is expected to carry **19 scientific instruments for research and observation**.
- **Planned Launch: March 29, 2028, using LVM3**, ISRO's heavy-lift launch vehicle.

#### Main Goals of the Venus Orbiter Mission

- Examine the geological structure of Venus, including its surface and regions beneath it.
- Study the planet's atmosphere, its composition, and weather-related processes.
- Explore the ionosphere and understand its changing behaviour.
- Observe how Venus interacts with solar radiation and charged particles from the Sun.
- Compare the evolution of Venus with Earth to understand why the two planets developed so differently.

### Scientific Instruments on Board

- **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR):** Used for high-resolution mapping and imaging of Venus's surface.
- **Thermal Imaging Cameras:** Designed to record heat patterns and temperature changes.
- **Atmospheric Sensors and Instruments:** Intended to analyse atmospheric gases, circulation, and dynamics.

### Key Technical Features of the Mission

- **Aero-Braking Method :**For the first time, ISRO plans to use the aero-braking technique during a planetary mission. In this process, the spacecraft will pass through the upper layers of Venus's atmosphere repeatedly to gradually reduce its orbit. This method helps save a significant amount of fuel.
- **Orbital Plan:**The orbiter will first be placed in a highly elliptical orbit around Venus. Later, mission controllers will adjust it into a lower orbit to improve scientific observations and data collection.

### Chandrayaan-3 mission

- **Context:**India's Chandrayaan-3 lunar mission has been honoured with the prestigious 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), presented in Washington DC on May 21.

### About Chandrayaan-3 mission

- Chandrayaan-3 is India's third lunar mission and the country's second attempt at a soft landing on the Moon.
- It was designed mainly to demonstrate safe and soft landing, rover mobility on the lunar surface, and in-situ scientific experiments.
- The mission was **launched by ISRO on 14 July 2023** and achieved a successful **soft landing on**

**23 August 2023** near the Moon's south polar region, making **India the first country to soft-land near this region and the fourth country overall to achieve a soft landing on the Moon.**

▪ The **mission objectives of Chandrayaan-3** were

- To demonstrate safe and soft landing on the lunar surface
- To demonstrate rover roving on the Moon
- To conduct in-situ scientific experiments on the lunar surface

▪ **Components of Chandrayaan-3:** Propulsion Module, Lander Module named Vikram, Rover named Pragyan

▪ **Launch details :**Chandrayaan-3 was launched on **14 July 2023** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, using the LVM3 launch vehicle.

▪ **Landing achievement :**The Vikram lander successfully soft-landed on **23 August 2023.**

This achievement made India

• **The first country to land near the lunar south polar region.**

• **The fourth country to soft-land on the Moon** after the Soviet Union, the United States, and China

▪ **Landing site:**The landing took place near the lunar south polar region. This region is scientifically important because it contains permanently shadowed craters and areas where water ice may exist or survive for long durations.

▪ Payloads on the lander

- ChaSTE - Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment
- ILSA - Instrument for Lunar Seismic Activity

- RAMBHA-LP – Radio Anatomy of Moon Bound Hypersensitive Ionosphere and Atmosphere – Langmuir Probe
- Payloads on the rover
  - LIBS – Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy
  - APXS – Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer
- Scientific findings
  - **LIBS** confirmed the presence of sulphur on the lunar surface through direct in-situ measurement
  - **APXS** detected elements such as aluminium, sulphur, calcium, iron, chromium, titanium, manganese, silicon, and oxygen-related signatures in the soil and rocks
  - **ChaSTE** made the first in-situ observations of the temperature profile of the lunar topsoil near the south polar region.

### **About IN-SPACe**

- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre is an autonomous coordinating agency operating under the Department of Space (DoS).
- Its headquarters is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- It is headed by a Chairperson appointed by the Cabinet Committee on Security. It became operational in June 2022.

### **Key Functions**

- Providing single-window authorization for all space-related activities of Non-Government Entities (NGEs), including private companies, academic institutions, and foreign subsidiaries.
- Promoting, guiding, and mentoring the private sector through industry-friendly regulations.
- Establishing safety and technical regulations for launch vehicles, satellites, and ground stations.

### **Recent IN-SPACe Decisions**

- Granted authorization to Agnikul Cosmos for the Agnibaan SOrTeD launch (2024).
- Granted authorization to Skyroot Aerospace for the Vikram-S launch (2022).
- Released the Earth Observation Policy (2023), which governs data dissemination.
- Released Norms, Guidelines, and Procedures (NGP) for Indian space activities.

## **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe)**

- **Context:** With the support of IN-SPACe, the Department of Space (DoS) has approved the establishment of Common Technology Facilities (CTFs) in Gujarat (Koraj) and Tamil Nadu (Thoothukudi).

# GEOGRAPHY

## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

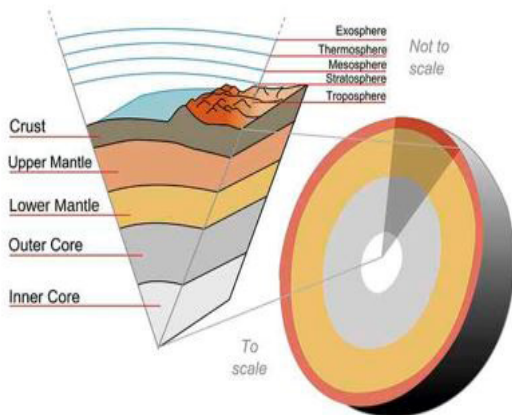
### Earth's Outer Core and Magnetic Field Shift

#### Earth's Outer Core

- The Earth's outer core is a massive liquid layer located about **2,800 km beneath the surface**.
- It is mainly composed of molten iron and nickel.

#### Role in Generating Magnetic Field

- **Continuous movement of liquid metals in the outer core** generates Earth's magnetic field.
- This **magnetic field protects the planet from harmful solar radiation and charged particles from the Sun**.



#### Study by Researchers

- Scientists from the University of Edinburgh and the British Geological Survey studied the movement of liquid iron in the outer core.

#### Discovery of Flow Reversal

- Researchers found that around 2010, molten iron beneath the equatorial Pacific Ocean changed direction: from a slow westward movement, to a faster eastward flow.

### Two Major Flow Patterns Identified

- Primary Pattern (95% of movement)
- Consisted of a steady westward flow.
- Explains the historical westward drift of Earth's magnetic field.
- Secondary Pattern
- Revealed the sudden directional reversal around 2010.
- The eastward surge began weakening around 2020.

### Link with Earth's Inner Core

- Researchers connected the 2010 reversal to seismic and geodetic changes occurring in Earth's solid inner core.

### Uneven Flow Between Hemispheres

- The model showed that the outer core flow is about 10% asymmetrical between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

### Importance of the Findings

- The study may help explain sudden magnetic disturbances or "geomagnetic jerks."
- It also suggests that deep-Earth liquid movements can change direction much faster than previously believed.

## SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

### Idu Mishmi Tribe

#### About the Tribe

- The Idu Mishmi Tribe is one of the **major tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh**.
- They mainly inhabit the Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley and Lohit districts of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The tribe resides largely in the **Mishmi Hills region near the Tibet border**.

#### Cultural Identity

- The community is recognised for its **unique hairstyles, traditional customs and artistic designs on their attire**.

- They are highly skilled in weaving and handicrafts.

### **Language**

- The tribe speaks **the Idu Mishmi language**.
- **UNESCO has classified this language as endangered.**

### **Connection with Nature**

- Traditionally, the Idu Mishmis follow **animistic beliefs and maintain a close relationship with forests, plants and wildlife**.
- Tigers hold a sacred position in their culture and mythology.
- According to their beliefs, humans and tigers were born from the same mother, making tigers their “elder brothers”.

### **Iyu-ena’ Belief System**

- The tribe follows a traditional system called **Iyu-ena’**.
- It consists of myths, taboos and customary restrictions related to nature and wildlife protection.
- Hunting several animals is restricted under this belief system.
- Killing tigers is completely forbidden.

### **Festivals**

- Important festivals of the tribe include Reh and Ke-Meh-Ha.
- They also prepare a traditional rice beer known as Ebu.

### **Social Structure**

- The Idu Mishmi society follows a patriarchal and patrilineal system.
- Property and inheritance are generally passed from father to son.

### **Koraga Tribe**

- The Koraga Tribe is recognised as one of India’s Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and is currently witnessing a decline in population.

- The community is mainly concentrated in the **Dakshin Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka and the Kasargod district of Kerala**.

### **Language**

- Most members of the tribe speak the Tulu language, though the community also possesses its own traditional language.

### **Clan System**

- The Koragas are organised into 17 exogamous clans or groups, locally referred to as “bali.”

### **Traditional Occupation**

- Traditionally, the tribe depends on agriculture and forest-based activities for livelihood.
- They collect bamboo, cane, and creepers from forests and use them for making baskets and other handicrafts.

- Their economy remains **closely connected with forest resources and nature**.

### **Culture and Traditions**

- The community performs folk songs, dances, and rituals to honour deities, ensure agricultural prosperity, and ward off diseases and epidemics.

- Important musical instruments used by the Koragas include: Dholu (drum), Voote (flute)

### **Social Structure**

- The Koraga society follows a **matrilineal tradition where lineage is traced through the mother’s side**.

- However, after marriage, couples generally follow patrilocal residence.

- Property rights are shared equally between sons and daughters.

### **Religious Beliefs**

- The tribe worships several Bhuta (spirit) deities through traditional rituals and performances.

- Bhuta Kola is an important ritualistic folk performance associated with the worship of spirits such as: **Panjurli, Kallurti, Korathi, Guliga**.

## ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### Ganges Soft-shell Turtle

- **Context:** India's first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle was released in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.
- **Assam** is considered one of the most important regions globally for freshwater turtle conservation.
- Out of the eight species of soft-shell turtles found in India, five occur in the Kaziranga landscape.

#### About the Ganges Soft-shell Turtle

- Scientific name: **Ganges soft-shell turtle**
- The species can be identified by the unique arrowhead-like markings present on the upper part of its head.

#### Habitat and Distribution

- The turtle mainly inhabits rivers and major canals that have muddy beds and flowing, cloudy water.

- It can also survive in ponds and lakes.
- In India, it occurs in large rivers, reservoirs, and lakes.

#### Ecological Importance

- The turtle acts as an important predator in river ecosystems.
- By feeding on dead and decomposing animals, it helps maintain the cleanliness and ecological balance of rivers.

#### Threats

- The species faces major threats from:
  - Illegal poaching
  - International wildlife trade
  - Loss and degradation of habitat

#### Conservation Status

- Protected under **Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**
- Listed as Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.
- Included in CITES Appendix I, which bans international commercial trade of the species.



# INDIAN POLITY

## Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)

- **Context** : The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed fines on coaching institutes for false advertisements and unfair trade practices.
- **The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a fine of ₹10 lakh against Motion Education Private Limited and ₹5 lakh against Career Line Coaching (CLC) in Sikar for violating consumer rights under the False Advertisements, Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and issued final orders.**

## Consumer Protection Act, 2019

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 is a modern and comprehensive law introduced to protect the interests of consumers in the rapidly growing digital and service-oriented economy, prevent unfair trade practices and ensure speedy redressal of consumer complaints.
- The Act replaced the erstwhile **Consumer Protection Act, 1986.**

## Objectives of the Act

- To protect consumers against misleading advertisements, unfair trade practices, and defective goods or services.
- To create effective enforcement mechanisms and ensure accountability and responsibility among manufacturers, sellers, service providers and advertisers.

## Key Features of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019

- **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA):** To protect the interests of consumers, the Act establishes the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA).

- The Authority has the power to investigate unfair trade practices, impose penalties, and order the withdrawal or cessation of misleading advertisements.

## False Advertisement - Definition under Section 2(28)

- Product Liability Rules
- The Act formally recognises six key consumer rights, including:
  - Right to protection, Right to information, Right to choose, Right to be heard, Right to seek redress, Right to consumer awareness
- Regulation of e-commerce
- Facilitation of consumer grievance redress

## Ordinance Increasing Supreme Court Judges Strength

- **Context:** President has promulgated an ordinance increasing the number of judges in the Supreme Court of India.
- The number of judges has been increased **from 33 to 37**, excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

## Judicial numbers

The top court currently has a backlog of over **93,000 cases**, which is threatening to reach six figures even as the court is going into summer recess, or 'partial working days', in June

The Framers of the Constitution had originally in Article 124(1) envisaged a Supreme Court consisting of the CJI and 'not more than seven judges' until 'Parliament by law prescribes a larger number'

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 as originally enacted, provided for the maximum number of judges (excluding the CJI) to be 10

Graph shows increase in strength of the Supreme Court (Maximum number of judges excluding the CJI)



## Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956

- When the 'Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act' was enacted in 1956, the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court of India was fixed as follows:
  - 10 judges, excluding the Chief Justice of India.

Increase in strength through the 1960 Amendment Act:

- From 10 to 13 judges (excluding the Chief Justice).
- Subsequently expanded to 17 judges.

1986 Amendment Act – Increase to 25 Judges

- In 1986, another Amendment Act significantly expanded the number of judges in the Court
  - The number of judges was increased from 17 to 25.

2009 Amendment Act – Increase to 30 Judges

- In 2009, Parliament once again amended the Act to address the increasing workload of the judiciary.

2019 Amendment Act – Current Strength of the Supreme Court

- The total number of judges, including the Chief Justice of India, was fixed at 34.

### **Total Judicial Strength**

- **With this amendment:**
  - Total sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court rises from 34 to 38 judges, including the CJI.

Constitutional Provision

- **The ordinance was issued under:**
  - **Article 123 of the Constitution**, which empowers the President to promulgate ordinances when Parliament is not in session.
- **The ordinance is titled:**
  - The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026.

### **Parliamentary Approval**

- The ordinance will be placed before both Houses of Parliament after reassembly.
- **It will cease to operate:**
  - If Parliament does not **approve it within six weeks of reassembly**, or
  - If both Houses **pass resolutions disapproving it**.

- The President also has **the power to withdraw the ordinance**.

### **Reason for Increasing Judges**

- The move aims to address the growing pendency of cases in the Supreme Court.
- **The backlog has crossed:**
  - 93,000 pending cases.
- Pendency increased further after the COVID-19 **pandemic due to greater use of e-filing systems**.

### **Constitutional Background**

- Originally, **Article 124(1)** of the Constitution provided for:
  - The Chief Justice of India and not more than seven judges.
- Parliament was empowered to increase the number through legislation.

### **Committee on Empowerment of Women**

- **Context:** Lok Sabha speaker has constituted the **Committee on Empowerment of Women**.
- **Daggubati Purandeswari** has been appointed as the **Chairperson** of the committee.

### **About the Committee on Empowerment of Women**

- The committee was first formed **on April 29, 1997** during the 11th Lok Sabha.
- The committee has a **total strength of 30 members:**
  - 20 members are nominated by the Speaker from the Lok Sabha.
  - 10 members are nominated by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha from among Rajya Sabha members.
- The duration of the committee is **not more than one year**.
- It is reconstituted annually.

### Working Principle

- Members of the committee are expected to function collectively beyond party differences for the **cause of women's empowerment and welfare**.

### Functions of the Committee

#### Review of NCW Reports

- Examines reports **submitted by the National Commission for Women**.
- Recommends measures that the Union Government should adopt to improve the condition and status of women.

#### Ensuring Equality and Dignity

- Studies the initiatives taken by the Central Government to guarantee equality, dignity, and better status for women in all spheres.

#### Education and Representation

- Evaluates steps taken to promote:
  - Comprehensive education for women
  - Adequate representation of women in legislatures, public services, and other sectors

#### Monitoring Welfare Schemes

- Reviews the implementation and effectiveness of welfare programmes meant for women.

#### Action Taken Reports

- Assesses the action taken by the Union Government and Union Territory administrations on recommendations made by the committee.

### Judges' Inquiry Committee

- Context:** The Judges' Inquiry Committee submitted its report regarding the complaints against Justice Yashwant Varma to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.
- This inquiry was conducted under the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**, which provides

the statutory framework for investigating allegations of misconduct against judges.

- The Committee was constituted by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha on August 12, 2025**, to examine these complaints.

- In accordance with statutory procedures, this report will be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

### On the Removal of Judges

- The "removal" of judges refers to the formal procedure for dismissing a Supreme Court or High Court judge from office on grounds of proven **misbehavior or incapacity**.

- It aims to ensure the accountability of the judiciary while simultaneously insulating it from political interference.

- The statutory framework for this process is provided under the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**, read in conjunction with **Articles 124(4) and 218 of the Constitution of India**.

- However, the term "**removal**" is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution.

- The grounds for removal include "**proven misbehavior**" and "**incapacity**."

- The procedure commences with a motion introduced in either House of Parliament**. This requires the support of **100 Members of Parliament (MPs) in the Lok Sabha or 50 MPs in the Rajya Sabha**, and the motion must be admitted by the Speaker or the Chairperson, respectively.

- Inquiry Committee:** Once the motion is admitted, a three-member Inquiry Committee is constituted under the provisions of the 1968 Act. It shall comprise a **Supreme Court Judge (or the Chief Justice), a High Court Chief Justice, and a distinguished legal scholar**.

- Parliamentary Approval and Presidential Order:** This committee shall submit its report to

the Parliament; if the charges are substantiated, a debate shall be held on the resolution, which must then be passed by a “**special majority**” in both Houses. Subsequently, the President shall issue the order for removal from office.

### Zonal Council

- **Context:** Home Minister Amit Shah to chair Central Zonal Council meeting in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh.
- The meeting will be attended by the Chief Ministers and senior officials of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

### About Zonal Councils

- **Mooted by PM Jawaharlal Nehru in 1956** to address linguistic hostilities and promote cooperation.
- **Legal Basis:** Established under **States Reorganisation Act, 1956 as statutory (extra-constitutional) advisory bodies.**
- **Objective:** Foster coordination among states and the Centre for economic, social and political stability.
- **Nature:** Only deliberative and advisory, recommendations are not binding.

### Composition

- **Chairman:** Union Home Minister (common chairman for all Zonal Councils).
- **Vice-Chairman:** Chief Ministers of states in each zone, serving by rotation for one year.
- **Members:**
  - Chief Ministers and two ministers from each state in the zone.
  - Administrators of Union Territories in the zone.
  - NITI Aayog representative, Chief Secretaries and Development Commissioners as advisors (without voting rights).

- Standing Committees: Chief Secretaries of member states discuss issues and prepare for main meetings.

### six zonal councils

- Under **state reorganisation act, 1956**
  - Set up The Northern Zonal Council; The Central Zonal Council; The Eastern Zonal Council; The Western Zonal Council; The Southern Zonal Council.
- Under **North Eastern Council Act, 1972.**
  - Set up North Eastern Council.

### The Supreme Court Collegium and the Judicial Appointment System

- **Context:** The Supreme Court Collegium (the committee for the selection of judges) has approved proposals for the **appointment of 19 judges to the Madras High Court.**

### About the Collegium

- The Supreme Court Collegium is a body empowered to make decisions regarding the selection, transfer, and **promotion of individuals eligible to be appointed as judges of the Supreme Court of India, as well as Chief Justices and judges of the various High Courts.**

### Composition of the Current Collegium

- The current Supreme Court Collegium consists of **five judges: the Chief Justice of India and the four most senior judges of the Supreme Court.**

### A System Not Explicitly Mentioned in the Constitution

- This system is **not specifically mentioned in the Constitution of India.** Rather, it evolved over time through a series of judgments delivered by the Supreme Court.

### The Appointment Process

- In this process, the Chief Justice of India (CJI), along with the **four most senior judges of the**

**Supreme Court**, jointly recommend names for judicial appointments and transfers.

### **The High Court Collegium**

- At the High Court level, the Chief Justice of the respective High Court, along with the two most senior judges of that court, function jointly as the Collegium.

### **The Role of the Government**

- The Government may raise queries or objections regarding the recommendations made by the Collegium. However, if the Collegium reiterates the same recommendations, it becomes mandatory for the Government to approve those appointments. Constitutional Articles
- Article 124** – Establishment and Constitution of the Supreme Court
- Article 124 (2)** – Every Judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal, after consultation with such of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose; and shall hold office until he attains the age of sixty-five years.
- Article 217** – Judges of the High Courts shall be appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Justice of India and the Governor of the respective State. Consultation shall also be held with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court.

### **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on One Nation, One Election (ONOE)**

- The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) observed that implementing the “One Nation, One Election” system could potentially save around ₹7 lakh crore and contribute nearly 1.6% growth to India’s GDP.

- The Committee consists of **39 members**, including 27 Members of Parliament from the Lok Sabha and 12 members from the Rajya Sabha, along with the Chairperson.

### **About One Nation, One Election (ONOE)**

- ONOE refers to the proposal of conducting elections for the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies simultaneously, so that both polls take place within the same election cycle.
- Scope:** The proposal does not include elections to Panchayats, municipalities, or by-elections within the framework of simultaneous elections.
- Common Voting Process:** Under this system, voters would cast votes for both Lok Sabha and State Assembly representatives on the same day, either in a single phase or through multiple coordinated phases.

### **Constitutional Framework and Suggested Amendments**

- Committee Recommendation:** The High-Level Committee (2023–24), headed by Ram Nath Kovind, recommended the introduction of ONOE to improve administrative efficiency and reduce the frequent conduct of elections.
- Constitutional Amendment Bill:** The proposal was officially introduced through the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, which seeks to synchronise the tenure of State Legislative Assemblies with that of the Lok Sabha.
- Article 82A:** The proposed Article 82A authorises the President to announce an “appointed date” for synchronised elections, even if it requires shortening the tenure of certain State Assemblies.

- **Residual Tenure System:** If a legislature is dissolved before completing its term, the newly elected House would function only for the remaining duration of the original term rather than receiving a full five-year tenure.
- **Powers of the Election Commission:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) would be empowered to postpone elections in States where conducting simultaneous polls is not feasible. This would require amendments to Articles 83, 172, and 327 of the Constitution.
- Article 12 includes: Union Government, State Governments, Legislatures, and local or other authorities under government control.

### **Central Information Commission (CIC)**

- The Central Information Commission (CIC) is an **independent apex authority** responsible for dealing with complaints and adjudicating appeals under the Right to Information Act.
- It examines matters related to **central government departments, ministries, public sector enterprises, financial institutions, and offices functioning under the Central Government and Union Territories.**

### **BCCI and RTI Act**

#### **BCCI's Stand on RTI**

- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) argues that it is a **private and autonomous body.**
- Therefore, it claims it does **not qualify as a "public authority"** under the Right to Information Act (RTI Act).
- The CIC was set up by the Central Government in **2005 under the RTI Act.** Therefore, it is a statutory body and not a constitutional body.
- The Commission consists of one Chief Information Commissioner along with a maximum of ten Information Commissioners.

#### **Section 2(h) of RTI Act**

- Section 2(h) defines a **public authority** as:
  - Any authority or institution established by: **the Constitution, Parliamentary law, State law, or government notification.**
- It also includes bodies that are: owned, controlled, or substantially financed by the government.
- NGOs receiving substantial government funding are also covered.
- The Chief Information Commissioner and the Information Commissioners are **appointed by the President of India** on the advice of a selection committee.
- This committee is headed by the Prime Minister and also includes the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.

#### **BCCI's Legal Argument**

- BCCI states that it is:
  - a **charitable society,**
  - Registered under the **Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975.**
- Hence, it argues that it is **independent of government control.**
- The Chief Information Commissioner and other Information Commissioners hold office for a period of **three years or until they attain the age of 65 years,** whichever occurs earlier. After completing their tenure, they cannot be reappointed.

#### **Article 12 of the Constitution**

- BCCI argues it does not fall under the definition of **"State"** in **Article 12** of the Constitution of India.
- The **President of India is empowered to remove** the Chief Information Commissioner or any Information Commissioner from office.

## Supreme Court and Revival of Sedition Proceedings

- **Context:** The Supreme Court of India allowed revival of proceedings under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code for accused persons who consent to continue their trials.

## Background: Freeze on Sedition Cases in 2022

- In May 2022, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court had suspended all pending sedition proceedings across the country.
- The court had raised concerns regarding the misuse of Section 124A, a colonial-era provision introduced in 1898.

## Colonial-Era Nature of Sedition Law

- Both the Union government and the Supreme Court acknowledged that Section 124A was: a colonial law, unsuitable for present-day India, and inconsistent with modern democratic values.

## Government's Stand

- The Union government referred to Prime Minister statement during "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" emphasizing the need to remove outdated colonial laws and practices.

## Concerns over Free Speech

- The Supreme Court observed that sedition law had a "chilling effect" on: freedom of speech, civil liberties, and democratic dissent.
- The provision carries punishment up to life imprisonment.

## Reference to I.R. Coelho Judgment

- The court's earlier observations aligned with the judgment in **I.R. Coelho versus State of Tamil Nadu (2007)**, which emphasized that laws must evolve with changing times and societal progress.

## May 21, 2026 Clarification

- The Supreme Court clarified that lower courts may continue deciding sedition cases on merits where accused persons seek speedy disposal and closure of proceedings.

## Constitutional Challenge Still Pending

- The constitutionality of Section 124A is still under challenge before the Supreme Court.
- Multiple petitions, including **S.G. Vombatkere versus Union of India**, argue that the law violates Fundamental Rights such as: freedom of speech and expression, personal liberty, right to life, and equality before law.

## Uniform Civil Code

- **Context:** The Union Home Minister has stated that the government has formulated special provisions to ensure that **all tribal communities are exempted from the purview of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**, thereby guaranteeing that their rights are fully protected.

## About the Uniform Civil Code

- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) paves the way for the creation of a **single, nationwide law applicable to all religious communities regarding personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption.**
- Currently, India's personal law framework is complex, with each religion adhering to its own specific laws.

## Personal Laws in India

- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, governs Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists.
- Muslim Personal Law governs Muslims.
- The Indian Succession Act, 1925, applies to Christians, Parsis, and Jews.
- The Special Marriage Act provides a framework for solemnizing marriages between individuals of different religious faiths and for

registering such marriages through a Marriage Officer.

### Key Features of the Uniform Civil Code

- Establishes a common set of laws governing civil matters that are common to all religions.
- Eliminates discriminatory practices within personal laws, particularly those concerning women's rights.
- Separates civil law from religion, ensuring that the laws remain secular in nature.
- Promotes social harmony by fostering a shared legal identity.
- Streamlines the legal complexities that arise from the existence of diverse personal laws. Legal Framework and Articles Governing the Uniform Civil Code:
- Article 44:** A Directive Principle of State Policy mandating that the State shall endeavor to secure a uniform civil code for all citizens.
- Article 14:** Ensures equality before the law and the equal protection of the laws.
- Article 25:** Safeguards freedom of religion, raising questions regarding the balancing of religious practices with legal uniformity.

### Committee on Petitions

- Context:** Recently, Rajya Sabha Member Raghav Chadha was appointed as the new Chairman of the Rajya Sabha's 'Committee on Petitions'.

### About Committee on Petitions

- The Committee on Petitions is one of the **oldest committees of the Parliament**.
- This committee originated from a resolution moved in the 'Council of States' on **September 15, 1921**, to constitute a 'Committee on Public Petitions' empowered to receive evidence.
- The committee acquired its current name, the 'Committee on Petitions', in the year 1933.

The Rajya Sabha Committee on Petitions was **first constituted in 1952 with a Chairman and four other members**; in 1964, its membership strength was increased to ten, a composition that has remained unchanged since then.

It is a 'Standing Committee' of the Rajya Sabha; the committee is constituted under Rule 147 of the **Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha**.

The members of this committee are nominated by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha; the Chairman of the committee is also appointed by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The 'quorum' for the committee is five; generally, the committee is reconstituted every year.

The committee examines petitions referred to it; it reports to the House regarding **specific grievances**; furthermore, it may recommend individual relief measures or broader reformative actions.

The committee is empowered to receive **evidence, call for documents, seek comments from Ministries or Departments, examine witnesses, and hear the views of petitioners**. Furthermore, it may recommend appropriate remedial measures to resolve grievances or to prevent their recurrence.

### Anti-Defection Law and Political Party Primacy

#### Constitutional Background

- The original Constitution (1950) provided **limited grounds for disqualification of MPs under Article 103**.
- Decisions on disqualification were made by the President based on the opinion of the Election Commission of India.

#### Introduction of the 10th Schedule

- The **10th Schedule was added through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985**.

- It aimed to prevent political defections and curb opportunistic party-switching by elected representatives.
- Under this law, disqualification cases are decided by the Speaker or Chairman of the House.

### **Original Exceptions under the Anti-Defection Law**

- Two exceptions were initially allowed:
  - Split (Paragraph 3)
  - Merger (Paragraph 4)

### **Removal of the “Split” Provision**

- Paragraph 3 recognised a split when one-third of legislators formed a separate faction.
- This provision was removed by the 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003.
- The removal followed recommendations of:
  - Dinesh Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms (1990)
  - 170th Law Commission Report (1999)

### **Significance of Removing Paragraph 3**

- Deletion of the “split” clause reduced the scope for legitimising internal party breakaways.
- It strengthened the authority and supremacy of the political party over the legislature party.
- Parliament signalled that party discipline and accountability are central to democracy.

### **Supreme Court’s Stand**

- In **Subhash Desai vs Principal Secretary, Governor of Maharashtra**, the Supreme Court reinforced the importance of the parent political party.
- The Constitution Bench stated that the legislature party cannot be separated from its political party.
- The Court emphasised that political parties continue to direct and influence their elected representatives even after elections.

### **Tamil Nadu Reservation Act, 1994**

- **Context:** As a case regarding the 69% reservation policy is scheduled to come up for hearing in the Supreme Court, the Chief Minister has issued directives to officials to expedite appropriate legal measures to safeguard the 69 percent reservation in education and employment within Tamil Nadu.
- The **76th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1994**, is a significant amendment in India concerning the policy of reservation.
- It was enacted by the Parliament in the 45th year of the Republic and **received the assent of the President on August 31, 1994.**
- The primary objective of this amendment was **to accord constitutional protection to a reservation law enacted by the Government of Tamil Nadu by including it in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.**

### **The 76th Constitutional Amendment Act**

- The 76th Constitutional Amendment Act was introduced with **the aim of protecting the Tamil Nadu Reservation Act, which provided for a 69% reservation in educational institutions and government services for Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.**
- Through Article 31-B of the Constitution, by including the Tamil Nadu law in the Ninth Schedule, Parliament ensured that the said law would receive constitutional protection against challenges raised on the grounds that it violated Fundamental Rights.

### **Changes Effected under the 76th Constitutional Amendment Act**

- **Ninth Schedule:** This amendment inserted a new entry, ‘257-A’, into the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

- This entry covers the ‘**Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 1993**’ (officially known as ‘**Tamil Nadu Act 45/1994**’).
- **Reservation Policy:** The Government of Tamil Nadu implemented a 69% reservation system in educational institutions and State government services for Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.
- The objective of this amendment was to **safeguard this policy by bringing the Act under constitutional protection.**
- Article 31-B: Through Article 31-B of the Constitution, laws listed in the **Ninth Schedule** receive **immunity (protection)** from being **invalidated on the grounds that they violate Fundamental Rights.**

### **Supreme Court Declares Safe Travel on National Highways a Fundamental Right**

- **Context:** The Supreme Court of India declared the **Right to Safe Travel on National Highways** as a part of the **Right to Life** under **Article 21** of the Constitution.
- Safe and motorable roads are now considered a **constitutional obligation of the State.**

#### **Case Background**

- The judgment came in:
  - In *Re: Phalodi Accident vs. National Highways Authority of India and Others* (2025).
- The Court took **suo motu cognisance** of two road accidents in November 2025 that caused the death of 34 people.

#### **Government’s Road Safety Goal**

- India aims to reduce road accidents by **50% by 2030.**

- The strategy focuses on the “4 Es”: **Education, Engineering** (roads and vehicles), **Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services**

#### **Supreme Court’s Constitutional Role**

- The Supreme Court is the **custodian of the Constitution** and can exercise special powers to ensure justice.
- It invoked **Article 142** of the Constitution to provide “complete justice”.

#### **About Article 142**

- Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass orders necessary for doing **complete justice** in any case.
- **These powers are:**
  - Inherent to the Supreme Court
  - Beyond limitations of ordinary laws
  - Used when law is silent or inadequate

#### **National Commission for Women**

- **Context:** The National Commission for Women (NCW) has submitted a comprehensive report containing recommendations regarding the **rights of Muslim women in India to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, and the Ministry of Minority Affairs.**
- This report was submitted following an extensive national-level consultation undertaken with the objective of **strengthening the legal, social, and constitutional rights of Muslim women in the country.**

#### **The Commission’s Views on Women’s Rights and Personal Law Reforms**

- Constitutional Safeguards and Legal Reforms
- The Commission noted that constitutional safeguards and recently enacted legal reforms have played a pivotal role in promoting and protecting women’s rights in India.

### Enhancing Access to Justice

- The Commission emphasized the importance of making the justice delivery system more accessible to women, thereby ensuring the availability of easy legal aid and effective remedies.

### Progressive Codification of Personal Laws

- The Commission underscored the necessity of codifying personal laws in a clearer, more uniform, and progressive manner to eliminate ambiguities within existing laws and to ensure fairness.

### Key Areas of Special Focus

- Special attention was directed toward issues concerning the following matters: Marriage, Divorce, Maintenance, Child Custody, and Inheritance.

### Review of Laws Pertaining to Muslim Women

- The consultation also undertook a review of key laws pertaining to the rights of Muslim women. These include the following:
  - The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937
  - The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939
  - The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986
  - The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019.

### National Commission for Women (NCW)

- The National Commission for Women is a **statutory body** of the Government of India; it primarily focuses on advising the government **on all policy-related matters affecting women.**
- This body was established in **January 1992**, under the provisions of the Constitution of India, as defined in the '**National Commission for Women Act, 1990**'.

- The primary objective of the **National Commission for Women is to represent the rights of women in India** and to serve as a voice for their issues and concerns.

- Dowry, politics, religion, equal representation for women in employment, and the exploitation of women in the workforce have been the central themes of the campaigns undertaken by this body.

- The National Commission for Women also undertakes the task of receiving and investigating complaints from women who have been subjected to violence, discrimination, harassment, or the denial of their rights.

### Jan Vishwas Act

- **Context** : The Central Government has directed the southern states to fast-track the **implementation of reforms introduced under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, through the Jan Vishwas reforms.**

- **The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act mandates the decriminalization of offenses and simplifies regulatory compliance across 79 laws and 784 rules.**

- This reform aims to boost the 'Ease of Doing Business' by significantly reducing the regulatory and compliance burden on traders and business enterprises.

- Its primary goal is to support honest businesses. At the same time, it ensures that strict action continues to be taken against fraud, violations, and malpractice.

- State governments have been directed to ensure the swift issuance of registrations and licenses without any delay or procedural hurdles once the necessary documents are submitted.

## INDIAN ECONOMY

### Sugar Export Ban in India

- **Context :** The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has placed exports of all types of raw, white, and refined sugar under the “prohibited” category.
- This ban comes into effect immediately. It will continue until the end of the current 2025–26 sugar season, i.e., September 30, 2026.
- Only about 14,500 tonnes of sugar exports are allowed under preferential quota commitments to the European Union (EU) and the United States (US).
- **Reasons for the Ban**
  - Concerns that monsoon and sugarcane production could be affected by the impact of ‘El Nino’.
  - Global uncertainties, such as the Iran issue, are also major reasons for this decision.
- **Production and Stock Details**
  - Sugar production for the year 2025–26 is estimated to be around 279 lakh tonnes.
  - As of October 1, 2025, the opening stock is more than 50 lakh tonnes.
- **Objective**
  - This measure has been taken to ensure the country’s food security, control sugar price hikes in the domestic market, and ensure abundant availability, even amidst global and climate-related uncertainties.

### Sugar Production

- Globally, India is the largest consumer of sugar and the **second-largest producer of sugar**.
- Tamil Nadu ranks **second in sugarcane productivity in India**.

### About Sugarcane crop

- Sugarcane production requires a temperature between **21°C and 27°C**, and a humid climate with **75–150 cm of rainfall**.
- Compared to northern India, due to the tropical climate of southern India, the sugarcane grown here has a **higher sucrose** content, and the yield per hectare is also higher.
- **Uses:** It is a tropical and sub-tropical cash crop used for the production of sugar, jaggery, ethanol, and bioenergy.

### Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP)

- The ‘Fair and Remunerative Price’ (FRP) is the price legally determined by the Central Government at which sugar mills must purchase sugarcane from farmers. Sugar mills are legally bound to pay this price to the farmers.
- This FRP price is fixed based on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)** and is approved by the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**.

### Jaggery

#### Information on Jaggery

- Popularly known as ‘Gur’, **jaggery** is a traditional and unrefined natural sweetener.
- It is produced by boiling down sugarcane juice without the use of any chemical additives.
- Since it possesses a high nutritional value—much like honey—it is often referred to as **“medicinal sugar.”**

#### India’s Position in Jaggery Production

- India accounts for more than 70 percent of global jaggery production, thereby standing as the world’s largest producer of jaggery.

- Jaggery production is predominantly carried out through decentralized, small-scale cottage industries.
- This scheme also promotes the utilization of traditional and nutrient-dense food products, such as jaggery.

### **Sugarcane Production in India (2024–25)**

- In the year 2024–25, India's total sugarcane production is **estimated at 444.9 million tonnes**.
- The state of **Uttar Pradesh contributed 48.5 percent to the total sugarcane production**.
- Maharashtra contributed 24.1 percent, while Karnataka contributed 10.5 percent.
- Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana are other key states playing a significant role in sugarcane production.

### **Jaggery in Tamil Nadu's Nutrition Schemes**

- To combat malnutrition among children and to boost school attendance, the Government of Tamil Nadu has incorporated jaggery as a key component in its nutrition schemes.
- Under the 'Nutritious Meal Scheme' and the 'Integrated Child Development Services' (ICDS), supplementary nutritious food is provided to children as 'take-home food packets' for **300 days a year**.
- Jaggery constitutes approximately 27 percent of this supplementary nutritional food mix; this enhances the food's energy and micronutrient value.
- This supplementary nutritional food mix is commonly referred to as 'Sathumaavu' (Nutritious Flour).
- This Sathumaavu is procured in a **65:35 ratio from 25 women-managed cooperative societies** and two private manufacturing firms.
- According to NITI Aayog, approximately **32.75 lakh** beneficiaries in Tamil Nadu receive nutrient-rich food through this initiative.

### **Geographical Indication (GI) Tagged**

#### **Jaggery Varieties**

- A Geographical Indication (GI) identifies products that are associated with a specific geographical region.
- GI recognition not only strengthens the regional identity of an area but also preserves traditional processing methods.
- **Kolhapur Jaggery (Maharashtra)** is renowned for its golden hue and high sucrose (sugar) content.
- **Muzaffarnagar Jaggery (Uttar Pradesh)** is celebrated for its export-quality production, which is manufactured from high-grade sugarcane.
- **Munnar/Marrayoor Jaggery (Kerala)** is highly esteemed for its purity and medicinal properties.
- **Central Travancore Jaggery (Kerala)** is recognized for its traditional processing methods and its uniqueness, which is exclusive to that region.

### **Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) – April 2026**

- **Context:** The combined Index of Eight Core Industries increased by **1.7% (provisional) in April 2026 compared to April 2025**.
- Positive growth was recorded in the following sectors: **Steel, Cement, and Electricity**.

#### **About the Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI)**

- The ICI measures the performance of **eight core infrastructure industries: Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Petroleum Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, and Electricity**.

- Together, these eight sectors account for a **weight of 40.27% in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**.
- **The Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** is a key statistical indicator that tracks short-term fluctuations in the volume of production across various industrial sectors in India.
- It reflects whether industrial activity is expanding or contracting during a specific period; thus, it serves as a significant measure of the country's economic performance.
- **The IIP is released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO)**, which functions under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.
- Currently, this index is **calculated using the year 2011-12 as the base year**.

### **Cement**

- **Share in ICI:** 5.37%
- **Production** recorded a growth of 9.4%.
- **Cumulative Growth:** 8.7%.

### **Steel**

- **Share in ICI:** 17.92%
- Production increased by 6.2%.
- **Cumulative Growth (Year-to-Date):** 9.5%.

### **Electricity**

- **Share in ICI:** 19.85%
- **Electricity generation** increased by 4.1%.
- **Annual Gross Growth:** 1.0%.

### **Key Highlights**

- The Cement sector recorded the highest growth in **April 2026**.
- The Steel and Electricity sectors also exhibited positive growth.
- The Coal and Fertilizer sectors witnessed a significant decline.
- Petroleum Refinery Products hold the highest share within the ICI basket.

### **Care Economy**

- Care Economy includes activities related to **childcare, eldercare, disability support, health related home care and domestic services**. It includes unpaid care work predominantly performed by women within households and paid care work delivered through formal and informal markets.

### **Government support for the care economy**

- The central government schemes for provision of care infrastructure and services are:
  - **Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0:**
    - An Integrated Nutrition Support Programme.
    - It seeks to address the challenges of malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers through a strategic shift in nutrition content and promote practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity.
  - **Mission Shakti's Samartha sub-scheme:** consist of erstwhile schemes of
    - Ujjwala (LPG connection), Swadhar Greh (provides shelter, clothing, food and health benefits to women), Working Women Hostel, National Creche Scheme for children of working mothers, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), ₹ 5000 Direct Bank Transfer to pregnant women and lactating mothers
- **Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana**
  - The main objective of the Scheme is to improve the quality of life of the Senior Citizens by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities and by encouraging productive and active ageing through providing support.
- **National Social Assistance Program**
  - secures for citizens adequate means of livelihood, raise the standard of living,

improve public health and provide free education to all children.

- The Anganwadi system (now in Palna scheme)
  - world's largest public system for child services, reaches 80 million children of up to six years of age through 1.4 million centres.
  - Anganwadi centres primarily cater to children aged 0–6 years. They significantly contribute to early education and holistic child development. However, since they are only open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., women still need additional care options if they are to work a full eight-hour day.

### **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)**

- **Context : The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) came into effect in the year 2016, and it has now successfully completed 10 years of implementation.**
- The IBC is a critical institutional reform that has created a positive impact on credit markets, corporate behavior, investor confidence, and overall economic efficiency.

### **About the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)**

- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was enacted in 2016 based on the recommendations of the **T. K. Viswanathan Bankruptcy Law Reforms Committee (2015)**.
- It provides a consolidated, time-bound, and creditor-driven framework for resolving insolvency in India.
- It was introduced to curb the rise of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and to improve previously weak debt recovery mechanisms like the SARFAESI Act and Lok Adalats.
- It aims for a swift resolution to prevent the erosion of the value of stressed assets.

Protecting asset value, ensuring timely resolution, fostering a healthy credit cycle, and promoting the ease of doing business.

- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) is the regulatory authority functioning under this Act.
- The IBBI frames the regulations, its board includes members from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has the authority to adjudicate corporate insolvency cases.
- The Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) handles insolvency cases related to individuals and partnership firms.
- In the event of a default, a financial creditor, an operational creditor, or the corporate debtor itself can initiate the insolvency resolution process.
- The Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) must generally be completed within a strict timeframe of 330 days.

### **Water Budgeting for Sustainable Water Management**

#### **Water Availability Status in India**

- India receives an average annual rainfall of **approximately 3,880 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM)**.
- After accounting for evaporation and other losses, the average annual water availability is estimated at **1,999.20 BCM**.
- The growing population is reducing per capita water availability while simultaneously increasing the pressure on water resources.
- India accounts for **17.5 percent** of the global population and **11.6 percent** of the global livestock population; this generates an extremely high demand for water.

### **The Growing Water Crisis**

- In rural areas, **80 to 90 percent** of available water is utilized for agriculture.
- Declining groundwater levels, seasonal water scarcity, and water-related conflicts are on the rise.
- There is a need to shift the approach to water management from being **'supply-centric' to being 'demand-centric.'**

### **About Water Budgeting**

- Water budgeting involves systematically assessing the water availability and demand within a specific village, watershed, block, or district.
- It compares:
  - **Inputs:** Rainfall, surface water inflow, groundwater recharge.
  - **Outputs:** Evaporation, surface runoff, groundwater extraction.
- It helps identify areas experiencing water surpluses and deficits.
- It supports resource-based water allocation and planning.

### **Significance of Water Budgeting**

- It facilitates the sustainable utilization of available water resources.
- **Facilitates:** Crop planning, groundwater management, drought preparedness, and flood management.
- Promotes efficient water allocation across **agriculture, domestic use, livestock rearing, and industrial sectors.**

### **Agriculture and Water Budgeting**

- Irrigation demand is projected to reach **807 BCM by the year 2050.**
- Supports:
  - Selection of water-efficient crops.
  - Optimal irrigation scheduling.
  - Climate-resilient agriculture.

- bsupported initiatives demonstrate enhanced productivity through water-efficient crop cultivation methods.

### **Livestock and Water Demand**

- The livestock population has increased from **512 million (2012) to 536 million (2019).**
- The cattle population has **increased by 18%.**
- Water budgeting incorporates water requirements for the following: drinking, fodder production, and allied activities.
- Ensures balanced water allocation across different sectors.

### **Government Initiatives**

- Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY)
  - Launched in **2019.**
  - Implemented in **229 groundwater-stressed blocks** across **7 states.**
  - Focuses on decentralized groundwater management at the **Gram Panchayat (village council) level.**
- National Water Mission (NWM)
  - Recognizes water budgeting as a key component of **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).**
  - Promotes water conservation and long-term water security.
  - Encourages women's participation in water governance through the **'Nari Shakti Se Jal Shakti' initiative.**

### **Successful Social Models**

- The Hiware Bazar Model (Maharashtra)
  - **Key Initiatives:** Rainwater harvesting, Watershed development, Groundwater recharge, Annual Gram Sabha based water budgeting, Restrictions on borewells.
  - **Outcomes**
    - Water security was achieved despite low rainfall.

- It became a model for Maharashtra's drought mitigation strategy.
- Rajasthan's Chief Minister's Jal Swavalamban Abhiyan (MJSA)
  - Launched in **2016**.
  - **Four-water-concept:** Rainwater, Ground water, Sub-surface water, and Soil moisture.
  - **Outcomes**
    - Groundwater levels increased by approximately 4%.
    - Soil fertility and crop yields improved.
- Technology for Water Management
  - Varuni Web App
  - An Indo-German project titled "**Water Security and Climate Adaptation in Rural India**" (WASCA).
  - **Collaborating Agencies:** Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Rural Development, NITI Aayog.
- **Key Features**
  - Generates block-level water budgets.
- Utilizes data regarding rainfall, land use, cropping patterns, population, and water resources.
- Automatically identifies water-surplus and water-deficit areas.
- Supports local planning and intervention strategies.
- Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyan
- Launched by the **Government of Maharashtra in 2014**.
- **Key Features**
  - Geo-tagging and mobile-based monitoring.
  - Focus on water conservation and groundwater recharge.
  - Village-level water budgeting.

- Importance of Water Budgeting**
- Promotes **demand-driven water management**.
  - Supports **climate resilience**.
  - Enhances **groundwater sustainability**.
  - Encourages community participation.
  - Increases agricultural productivity.
  - Strengthens rural livelihoods.
  - Enables **evidence-based policy formulation**.

## TAMIL NADU

### INITIATIVES / SCHEMES

#### Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation

- **Context:** On behalf of **Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation**, various creative activities are being undertaken to market the **products produced by women's self-help groups operating in rural and urban areas in urban areas.**
- As a part of this, a **natural market is being organized at the Mother Teresa Women's Complex in Nungambakkam, Chennai** on the first and third weekends of every month, Saturdays and Sundays, featuring the products of the self-help groups.

#### About Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation

- Established by the Government of Tamil Nadu in **1983.**
- Registered as a **statutory body and functioning under the Department of Rural Development and Panchayats.**

#### Objectives

- Upliftment of the status of women through education, employment, economic empowerment and self-reliance.
- It is fully committed to promoting the Self Help Group (SHG) movement by providing skill development training to SHGs across Tamil Nadu through various poverty alleviation schemes

The Tamil Nadu Women Development Corporation is currently implementing the following major schemes:

- Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihoods Mission (TNSRLM).
- Tamil Nadu Urban Livelihoods Mission (TNULM).

- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Rural Skill Development Scheme (DDU-GKY).
- Mahila Yojana (Women Development Scheme).

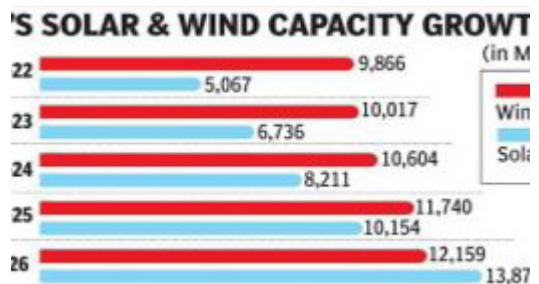
#### Tamil Nadu: From Wind Energy Pioneer to Solar Energy Powerhouse

##### Tamil Nadu's Pioneering Status in Renewable Energy

- Tamil Nadu has stood as **one of India's leading states in the renewable energy sector**, particularly in the field of wind energy.
- The state established a **robust wind energy ecosystem and emerged as a central hub for India's wind energy sector.**
- Although Gujarat subsequently surpassed Tamil Nadu in terms of installed wind energy capacity, Tamil Nadu continues to play a pivotal role in India's renewable energy landscape.

##### Efforts to Reclaim Leadership in the Wind Energy Sector

- Repowering (upgrading) older wind turbines to enhance efficiency.
- Improving power transmission and distribution infrastructure.
- Attracting new investments into the renewable energy sector.
- It is estimated that wind turbines nearing the end of their operational lifespan with a combined capacity ranging from approximately 2,500 MW to 3,000 MW are suitable for repowering; this initiative will significantly boost power generation capacity.



### **Installed Renewable Energy Capacity (April 2026)**

- Solar Energy Capacity: 13,871 MW
- Wind Energy Capacity: 12,159 MW
- In terms of installed power generation capacity within Tamil Nadu, solar energy has now surpassed wind energy to take the lead.

### **Rapid Growth of Solar Energy**

- Tamil Nadu's solar energy generation capacity has risen from 5,067 MW in March 2022 to 13,871 MW in April 2026.
- The state achieved the milestone of 10 GW in solar energy generation capacity in March 2025.

### **Tamil Nadu's National Standing in the Solar Energy Sector**

- Based on installed solar energy capacity, Tamil Nadu currently ranks fourth at the national level.
- The states leading Tamil Nadu are as follows: Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra

### **Factors Driving Solar Energy Expansion**

#### **Supportive 'Open Access' Policies**

- Tamil Nadu's favorable 'Open Access' policy framework has encouraged investments in renewable energy and facilitated the procurement of electricity.

#### **Industrial Demand for Green Energy**

- To achieve sustainability and green energy-related targets, industries and corporations are increasingly adopting renewable energy on a large scale.

### **Transition from Wind Energy Dominance to a Solar Energy Hub**

- Tamil Nadu was once known primarily for its wind energy sector.
- While continuing to strengthen its wind energy sector through modernization and restructuring efforts, the state is now emerging as one of India's leading hubs for solar energy.

### **Tamil Nadu's Push to Become an AI Hub**

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu plans to establish itself as a major regional hub for Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Focus is on developing indigenous AI capabilities and Tamil-language AI ecosystems.

### **Development of Tamil Large Language Models (LLMs)**

- The state aims to build Large Language Models (LLMs) specifically tailored for Tamil computing.
- Initiative seeks to reduce dependence on English-centric AI models dominated by global tech companies.

### **Strengthening AI Infrastructure**

- Tamil Nadu is increasing investments in:
  - Graphics Processing Units (GPUs)
  - High-performance computing infrastructure
  - Digital public infrastructure for AI
- GPUs are essential for training and running advanced AI models due to their parallel processing capability.

### **Collaboration with International Institutions**

- The government is exploring partnerships with several organisations.
- Discussions are underway with the National University of Singapore for academic collaboration.

### **Indigenous AI Ecosystem**

- Talks are being held with Sarvam AI to strengthen local AI capabilities.
- Emphasis on creating: Tamil AI tools, Tamil datasets, Vernacular AI resources

### **Role of Tamil Virtual Academy**

- Tamil Virtual Academy will play a major role in:
  - Expanding Tamil-language AI resources
  - Supporting Tamil computing projects

**Connection with National AI Mission**

- **Tamil Nadu has not yet implemented the** Union Government's National AI Mission.
- The National AI Mission was approved in 2024 with an outlay of about ₹10,300 crore.

**Objectives of National AI Mission**

- Build large-scale GPU infrastructure
- Support Indian AI startups
- Develop indigenous Indian Large Language Models (LLMs)

**Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET)**

- **Context:** Tuberculosis death rates showed a sustained decline in six districts of Tamil Nadu following the roll-out of the State's Kasanoi Erappi-la Thittam (TN-KET), a new study published in **Global Health Action** has found.
- **"Beyond the six districts,** the overall impact of TN-KET also reflected across the rest of the State, with a **nearly 2.5% reduction in TB deaths** after its implementation.

**Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET)**

- TN-KET is a state-level TB mortality reduction initiative **launched by Tamil Nadu in 2022,** focused on early detection and differentiated care for severe TB cases.
- Tamil Nadu has become the **first state in India to include a predictive system** for tuberculosis (TB) mortality in its TB eradication programme.
- The forecasting model was created by the **Indian Council of Medical Research's National Institute of Epidemiology (ICMR-NIE).**
- The predictive model has been incorporated into **Tamil Nadu's TB SeWA platform** and will operate under the Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET) patient care initiative.

**Key Features:**

- **Paper-Based Triage Tool:** Assesses **5 quick parameters** (BMI, oxygen level, respiratory rate, leg swelling, ability to stand) to classify patients as "severely ill."
- **Fast-Track Care:** 98% of identified severe cases admitted within 7 days.
- **Severe TB Web App:** Calculates mortality risk and helps guide urgent interventions.
- **Simplified Assessment:** No lab needed and saves 6-7 days over older 16-parameter tools.
- **Differentiated Care Model:** Offers customized treatment based on age, BMI, severity, and comorbidities.

**Key Achievements & Impact**

- **Data Reduction in Early Deaths:** Statewide early TB deaths saw a **20% decline** within just two quarters of the project's execution.
- **District-Level Progress:** By 2024, nearly two-thirds of Tamil Nadu's districts documented a **20% to 30% reduction** in overall TB mortality.
- **High Screening Efficiency:** In 2024, **98% of adult TB patients** were successfully triaged at diagnosis, well exceeding the state's initial target of 90%.

**HISTORY & CULTURE****Archaeological Excavations at Vellalore, Coimbatore**

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology has unearthed nearly 500 artefacts during excavations **at Vellalore on the Noyyal river bed in Coimbatore.**
- Findings include **Roman copper coins, spindle whorls, shell bangles, and glass bangles.**
- Excavations are being conducted at eight archaeological sites across Tamil Nadu.

- The excavation proposal received approval from the **Central Advisory Board of Archaeology under the Ministry of Culture**
- This 4.2-fold real growth in Tamil Nadu's per capita income is significantly higher than the national average growth of 3.3 times.

### **Evidence of Roman Trade Links**

- The discovery of Roman copper coins indicates ancient trade relations between the Roman world and the Coimbatore region.
- Earlier informal digging activities in **Vellore** had also reportedly revealed Roman coins.
- Based on current US dollar values, Tamil Nadu's per capita income is 6.6 times higher than in 2003-04; securing the fourth position nationally, the state trails Karnataka by only a very narrow margin.

### **Sites Included in the Excavation Programme**

- Vellore (Coimbatore), Thelunganur (Salem), Adichanur (Kallakurichi), Manikkollai (Cuddalore), Nagapattinam, Pattanamurudur (Thoothukudi), Karivalamvanthanallur (Tenkasi), Keezhadi .

### **Financial Allocation**

- The Government of Tamil Nadu **allocated ₹7 crore in the 2025-26 Budget** for archaeological excavations and scientific studies at these sites.

### **Excavation Details at Vellore**

- Excavations are being carried out at **two locations on the Noyyal river bed**.
- Out of seven planned trenches, five have already been excavated to a depth of 2.5 metres.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Tamil Nadu: One of the Leading States in Income Growth since 2003-04**

- **Context:** According to a recent Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report, Tamil Nadu's per capita Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) has grown significantly since 2003-04.
- When calculated at constant prices (adjusted for inflation), the state's per capita GSDP in 2024-25 stands at 4.2 times the level recorded in 2003-04.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary**

- **Context:** The Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL) has directed the Tamil Nadu government to complete the rationalisation of the boundaries of the Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary within a year, while clearing two industrial expansion projects near the protected wetland in Tiruvallur district.

### **About Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary**

- It is a large, **shallow coastal brackish-water lagoon located along the Bay of Bengal coast**, receiving water from several streams and rivers.
- It is the **second-largest brackish water lagoon in India after Chilika Lake**, extending across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- It receives inflow mainly from the **Aarani River in the south and the Kalangi River in the northwestern region**.
- The wetland was recognised as a **Ramsar Convention site in 2002** due to its ecological significance.
- The lagoon forms an important ecotonal habitat supporting diverse life forms, including mudskippers, seagrass ecosystems, oyster beds, and over 200 species of birds.

- Vegetation in the region includes nearly 132 plant species such as *Walsura piscida*, *Manilkara elengi*, *Excoecaria agallocha*, *Spinifex littoreus*, and *Calamus viminalis*.
- The wetland serves as a habitat for several migratory and resident birds, including flamingos, Eurasian curlews, oystercatchers, bar-tailed godwits, sand plovers, and greater flamingos.
- The barrier island of Sriharikota, which separates the lagoon from the Bay of Bengal, houses the Satish Dhawan Space Centre India's primary rocket launch facility. This makes Pulicat unique in world conservation geography.

## REPORT/ SURVEY

### Post-COVID Healthcare Advancements in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** A study conducted by IIT Madras reveals that, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tamil Nadu's emergency healthcare system has strengthened significantly, and notable improvements have been observed in maternal and child health indicators.

#### Research Team and Study Period

- On behalf of IIT Madras, a research team led by retired IPS officer Kandaswamy—and including Unnitor, an Associate Analyst at the Bengaluru-based firm Moody's Analytics—

conducted this study on the state of healthcare in post-COVID Tamil Nadu.

#### Key Findings of the Study

- The study analyzed eight years of data regarding the '108' Ambulance Service, spanning the period from 2017 to 2024. According to the findings, Tamil Nadu's healthcare system has demonstrated a rapid re-recovery following the challenges posed by the pandemic, and its overall operational efficiency has improved.

#### Improvements in Maternal and Child Health

- Furthermore, the maternal mortality rate has declined by 19 percent, while the incidence of home births has dropped by over 36 percent. The study also noted a 28 percent reduction in miscarriages, a 17 per-cent reduction in neonatal mortality, and a 19 percent reduction in infant mortality. Overall, significant progress has been achieved in key maternal and child health indicators.

#### Primary Factors Contributing to the Progress

- The study results indicate that the expansion of emergency medical infrastructure, an increase in the healthcare workforce, and the implementation of specialized initiatives—such as the 'Suvanam' pro-gram—within maternal and child welfare schemes have been the primary drivers behind these advancements.

## NATIONAL - NEWS

### Pilot Programme to Connect Out-of-School Children with NIOS

- **Context:** The Union Government is launching a **pilot programme** to connect **out-of-school children aged 14-18 years** with the National Institute of Open Schooling through distance learning.
- The initiative moves beyond the earlier voluntary enrolment framework and aims for proactive identification and inclusion.

#### Objective of the Initiative

- To identify and reconnect children who have dropped out of school.
- To provide flexible distance education opportunities through NIOS.
- To improve educational access for vulnerable adolescents.

#### Coverage of Pilot Programme

- The pilot will be implemented in **10 districts across nine States:** Odisha, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi

#### Key Features

- App-based mapping of out-of-school **children aged 14-18**
- Monitoring and tracking systems
- Incentive mechanisms for enrolment and participation
- District-level convergence strategies among departments

#### Important Data

- According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS): More than two crore children in the 14-18 age group are currently out of school in India.

### AI-Based Helpbot "Abhay" Launched by CBI

- **Context:** The Central Bureau of Investigation has introduced an **AI-driven helpbot named "Abhay"** to verify the authenticity of notices issued by the agency.

#### Need for the Initiative

- **Cyber-related frauds** are emerging as a serious challenge to India's criminal justice system.
- Technologies such as **Artificial Intelligence and deepfake tools** are making it increasingly difficult for people to distinguish genuine information from fake or manipulated content.

#### About "Abhay"

- "Abhay" is an AI-enabled chatbot system created to **help citizens confirm whether CBI notices are genuine.**
- It has been developed to counter: Cyber fraud, Digital arrest scams, Fake notices circulated in the name of the CBI.

#### Key Features

- Provides a secure and user-friendly verification mechanism.
- Designed with strong safeguards for data privacy and confidentiality.
- Offers a publicly accessible authentication system to enhance trust and transparency.

### Project Saksham

- **Context:** National Highways Authority of India, in collaboration with Vertis Foundation, is implementing 'Project Saksham' to **promote inclusive development and empower rural women through skill development.**

#### Objective

- The initiative aims to:
  - Provide structured vocational training
  - Create sustainable livelihood opportunities
  - Promote financial independence and social empowerment among rural women

**Key Features**

- Project Saksham functions through:
  - 12 training centres located across India
- It focuses on underserved communities residing near National Highways.

of promoting peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

- While one of the member nations assumes the leadership of the alliance each year, India is holding the chairmanship for the current year.

**Kalam & Kavach 3.0**

- **Context:** The third edition of Kalam & Kavach will be inaugurated on May 14, 2026.

**Purpose of the Conference**

- The conference serves as a major strategic platform for discussions on:
  - India's defence transformation
  - Indigenous defence capabilities
  - Future warfighting preparedness
- It brings together policymakers, military leaders, diplomats, industry representatives, start-ups, innovators, and academic experts.

**Central Theme**

- The event is based on the vision of: **Jointness, Aatmanirbharta, Innovation (JAI)**
- It also emphasises: **Indigenisation, International Collaboration (I<sup>2</sup>)**

**Objectives**

- Promote integrated military capability development.
- Encourage technological innovation in defence.
- Strengthen strategic partnerships aligned with: National security goals, Vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat

**Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)**

- **Cibtext :** A consultative meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) alliance is scheduled to take place in India next week.
- The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) alliance comprises four nations: **India, the United States, Australia, and Japan.** This alliance operates with the primary objective

**National One Health Mission**

- **Context:** The Fifth Meeting of the Scientific Steering Committee on One Health was held in New Delhi.

- One Health mission focuses on national preparedness against emerging public health threats.

**About the National One Health Mission**

- The National One Health Mission is a collaborative **multi-sector initiative that seeks to integrate human health, animal health, wildlife health, and environmental health systems** for stronger disease surveillance, diagnostic capacity, and coordinated outbreak management.

- **Vision:** The mission aims to create a unified framework for disease prevention and pandemic preparedness in India by promoting cooperation among the human, animal, and environmental sectors.

- **Approval :** The mission was approved by the **Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council during its 21st meeting held in 2022.**

- **Nodal Agency:** The initiative is coordinated by the Indian Council of Medical Research under the guidance of the **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA).**

- **Anchor Institution:** The National Institute of One Health, Nagpur

**Operational Tools of One Health**

- **Animal Vaccination:** Large-scale vaccination reduces zoonotic disease spread.

- **Veterinary Surveillance:** Regular livestock monitoring helps identify outbreaks early.
  - **Medicine Regulation:** Controlled use of animal drugs limits resistance and environmental harm.
  - **Sanitation Measures:** Proper disposal of waste and carcasses prevents vector-borne diseases.
  - **Shared Data Systems:** Integrated human, animal, and environmental databases improve disease tracking.
- The nitrogen in urea is readily fixed in the soil in an ammoniacal form and is not lost in drainage.
  - Urea sprays are **readily absorbed by plants**.
  - It may be applied at sowing or as, a top-dressing.
  - It is suitable for most crops and can be applied to all soils.

### The Use of Ammonium Sulfate as an Alternative to Urea

- **Context:** With the Iran war triggering a shortage of fertilizers and a spike in prices, the Centre has asked states to consider ammonium sulphate as a substitute for urea in rice cultivation.

#### Ammonium sulphate $[(NH_4)_2 SO_4]$

- It is a **white salt** completely soluble in water containing **20.6 .per cent of nitrogen and 24.0 per cent of sulphur**.
- It is used advantageously in **rice and jute cultivation**.
- It is easy to handle and it stores well under dry conditions. But during rainy season, it sometimes forms lumps.
- It can be applied before sowing, at the time of sowing or as a top-dressing to the growing crop.

#### Urea $[CO (NH_2)_2]$

- It is the most **concentrated solid nitrogenous fertilizer, containing 46 per cent nitrogen**.
- It is a **white crystalline** substance readily soluble in water.
- It absorbs moisture from the atmosphere and has to **be kept in moisture proof containers**. It is readily converted to ammoniacal and nitrate forms in the soil.

### Ethanol E30

- **Context:** The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has announced new petrol standards for ethanol blends of up to 30% (E30) and issued a Gazette notification to this effect on May 18, 2026.
- These new standards encompass **E22, E25, E27, and E30**, which designate **petrol blended with 22%, 25%, 27%, and 30% ethanol**, respectively.
- Ethanol blending in petrol refers to the **mixing of anhydrous ethanol** with petrol for use in vehicles equipped with spark-ignition engines.
- These regulations came into effect on **May 15, 2026**. This serves merely as a technical guideline and does not constitute a mandate for the immediate, nationwide compulsory introduction of E30 fuel.
- The **Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP), initiated in 2003**, aims to reduce import dependency, conserve foreign exchange, support farmers, and deliver environmental benefits.
- Ethanol blending in petrol has risen from **1.5% in 2014 to 10% in 2022, and further to 20% in 2025**.
- India has set a target to achieve 27% ethanol blending (E27) by 2030 through a phased implementation process.

### VB - G RAM G

- **Context:** The Union Ministry of Rural Development has informed a Parliamentary Standing Committee that 25 states have

already allocated funds for the 125-day work scheme.

- In place of the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (the 100-day work scheme)**, the 'VB-G RAM G Bill' (a 125-day work scheme) was passed in Parliament last December. Following the assent granted by President Droupadi Murmu, the bill officially became law.
- Under this new legislation, the duration of the work scheme has been extended from **100 days to 125 days**.

#### **Funding Sharing Mechanism**

- In states and Union Territories possessing a legislative assembly, the Central Government will bear 60 percent of the funding for this scheme, while the respective State and Union Territory governments will bear the remaining 40 percent.
- For the eastern states, as well as the Himalayan region—specifically Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir—the Central Government will contribute 90 percent of the scheme's funding, with the respective State governments contributing the remaining 10 percent.
- In this context, a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj was held in New Delhi.
- The 125-day work scheme is scheduled to be implemented starting July 1st. Twenty-five states have already allocated funds for this initiative. All necessary administrative and policy-related measures for the scheme have been set in motion.

#### **New Cards Featuring Facial Recognition**

- Furthermore, it was announced that new 'Smart Work Cards' will be issued for the 125-day work scheme, replacing the work cards previously issued for the 100-day scheme.

- Officials stated that, in order to ensure transparency and accountability within this program, these new work cards will feature a specialized facial recognition capability for identification purposes.

#### **79th World Health Assembly**

- **Context:** Union Health Minister highlighted India's expanding efforts in tuberculosis elimination, lung health screening, and ethical use of artificial intelligence in healthcare while addressing multiple high-level side events during the **79th World Health Assembly in Geneva**.

#### **India's Tuberculosis Elimination Efforts**

- Under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) and the vision of a "TB-Free India," India has undertaken one of the world's largest campaigns for TB screening and early detection.
- Active patient-finding efforts have been expanded through the following initiatives:
  - Door-to-door outreach
  - Mobile screening units
  - Community awareness campaigns
  - Targeted campaigns focusing on high-risk and vulnerable populations

#### **National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP)**

- In 2020, the RNTCP was renamed the 'National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme' (NTEP).
- This renaming was undertaken to emphasize the Government of India's objective of completely eliminating TB in India by 2025—five years ahead of the global targets set for 2030.
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to TB (Base Year: 2015) are as follows:
  - An 80% reduction in the incidence rate.
  - A reduction of over 90% in the mortality rate.

- Zero catastrophic financial burden on any patient or their family due to TB.
- The programme operates under the guidance of the 'National Strategic Plan 2017-2025'.
- Furthermore, the key activities of the programme are implemented under four strategic pillars: "Detect - Treat - Prevent - Build" (DTPB). The Role of Ayushman Bharat
- Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres, along with frontline health workers, help bring healthcare services closer to communities.

### **TB-Free India Campaign**

- Through the TB-Free India Campaign, India has mobilized citizens, corporations, organizations, and communities.
- This initiative provides support—including care and assistance—to TB patients and their families.

### **Digital Initiative – TB-Free India App**

- The Ministry launched the TB-Free India App, featuring "Kushi"—a multilingual conversational technology powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Features of the App:
  - Real-time guidance regarding TB symptoms
  - Information concerning entitlements
  - Details of nearby diagnostic centers
- This app is designed to function even on basic smartphones.

### **India's Global Commitment**

- India reiterated its commitment to eradicating TB ahead of global targets.
- India expressed its readiness to collaborate globally on scalable solutions for lung health screening.

### **Key Facts about Tuberculosis (TB)**

- India bears the highest TB burden in the world; it is estimated that approximately 2.6 million people contract the disease annually, and nearly 400,000 people lose their lives due to it.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is implementing an ambitious 'National Strategic Plan' aimed at achieving the 'TB eradication' targets set under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the year 2025.

### **TEAM Initiative**

- **Context:** The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is accelerating the digital transformation of India's smallest businesses through the 'Trade Enhancement and Access to Markets' (TEAM) initiative a transformative sub-scheme under the '**Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance' (RAMP) program**, which operates with the support of the World Bank.
- Implemented by the **National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)**, the **TEAM initiative** aims to provide **end-to-end e-commerce support to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)**. By doing so, it enables them to participate effectively in digital commerce ecosystems, specifically through the '**Open Network for Digital Commerce' (ONDC)**.
- This initiative seeks to empower artisans, home-based entrepreneurs, local manufacturers, and small retailers by providing them with structured institutional support at every stage of their e-commerce journey—including onboarding, product listing, packaging, logistics, and customer management.

### **About the TEAM Initiative**

- A **Central Sector Scheme launched in 2024**.
- The objective of this initiative is to provide comprehensive e-commerce assistance to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), thereby

facilitating their successful integration into digital commerce platforms via the 'Open Network for Digital Commerce' (ONDC).

- It is designed to promote open and inclusive digital networks that are conducive to the exchange of goods and services through electronic platforms.
- **Project Linkage:** TEAM serves as a key sub-scheme under the 'Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance' (RAMP) program, which is being implemented with the support of the World Bank.
- **About RAMP:** Launched in 2022, this program focuses on enhancing the operational efficiency and expanding the reach of **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)** across the country.
- **Duration:** The scheme will be implemented for a period of **three years, spanning from 2024 to 2027.**
- **Implementing Agency:** The scheme is being implemented by the 'National Small Industries Corporation' (NSIC).

### Dowry Death in India

- **Context:** NCRB data- UP, Bihar lead in dowry death cases.

#### The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

- The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 was introduced to **abolish the practice of dowry** in India and curb this social evil through law.
- It is the **first comprehensive legislation aimed at addressing dowry** across all communities, applying uniformly to all persons except where specifically exempted.
- **Objectives:**
  - Ban giving, taking, and demanding dowry.
  - Protect women from harassment and exploitation.
  - Discourage commercialization of marriage.
  - Promote **equality and dignity for women.**

#### Main provisions:

- **Giving or receiving dowry is a punishable offence.**
- **Even demanding dowry without exchange is illegal.**
- Dowry received must be transferred to the woman within a fixed time period.
- Serious offences are **cognizable and non-bailable.**
- Courts can act based on police reports or victim complaints.

#### Punishment:

- Minimum **imprisonment of five years.**
- Fine of at least **₹15,000** or the dowry value, whichever is higher.
- Reduced punishment only in exceptional circumstances.

#### Dowry Prohibition Officers:

- **Appointed by state governments.**
- Responsible for prevention, investigation support, victim assistance, and enforcement of the Act.

### Indian Farmers Shift to Millets Cultivation Due to Climate Change

- **Context:** Geopolitical tensions and severe climatic disruptions are prompting Indian farmers to increasingly cultivate hardy crops such as **Pearl Millet (Bajra) and Sorghum (Jowar).**
- Uncertainties stemming from international conflicts—including the war in Iran—**weak monsoon seasons caused by El Niño**, and persistent crop losses due to pests like the **Pink Bollworm** have encouraged farmers to move away from water-intensive and fertilizer-dependent crops, shifting instead toward hardy millets that require fewer inputs and can withstand harsh climatic conditions.

### **Millet Cultivation in India**

- India stands as the world's largest producer of millets, contributing nearly 42.75% to global millet production.
- Millets are generally categorized into major and minor varieties.
- **Major millets** include Pearl Millet (Bajra), Sorghum (Jowar), and Finger Millet (Ragi). **Minor millets** include Foxtail Millet (Kangni), Little Millet (Kutki), Kodo Millet (Kodra), and Proso Millet (Cheena).
- In India, millets are primarily cultivated during the Kharif season, although certain varieties – particularly in the southern regions – are also grown during the Rabi season.
- Among all millet varieties, **Pearl Millet (Bajra) accounts for nearly 60% of the country's total millet production.**

### **Regional Distribution of Millets**

- **Rajasthan possesses the largest area under millet cultivation** and records the highest production volume in the country. It is followed by Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.
- Rajasthan leads in **Bajra** production, Karnataka dominates **Ragi** cultivation, while Maharashtra ranks first in **Sorghum** production.
- In terms of **minor millets**, **Madhya Pradesh holds the top spot**, followed by Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand.

### **National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM)**

- **Context:**The National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management has recently completed the documentation and field verification of nearly all **wetlands in Maharashtra**. Consequently, **out of the state's 23,415 wetlands, only 11 remain to be surveyed.**

### **About the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management**

- The National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management was established in **2011 as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).**

- Its objective is to assist in the conservation, preservation, restoration, management, and policy planning related to coastal areas.

- **Headquarters: Located in Chennai.**

### **Objectives and Functions**

- To emerge as a **globally recognized knowledge and research institution focusing on coastal ecosystems**, environmental resources, and coastal processes.

- To promote the integrated and sustainable management of India's coastal and marine areas for the welfare of traditional coastal and island communities.

- To provide scientific guidance and policy-related advice to the Central Government, State Governments, and other stakeholders on matters related to **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).**

### **Launch of 'Jeevan' App and 'Shatayu' Dashboard for Elderly Welfare**

- **Context:**The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment is set to launch the 'Jeevan' mobile application for senior citizens and the 'Shatayu' dashboard for elderly caregivers.

- The objective of this initiative is to strengthen elderly care services by leveraging technology, supportive policies, and community participation.

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is introducing these two key digital platforms dedicated to the welfare of the elderly:

- 'Jeevan' Mobile App for Senior Citizens
- 'Shatayu' Dashboard for Elderly Caregivers

**About the 'Jeevan' App**

- The 'Jeevan' app is being launched specifically for senior citizens.
- It aims to enhance their access to various support mechanisms, welfare services, and essential information related to senior citizen care.

**About the 'Shatayu' Dashboard**

- The 'Shatayu' dashboard has been developed for elderly caregivers.
- It will serve as an information platform providing details regarding elderly care services, care assistance, and other relevant data within the elderly care ecosystem.

**Birth rate and infant deaths falls in India**

- **Context:**The bulletin from the recent **Sample Registration Survey (SRS) 2024** provides the sharpest picture yet of India in the throes of demographic transition.
- As per the latest estimate, while the country's birth rate has fallen between **2014 and 2024** and the death rate is down marginally, good gains have been reported with the **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)**, amid substantial progress made over the last decade.

**India's Health Gains Shadowed by Rural-Urban Divide in Birth and Death Rates**

- The country's birth rate – live births per **1,000 population** – fell from **21 in 2014 to 18.3 in 2024**, while the **death rate (deaths per 1,000 people)** is down from **6.7 to 6.4**.
- The IMR, recorded as the number of deaths per thousand live births, has dropped from 39 to 24.
- The overall performance is creditable, indicating several measures being launched by the Center and States to improve healthcare outcomes.

- The **rural birth rate fell from 22.7 to 20.2** in the given decade, the simultaneous decadal performance in the urban areas was better – **the birth rate fell from 17.4 to 14.7**.
- In the rural areas, the death rate fell from 7.3 to 6.8 between 2014 and 2024, and in the urban segment, it was at 5.5 in 2014 and went up marginally to 5.6 --still a better performance than in rural areas.
- **Kerala has single digit IMR 8**, lowest in the country.
- **Tamil nadu** brings up second position among larger states with **IMR 11**.

**Severe heatwave conditions to prevail in parts of India**

- **Context:**Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions are likely to persist over the plains of Northwest India, Central and East India, and parts of Peninsular India during the next six to seven days, says India Meteorological Department (IMD) .
- The IMD stated that heatwave conditions are likely in isolated areas of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh from **May 22 to May 28**. "Severe heatwave conditions over East Uttar Pradesh and East Madhya Pradesh are expected during the same period," the IMD said.

**Definition**

- A **heatwave is a period of abnormally hot weather**, usually over several days, that is significantly hotter than what is normal for a place at that time of year. The World Meteorological Organization describes it as a period where local excess heat accumulates over a sequence of unusually hot days and nights.

**Conditions for Declaring a Heatwave**

- A heatwave is declared when the highest temperature recorded at a station is **40°C or**

above in plains and 30°C or above in hilly areas.

#### ▪ **Classification Based on Variation from Normal Temperature**

- **Heat Wave:** When the maximum temperature is 4.5°C to 6.4°C higher than the normal temperature.
- **Severe Heat Wave:** When the maximum temperature is more than 6.4°C above the normal temperature.

#### **Health Impacts of Heat Waves**

- **Heat Cramps:** Edema (swelling) and Syncope (Fainting) generally accompanied by fever below 39°C.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** Fatigue, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps and sweating.
- **Heat Stroke:** Body temperatures of 40°C or more along with delirium, seizures or coma. This is a potential fatal condition.

#### **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**

- **Context:** The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has welcomed Saudi Arabia as its newest Member Country.
- IBCA said Saudi Arabia's joining is a significant collective step towards advancing global cooperation for Big Cat conservation and a sustainable planet.

#### **About International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**

- **India will host** the inaugural International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026, in New Delhi.
- The event represents an important milestone in promoting international collaboration for the protection of big cats and their natural habitats.
- The theme of the summit is **"Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystem."**

▪ The conference aims to provide a global forum for deliberations on the challenges, opportunities, and joint efforts required for big cat conservation across countries.

▪ The summit will also showcase India's success in wildlife conservation, particularly its efforts related to: **Tigers, Asiatic lions, Leopards, Snow leopards, and Cheetahs.**

▪ A proposed **Delhi Declaration** is expected to outline common international priorities, strengthen cross-border cooperation, and support a landscape-based strategy for conserving big cats and their ecosystems.

#### **Smart Border Project and Border Security Measures**

▪ **Context:** Home Minister announced that the government will soon launch the **Smart Border Project** to strengthen security along the borders with Bangladesh and Pakistan.

▪ The objective is **to make the borders highly secure and difficult to infiltrate.**

#### **Use of Advanced Technology**

▪ The Smart Border initiative will integrate modern technologies such as: **drones, radars, advanced surveillance cameras, and other high-tech security systems.**

▪ These technologies will help create a comprehensive and technologically advanced border security network.

#### **Strengthening Border Security Grid**

▪ The Home Minister stated that work is underway to establish an **impregnable border security grid within the next year under the Smart Border concept.**

#### **Easier Operations for BSF**

▪ The new technological systems will make the functioning of the Border Security Force (BSF) more efficient, effective, and stronger.

### Focus on Emerging Security Threats

- The government emphasized the need to develop new strategies to tackle: **cyber threats, hybrid warfare, and drone-based security challenges.**

### Government's Stand on Infiltration

- The government is committed not only to stopping infiltration but also to identifying and deporting illegal infiltrators from the country.
- He said the government **would not allow unnatural demographic changes due to illegal migration.**

### Role of Border States

- The Home Minister noted that governments in: **Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal have adopted policies opposing illegal infiltration.**

### Growth of BSF

- The Border Security Force, **established in 1965** with 25 battalions and limited resources, has grown into the world's largest border guarding force with nearly 2.7 lakh personnel.

### Expansion of BSF Jurisdiction

- The government has extended BSF jurisdiction **from 15 km to 50 km from the international border** in certain areas to improve border management and security operations.

### Coldwater Fisheries Sector in India

- **Context:** India's coldwater fisheries sector is emerging as a vital component of the Blue Economy. It contributes significantly to livelihoods, nutritional security, eco-tourism, and sustainable development in mountainous regions.
- Coldwater aquaculture is practiced in **high-altitude, snow-fed rivers, streams, lakes, and reservoirs** characterized by temperatures ranging from 5°C to 25°C, **dissolved oxygen levels exceeding 6 mg/L, and pH levels between 6.5 and 8.0.**

- This sector is concentrated in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Nagaland, as well as in the hilly regions of West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.

- More than 278 coldwater fish species have been identified in India. Among these, the **Rainbow Trout, Golden Mahseer, and Snow Trout are the most prominent species.**

- In the year 2024-25, India's total fish production stood at approximately 197.75 lakh tonnes. Of this, **the coldwater fisheries sector contributed about 3% to the country's inland fish production.**

- The national-level production of coldwater fish stands at approximately 7,000 metric tonnes. Meanwhile, Trout production has witnessed a substantial increase growing by about 1.8 times over the past decade to reach approximately 6,000 metric tonnes in 2024-25.

- **Jammu and Kashmir is the leading region** for trout production, followed by the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

### Government Schemes and Initiatives

#### Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (2020-26)

- Under this scheme, projects worth ₹5,638.76 crore have been sanctioned for states engaged in cold-water aquaculture.
- This provides support for hatcheries, raceways, RAS units, ponds, cold storage facilities, and transportation infrastructure.

#### Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)

- The Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund has approved projects worth ₹7,761.78 crore for infrastructure development (2018-26).

**Blue Revolution Scheme (2015–20):**

- This scheme laid the foundation for scientific trout farming through the establishment of hatcheries, raceways, and fish stocking in reservoirs.

**Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana:**

- Valued at ₹6,000 crore, this scheme supports aquaculture insurance, fisheries sector startups, micro-enterprises, and value chain capabilities.

**Model Guidelines (2026):**

- The government has released the '**Model Guidelines for Cold-Water Fisheries Development, 2026**,' covering aspects such as site selection, hatchery standards, disease management, biosecurity, branding, certification, e-commerce, and skill development.
- **India is strengthening international cooperation with Norway and Iceland for technology transfer**, sustainable aquaculture practices, disease control, and export promotion.

**Mohenjo-daro**

- **Context:** Mohenjo-daro, **the largest city of the Indus Valley Civilization** of the Indian Subcontinent, was truly the 'rebel' of its times. It was not only more equal than its neighbours in Mesopotamia and Greece, but it actually became more egalitarian as it prospered, according to a new study.

**About Mohenjo-daro**

- Meaning "Mound of the Dead," Mohenjo-daro stands as one of the most significant centers of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- This civilization spanned a vast geographical area **extending from Sutkagen Dor in Balochistan (near the Iran-Pakistan border) to**

**Alamgirpur in present-day Uttar Pradesh; its boundaries stretched from Manda in Jammu to Daimabad in Maharashtra.**

- Among the important Harappan-era sites located within India, Lothal, Dholavira, and Kalibangan are particularly noteworthy.
- Alongside the city of Harappa, Mohenjo-daro is regarded as **one of the most renowned cities of the Bronze Age civilization**; this civilization flourished approximately **between 3300 BCE and 1200 BCE**.
- Its zenith, or "Mature" phase, occurred during the period from **2600 BCE to 1900 BCE**.
- By the mid-2nd millennium BCE, the civilization began to decline due to severe climatic changes and environmental factors.
- Excavation work at the Mohenjo-daro site commenced in 1920 and continued in various phases until 1964–65.
- **In 1922, Rakhaldas Banerjee of the Archaeological Survey of India** confirmed the site's immense historical significance.
- The city of Mohenjo-daro is renowned, particularly for its **advanced urban planning**.
- The city featured streets neatly laid out in a grid pattern, paved roads, efficient water supply systems, enclosed drainage and sewage disposal structures, houses equipped with toilet facilities, and monumental public buildings such as **the 'Great Bath' and the 'Great Granary.'**
- It is estimated that, at its zenith, the city may have had a population ranging from approximately 30,000 to 60,000, and it is considered to provide evidence of a highly organized society.
- In recognition of its historical significance, **it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1980.**

## India's First Geothermal Power Project

- **Context:** Ladakh is set to take a significant step towards clean energy generation with Lt Governor approving the setting up of **India's first geothermal power project by the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation at Puga valley in Ladakh**, at an altitude of over 14,000 feet.
- Testing, evaluation and commissioning of the pilot plant are expected during FY 2026–27.

### Implementing Agency

- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) will develop the **geothermal power project**.
- The project is located in Puga Valley of eastern Ladakh at an altitude above 14,000 feet.

### Objective

- The project aims to **harness geothermal energy as a clean, renewable and low-carbon power source**.

### Pilot Plant

- ONGC will establish a **1-MWe pilot geothermal power plant in Puga Valley**.
- A Detailed Project Report (DPR) will be prepared for large-scale commercial exploitation.

### Geothermal Energy

- Geothermal energy is produced from **heat stored beneath the Earth's surface**.
- It is considered a **renewable and environmentally sustainable source** of power.

### Himalayan Geothermal Belt

- Puga Valley and Chumathang lie in the Himalayan geothermal belt known for **intense tectonic heat activity**.

### Temperature Findings

- Existing wells recorded temperatures above 200°C at around 400 metres depth.
- Geothermometric studies indicate subsurface temperatures exceeding 240°C.

## Power Generation

- The pilot plant is expected to generate around 1 MW of electricity.
- The turbine inlet temperature is expected to be around 200°C.

## Education to Employment and Enterprise Standing Committee

- **Context:** Union Budget 2026–27 proposed the creation of a High-Powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee.

### Objective

- The Committee aims to help India achieve a **10% share in the global services market by 2047**.
- It focuses on **growth, employment generation, exports and entrepreneurship in the Services sector**.

### Major Functions

- Identify priority areas for growth in the Services sector.
- Assess impact of frontier technologies like **Artificial Intelligence on jobs and skills**.
- Recommend policy measures for employment and skilling.
- Strengthen linkage between education, employment and enterprise ecosystems.

### Key Observations

- India's demographic dividend offers opportunities for economic growth.
- Education, skilling and employment systems must align with changing economic needs.
- Industry-relevant skills are essential for future jobs.

### Final Goal

- Convert India's demographic dividend into a growth dividend.
- Bridge gaps between education, employment and entrepreneurship.

- Promote coordinated action among Centre, States, industry and academia.

### High-Level Committee to Study Demographic Change

- **Context:** The Central Government has constituted a high-level committee to address the challenges associated with demographic changes resulting from infiltration and other factors.
- This committee will be chaired by Mr. Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar, a former Judge of the Supreme Court.
- Demographic change is a critical issue that bears upon not only national sovereignty but also national security, law and order, profound shifts in the social fabric, and the protection of tribal communities.
- The committee will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the demographic changes occurring across India **due to illegal immigration and other anomalous factors.**
- Furthermore, the committee will analyze trends regarding anomalous demographic changes at the level of religious and social communities, and will propose planned, time-bound solutions to address them.

### Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)

- **Context:** The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has initiated regulatory actions **against the unauthorized online sale and advertisement of hazardous chemicals, explosives, and their associated precursors on digital platforms.**
- This action has been undertaken under the provisions of the **'Consumer Protection Act, 2019,'** with the aim of strengthening consumer protection, public safety, and responsible e-commerce practices.

- In this regard, notices have been issued to major e-commerce platforms concerning the listing and sale of regulated substances including **Ammonium Nitrate, Gunpowder, Picric Acid, and Pentaerythritol Tetranitrate.**

### About the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)

- The CCPA is a regulatory body **established in 2020** under the provisions of the 'Consumer Protection Act, 2019.'
- The CCPA functions under the **administrative control of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.**

### Composition

- The Authority consists of a Chief Commissioner as its head, along with two other Commissioners as members.

### Powers and Functions

- To investigate or inquire into matters related to violations of consumer rights or unfair trade practices—either *\*suo motu\** (on its own initiative), based on a complaint received, or upon the direction of the Central Government.
- Imposition of a **fine of up to ₹10 lakh and imprisonment for up to two years** on manufacturers or endorsers who publish false and misleading advertisements.
- This fine amount may be **extended up to ₹50 lakh**, and the imprisonment up to five years.
- Filing of complaints regarding violations of consumer rights or unfair trade practices with the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

### Ken-Betwa Link Project

- **Context:** Presiding over the **51st PRAGATI meeting held in New Delhi**, the Prime Minister noted that the Ken-Betwa project should serve as a **model for resolving inter-state**

water disputes through cooperation, timely clearances, technology-based monitoring, and planned implementation.

#### **About the Ken-Betwa Link Project**

- The Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP) is India's first initiative being implemented by the Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority under the National Perspective Plan (NPP) formulated in 1980 for the interlinking of rivers.
- It aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken River in Madhya Pradesh to the Betwa River in Uttar Pradesh, a tributary of the Yamuna.

#### **Phases of the Project**

- Phase I: Construction of the Daudhan Dam complex, lower and upper-level tunnels, the Ken-Betwa Link Canal, and powerhouses.
- Phase II: Development of the Lower Orr Dam (across a tributary of the Betwa), the Bina Complex Project, and the Kotha Barrage.

#### **Benefits**

- Irrigation for 6.3 lakh hectares of land annually.
- Drinking water supply for 62 lakh people.
- The project includes provisions for hydroelectric power generation (100 MW) and solar power generation (27 MW).

#### **Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0**

- **Context:** The Prime Minister has emphasized the necessity of effectively implementing Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0. Furthermore, he underscored that this mission must move beyond mere infrastructure creation to ensure measurable outcomes through continuous monitoring, citizen participation, and coordination among various stakeholders.

#### **About Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0**

- Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) 2.0, being implemented from 2021 to 2026, aims to transform all Indian cities into 'Garbage-Free Cities.'

▪ The program focuses on 100% source segregation of waste, bio-remediation of legacy dumpsites, and scientific waste management.

▪ Additionally, it emphasizes used water management and sustaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) sanitation standards across the country.

#### **Key Objectives**

- **Garbage-Free Cities:** A complete and sustainable transition towards total sanitation and 100% solid waste processing.
- **Legacy Waste Management:** The removal and bio-remediation of legacy dumpsites to reclaim urban land.
- **Used Water Management:** The treatment and reuse of greywater and sewage, particularly in cities with a population of less than one lakh that do not fall under the AMRUT scheme.
- **Sanitation:** Sustaining the existing Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in Urban Local Bodies and upgrading them to ODF+ and ODF++ standards.

#### **Key Components**

- **Solid Waste Management (SWM):** Door-to-door collection, source segregation of waste, and the establishment of centralized/decentralized waste processing and composting plants.
- **Safaimitra Suraksha:** Protecting sanitation workers by mechanizing sewage and septic tank cleaning operations.
- **Plastic Waste Management:** Phasing out single-use plastics and effectively managing Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste.

#### **Target Beneficiaries and Financial Allocation**

- **Coverage:** All statutory towns in India.
- **Financial Allocation:** Estimated at ₹1.41 lakh crore for the SBM-U 2.0 scheme.
- **Funding Mechanism:** This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), wherein funds are

released to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) based on the achievement of specific targets, such as securing a **minimum '1-Star Garbage Free City' certification.**

### Key Initiatives

- **Swachh Survekshan:** The world's largest annual cleanliness survey (implemented by QCI).
- **LiFE, Mera Swachh Shehar' Campaign:** Promotes 'Mission LiFE' and behavioral change among citizens.
- **National BCC Framework for GFC:** Strengthens public participation (Jan Andolan) to create 'Garbage Free Cities' (GFC).
- Its primary objective is to educate illiterate adults and integrate them into the society and the economy of the country.
- The vision of this scheme is "**Jan Jan Sakshar" (Literacy for every person).**
- The scheme is implemented through voluntary work based on the noble objective of "**Kartavya Bodh" (Sense of Duty).**
- It has **five main components:**
  - Basic Literacy and Numeracy
  - Essential Life Skills
  - Basic Education
  - Vocational Skills
  - Continuing Education

### Sikkim - Literate State

- **Context:** Sikkim has become a fully literate state under the ULLAS - Nav Bharat Sakshardha Karyagram scheme on 27th May 2026.
- The literacy rate achieved is 99.82%.
- The Union Education Ministry's target for "Full Literacy" is 95%.
- ULLAS scheme was launched in Sikkim on 14th November 2022.
- Areas covered:
  - All 6 districts
  - 34 blocks
  - Gram Panchayats and wards.
- The ULLAS app is used to register learners and volunteers.
- This registration can be done by users themselves or through enumerators.
- The app acts as a digital gateway to access learning resources through NCERT's **DIKSHA website.**

### DIESEL-ISOBUTANOL BLENDING FROM '26

- **Context:** INDIA is set to introduce a mandate for blending isobutanol with diesel later this year, **Road Transport and Highways Secretary** said at CII Multimodal Transportation and Logistics Summit in New Delhi.

### About Isobutanol

### About ULLAS - Nav Bharat Sakshardha Karyagram scheme

- ULLAS stands for: Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society.
- This is a **Centrally funded scheme to be implemented during the period 2022-2027.**
- The scheme is designed in line with the objectives of the **National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020).**
- The main target of this scheme is the **elderly/adults aged 15 years and above who have missed out on formal schooling.**
- **Isobutanol (C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>10</sub>O)** is a **four-carbon alcohol** that appears as a clear, combustible liquid.
- It has a **higher energy content than ethanol**, making it an attractive alternative fuel component.
- Besides its traditional **use as a solvent in paints and coatings**, it is increasingly being evaluated as a renewable blending agent for diesel fuels.

### Production Process

- Isobutanol is manufactured through the **fermentation of sugar-rich feedstocks** such as sugarcane juice, molasses, and cereal grains.
- Specially engineered microorganisms convert these sugars into isobutanol under controlled, sterile fermentation conditions.
- In sugar-processing facilities, production typically requires modifications to existing fermentation vessels along with distillation systems capable of separating both **ethanol and isobutanol** from the fermentation broth.

### Key Characteristics

- **Improved Safety:** Isobutanol has a higher flash point than ethanol, making it less volatile and safer to handle when blended with diesel fuel.
- **Superior Blend Compatibility:** It mixes more effectively with diesel and generally does not require additional additives to maintain blend stability.
- **Higher Energy Content:** Its greater calorific value compared to ethanol can contribute to better fuel economy and engine performance.
- **Adaptable Manufacturing:** Isobutanol can be produced alongside ethanol using existing biofuel infrastructure with only limited equipment upgrades.
- **Environmental Advantages:** Its use as a fuel blendstock may help reduce particulate matter emissions and lower the overall carbon footprint of transportation fuels.

### Weather monitoring system

- **Context:** Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences on Friday inaugurated **India's first "SkyCast" aviation weather monitoring system at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport in New Delhi**, saying the country has entered a new era of **"fog-free, weather-smart aviation"**.
- Developed under the Centre's **"Mission Mausam" initiative**, the advanced integrated

atmospheric monitoring system is designed to provide **real-time weather intelligence to pilots**, airlines and airport operators, helping reduce flight delays, diversions and cancellations caused by fog, turbulence and poor visibility."

### About Mission Mausam

- Mission Mausam was introduced by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences in 2024**.
- The programme is being carried out by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD), the National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)**.
- Its purpose is to strengthen weather and climate-related services by providing accurate and timely observations, forecasting, and modeling support for sectors such as agriculture, disaster management, and rural development.

### Objectives of Mission Mausam

- To improve India's weather forecasting capabilities for **short-term, medium-range, extended-range, and seasonal periods**.
- To create advanced **high-resolution forecasting models** for more reliable monsoon predictions.
- To deliver useful **weather-based advisories** for sectors including agriculture, water management, energy, healthcare, and disaster preparedness.
- To promote **scientific research and capacity building** through partnerships with national and global institutions.

### Importance of Mission Mausam

- It represents a major step forward in strengthening India's ability to manage climate variability and its socio-economic consequences.
- The mission contributes to sustainable development by protecting people, livelihoods,

and essential infrastructure from weather- and climate-related risks.

### **Nirbhay Raho' initiative**

- **Context:** The Ministry of Panchayati Raj successfully conducted a **three-day national Training of Trainers program** in New Delhi.
- The program focused on legal provisions for **women's security**, marking a major step forward for the Ministry's newly launched '**Nirbhay Raho' initiative**.

### **About Nirbhay Raho Initiative**

- The Nirbhay Raho Initiative is a nationwide programme focused on **gender-responsive governance and strengthening grassroots institutions**.
- It is funded and implemented through the **Union Government's Nirbhaya Fund, which is a non-lapsable fund dedicated to women's safety and empowerment**.
- The initiative aims to **transform local self-government bodies into strong support systems** that ensure the protection and well-being of women.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The programme is overseen by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India**
- **Aim**
  - The initiative seeks to reduce gender-based discrimination and violence at the grassroots level by **creating inclusive, sensitive, and women-friendly Panchayats**.
  - It aims to empower rural leaders with legal knowledge, survivor-focused approaches, and first-response skills to improve women's safety and access to justice in rural areas.

### **Key Features**

- Nirbhay Netri (Strengthening Women Leaders)
  - Focuses on training and capacity building

of **approximately 14.5 lakh Elected Women Representatives (EWRs)**.

- Enhances their legal awareness and leadership skills to effectively address safety and security issues within their communities.
- Nirbhay Chetna (Engaging Male Representatives)
  - Targets **around 17.5 lakh Male Elected Representatives** across the country.
  - Promotes gender sensitivity, challenges patriarchal attitudes, and encourages male leaders to actively support women's safety and equality initiatives.
- Nirbhay Drishti (Improving Safety Infrastructure)
  - Supports the development of **technology-based safety measures** in rural areas.
  - Provides funding for the installation of CCTV surveillance systems at key locations within Gram Panchayats to enhance security and monitoring.

### **Kala-II Hydroelectric Project and the White-bellied Heron**

- **Context:** The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), operating under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has granted in-principle forest clearance for the '**Kala-II Hydroelectric Project**'.
- This has sparked concerns regarding the potential impacts that the project could have on the habitat of the **White-bellied Heron**.

### **Kala-II Hydroelectric Project**

- The '**Kala-II Hydroelectric Project**', with a **capacity of 1,200 MW**, is a run-of-river scheme proposed by THDC India Limited.
- The project is situated in the **Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh**, located in close proximity to the India-China border

- The project involves the construction of a **128.5-meter-high concrete gravity dam**, along with an associated underground powerhouse.
- Mild to moderate infections are typically treated with a **combination of atovaquone and azithromycin administered over a period of 7 to 10 days.**

### **White-bellied Heron**

- **Scientific Name:** *Ardea insignis*
- **Ecological Significance:** It is considered a key indicator species reflecting the health and integrity of riverine ecosystems.
- **IUCN Red List Status:** Critically Endangered.
- Globally, the distribution of this species is extremely limited; it is primarily found in **Bhutan, India, and Myanmar.**
- Within India, it is predominantly found only in specific pockets of **Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.**

### **Threats Posed by the Project**

- The **Lohit River basin** serves as one of the most critical habitats for the '**White-bellied Heron**'.
- Reports indicate that these herons have been sighted in areas such as **Walong, Sengkhung, and the Kamlang Tiger Reserve area**, which is situated in the lower reaches of the river.
- Since forests and riverbank areas are liable to become submerged, there is a risk that the sites essential for the breeding, foraging, and nesting of storks could be destroyed; this poses a grave threat to the very survival of the species.

### **Babesiosis Infection**

- **Context:** The deaths of **eight lion cubs in Gujarat**—suspected to be caused by a **Babesiosis infection**—have raised concerns regarding the health and safety of Asiatic lions.
- Babesiosis is a **parasitic infection** primarily transmitted through the bites of infected ticks.
- Infected animals may exhibit symptoms such as fever, weakness, coughing, and a runny nose.
- It is a **zoonotic disease**, meaning it can be transmitted from animals to humans.

### **The Future of India's Semiconductor Sector: A 10-Year Action Plan (2026–2035)**

- **Context:** NITI Aayog's 'Frontier Technologies Hub' has released **India's first comprehensive 10-year action plan** titled "**The Future of India's Semiconductor Sector.**"

### **Importance of Semiconductors**

- **Semiconductors are critical for:** National Security, Economic Stability, Digital Sovereignty, and Future Technological Competitiveness.
- **They power sectors such as:** Defense Systems, Telecommunications, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Automotive, Healthcare Devices, Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), and Advanced Manufacturing.

### **Vision and Goal**

- Aims to build a semiconductor **value chain worth US\$ 120–150 billion by the year 2035.**
- Seeks to transform India from being merely a major consumer of semiconductors into a key partner within the global semiconductor value chain.

### **Five Strategic Pillars**

- **Frontier Research & Design IP:** Fostering cutting-edge research and innovation in semiconductor design.
- **Policy & Investment:** Mobilizing long-term capital and incentivizing investments.
- **Manufacturing:** Focusing on advanced packaging and compound semiconductor manufacturing.
- **Talent:** Cultivating skilled talent across the entire workforce ecosystem of the semiconductor sector.

- **Partnerships:** Strengthening collaboration with trusted nations and global industry leaders.

#### Key Objectives

- Positioning India as a **world-leading hub for advanced packaging and OSAT (Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test)**.
- Emerging as a key supplier of **wide-bandgap semiconductors**.
- Fostering leadership in compound semiconductor manufacturing.
- Strengthening advanced semiconductor design capabilities.
- Generating over **100 advanced semiconductor design-related Intellectual Property (IP) assets**.

#### **Alignment with National Initiatives**

- It supports the objectives of the **'India Semiconductor Mission,'** as announced in the **Union Budget of 2026**.
- It signifies India's evolutionary transition from: **Ecosystem Creation → Ecosystem Deepening**
- It focuses on strengthening the following areas: **Design, Materials, Manufacturing, Packaging, Skill Development, Research & Development, and Trusted Global Partnerships**.

#### **Launch of Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) and Maritime Digital Initiatives**

- **Context:** Union Minister launched the **Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) FY 2024-25** and **four major digital initiatives** during the **37th Foundation Day celebrations of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority in Mumbai**.

#### **Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI)**

- Serves as a national benchmarking tool to evaluate and improve port performance.

#### ▪ **Aligned with:**

- PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan
- Maritime India Vision 2030
- Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047
- Aims to enhance **efficiency, transparency, and global competitiveness** of Indian ports.
- **Four Digital Initiatives Launched by Directorate General of Shipping**
  - 24x7 Grievance Redressal Module under the **e-Navik Platform**.
  - Ship Registration Module on the **e-Samudra Platform**.
  - Medical Practitioner Module.
  - Unified Ship Recycling Credit Note Module.
- Significance of Digital Initiatives
  - Improves transparency, accountability, and service delivery.
  - Simplifies vessel registration procedures.
  - Strengthens monitoring of authorized medical practitioners for seafarers.
  - Reduces fraudulent medical certifications.
- Major Port Rankings under LPPI
  - **Dry Bulk Cargo:** Paradip Port Authority ranked first.
  - **Liquid Bulk Cargo:** Sikka Port and Terminals ranked first.
  - **Container Cargo:** Mundra Port ranked first.
  - JNPA secured second position among major container ports.
- Other Key Initiatives Highlighted
  - Launch of indigenous **Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)**.
  - Introduction of AI-powered tender evaluation platform – **NIVIDA**.
  - Signing of multiple strategic MoUs.
- India's Logistics Achievement

- India's ranking in the **World Bank Logistics Performance Index improved from 44th to 22nd** in the International Shipments category.
- **Seven Indian ports featured among the world's top 100 ports in the World Bank Container Port Performance Index 2024.**

### **SkyCast System: India's First Advanced Aviation Weather Intelligence System**

- **Context:** Union Minister inaugurated India's first SkyCast System at Indira Gandhi International Airport.
- India has become the 19th country in the world to deploy this advanced integrated atmospheric remote sensing system.
- The next SkyCast facility will be established at Noida International Airport.

#### **About SkyCast System**

- Developed under **Mission Mausam**.
- An advanced aviation weather monitoring and forecasting system.
- Provides **real-time atmospheric information** for safer aviation operations.
- Helps reduce flight disruptions caused by: **Fog, Turbulence, Adverse weather conditions**

#### **Key Features**

- Provides advance weather alerts to pilots and aircrew up to three hours in advance.
- Supports safer take-offs and landings.
- Reduces flight diversions, delays, and cancellations.
- Offers accurate nowcasting and early warning services.

#### **Technologies Integrated in SkyCast**

- Radar Wind Profiler
- SODAR (Sonic Detection and Ranging)

- Microwave Radiometer
- Ground-based Fog Aerosol Spectrometer (GFAS)
- CL61 Lidar-based Ceilometer

#### **Core Component: Radar Wind Profiler**

- The Radar Wind Profiler continuously measures atmospheric conditions up to 3 km above the airport, including **wind speed, wind direction, turbulence, vertical velocity, and boundary-layer dynamics**, providing critical information for safe aircraft descent and landing operations.

#### **Fog Monitoring Capabilities**

- Ground-based Fog Aerosol Spectrometer (GFAS)
  - Measures: **Fog droplets, Aerosols, Aerosol-fog interactions**
  - Particularly useful in urban areas like **Delhi** where pollution affects visibility.
- CL61 Lidar-based Ceilometer
  - Monitors the vertical structure of fog.
  - Helps assess: **Fog formation, Visibility reduction, Atmospheric conditions impacting aviation.**

#### **Origin of the Project**

- Based on findings from the **Winter Fog Experiment (WiFEX)**.
- WiFEX was launched jointly by: **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and India Meteorological Department**

#### **Benefits Beyond Aviation**

- Enhances **weather forecasting accuracy**.
- Supports: **Artificial Intelligence-enabled decision support systems**, Urban weather forecasting, Pollution management, Transport advisories, Disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

## NATIONAL SCHEMES

### National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)

- **Context:** With the vision to strengthen the concept of “Sahakar se Samridhhi” (Prosperity through Cooperatives) in the fisheries sector, a National Workshop on Fisheries Cooperatives was organized in Hyderabad.
- Its aim is to strengthen the fisheries cooperative ecosystem and promote “**cooperation among cooperatives**” for the inclusive and sustainable development of fishing communities and rural economies.

### About the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB)

- The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) was established in the year 2006.
- It is registered as a society under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- Location: **Hyderabad, Telangana**.
- It is an autonomous organization under the administrative control of the **Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying**.
- It works to enhance fish production and productivity in the country and to coordinate fisheries development in an integrated and holistic manner.

### Mission Karmayogi

- **Context** : Union Minister Jitendra Singh has stated that the ‘Mission Karmayogi’ scheme is steadily progressing towards an administrative framework integrated with Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The Minister noted that ‘Mission Karmayogi’ is advancing smoothly towards an AI-integrated governance model by converging skill

development, capacity building, technology, and public service delivery.

### About Mission Karmayogi

- Mission Karmayogi is a **new experiment in the direction of capacity building**. Through this scheme, **government employees must modernize their thinking and approach, and enhance their skills. This is to provide them with an opportunity to transform into a ‘Karmayogi’**.
- On **September 2, 2020**, the Government approved the **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)**.
- **It comprises six core pillars:** Policy Framework, Institutional Framework, Competency Framework, Digital Learning Framework (iGOT-Karmayogi), Electronic Human Resource Management System (e-HRMS), and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
- **Need for the Reform:**
  - Government employees play a vital role in formulating policies and implementing them.
  - Shifting from a **‘rules-based’ human resource management system to a ‘roles-based’ system**.
  - The fundamental objective of this mission is to allocate the right person to the right role at the right time.

### iGOT Karmayogi Platform

- **MY iGOT:** It delivers targeted training courses directly on the homepage of every officer, specifically addressing the unique capacity-building needs of the officer as identified in the Capacity Building Plan of their respective Ministries/Departments.

### Unique Identity Card Scheme

- **Context:** In 2024, the Central Government announced a Unique Identity Card Scheme for farmers. As a fundamental feature of this

scheme, linking agricultural land with the Aadhaar number has been made mandatory.

- In Tamil Nadu, there is a total of 1.23 crore acres of agricultural land and 42.52 lakh farmers.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme which has been operational since 2019-21, 57 lakh farmers in Tamil Nadu, who own less than 5 acres of land, are currently receiving benefits.
- Since it was discovered that ineligible individuals had been included as beneficiaries in this scheme, a need was felt to ensure the accuracy of beneficiary identification.
- Furthermore, allegations arose that subsidized fertilizers were being diverted for industrial use rather than for agriculture; this further reinforced the need for stricter regulatory controls.
- In this regard, although the previously launched Soil Health Card Scheme attempted to streamline fertilizer usage, it did not achieve the expected level of success.
- Therefore, the primary objective of the current Unique Identity Card Scheme is to prevent the leakage and misuse of subsidies.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)**

- The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) is a Central Sector Scheme of the Government of India.
- The scheme was launched in February 2019 and was implemented with retrospective effect from December 1, 2018.
- Subject to certain exclusion criteria, this scheme aims to provide financial assistance to land-holding farmer families across the country to help them meet expenses related to agriculture, allied activities, and domestic needs.
- Under this scheme, an annual sum of ₹6,000 is deposited directly into the bank accounts

of farmers in each financial year, in three equal installments of ₹2,000 each (April–July, August–November, and December–March), through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.

#### **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (Self-Reliant India Campaign)**

- **Context:** The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry stated that India has set a target to achieve exports worth \$1 trillion this year and \$2 trillion over the next five years.
- He emphasized that this would serve as the true hallmark of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India).

#### **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (Self-Reliant India Campaign)**

- The 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' (Self-Reliant India Campaign) reflects a broad vision for India's economic transformation and self-reliance.
- This initiative focuses on economic revival, promoting domestic industries, and fostering national self-reliance, while simultaneously strengthening India's participation in global supply chains.
- Through sector-specific measures, the scheme aims to generate employment, improve liquidity, expand manufacturing activities, and strengthen administrative frameworks.
- This campaign views times of crisis as an opportunity for economic reform and domestic growth.
- Inspired by the principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The World is One Family) – enshrined in the Maha Upanishad – this initiative does not advocate for isolation from the world. Instead, it promotes strategic self-reliance by leveraging local resources, supporting Indian industries, and enhancing India's role within international markets and supply chain networks. Objectives of the

Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

- Promotion of domestic industries
- Creation of a self-reliant economy
- Integration with global supply chains
- Post-COVID-19 economic recovery
- Reforms in key economic sectors
- Support for farmers and MSMEs
- Improvement in the standard of living

### **ANRF Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Integrative Research Program**

- **Context:** The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) has selected 10 institutions under its flagship initiative, the Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Integrative Research program.

#### **Key Objective**

- The program aims to integrate science, technology, social sciences, and humanities to address complex societal and systemic challenges through multidisciplinary research.

#### **Focus on Integrative Research**

- This initiative promotes multidisciplinary and integrative research approaches to find solutions to regional and national issues.

#### **Requirement for Collaboration**

- Each Centre is required to establish inter-institutional collaborations, which may be either discipline-specific or multidisciplinary in nature.

#### **Extensive Institutional Network**

- Collectively, the selected Centres involve researchers from **20 collaborating institutions located across India.**

#### **Strong National Response**

- The program received **945 proposals from academic and research institutions**, demonstrating significant national interest and relevance.

### **Inspired by the National Education Policy 2020**

- This program draws inspiration from the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes **the integration of multidisciplinary education and research.**

#### **Alignment with Viksit Bharat 2047**

- It supports the vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'—to transform India into a developed, innovative, inclusive, and self-reliant nation by the year 2047.

#### **Role of Emerging Technologies**

- This initiative recognizes the critical role of **Artificial Intelligence (AI), Robotics, and Big Data Analytics in driving socio-economic transformation.** Contribution to Sustainable Development
  - This initiative aims to support the achievement of **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** through comprehensive and knowledge-integrated solutions.

#### **SHE-MART Initiative**

- **The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** has launched a nationwide roadmap for **establishing SHE-MARTs (Self Help Entrepreneurs-Marketing Avenues for Rural Transformation).**
- **Main Objective:** The initiative aims to strengthen women-led enterprises, improve rural incomes, and expand market access for **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** across India.

#### **Focus of Discussions**

- Discussions focused on operationalising the **SHE-MART initiative announced in the Union Budget 2026.**
- **Key themes included:** Institutional frame works, Financing models, Governance systems Technology integration, Monitoring mechanisms, Implementation strategies, Vision for SHE-MARTs.

- Enterprise-Led Rural Markets
- The initiative emphasizes shifting from traditional livelihood promotion to enterprise-based rural market systems.

### **Role of States and UTs**

- States and Union Territories reviewed the draft operational framework and suggested practical measures for large-scale implementation.

### **Convergence with VB-GRAM-G**

- Discussions highlighted opportunities for convergence between SHE-MARTs and the VB-GRAM-G initiative in infrastructure, market support, and demand generation.

### **Key Panel Discussion**

- A national panel discussion on “SHE-MARTs as a Strategic Intervention for Rural Marketing” explored scalable models for women-led rural markets.

### **Community Ownership and Professional Management**

- Participants stressed the importance of combining professional retail management with community ownership and women-led governance.

### **Consensus on SHE-MART Model**

- A broad consensus emerged that SHE-MARTs should function as decentralised, professionally managed, community-owned enterprise ecosystems rather than subsidy-dependent retail outlets.

### **Link with Lakhpati Didi Mission**

- The Ministry reaffirmed its goal of creating **three crore additional “Lakhpati Didis”** by 2029 through sustainable women-led rural enterprises and marketing platforms.

## **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) and Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN)**

- **Context:**The Ministry of Rural Development held a meeting with a delegation from

the **Asian Development Bank** to discuss collaboration in the areas of land governance, digital land records modernisation, and watershed development.

- **Unique Land Parcel Identification Numbers, also known as Bhu-Aadhaar,** have already been generated for **nearly 66 per cent of agricultural land parcels in the country.**

### **About the Digital India Land Records**

#### **Modernization Programme (DILRMP)**

▪ The **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)** was introduced in **2016** after restructuring the earlier National Land Records Modernization Programme.

▪ It is a **Central Sector Scheme** implemented by the Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development.

▪ The programme has been continued for the period from **2021-22 to 2025-26** with the inclusion of two additional components:

- **Computerization of all revenue courts** across the country along with their integration with land records.

- **Linking of Aadhaar numbers with Records of Rights (RoR)** based on the consent of individuals.

▪ The main objective of DILRMP is to **transform the existing manual and presumptive land title system into a modern digital system** with conclusive land titles.

#### **Major Components**

- **Computerisation of Records:** Includes mutations/transfers.

- **Digitisation of Maps:** Integrates textual and spatial data.

- **Survey/Re-survey:** Updates all survey and settlement records and creates original cadastral records where necessary.

- **Computerisation of Registration:** Integrates with the land records maintenance system.
- **Geospatial Information System (GIS):** Core development for enhanced land records management.

### **About Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN)**

- The Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN), also known as “Bhu-Aadhar,” is an initiative under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).
- It assigns a **unique 14-digit identification number** to every land parcel in the country.
- The main objective of ULPIN is to provide a **distinct identity to each surveyed piece of land and reduce cases of land fraud and disputes.**
- ULPIN also seeks to create a comprehensive database containing all relevant details related to properties across India.
- In addition, different types of land-related data currently maintained by various ministries and government departments will be integrated with the ULPIN system to ensure better coordination and accessibility of information.

### **UMMID Programme**

- **CONTEXT:** The Union Minister of Science and Technology Dedicates UMMID Programme to the Nation, Says Genomic and Precision Medicine Will Shape the Future of Healthcare

#### **About UMMID Programme**

- The **UMMID (Unique Methods of Management and Treatment of Inherited Disorders)** programme is an initiative of the Government of India aimed at addressing inherited genetic disorders among pregnant women and newborn babies.

- Nodal Ministry: Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology to tackle inherited genetic disorders.
- The programme focuses on preventing rare genetic diseases through early detection, genomic testing, and genetic counseling.

#### **Objectives of the Programme**

- **Prevention and Counseling:** To screen pregnant women and newborns for inherited genetic disorders and provide timely medical guidance and treatment.
- **Capacity Building:** To train doctors and healthcare professionals in areas such as molecular genetics, cytogenetics, and clinical genetics.
- **Diagnostic Network:** To establish **NIDAN (National Inherited Diseases Administration) Kendras** across the country for advanced diagnosis and comprehensive patient care.

#### **Major Components**

- **NIDAN Kendras:** Around 30 regional centers have been set up to provide prenatal testing, newborn screening, counseling, and diagnostic services in different parts of the country.
- **Training Centres:** Institutions such as All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Christian Medical College, and The Madras Medical Mission serve as centres of excellence for training healthcare professionals.
- **Screening in Aspirational Districts:** Special emphasis is given to aspirational districts for large-scale genetic screening of pregnant women and newborn children.

### **The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**

- **Context:** The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), implemented by the National Health Authority under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, has achieved a major milestone with over **100 crore health records successfully linked with Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA).**

- The achievement marks a significant step towards building an integrated, citizen-centric and interoperable digital healthcare ecosystem in the country.
- **Healthcare Professionals Registry:** A national database of healthcare workers, including practitioners of both modern medicine and traditional systems of medicine.

### **About Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**

- ABDM was officially launched nationwide on **September 27, 2021**.
- ABDM is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched to establish an integrated digital healthcare system across India.
- It aims to help citizens, healthcare providers, and insurance agencies securely store, access, and exchange health records through a common digital platform.
- **Unified Health Interface (UHI):** An open digital platform that supports services such as online appointments, telemedicine, and other healthcare facilities.
- **Health Information Exchange and Consent Manager (HIE-CM):** A system that allows citizens to securely share and access their health information based on informed consent.
- **National Health Claims Exchange (HCX):** A digital mechanism designed to simplify, standardize, and accelerate the processing of health insurance claims.

### **Purpose**

- The mission seeks to **connect digital health services** to ensure continuous healthcare support and better use of healthcare resources.

### **Features of the Scheme**

- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Duration:** 5 years
- **Implementing Agency:** National Health Authority (NHA)

### **Objectives**

- To create a strong digital framework for India's healthcare sector.
- To improve coordination and connectivity among different stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem.

### **Main Components**

- **ABHA and ABHA App:** ABHA provides a unique **14-digit health identification** number that allows individuals to access and manage their digital health records. The ABHA app enables users to upload and scan medical documents digitally.
- **Health Facility Registry:** A comprehensive database containing details of public and private healthcare institutions across the country.

### **VB-G RAM G: New Rural Jobs Scheme**

- **Context:** The new law, **Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (VB-G RAM G)**, will replace the 20-year-old Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act from **July 1**.

### **Higher Funds for Larger and Poorer States**

- Central allocations to States will be based on the **16th Finance Commission's horizontal devolution formula**.

- This formula gives greater weightage to:

- **Poorer States** through Per Capita GSDP Distance (42.5% weightage).
- **Larger States** through Population (17.5% weightage).

### **Parameters Used for Allocation**

- The allocation formula includes: Population (2011 Census), Demographic performance, Forest cover Geographical area, Per capita GSDP distance, Contribution to GDP.

### **Shift from Demand-Based Model**

- Unlike MGNREGA's demand-driven structure, VB-G RAM G moves towards a **normative allocation model**.

- Funds will no longer automatically expand according to employment demand.
- During the first phase, up to 50 industrial parks will be selected through a competitive challenge-based process.

#### **Cost Sharing Between Centre and States**

- Under MGNREGA, the Centre paid **100% of wages**.
- Under VB-G RAM G, wage expenditure will be shared in a **60:40 ratio** between the Centre and States for most States.
- **A National Level Steering Committee and Central Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Council will guide allocations, monitoring, and implementation.**
- States, Union Territories, and eligible agencies will compete based on: quality of infrastructure, connectivity, and investment potential.
- The competitive selection mechanism is expected to improve execution efficiency and project standards.

#### **Main Features of the Scheme**

- A major feature of BHAVYA is the emphasis on **plug-and-play industrial infrastructure**.
  - This approach allows industries to begin operations quickly without long delays in obtaining basic infrastructure and utilities.
  - Facilities Proposed in Industrial Parks
  - **The industrial parks will provide:** multimodal logistics connectivity, uninterrupted water and power supply, underground utility networks, renewable energy infrastructure, housing facilities for workers, skill development centres, waste management and treatment systems, and testing laboratories.
- Timely payment of wages
  - Compliance with social audits
  - Percentage of completion of works
  - Other indicators notified by the Centre

#### **BHAVYA Scheme**

- **Context:** The Union Government has issued detailed operational guidelines for the **BHAVYA Scheme**, which aims to establish 100 world-class industrial parks across India.

#### **About the BHAVYA Scheme**

- BHAVYA is a **Central Sector Scheme** focused on **developing integrated industrial ecosystems** capable of attracting both domestic and international manufacturing investments.
- The initiative is aligned with major government programmes such as: **Make in India, PM Gati Shakti, and the national manufacturing expansion strategy.**
- Its objective is **to make industrial investment more efficient, globally competitive, and easier to implement.**

#### **Development of 100 Industrial Parks**

- Under the scheme, 100 industrial parks are proposed to be developed between 2026-27 and 2031-32.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati**

#### **Abhyuday Yojana**

- **Context:** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is set to launch the **'PM-AJAY' website and the 'PM-AJAY' mobile application** to facilitate the implementation of the **'Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana' (PM-AJAY) scheme.**

#### **About the 'PM-AJAY' Website and Mobile App**

- The website is designed to ensure **faster and more accountable service delivery to beneficiaries**, while also facilitating seamless coordination among the various stakeholders involved in the scheme.
- The PM-AJAY Dashboard records the socio-economic developmental progress achieved in over 47,000 villages with a majority Scheduled Caste (SC) population.

- The PM-AJAY website functions as a **digital interface linked to a centralized database**, thereby enabling the release of funds based on the achievement of various milestones (key stages) of the scheme.
- The PM-AJAY mobile **application aims to provide access to scheme services via mobile devices, enhance field-level monitoring, facilitate real-time reporting, and strengthen transparency and digital governance.**

#### **Details regarding the Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)**

- The Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY) scheme was officially launched by the Government of India during the **financial year 2021-22.**
- This scheme is implemented by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**
- The Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY) is a **scheme funded 100% by the Central Government.**
- This **scheme aims to reduce poverty prevailing among Scheduled Castes through various initiatives**, such as creating additional employment opportunities and improving socio-economic indicators in villages where Scheduled Castes constitute a majority of the population.
- It is a converged scheme formed by merging three Central Government schemes: the 'Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana' (PMAGY), the 'Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan' (SCA to SCSP), and the 'Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana' (BJRCY).

#### **Objectives of the PM-AJAY Scheme**

- To enhance the income of the target population through various income-generating schemes, skill development, and infrastructure development.
- To reduce poverty among the target population and uplift them above the poverty line.

#### **Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme**

- **Context:** The Ministry of Food Processing Industries held a press briefing highlighting the progress, implementation status, and major accomplishments of the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME Scheme).

#### **About Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme**

- The Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME) was **launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.**
- The scheme aims to **support and formalise India's unorganised micro food processing sector.**

#### **Need for the Scheme**

- India has nearly 25 lakh unregistered and informal food processing enterprises.
- The sector faced several challenges such as: Limited access to credit, Lack of modern technology, Poor branding and packaging, Weak quality standards, Inadequate market linkages
- Strengthening food processing is important for: **Reducing food wastage, Increasing farmers' income, Generating employment opportunities.**

#### **Objectives**

- Promote formalisation and modernization of micro food processing enterprises.
- Encourage sustainable growth through cooperatives, groups, and collective enterprises.
- Improve rural food processing infrastructure and entrepreneurship.

### **Financial Outlay and Duration**

- The centrally sponsored scheme has a **total outlay of ₹10,000 crore.**
- Initially approved for implementation from 2020–21 to 2024–25.
- The scheme has been extended until September 2026.

### **One District One Product (ODOP) Approach**

- The scheme follows the One District One Product (ODOP) model.
- It promotes **economies of scale in procurement, processing, and marketing.**
- Traditional and indigenous products receive focused support and market visibility.

### **Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) Scheme**

- **Context:** With the objective of making public Wi-Fi services across the country simpler, faster, and more easily accessible, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) introduced a series of reforms under the PM-WANI (Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) framework, designed to benefit citizens.

#### **Objective**

- The scheme aims to increase the proliferation of public Wi-Fi hotspots in the country particularly in rural areas in order to build a robust digital communication infrastructure.

#### **About the PM-WANI Scheme**

- The Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme was launched by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in December 2020.
- The scheme aims to **increase the proliferation of public Wi-Fi hotspots in the country particularly in rural areas in order to build a robust digital communication infrastructure.**
- Through improved access to public hotspots, the government aims to boost employment

opportunities for small and micro-entrepreneurs, and to provide internet access at affordable rates to the urban poor and rural households that currently lack adequate internet facilities.

- The scheme encourages local shops and establishments to provide Wi-Fi for "last-mile" internet delivery, without requiring any license or registration fees.

### **Components of the PM-WANI Ecosystem**

- **Public Data Office (PDO):** This entity will set up, maintain, and operate WANI-compliant Wi-Fi access points to provide broadband services to subscribers. No license is required from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- **Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA):** This acts as an aggregator for Public Data Offices and handles tasks related to authorization and accounting.
- **App Provider:** This develops an application to register users, detect WANI-compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in nearby areas, and display them within the app to facilitate access to internet services.
- **Central Registry:** This maintains the details of App Providers, Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs), and Public Data Offices (PDOs).

### **National Health Accounts figures indicate high burden of health care costs on people**

- **Context:** As per the latest figures from the **National Health Accounts (NHA) Estimates for India 2022-23, out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE)** is nearly half of the current health expenditure, and financial protection for health emergencies remains incomplete, though government and insurance spending has increased.
- The share of **Government Health Expenditure (GHE)** as a **per-centage of the GDP** has risen

from 1.15% in 2013-14 to 1.43% in 2022-23, and as per the new GDP series, it will be 1.48% in 2022-23.

- Stated that **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** and associated government health insurance schemes are **failing to provide substantial protection to people from high healthcare spending.**

#### **About Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)**

- Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) was introduced in **September 2018** as the flagship programme of the Ayushman Bharat mission.
- It is regarded as the **world's largest publicly funded health insurance scheme.**
- The scheme seeks to promote **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** and reduce the burden of huge medical expenses
- At the national level, the programme is **administered by the National Health Authority (NHA)** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, while State Health Agencies (SHAs) oversee implementation in respective states.

#### **Coverage and Financial Structure**

- PM-JAY offers health insurance coverage of up to **₹5 lakh per family annually.**
- It mainly includes **secondary and tertiary hospitalization care**, while outpatient primary care is excluded.
- The scheme covers expenses for up to **3 days before hospitalization**, including tests and consultations, and **up to 15 days after discharge for medicines and follow-up treatment.**

#### **Funding Pattern**

- PM-JAY functions as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with shared financial responsibility between the Centre and States:
  - 60:40** for regular States and Union Territories with legislatures.

- 90:10** for North-Eastern and Himalayan States.
- Full Central funding for Union Territories without legislatures.

#### **Eligibility and Beneficiaries**

- Initially, the programme targeted **nearly 12 crore poor and vulnerable families (around 55 crore people)**, representing the **bottom 40% of India's population.**
- Beneficiaries are selected using deprivation and occupational criteria listed in the **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011** for rural and urban households.
- The scheme places no restriction on family size, age, or gender, ensuring inclusion of women, children, and senior citizens.
- In **September 2024**, PM-JAY was widened to include **all individuals aged 70 years and above**, regardless of income or SECC category, through the **Ayushman Vay Vandana Card**, benefiting **around 6 crore elderly citizens.**
- Coverage was also extended to **ASHA workers, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs).**

#### **INDIA'S OUT-OF-POCKET HEALTH**



#### **Challenges Faced by PM-JAY**

- Restricted Coverage:** OPD treatment, medicines, and diagnostics outside hospitalization are not included, and some expensive procedures remain uncovered.
- Limited Hospital Participation:** Several

private hospitals hesitate to join due to low package rates, while public hospitals face overcrowding.

- **Fraudulent Practices:** Instances of fake beneficiaries, false claims, and unnecessary treatments have been reported.
- **Awareness and Access Issues:** Many eligible families are unaware of the scheme, and low digital literacy affects accessibility.
- **Financial Pressure:** Rising healthcare demand increases the fiscal burden on governments, with variations in implementation across states.
- **Healthcare Quality Concerns:** Lack of specialists and uneven standards of care across regions impact treatment outcomes.
- **Claim Settlement Delays:** Slow reimbursement processes and complicated paperwork discourage hospitals from active participation.

### **National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)**

- **Context :** A national workshop on oil palm development in the Northeast was held under the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP).

### **National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)**

- National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), approved in 2021 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, was launched to enhance domestic edible oil production by expanding oil palm cultivation and increasing Crude Palm Oil (CPO) output.
- The mission has a financial allocation of ₹11,040 crore.

#### **Key Features**

- **Price Protection:** The scheme introduced the Viability Price (VP) mechanism for the first time to shield farmers from fluctuations in global CPO prices.

- **Higher Financial Assistance:** Support for planting material was significantly increased from ₹12,000 per hectare to ₹29,000 per hectare, along with enhanced maintenance assistance.

- **Support for Rejuvenation:** Farmers are provided special aid of ₹250 per plant for rejuvenating old oil palm gardens.

- **Priority Regions:** The mission gives special attention to North-Eastern states as well as traditional oil palm growing states such as Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

#### **Major Targets**

- **Expansion of Cultivation Area:** Bring around 6.5 lakh hectares under oil palm plantations by 2025-26.

- **Production Goals:** Achieve CPO production of 11.20 lakh tonnes by 2025-26 and 28 lakh tonnes by 2029-30.

- **Consumption Objective:** Sustain edible oil consumption at 19 kg per person annually up to 2025-26.

#### **NeSDA Portal**

- **Context :** To strengthen digital governance in India, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has launched the 'NeSDA 2025' portal.

#### **About the NeSDA Portal**

- The National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) is a biennial (once every two years) framework used to assess the online service delivery of States, Union Territories, and selected Central Ministries.

- It is modeled after the United Nations (UN) Online Service Index (OSI) and has been customized to suit India's federal structure.

- The framework evaluates the availability, accessibility, and overall maturity of e-governance services from a citizen-centric perspective.

- NeSDA serves as a benchmarking tool to enhance service delivery and promote best practices among various government entities.
- This assessment covers key sectors such as: Finance, Labour and Employment, Education, Local Governance and Utilities, Social Welfare (including Health, Agriculture, and Home Security), Environment, Tourism, Public Grievances, Transport and Travel.
- The scheme covers 1.16 million schools, over 156 million students and 5.7 million Teachers of Govt. and Aided schools
- The major objectives of the Scheme are
  - Provision of quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students;
  - Bridging Social and Gender Gaps in School Education;
  - Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education;
  - Support States in implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

### Education Minister reviews fund utilisation under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan

- **Context:** Union Education Minister held a detailed review meeting on fund release and utilisation under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, with a focus on making Samagra Shiksha 3.0 more efficient, transparent and outcome-oriented.
- Union Minister said that an integrated approach through the convergence of key schemes, including Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), PM-POSHAN (Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman), ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society), PM-SHRI (Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India) and other flagship programmes, will be undertaken from this year.

### About Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan

- Samagra Shiksha is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.
- **Period:** 1st April 2021 to 31st March, 2026.
- The scheme has been prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.
- It subsumes the three Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) and was launched in 2018.

### Salient Features:

- It aims to ensure that all children have access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment.
- The main emphasis of the Scheme is on improving quality of school education by focussing on the two T's - Teacher and Technology.
- The fund sharing pattern for the scheme between Centre and States
  - 90:10 for North-Eastern States
  - 60:40 for all other States and Union Territories with Legislature
  - 100% centrally sponsored for Union Territories without Legislature.
- The revised Samagra Shiksha Scheme includes new measures based on the recommendations of NEP 2020 to improve school education and make learning more accessible, inclusive, and effective.

### Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme

- **Context:** Union Electronics and Information Technology Minister has said that the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme is delivering encouraging results.
- Union Electronics and Information Technology Minister said that Thiruvananthapuram-

based semiconductor **start-up** Netrasemi has developed the **country's first Edge AI System-on-Chip, NETRA A2000, using an advanced 12-nanometre technology node.**

### **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme**

- DLI Scheme was launched in **December 2021** as part of the **India Semiconductor Mission**
- It aims to **offer financial incentives** as well as **design infrastructure support** across various stages of development and deployment of semiconductor design.
- **Target Segments:** Semiconductor design for Integrated Circuits (ICs), Chipsets, System on Chips (SoCs), Systems & IP Cores and semiconductor-linked design.
- **Nodal agency:** C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing), operating under MeitY.
- **Aim:** To nurture at least **20 domestic companies** involved in **semiconductor design** and facilitate them to achieve turnover of more than **Rs.1500 Crore in 5 years.**

### **AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION**

- **Context:**The **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**, implemented by the **National Health Authority (NHA)**, has crossed the landmark milestone of **90 crore Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHAs)** across the country.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said that the achievement marks a major step in **India's journey towards a connected, interoperable and citizen-centric digital health ecosystem**

### **About Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**

- It aims to develop the backbone to support the **integrated digital health infrastructure of the country** to bridge the existing gap amongst different stakeholders of Healthcare ecosystem through digital highways.

### **Objectives**

- To build modern and advanced digital healthcare infrastructure.
- To develop registries that act as a **single, reliable source of health data.**
- To ensure the use of common open standards by all digital health stakeholders.
- To create a secure system for maintaining personal health records.

### **Components**

- Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR)
  - A **central database of healthcare professionals.**
  - Covers practitioners from both modern and traditional systems of medicine.
- Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) Number
  - A unique **14-digit number** generated through **self-registration.**
  - Used to **identify and authenticate individuals.**
- ABHA App
  - A **Personal Health Records (PHR)** application.
- Individuals have full control over their health information.
- Health Facility Registry (HFR)
  - A national database of healthcare facilities.
  - Includes public and private hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, diagnostic labs, imaging centres, and other health institutions.
- Unified Health Interface (UHI)
  - An **open platform for digital health services.**
  - Connects patients with healthcare service providers (HSPs).
  - Supports services such as appointment booking, teleconsultation, and healthcare service discovery.

### Implementation & Governance

- **Implementing Agency:** National Health Authority (NHA).
- **Voluntary Participation:** The scheme including the creation of the ABHA ID is strictly voluntary for citizens.

### PM SVANidhi Scheme (Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi)

- **Context:** PM SVANidhi Completes Six Years of Empowering Street Vendors Through Access to Affordable Credit and Social Security.
- Over the last six years, **more than 75.5 lakh street vendors** across the country have benefited under PM SVANidhi.
- The scheme has also recorded a **20% annual increase** in average beneficiary incomes.

### About PM SVANidhi

- **PM SVANidhi (Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched in **June 2020** by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** to provide collateral-free working capital loans to street vendors.
- The scheme has been **extended until March 2030**.

### Key Features

- Provides loans without requiring any collateral.
- Follows a three-stage loan structure:
  - **First Loan:** Up to ₹15,000
  - **Second Loan:** Up to ₹25,000
  - **Third Loan:** Up to ₹50,000
- Vendors who repay loans on time receive a **7% interest subsidy**, which is credited directly to their bank accounts every quarter.
- Beneficiaries who successfully repay the second loan can avail a **UPI-linked RuPay Credit Card** for easy access to credit.

- Encourages digital payments by offering **cashback rewards up to ₹1,600** on eligible transactions.

### Implementation

- Implemented jointly by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)**.
- The implementing agency is the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**.

### Coverage

- Initially launched for street vendors in statutory towns.
- Later expanded to include vendors in **census towns** and **peri-urban areas**.

### Proposed 'Kill Switch' and On/Off Facility

- **Context:** To protect users from digital payment frauds and scams, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** is exploring the introduction of a mechanism known as a **"Kill Switch."**
- To enhance customer safety and control, the RBI has also proposed an **"On/Off"** facility for all digital payment modes.

### About the Kill Switch

- A Kill Switch is an emergency mechanism that allows for the immediate blocking or deactivation of a system, account, or service under specific circumstances.
- Under this proposal, users may be provided with an emergency option within banking or payment applications to immediately freeze all financial transactions if they suspect fraudulent activity.

### Need for the Freezing Mechanism

- Online arrest scams and online financial frauds are on the rise.
- Fraudsters often pose as police or law enforcement officials via video calls, threatening victims with fake legal proceedings.

- Victims are coerced into sending money to avoid arrest or investigation.
- It is reported that such scams have resulted in financial losses amounting to nearly ₹3,000 crore across India.

### **Benefits of the Kill Switch**

- **Facilitates the immediate suspension of financial transfers.**
- Helps prevent financial losses in instances where fraudulent attempts are suspected.
- Provides customers with an emergency safety tool.
- Strengthens trust in digital payment systems.

### **Enable/Disable Facility**

- The Reserve Bank of India proposes to extend the existing card control feature to all digital payment channels.
- Customers will be able to enable or disable payment services whenever required.

### **Benefits**

- Greater control for customers over digital transactions.
- Reduced risk of unauthorized transactions and fraud.
- Enhanced security and consumer protection.
- Improved flexibility in managing banking services.

### **PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana**

- **Context: Minister for New and Renewable Energy** said that on the 29th of this month, India has achieved the highest-ever single-day record of 15 thousand rooftop solar installations across the country under **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana**.
- Also informed that **Maharashtra** has emerged as a leading contributor to this success by registering a record **4,700 rooftop solar installations in one day**.

### **About PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana**

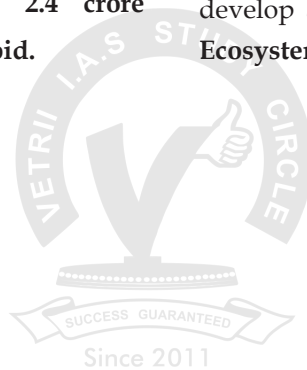
- The **PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana** is a **Central Sector Scheme** introduced by the Government of India in **2024**.
- It is regarded as the **largest residential rooftop solar programme** in the world.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The scheme is overseen by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**.
- **Duration:** It is being implemented from **FY 2023–24 to FY 2026–27**.
- **Purpose:** The initiative aims to promote the widespread adoption of rooftop solar systems in households and contribute to India's transition towards clean and sustainable energy.
- **Goal:** Installation of rooftop solar systems in **1 crore residential homes** by 2026–27.
- **Electricity Benefit:** Beneficiary households can receive up to **300 units of electricity free of cost every month**.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
  - The applicant must be an Indian citizen.
  - The household should own a house with adequate rooftop space for solar panel installation.
  - A valid electricity connection is mandatory.
  - The household should not have previously availed any government subsidy for rooftop solar installations.
- **Implementation Mechanism**
  - At the national level, the scheme is coordinated by the **National Programme Implementation Agency (NPIA)**.
  - At the state level, implementation is carried out through electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs) or State Power/Energy Departments acting as **State Implementation Agencies (SIAs)**.

## Digi YATRA project

- **Context** : Union Minister for Civil Aviation, has congratulated the Digi Yatra Team for enabling over 10 crore seamless journeys through the Digi Yatra App.
- The Minister further informed that currently, **Digi Yatra is active at 38 airports, and by next year, 27 more airports** will be enabled with the application.
- Also, said that the Digi Yatra platform stands as one of the most successful digital innovations in global aviation currently.
- The app has witnessed over **2.4 crore downloads** across iOS and Android.

## About Digi Yatra project

- The Digi Yatra project was officially launched on **December 1, 2022**
- Digi Yatra provides a **hassle-free, paperless airport travel experience** by eliminating the need for repeated identity verification at various checkpoints.
- Every traveller is issued a **distinct Digi Yatra ID** for seamless authentication during the journey.
- **Enrollment in the Digi Yatra system** is entirely optional and based on the passenger's choice.
- The **Digi Yatra Foundation (DYF)** has been established as a joint venture organization to develop and operate the **Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem**.



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### International Day of Light

- International Day of Light is observed annually on **16 May**.
- It commemorates the **first successful operation of the laser in 1960 by physicist and engineer Theodore Maiman**.
- Theme for this year: **“Light for a Sustainable Future”**, focusing on sustainability through light-based technologies.

### National Dengue Day

- **National Dengue Day** is observed in India every year on **May 16**.
- This day was officially declared by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- The main objective of this day is to **raise awareness about dengue disease** and to strengthen preventive measures before the onset of the monsoon season.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare observes the month of July as **‘Anti-Dengue Month’**.
- The official theme for National Dengue Day 2026 is: **“Unite. Act. Eliminate.”**

### International Museum Day

- International Museum Day 2026 will be observed globally on **May 18, 2026**.
- 2026 theme is **“Museums Uniting a Divided World”**.

### Sikkim's 51st Statehood Day

- Sikkim's 51st Statehood Day was celebrated on **May 16th**.
- Sikkim, which was formerly a monarchy, was integrated as a **full-fledged state of India on May 16, 1975**.

- The **35th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1974** granted Sikkim a unique status as an **"Associate State."** This was a constitutional category utilized only once.

- The **36th Constitutional Amendment Act**, enacted on **May 16, 1975**, officially made **Sikkim the 22nd state of India**.

- **Article 371F** was inserted to provide special constitutional guarantees safeguarding Sikkim's cultural identity, laws, and land rights.

- In 2016, by converting over **76,000 hectares of land to chemical-free farming**, Sikkim became the world's first **100% organic farming state**.

### World AIDS Vaccine Day

- World AIDS Vaccine Day 2026 is observed on **May 18** to raise awareness regarding HIV vaccine research and the global fight against AIDS.

### World Bee Day

- World Bee Day 2026 will be observed on **May 20, 2026**.
- The theme for this year is: **“Bee together for people and the planet.”**

### World Metrology Day

- World Metrology Day is celebrated annually on **May 20**, commemorating the anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875.
- The theme for World Metrology Day 2026 is: **"Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making"**.

### Anti-Terrorism Day

- **Anti-Terrorism Day to be Observed on 21st May**.
- The day commemorates the assassination of former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi on 1991**.

- The objective behind the observance of Anti-Terrorism Day is to wean away the people from terrorism and violence.

### World day for cultural diversity

- Held every year on **21 May**, the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development celebrates not only the richness of the world's cultures, but also the essential role of intercultural dialogue for achieving peace and sustainable development.
- **The United Nations General Assembly first declared this World Day in 2002**, following UNESCO's adoption of the **2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity**.

### International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB)

- IDB is celebrated on **22 May** annually to commemorate the adoption of the text of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**.
- **"Acting locally for global impact"** is the theme of the 2026 edition of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB).

### World Turtle Day

- May 23 is observed worldwide as **World Turtle Day**, a day dedicated to raising awareness about turtles and tortoises and promoting their conservation.
- The theme for World Turtle Day 2026 is **"Dancing Turtles Rock!"**

### World Thyroid Day

- Every year on **May 25**, the world marks World Thyroid Day to spread awareness about thyroid health and highlight the increasing prevalence of thyroid-related disorders across the globe.

### World Football Day

- **World Football Day** is observed globally on **25 May** every year.
- The game brings together people from different nations, cultures and generations beyond geographical boundaries

### World Dugong Day

- 'World Dugong Day' is observed annually on **May 28th** with the aim of raising global awareness regarding the conservation of dugongs (marine mammals also known as sea cows) and their vulnerable coastal habitats.
- The official theme for World Dugong Day is: **"A Decade Beneath the Waves: Dugongs & Us."**
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) officially recognised **India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay, Tamil Nadu**, during the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

### Key Points

- The reserve was officially notified in **September 2022 under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- This is India's first marine reserve dedicated to conserving dugongs, a vulnerable marine mammal species.
- Dugongs (Dugong dugon) are marine mammals listed as **Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List**.
- The **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**, provides the legal framework for such conservation reserves in India.

### World Hunger Day

- 'World Hunger Day' is observed annually on **May 28th** to raise awareness regarding global food insecurity and to inspire grassroots-level actions aimed at eradicating hunger.

- The theme for World Hunger Day 2026 is: **"The End of Hunger is in Our Hands."**
- It was on this day in **1987** that **Goa was granted full statehood and became the 25th state of the Indian Union.**

### **International Mount Everest Day**

- Every year the International Mount Everest Day is celebrated on **May 29.**
- This was enacted by the **56th Constitution Amendment Act.**
- The theme for the Everest Summiters Summit held in celebration of International Everest Day is **"Uniting Voices for the Future of the Himalaya".**

### **World No Tobacco Day**

### **Goa Statehood Day**

- Goa is celebrating its Statehood Day on **May 30.**
- World No Tobacco Day is being observed on **May 31** to raise awareness against the dangers of using tobacco.
- The day is a global initiative by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to end the use of tobacco.
- The theme for this year is **Unmasking the appeal - Countering nicotine and tobacco addiction.**
- Goa, along with Daman and Diu, was incorporated into the Indian Union and made a Union Territory by the Twelfth Amendment Act of 1962.



## REPORTS & INDICES

### Freedom of the Press in India

- **Context:** According to the 2025 report published by 'International IDEA', global press freedom has de-clined to its lowest level in the last 50 years.
- Similarly, the 'World Press Freedom Index 2026' has noted that the environment for press freedom is currently at its weakest point in the last 25 years.

### Constitutional Protection

- In India, freedom of the press is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution; rather, it is considered an integral part of the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a).
- Article 361A provides protection for the fair and substantially accurate reporting of the proceedings of Parliament and State Legislatures.

### Judicial Recognition

- The Supreme Court of India has repeatedly affirmed that freedom of the press is an essential component of Article 19(1)(a).
- In cases such as Ramesh Thapar vs. State of Madras and Indian Express Newspapers vs. Union of India, the Court has emphasized the critical importance of a free press within a democratic framework.
- India's Position in Global Rankings
- In the 'World Press Freedom Index 2026', India ranked 157th out of 180 countries; furthermore, it was categorized under the "very serious" category.
- However, the Government of India has consistently rejected these international rankings, arguing that they are biased and do not accurately reflect the actual ground realities prevailing in the country.

### India's Fertility Rate Drops below Replacement Level

- **Context:** According to the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) report for 2024, India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) defined as the average number of children born to a woman has declined further, **dropping from 2.1 to 1.9.**

### Fertility Rates in Most Indian States Have Fallen Below Replacement Level

- With the exception of six states **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand** the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has dropped below the replacement level in all other states.
- The rate is **lowest in Delhi (1.2)**, followed by Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, where the Total Fertility Rate stands at 1.3.
- **A Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2.1 is referred to as the "replacement level."** This is because if a woman bears an average of 2.1 children over her lifetime, this is sufficient to replace herself and her husband.
- An analysis of the percentage change observed in the decade preceding this report reveals that Bihar has experienced the smallest decline in its Total Fertility Rate (TFR). **The TFR in Bihar, which stood at 3.2 during 2012-14, dropped to 2.9 during 2022-24 a decline of merely 9.4%.**
- The Total Fertility Rate remains relatively high in two states: **Chhattisgarh and Assam.** These states witnessed a comparatively modest decline of 11.5% and 13%, respectively.

### National Family Health Survey-6 (2023-24)

- **Background:** The National Family Health Survey-6 (2023-24) has been released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- This survey was conducted during the year 2023-24.
- **Nodal Agency:** International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS).

- **Survey Coverage:** The survey was conducted across approximately **6.79 lakh households in 715 districts**.
- **Utility:** It provides **district-level data regarding population, health, nutrition, and family welfare indicators**.
- **Rotavirus Vaccine:** Coverage for this vaccine has increased significantly, rising from 36.4 percent to 85.4 percent.
- **Measles Vaccine:** Coverage for the second dose of the measles vaccine has increased from 58.6 percent to 71.8 percent.

### **Maternal and Child Health**

- **Institutional Deliveries:** Increased from 88.6 percent to 90.6 percent.
- **Antenatal Care (ANC):** The proportion of pregnant women receiving antenatal care increased from 92.6 percent to 95.9 percent.
- **First Trimester Care:** The number of mothers receiving ANC care within the first three months (first trimester) of pregnancy increased from 70.0 percent to 76.2 percent.
- **Minimum Care:** The number of mothers who underwent at least four ANC check-ups increased from 58.5 percent to 65.2 percent.
- **Skilled Deliveries:** Deliveries conducted in the presence of skilled health personnel increased from 89.4 percent to 91.3 percent.
- **Postnatal Care:** The proportion of mothers receiving care within two days of delivery increased from 79.1 percent to 85.3 percent.
- **Family Planning**
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** India's Total Fertility Rate remains stable at 2.0.
- **Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR):** This has increased from 66.7 percent to 69.1 percent.

### **Immunization**

- **Full Immunization:** Full immunization coverage for children aged 12 to 23 months has increased from 83.8 percent to 87.1 percent.
- **Minimum Immunization:** More than 96 percent of children have received at least one vaccine dose.
- **Role of Government Hospitals:** 95.6 percent of children received the majority of their vaccinations through government health facilities.

### **Child Nutrition**

- **Stunting:** The prevalence of stunting among children under five years of age has decreased from 35.5 percent to 29.3 percent.
- **Severe Wasting:** This has decreased from 7.7 percent to 5.2 percent.
- **Underweight:** The rate for underweight children has declined slightly, from 32.1 percent to 31.8 percent.
- **Complementary Feeding:** The provision of complementary food to children aged 6 to 8 months has increased from 45.9 percent to 59.5 percent.
- **Health Insurance Coverage**
- **Insurance Reach:** The proportion of families covered under health insurance or medical financing schemes has increased from 41.0 percent to 60.2 percent.
- **The "Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana" (PM-JAY) scheme** has been a key driver behind this significant growth.

### **Women's Empowerment and Financial Inclusion**

- **Internet Usage:** The percentage of women who have ever used the internet has doubled, rising from 33.3 percent to 64.3 percent.
- **Bank Accounts:** The proportion of women who independently operate their own bank accounts has increased from 78.6 percent to 89.0 percent.
- **Mobile Phone Usage:** The percentage of women who own and use a mobile phone has risen from 53.9 percent to 63.6 percent.
- **Menstrual Hygiene:** Among women aged 15 to 24, the use of hygienic menstrual protection methods has increased from 77.6 percent to 79.2 percent.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### The Library Man of India: The Story of P.N. Panicker

- **Context:** Vice President releases book on P.N. Panicker, stresses need to rebuild reading habits.

- Released the book **The Library Man of India: The Story of P.N. Panicker** authored by P. P. Sathyan at Uprashtrapati Bhavan.
- The Vice President paid tribute to P.N. Panicker, describing him as a visionary who transformed millions of lives through the power of books and knowledge.

## AWARDS & HONOURS

### PM Receives Sweden's Royal Honour

- Prime Minister has been conferred Sweden's distinguished Royal Order of the Polar Star, Commander Grand Cross, one of the country's highest civilian honours.

### Prime Minister Conferred with Norway's Highest Award

- Having concluded his visit to Sweden, the **Prime Minister arrived in Oslo**, the capital of Norway, yesterday. On this occasion, **King Harald** conferred upon the Prime Minister Norway's highest honor, the "**Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit.**"

### International Booker Prize 2026

- Taiwanese author **Yáng Shuāng-zi** and translator **Lin King** won the International Booker Prize.
- **Taiwan Travelogue** wins **International Booker Prize 2026**, a historical romance set in Japan-occupied Taiwan in the 1930s.
- Ms. Yáng and Ms. Lin will split the **£50,000** prize.

### Agricola Medal

- The prestigious Agricola Medal was **presented to the Prime Minister** at the headquarters of the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** in Rome, Italy.

# INTERNATIONAL

## Return of the Chola-era Anaimangalam Plates to India

- **Context:** The Chola-era copper plates, known as the Anaimangalam Plates, have been returned to India from the Netherlands.
- The plates were in the possession of Leiden University since 1862. The return ceremony took place in The Hague.
- **The Anaimangalam Copper Plates - A Testament to Chola Glory and Religious Harmony.**

### Historical Importance

- The plates are important royal charters from the Chola period.
- They provide key information about relations between the Chola Empire and the Srivijaya Empire.

### Historical Importance of the Plates

- The plates belong to the reign of Rajendra Chola I.
- They contain a royal order originally issued by Raja Raja Chola I.
- The inscription granted the village of Anaimangalam as Pallichchandam to support:
  - The Chudamani Vihara, a Buddhist monastery in Nagapattinam.
- They document royal grants issued during the reigns of: Raja Raja Chola I, Rajendra Chola I, Kulottunga Chola I
- They provide evidence of: Chola administration, Maritime diplomacy,

Religious harmony, Links between Tamil Nadu and Southeast Asia.

### Raja Raja Chola I and the Buddhist Vihara

- The plates record Raja Raja Chola I's grant of land at Anaimangalam village to support a Buddhist monastery in Nagapattinam.
- During the 21st regnal year of the Great Emperor Rajaraja Chola I (corresponding to 1005 CE), the village of Anaimangalam—spanning an area of 97 velis (a traditional land measure) was granted verbally as Pallichchandam (a land endowment bestowed upon religious institutions).
- The vihara was constructed by: Sri Mara Vijayotunga Varman of Java the King of the Srivijaya-Kedah Empire.
- This land grant was bestowed upon the Buddhist monastery known as the 'Chudamani Varma Vihara,' situated in Nagapattinam.
- The vihara was also known as: Raja Raja Cholan Perumpalli during Rajendra Chola I's reign.

### Delayed Formal Documentation

- Although the announcement regarding this land grant was made during Rajaraja Chola's own reign, the corresponding epigraphic record was not formally drafted until his passing in 1014 CE.
- The official written document formalizing this grant was finally created during the reign of his son, who succeeded him on the throne.

### Role of Rajendra Chola I

- Though Raja Raja Chola I issued the original order, it was implemented by Rajendra Chola I.
- The larger Leiden plates contain: Five Sanskrit plates and Sixteen Tamil plates.

- All these copper plates are strung together by means of a bronze ring.
- These plates formally recorded the royal grant.
- Religious harmony
- Administrative excellence
- International diplomatic relations and trade

### **Additional Grants by Kulottunga Chola I**

- Smaller plates mention further grants made by **Kulottunga Chola I to the Buddhist sangha.**
- After requests from emissaries of the Javanese kingdom: Kulottunga granted 4,500 kalam of paddy and additional land.
- This was in addition to Raja Raja Chola I's earlier grant of 8,943 kalam of paddy.
- **The cultural richness of the Chola Empire.**

### **Destruction of the Vihara**

- The Chulamanivarma Vihara's tower was demolished in **1867 by Jesuit priests with permission from the colonial Madras government.**

### **The inscriptions highlight:**

- Maritime diplomacy
- Trade and cultural exchange
- Religious coexistence between Hindu and Buddhist institutions
- Indian Ocean connections during the 11th Century

### **Discovery and Removal**

- The plates were reportedly lost around 300 years ago.
- Investigations revealed that they were likely excavated **in Nagapattinam between 1687 and 1700 by the Dutch East India Company (VOC).**
- They were removed from India without the consent of the rightful owners.

### **India's Efforts for Repatriation**

- In 2023, the Indian government formally requested the return of the plates.
- The Dutch Colonial Collections Committee concluded that: The plates were removed involuntarily. India had rightful ownership.
- Leiden University accepted the recommendation for unconditional return.

### **Future Custody**

- The plates will be **handed over to the Archaeological Survey of India.**

### **Chola Royal Insignia on the Plates**

- The plates are bound together by a royal ring bearing Chola symbols:
  - Tiger - emblem of the Cholas
  - Two fish -symbol of the Pandyas
  - Bow - symbol of the Cheras
  - Royal parasol
  - Lamps
  - Chamaras
  - Swastika
- The inclusion of Pandya and Chera symbols signified Chola victory over those kingdoms.

### **A Symbol of Religious Tolerance**

- Rajaraja Chola I was a **staunch devotee of Shaivism.**
- Despite this, he donated an **entire village to support a Buddhist monastery.**
- This act stands as **powerful testimony to the religious harmony and tolerance practiced by Tamil monarchs during the Chola era.**

### **Historical Significance of the Anaimangalam Copper Plates**

- The Anaimangalam copper plates serve as a historical mirror, reflecting the following aspects:
  - The benevolence of Tamil monarchs

- The ASI will decide where the artefacts will be preserved and exhibited in India.

### Quad Meeting and Indo-Pacific Cooperation

- **Context:** Japan's Foreign Minister reaffirmed that the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) continues to remain an important strategic platform despite concerns regarding its declining relevance.

#### Critical Minerals as Top Agenda

- Cooperation in **critical minerals** required for green energy and advanced technologies will be a major focus of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting.
- Japan is already collaborating with India on critical mineral projects.

#### Quad Summit Preparations

- The meeting will also help prepare for the next Quad Summit, which has not taken place since 2024 because of tensions between India and the United States.

#### About QUAD

- The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, commonly called the Quad, is a strategic partnership involving four nations – **India, United States, Japan, and Australia.**
- The main objective of the Quad is **to strengthen regional stability, security, and economic collaboration across the Indo-Pacific region.**

- The grouping regularly conducts ministerial and summit-level meetings to deliberate on issues such as maritime safety, infrastructure connectivity, emerging technologies, and resilient supply chains.

- The **Quad first emerged in 2007** during informal discussions held alongside the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meetings.

- Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe played a key role in proposing the formation of the grouping.

- In 2012, Shinzo Abe introduced the idea of the "Democratic Security Diamond," envisioning strategic cooperation among India, Japan, the United States, and Australia in the Indo-Pacific.

- In 2017, officials from the four countries held the **first revived Quad discussions in Manila on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit.**

- In 2020, the **India-US-Japan Malabar Naval Exercise was expanded to include Australia.**

- This marked the first formal military engagement of all four Quad nations together since the grouping's revival and their first combined naval exercise in more than ten years.

- In 2021, the leaders of the Quad countries met virtually and issued a joint declaration titled "**The Spirit of the Quad.**"

## SPORTS & GAMES

- **Gurindervir Singh** created history by becoming the **fastest sprinter from India** after recording an **impressive time of 10.09 seconds** in the men's 100-metre final at the Federation Cup held in Ranchi.

## EMINENT PERSONALITIES

### Iyothee Thassar – Important Points

- **Context:**Tamil nadu Chief Minister paid floral tributes to the statue of social reformer Pandit Iyothee Thassar at Gandhi Mandapam in Chennai on the occasion of his 181 birth anniversary.

### Early and Political Activity

- Ayothidasa was born on May 20, 1845, under the name '**Kathavarayan**'.
- Later, he adopted the name 'Ayothidasa' in honor of his teacher.
- He mastered Siddha medicine through his family's traditional lineage.
- Ayothidasa was a multifaceted personality who excelled as a writer, journalist, social reformer, Siddha physician, Tamil scholar, and Buddhist scholar.
- To propagate ideas of social reform, he published and edited the journal *Tamizhan* for eight years.
- During the 1870s, he mobilized indigenous communities—including the Todas living in the Nilgiri Hills—and fostered ideas related to the freedom movement.
- In 1891, in collaboration with Rettamalai Srinivasan, he founded the "Dravida Mahajana Sabha."
- At the **Nilgiri Conference held in 1892:**
  - He put forward the demand for reservation.
  - He advocated for representational rights for oppressed communities.
- He emphasized equal rights for men and women.
- He championed widow remarriage, vocational education for women, and reservation and equal rights for women.
- In 1898, he established the "Sakya Buddhist Society" in Madras and subsequently set up its branches across South India.
- In June 1907, he launched the journal *Oru Paisa Tamizhan* to coordinate the activities of this organization.
- He is hailed as the "Father of South Indian Social Reform."
- Pandit Ayothidasa's birth anniversary is celebrated annually as a state event by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- He vehemently opposed Brahmanism, Vedic rituals, untouchability, and caste-based discrimination.
- His grandfather, Kandappan, was a renowned Tamil scholar and a Siddha physician.
- Kandappan preserved a palm-leaf manuscript of the *Thirukkural*.
- During his time in Ooty, he established the '*Advaitananda Sabha*' to propagate the philosophy of Advaita.
- He maintained close ties with Henry Steel Olcott and John Rathinam.
- He strove tirelessly for the educational advancement of oppressed communities.
- He played a pivotal role in the formation of the '*Dravidar Kazhagam*' in 1882.
- In 1885, he launched a periodical titled *Dravida Pandiyan*.

### Journals of Depressed Classes

- During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many Tamil journals were published by intellectuals from the Depressed Classes in Tamil Nadu.
- Suriyodayam (1869), Panchama (1871), Sugirdavasani (1877), Dravidapandian / Dravidan (1885), Dravidamitran (1885), Anror Mitran (1886), Mahavikatatoothan (1888), Dravida Kokilam (1907), *Tamilan* (1907)

### **Ideologies of Iyothee Thassar**

- These journals became important platforms for Dalit social and political awareness.
- Iyothee Thassar believed that social change was more important than political change.
- He worked towards creating a society without caste discrimination.
- He is considered one of the earliest leaders of the Dravidian movement.
- He is regarded as the first modern revolutionary leader of the Dalit community.
- He became the earliest well-known anti-Brahmin leader in the Madras Presidency.
- He described Dalits as “Casteless Dravidians” because they existed outside the Hindu caste system.

### **Raja Ram Mohan Roy**

#### **Introduction**

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833) was a renowned Indian social reformer, scholar, and the founder of the Brahmo Samaj.
- Due to his pioneering role in shaping modern Indian society, he is widely regarded as the “Father of the Indian Renaissance.” He was born on May 22, 1772, in Radhanagar.

#### **Establishment of the Atmiya Sabha**

- In 1814, he established the Atmiya Sabha in Kolkata as a forum for intellectual discussions aimed at combating prevalent social evils such as idol worship, caste discrimination, and meaningless rituals.

#### **Struggle Against the Practice of Sati**

- One of Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s greatest achievements was his resolute struggle against the cruel practice known as Sati.
- As a result of his efforts, Sati was abolished in 1829 under Governor-General Lord William Bentinck through Regulation XVII.

#### **Women’s Rights and Social Reform**

- Roy strongly opposed child marriage and

polygamy. Furthermore, he consistently advocated for women’s rights and female education.

#### **Religious Reform Ideas**

- His religious views were rooted in monotheism and rational thought.
- In 1803, he authored the work **Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin** to promote the concept of a single God and rational religious beliefs.

#### **Brahma Sabha and Brahmo Samaj.**

- In 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the **Brahma Sabha**, a reformist movement that rejected idol worship and promoted rationalism, humanism, and social equality. It later came to be known as the Brahmo Samaj.

#### **Other Reformist Organizations**

- Roy also established several other reformist organizations, including the **Atmiya Sabha (1815)** and the **Calcutta Unitarian Committee (1821)**.

#### **Contributions to Education**

- In 1822, he founded the **Anglo-Hindu School**, which combined traditional Indian educational systems with Western science and humanities.
- Later, in 1825, he established the **Vedanta College**, where both Indian philosophy and modern scientific subjects were taught.

#### **Contributions to Journalism**

- Roy actively utilized the field of journalism to disseminate his reformist ideas.
- Following the relaxation of press restrictions by Lord Hastings in 1819, he launched several publications, including **The Brahmanical Magazine (1821)**, **Samvad Kaumudi (1821)**, and **Mirat-ul-Akhbar**.

#### **Political and Economic Reforms**

- Politically, Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed oppressive British policies and advocated for administrative reforms.
- Furthermore, he criticized the exploitative practices of the Zamindars (landlords) of

Bengal and demanded the fixation of fair minimum rents.

### Views on Christianity

- While he appreciated the moral teachings of Jesus Christ, he rejected the concept of Christ as an incarnation of God. In his book **The Precepts of Jesus (1820)**, he distinguished the ethical teachings of Christianity from its miraculous narratives.

### The Split of the Brahmo Samaj

- The Brahmo Samaj subsequently split into **two branches in 1866**: the **Brahmo Samaj of India**, led by Keshav Chandra Sen, and the **Adi Brahmo Samaj**, led by Debendranath Tagore. Other notable leaders associated with this movement included Rabindranath Tagore and Pandit Shivanath Shastri.

### Literary Works

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy authored several significant literary works, including **Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin (1804)**, **Vedanta Grantha (1815)**, translations of the Upanishads, **A Defence of Hindu Theism (1820)**, **The Precepts of Jesus (1820)**, **Bengali Grammar (1826)**, **The Universal Religion (1829)**, and **The History of Indian Philosophy (1829)**.

### Journey to England and Demise

- In 1830, he traveled to England as the unofficial envoy of the Mughal Emperor, where he received acclaim from the Unitarians and **King William**.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy **passed away in Bristol in 1833 due to a fever**. He was laid to rest at that very location.

### Rash Behari Bose

- Context**: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of the great revolutionary Rash Behari Bose, the Union Home Minister paid his tributes to him.

### About Rash Behari Bose

- Rash Behari Bose was an Indian **revolutionary**

**leader and freedom fighter** who actively struggled against British rule, both within India and abroad.

- He was born on May 25, 1886, in the Burdwan district, currently located in West Bengal.
- While studying at Duplex College in Chandannagar (which was a French colony at the time), he was deeply inspired by the French Revolution (1789).

### Key Contributions

- Alipore Bomb Case (1908)**: He left Bengal to evade the investigation related to this case.
- Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy Case (1912)**: He helped plan the bomb attack on Viceroy Lord Hardinge; Hardinge was severely injured in this attack.
- Ghadar Mutiny (1915)**: During the First World War, he served as a key organizer of the 'Ghadar' uprising, which aimed to incite a mutiny within the Indian Army.
- Indian Independence League (IIL)**: He convened conferences in Tokyo and Bangkok to establish and expand this organization.
- Azad Hind Fauj (INA)**: In 1942, he helped structure the 'Indian National Army' (INA) as the military wing of the Indian Independence League.
- Handover of Responsibility to Netaji**: Recognizing that Netaji possessed the capability to lead the final offensive against British rule, he entrusted the leadership of both the Indian Independence League (IIL) and the Indian National Army (INA) to Subhash Chandra Bose in 1943.

### Awards and Legacy

- He received the '**Order of the Rising Sun' (Second Class) award from the Government of Japan**.
- To honor his memory, the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department issued a **commemorative postage stamp in 1967**.

- Demise: Rash Behari Bose passed away on January 21, 1945, due to tuberculosis.

## Jawaharlal Nehru

### Early Life and Education

- Jawaharlal Nehru was born on **November 14, 1889**, in Allahabad.
- His father, **Motilal Nehru**, served as the **President of the Indian National Congress** on two occasions.
- He studied law at the **Inner Temple in London** and became a barrister in 1912.

### Contribution to the Indian Freedom Struggle

- After returning to India in 1912, he joined the Indian National Movement under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi.
- He participated in the **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22)** and was arrested in 1921.
- In 1940, he was selected as the **second Individual Satyagrahi**, following Vinoba Bhave.
- During the Quit India Movement, on August 7, 1942, he moved the **“Quit India” resolution in Bombay**.
- During the INA trials (1945–46), he joined forces with **Bhulabhai Desai and Asaf Ali** to assist in the defense of the INA soldiers.

### Congress Leadership

- He became the President of the Congress at the **Lahore Session in 1929**.
- Under his leadership, the Congress adopted the historic **“Purna Swaraj” (Complete Independence) resolution in 1929**.
- At the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress held in 1936, he spoke in **support of socialism**.
- In 1937, he presided over the **Faizpur Session**, which was the first Congress session to be held in a rural setting. Interim Government and Assumption of Office as Prime Minister

- Became the **Prime Minister of the Interim Government in 1946**.

- Served as the **first Prime Minister of independent India from 1947 to 1964**.
- Continued as Prime Minister even **after India became a Republic in 1950**.
- Promoted democracy, secularism, socialism, and a scientific temper.

### Economic and Social Policies

- Introduced a **mixed economy model following independence in 1947**.
- **Prioritized heavy industries, dams, and public sector** undertakings during the First and Second Five-Year Plans.

### Foreign Policy

- Played a pivotal role in the formation of the **Non-Aligned Movement in 1961**.

### Defense and Nuclear Policy

- Supervised the integration of Hyderabad into India through **‘Operation Polo’ in 1948**.
- Led the liberation of Goa from Portuguese rule and its integration into India in 1961.
- Emphasized scientific and technological development, including nuclear research for peaceful purposes.

### Literary Works

- Wrote the book **The Discovery of India** during his imprisonment from 1942 to 1946.
- Wrote **An Autobiography (also known as Towards Freedom) in 1936**.
- Wrote **Glimpses of World History in 1934**.
- Wrote **Letters from a Father to His Daughter in 1929**.

### Awards and Honors

- Received an honorary doctorate from the **University of Mysore in 1948**.
- Was awarded the **Bharat Ratna in 1955**.
- Received the **World Peace Council Prize** posthumously in 1970.

### *Demise and Legacy*

- Passed away on **May 27, 1964**.
- Is known as the “**Architect of Modern India.**”
- His birthday, **November 14, is celebrated as Children’s Day in India.**

### **Vinayak Damodar Savarkar**

- **Context:** Today, the Prime Minister remembered Veer Savarkar on his birth anniversary. In a social media post, he mentioned that Veer Savarkar’s courage and patriotism will always inspire the people.

### **Early Life**

- Widely known as **Swatantryaveer Savarkar**, he was born on **May 28, 1883, in Nashik**.
- He was a revolutionary nationalist, lawyer, politician, writer, and social reformer. He played a key role in India’s freedom movement.

### **Organizations and Revolutionary Activities**

- In the year 1899, **Savarkar** founded a secret revolutionary group called ‘**Mitra Mela**’. It was later reorganized as the ‘**Abhinav Bharat Society**’ in 1904.
- While staying in **London in 1906**, he founded the ‘**Free India Society**’ to ignite nationalist feelings among Indian students living abroad.
- He was also closely associated with ‘**India House**’, which was founded by **Shyamji Krishna Varma** and became a hub for anti-colonial revolutionary activities.
- Savarkar supported armed struggle against British rule, promoted guerrilla-style tactics, and was also allegedly linked with the manufacturing of crude bombs. He also provided legal support to Madan Lal Dhingra.
- As a writer, he authored influential works such as ‘**Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?**’ and ‘**The History of the War of Indian Independence**’. Some of his articles were published under the pen name “**Mahratta**”.

### **Arrest and Imprisonment**

- Savarkar was arrested in 1909 for allegedly conspiring to incite an armed rebellion against the reforms introduced under the Indian Councils Act of **1909**.
- He was deported to India, convicted, and sentenced to two consecutive life imprisonments at the Cellular Jail, infamously known as ‘**Kala Pani**’.

### **Political Life and Ideological Views**

- After his release, Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha from **1937 to 1943**.
- He opposed the **Quit India Movement**, believing that it would not succeed in achieving independence.
- He also participated in discussions regarding the **Cripps Mission and the Wavell Plan**, emphasizing the importance of national unity.
- Inspired by leaders like **Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bipin Chandra Pal**, **Savarkar** supported the concept of a united India based on equal rights and patriotism.
- He championed social reforms by opposing untouchability and caste discrimination, promoting inter-caste marriages, supporting the entry of Dalits into temples through initiatives like the Patit Pavan Mandir, encouraging seafaring (crossing the oceans), and supporting reconversion back to Hinduism.

### **Death and Legacy**

- In **1964**, believing that his life’s mission was fulfilled after India achieved independence, Savarkar chose to fast unto death starting from February 1. He passed away on February 26, 1966.
- To honor his contribution to the nation, the airport in Port Blair was renamed as the **Veer Savarkar International Airport in 2002**.

## DEFENCE

### INS Sagardhwani

- **Context:** After successfully completing its mission with the Royal Malaysian Navy, **INS Sagardhwani** departed from Port Klang, Malaysia.
- This voyage focused on professional and scientific collaboration in the fields of hydrography, marine environmental research, and oceanographic technology.

#### About INS Sagardhwani

- INS Sagardhwani is an advanced marine research vessel commissioned into the Navy in July 1994. It was designed for modern marine scientific studies.
- The name "**Sagardhwani**" translates to "**Voice of the Ocean.**" It was chosen to reflect the vessel's marine research mission.
- The ship was designed by the Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL) in Kochi and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).

### Pragati 2026

- A joint military exercise involving 13 nations, including **India and Sri Lanka**, has commenced in Meghalaya.
- The joint military exercise, codenamed 'Pragati 2026', has begun at the Umroi Military Station in the Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya.
- Thirteen nations—India, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam—are participating in this exercise.

- The exercise is scheduled to span two weeks, focusing on counter-terrorism operations in semi-mountainous and dense forest terrains.
- The objective of this exercise is to strengthen defense ties through joint training and cultural exchange.
- 'Pragati' is the acronym for 'Regional Armies' Cooperation for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region'. The exercise is being conducted in a spirit of equality, friendship, and mutual respect.

### IOS SAGAR Initiative

- **Context:** With the return of INS Sunayna to Kochi on May 20, 2026, the Indian Navy has successfully concluded the IOS SAGAR initiative.

#### About the IOS SAGAR Initiative

- IOS SAGAR is a multinational maritime initiative aimed at strengthening maritime cooperation, interoperability, and collective security within the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- 16 friendly nations participated in this deployment: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Maldives, Mozambique, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and the United Arab Emirates.
- The initiative was conducted under the theme "**One Ocean, One Mission.**"
- IOS SAGAR reflects India's maritime vision:
  - **SAGAR - Security and Growth for All in the Region.**
  - **MAHASAGAR - Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.**

### Agni-I Ballistic Missile

- **Context:** India on May 22 successfully carried out the **test-launch of the Agni-1 short-range**

### ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur.

- The Agni-1 is a short-range ballistic missile developed as part of India's strategic defense capability and forms an important component of the country's deterrence architecture.

#### About Agni-I Ballistic Missile

- Agni-I is a medium-range ballistic missile developed by India with a strike range of about 700 to 900 km.
- It is a single-stage missile powered by solid fuel.
- The missile can carry a nuclear warhead with an approximate payload capacity of 1,000 kg.
- Recent upgrades include an improved guidance system for better accuracy and an enhanced warhead with greater destructive capability.
- Being road-mobile, the missile can be transported and launched from different locations, making it difficult for adversaries to detect and target.
- Agni-I was first successfully tested in 2002.
- It was inducted into service by the Strategic Forces Command of the Indian Army in 2007.
- The missile was developed under India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP) launched in 1983.

#### 'Sanghamitra'

- **Context:** Indian Navy achieved another milestone in indigenous shipbuilding with the launch of Sanghamitra, a Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV).
- The vessel is named after Sanghamitra, symbolising India's historical and cultural heritage.

- The vessel was launched at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata.

- Sanghamitra is among 11 Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels.

#### Purpose of the Vessel

- The indigenously designed and built ships are intended to enhance the Navy's operational strength in multiple maritime roles.

#### Key Operational Functions

- The NGOPVs will be used for: maritime surveillance, coastal and offshore defence, search and rescue operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), anti-piracy missions, and protection of offshore assets.

#### Support to Aatmanirbhar Bharat

- According to the Ministry of Defence, the launch strengthens India's push for self-reliance in defence manufacturing.
- It also supports the government's: **Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, and the Make in India programme** aimed at promoting indigenous defence production.

#### Suryastra Rocket System

- **Context:** Defence Minister launched India's first indigenous 300-km Universal Rocket Launching System named "Suryastra".
- He also inaugurated a major private defence manufacturing facility in Shirdi.

#### About Suryastra

- Suryastra is India's first domestically developed Universal Rocket Launching System with a strike range of 300 km.
- The system has been developed to strengthen India's long-range artillery and precision strike capabilities.

**Purpose**

- The rocket system is intended **to improve operational flexibility and battlefield effectiveness.**
- It supports India's defence modernisation and indigenous weapons development programme.

**Features**

- Range of the system is around 300 kilometres.
- It belongs to the **category of Universal Rocket Launching Systems.**
- Designed for long-range artillery attack and precision targeting.

**Strategic Importance**

- The system improves **India's indigenous defence preparedness and combat capability.**
- It represents progress in the development of **advanced home-grown military technology.**
- Suryastra supports the vision of **reducing dependence on imported defence equipment.**

**'Kautilya' and 'Q-FORCE' Artificial Intelligence platforms.**

- **Context:** In 2026, the Indian Army developed two Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based digital systems: 'Kautilya' and 'Q-FORCE'.

**About Kautilya**

- **'Kautilya' is an AI-based command intelligence platform** designed to provide support for data analysis and decision-making.
- The 'Kautilya' system utilizes **AI-enabled dashboards and interfaces** based on Natural Language Processing (NLP).

- It processes data related to personnel, weaponry, equipment, logistics, training, rations, and operational readiness.
- **'Kautilya' supports data entry via tablets and also functions as an AI co-pilot for administrative and operational tasks.**

**About Q-FORCE**

- 'Q-FORCE' is an integrated digital application designed **for logistics, inventory management, and supply chain management.**
- The 'Q-FORCE' system integrates various logistics and inventory platforms **to facilitate sustained operations across diverse terrains.**
- The Indian Army has declared 2026 as the **"Year of Networking and Data Centricity."**
- The complete integration of Artificial Intelligence into the Indian Army's operations has been set as a **target to be achieved by 2027.**
- During 'Operation Sindoor', the Indian Armed Forces utilized 23 Artificial Intelligence applications including ECAS and TRINETRA under 'Project SANJAY'.
- Artificial Intelligence enables machines to perform tasks such as data analysis, pattern recognition, and decision-making support.
- Natural Language Processing (NLP) enables computers to understand and process human language.
- **Project SANJAY is associated with digital integration and AI-driven military operations in India.**

## CURRENT FACTS

### India's green ammonia

- India aims to produce **5 million tonnes of green ammonia by 2030** under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** to reduce imports and enhance energy self-reliance.
- India has also signed agreements for **724 lakh metric tonnes of green ammonia production for domestic use**, indicating large-scale expansion plans.
- Ammonia is critical for India's agriculture sector as it is a key input for fertiliser production, especially **Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP)**, linking energy security with food security.
- India currently imports **over 70% of its 30 million tonnes annual ammonia requirement**, mainly as grey ammonia from countries like Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain.
- **Grey ammonia production** is highly carbon intensive, emitting **1.9-2.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per tonne of ammonia produced**.
- India's grey ammonia production contributes about **25-43 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually**, accounting for **5-10% of global ammonia-related emissions** and about **1.2-1.8% of total global greenhouse gas emissions**.
- Transition to green ammonia aligns with India's commitments under the **Paris Agreement** by reducing emissions through renewable hydrogen-based production.

### Tamil Nadu Economy Growth

- Tamil Nadu remains a leading industrial state, recording strong post-COVID recovery with real GDP growth of **11.19% (2024-25) and 10.83% (2025-26)**.
- **Manufacturing sector** showed robust growth of **14.74% (2024-25) and 14.22% (2025-26)** during the period, indicating strong industrial momentum.
- The state attracted **₹1.38 lakh crore FDI (Oct 2019-June 2025)**, ranking fourth in India.
- **Export performance** is strong, the state **ranks second in Export Preparedness Index**, with exports rising from \$26.16 billion (2020-21) to \$52.07 billion (2024-25).
- **Agriculture** showed recovery with **8.91% growth in 2025-26** after contraction in previous years, but continues to face climate-related vulnerabilities.
- Fiscal deficit rising to **4.91% of GSDP (2020-21)** and debt-to-GSDP at **26.9%**.

### Indian Skimmer

- Tawa Reservoir, located within **Sapura Tiger Reserve in Narmadapuram district of central Madhya Pradesh**, has emerged as the **second breeding site of the Indian Skimmer in India**, after the **National Chambal Sanctuary**.
- The Indian Skimmer is listed as **Endangered on the IUCN Red List**, with its global population largely concentrated in India.
- **Indian Skimmer population in India is estimated at 2,000-2,500 individuals**, with a **nearly 50% decline over the last decade**.

### Project Saksham

- **National Highways Authority of India** in partnership with Vertis Foundation implements **Project Saksham** to promote inclusive development by **empowering rural women** through structured skill development for sustainable livelihoods and social empowerment.
- The programme operates through **12 training centres** across India, targeting underserved

rural communities and providing industry-relevant vocational training with pathways to the formal workforce.

- Beneficiaries earning ₹13,000–₹16,000 per month, and over 80% participation by women, highlighting strong gender-focused empowerment.

### Thirukkural

**The base (vile) resemble human beings;  
we have never seen such a striking resemblance among any other two species.”**

- Thiruvalluvar is using a touch of sharp irony here. He says that bad or wicked people look so perfectly human on the outside that it is impossible to tell them apart by their appearance. He wittily remarks that this is the most flawless imitation that exists in the world, even though their actions are entirely inhuman.
- Thirukkural (No. 1071) Chapter: **Gayamai**

### The Southwest Monsoon

- The Southwest Monsoon serves as India’s primary rainy season and acts as a pivotal force driving the country’s economy and ecology; furthermore, it accounts for approximately 75% of the nation’s total annual rainfall.
- Typically, this monsoon season commences in Kerala in early June and gradually extends across the entire country. By mid-July, most parts of the nation are enveloped by the monsoon rains.
- This monsoon phenomenon arises from the differential heating of land and sea during the summer season.
- The land heats up rapidly, creating a low-pressure zone over Northern and Central India, while the oceanic regions remain relatively cooler, characterized by higher atmospheric pressure.
- This pressure differential causes moisture-laden winds to blow from the southwestern Indian Ocean towards the landmass, thereby bringing rainfall.
- Monsoon systems originating in the Bay of Bengal bring substantial rainfall to Eastern and Northern India.

Since the monsoon winds originate from the southwest direction, this phenomenon is termed the “Southwest Monsoon.”

This monsoon system bifurcates into two distinct branches:

- The Arabian Sea Branch, which brings rainfall to Central India and the West Coast.
- The Bay of Bengal Branch, which brings rainfall to Eastern and Northeastern India.

### Thirukkural (520)

**Let king search out his servants’ deeds each day;**

**When these do right, the world goes rightly on its way**

#### Explanation

Let a king daily examine the conduct of his servants; if they do not act crookedly, the world will not act crookedly.

### Pokhran-I

- Operation Smiling Buddha (Pokhran-I) was India’s first nuclear weapons test. It was conducted on May 18, 1974, at 8:05 AM (IST) at the Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan, amidst strict military security and secrecy.
- This test utilized an indigenously developed, plutonium-based implosion device, created by Indian scientists through the coordinated efforts of BARC, DRDO, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Indian Army.

- Conducted under the supervision of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the test was officially described as a "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE)," reflecting India's policy stance at the time.
- This undertaking demonstrated India's strategic autonomy and indigenous nuclear capabilities. With this achievement, India earned the distinction of becoming the first nation outside **the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5) to conduct a nuclear test.**

#### About EDII

- Established in 2001, the Entrepreneurship Development and Innovation Institute (EDII), Chennai, stands as a premier organization in Tamil Nadu in the fields of entrepreneurship education and self-employment development.
- EDII was constituted by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a non-profit society.
- It functions under the administrative control of the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Department.

#### Operation Ragepill

- Under 'Operation RAGEPILL', the NCB dismantled a **major international drug trafficking network**; notably, it seized '**Captagon**' a mind-altering substance widely used in the Middle East region in India for the first time.
- Captagon is a highly addictive synthetic stimulant belonging to the amphetamine class.
- Captagon pills contain amphetamine, caffeine, and other chemical substances.
- 'Operation Ragepill' refers to a **major drug eradication operation** conducted by the **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) of India**, which successfully exposed an international drug syndicate.
- **Jharkhand** is preparing to set up **India's first exclusive Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) Research Centre at Palamu Tiger Reserve.**

#### About Ebola

- Ebola is a serious and frequently fatal viral illness caused by a group of viruses called **orthoebolaviruses**, previously referred to as ebolavirus.
- It is a highly infectious disease that affects **both humans and non-human** primates such as monkeys and chimpanzees.
- The disease was **first detected in 1976** in regions of southern Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Ebola outbreaks mainly occur in remote areas of Central and West Africa.
- It is classified as a **hemorrhagic fever** because the virus damages the body's blood-clotting mechanism, which can result in internal bleeding due to leakage from small blood vessels.

#### Thirukkural (No. 824) – Chapter: Unsuitable Friendship

**'Tis fitting you should dread dissemblers' guile,  
Whose hearts are bitter while their faces smile**

**Explanation:** One should fear the deceitful who smile sweetly with their face but never love with their heart.

#### Glanders Disease

- **Causative Agent and Impact:** Glanders, a disease caused by the **bacterium Burkholderia mallei**, primarily affects equine species such as horses, mules, and donkeys. Furthermore, it poses a risk of causing infection in other animals as well as humans.

- **Statutory Notification:** Under the **Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals (PCICDA) Act, 2009**, Glanders has been declared a disease that must be compulsorily reported to the government upon detection.

### Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission

- Sickle Cell Disease is a major public health challenge in India.
- It primarily **affects tribal populations**. The disease **causes red blood cells to distort into a crescent (sickle) shape**, obstructing the flow of oxygen to tissues and leading to the dysfunction of multiple organs.
- The Central Government has announced the **National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission with the objective of eradicating Sickle Cell Anemia by the year 2047**.
- This initiative involves a collaborative effort between various Central Ministries and State Governments.
- The mission encompasses raising widespread awareness about Sickle Cell Disease, conducting universal screening, and providing comprehensive care **to 70 million people aged 0 to 40 residing in affected tribal regions**.
- Tamil Nadu stands as a pioneer state in addressing this disease.
- It places particular focus on areas with high tribal populations, such as the Nilgiris and Anaimalai.
- Mandatory screening is conducted for all pregnant women residing in tribal areas.

### Gender and caregiving law in India

- **Article 15(3)**- Allows the State to make special provisions for women and children, acting as an exception to the general non-discrimination clauses.
- **Article 16** -Guarantees equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters of public employment.
- **Article 51A(e)** -To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.
- **The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017** remains the most substantive legal protection available to women.
  - The **2017 amendment extended paid maternity leave to 26 weeks** for women with fewer than two surviving children and introduced provisions for crèche facilities in larger establishments.

### Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ)

- Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) is a **special economic zone** in Chennai, India.
- It is **one of the seven export processing zones in the country** set up by the central government.
- It was established in **1984** to promote **foreign direct investment**, enhance foreign exchange earnings, and create greater employment opportunities in the region.
- The zone is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Commerce and Industries**.
- On **1 January 2003**, the zone was converted into a special economic zone (SEZ).

### Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses (Dalhan Mission)

- Mission launched in **October 2025** promised **100% procurement of Tur, Urad, and Masoor at MSP for four years**.
- Under it, **₹11,440 crore was allocated to scale up production to 350 lakh tonnes per year in five years** by expanding the area under cultivation.
- But according to the April 2026 data released by the government, the area for sowing pulses grew only 1.26% over last year.
- This is negligible compared to the 10% fall in area between 2021-22 to 2024-25.

**Thirukkural (No. 1023) Chapter: The Way of Upholding One's Lineage**

'T'll make my race renowned,' if man shall say,  
With vest succinct the goddess leads the way

**Explanation:**The Deity will clothe itself and appear before him who resolves on raising his family.

**Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA)**

- **Objective:**The Act was introduced to ensure stronger measures for preventing unlawful activities carried out by individuals or organizations, to curb terrorist acts, and to deal with matters related to such activities.
- **Activities Considered Unlawful**  
Under the Act, the following acts are treated as unlawful activities:
  - Any act aimed at claiming authority or exercising control over any part of India's territory.
  - Any act that threatens the sovereignty, unity, or territorial integrity of India.
  - The Central Government has the authority to designate an organization involved in such activities as a terrorist organization.
  - Investigations under the Act can be carried out only by police officers holding the rank of DSP, ACP, or higher.
- **Applicability :**The provisions of the Act apply throughout India and are enforceable against both Indian citizens and foreign nationals.
- **Timeline:**
  - A charge sheet may be submitted within a maximum period of 180 days from the date of arrest.
  - The investigation is required to be completed within 90 days.

**Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)**

- An OCI cardholder is a foreign citizen who holds a passport issued by another country and is not considered a citizen of India. Therefore, an OCI holder does not enjoy the constitutional and political rights available to Indian citizens.
- The OCI Scheme was **introduced in 2005** through an amendment to the **Citizenship Act, 1955**. In **2015**, the **Person of Indian Origin (PIO) scheme** was merged with the OCI scheme.
- **An OCI cardholder is not permitted to:**
  - Participate in voting during elections.
  - Become a member of Parliament, Legislative Assembly, or Legislative Council.
  - Hold constitutional offices such as President, Vice President, or Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court.
  - Be appointed to government services or public posts under the Central or State Government.
  - Purchase agricultural land, plantation property, or farmhouses in India.
- **OCI cardholders are entitled to the following benefits:**
  - A lifelong multiple-entry and multipurpose visa for visiting India.
  - Equal treatment with NRIs in selected economic, financial, and educational matters, except in relation to purchasing agricultural or plantation property and issues concerning inter-country adoption of Indian children.
  - Eligibility to apply for Indian citizenship under Section 5(1)(g) of the Citizenship Act, 1955 after completing five years as an OCI cardholder.

## Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025

- The SHANTI Bill, 2025 is a proposed Indian law aimed at updating and reforming the country's nuclear energy framework. The legislation seeks to encourage private sector participation, improve regulatory mechanisms.
- The Bill is intended to replace the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010.
- **Major Features of the SHANTI Bill, 2025**
  - **Unified Legal Structure:** The Bill combines different areas of nuclear energy regulation and development into one comprehensive and updated legal framework.
  - **Role of the Private Sector:** It permits controlled participation of private companies in the nuclear energy sector, subject to strict supervision and regulations.
  - **Legal Status to AERB:** The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) is given statutory authority to ensure stronger and more effective regulatory oversight.
  - **Promotion of Clean Energy:** The Bill supports India's objective of increasing nuclear power generation as part of its clean energy strategy and aims to help achieve 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047.
  - **Modified Liability Provisions:** It introduces a revised civil liability system for nuclear accidents, including limits on operator liability and financial support through government-backed compensation funds.
  - **Creation of New Bodies:** The legislation proposes the establishment of institutions such as the Atomic Energy Redressal Advisory Council and the Nuclear Damage Claims Commission for dispute

## Broad Gauge Railway Network

- India has achieved a major milestone in railway modernization by completing **99.6 percent electrification** of its Broad Gauge railway network.
- With this achievement, India has surged ahead of several major railway systems, including those of the **European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States.**
- **Railway electrification in India began in 1925. The first electric train was operated between Bombay Victoria Terminus and Kurla Harbour,** laying the foundation for energy-efficient rail transportation.
- Indian Railways aims to achieve **Net Zero emissions by 2030.** This represents one of the earliest global targets set for a national railway system.
- **According to Article 164 (1A)** of the Constitution of India, the number of ministers may constitute up to 15 percent of the total strength of the Legislative Assembly. Accordingly, in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, which comprises 234 members, there is a limit of 35 ministers.
- **Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PCPNDT Act)**
- Tamil Nadu Private Clinical Establishments (Regulation) Act, 1997

## PM-KUSUM

- PM-KUSUM Scheme is a government initiative that supports farmers in installing solar power systems on farmland for self-use and selling surplus electricity to the grid, while also replacing diesel pumps with solar pumps and solarising existing grid-connected pumps.
- The main aim of the scheme is to **promote clean energy in agriculture**, reduce dependence on diesel, and improve farmers' income through renewable energy generation.
- It helps farmers use solar-powered irrigation systems, making farming more eco-friendly and cost-effective, while also allowing them to earn by selling extra electricity to DISCOMs.

### National Investigation Agency

- The National Investigation Agency is a special agency set up in India to **investigate terrorism and related crimes**.
- The headquarters of this agency is located in New Delhi.
- The agency has the power to investigate terrorism-related crimes in any part of India, without prior permission from the state governments.
- After the **2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks**, the NIA was established by the '**National Investigation Agency Act, 2008**' enacted by the Parliament.
- Under the **Police Act, 1861**, the Central Government can create a special agency called the '**National Investigation Agency**' to investigate and prosecute the crimes listed in the Schedule to the Act.
- If the Central Government so directs, this agency can also investigate crimes committed outside India.
- **Kerala** stands as the **first state in India** to officially recognize **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** as an independent administrative department within the government structure, by establishing a dedicated department for it at the cabinet level.
- **Tamil Nadu** has become the **second state** in India to create a **Ministry of Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.

### Thirukkural (Verse 435) – Chapter: Avoiding Faults

His joy who guards not 'gainst the coming evil day,  
Like straw before the fire shall swift consume away

**Explanation:** The prosperity of him who does not timely guard against faults, will perish like straw before fire.

### The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025

- **Purpose of the Act**
  - Aims to create clarity and balance in India's online gaming sector.
  - It promotes innovation in e-sports and online social games while prohibiting online money games.
  - The Act clearly distinguishes between permissible and prohibited gaming activities.
- **Complete Ban on Online Money Games**
  - All forms of online money games are banned.
  - The ban applies to: Games of chance, Games of skill, Any combination of skill and chance
- **Ban on Promotion and Facilitation**
  - Advertising online money games is prohibited.
  - Promotion and facilitation of such games are also banned.
- **Blocking of Illegal Platforms**
  - Unlawful gaming platforms may be blocked under the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- **Recognition of E-sports and Social Games**
  - The Act officially recognizes: E-sports, Online social games

- **Creation of Regulatory Authority**
  - The Act establishes the Online Gaming Authority of India.

## SWAYAM PORTAL

- **SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds)** is India's dedicated **MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) platform** developed under the initiative of the **Ministry of Education (MoE)**.
- It was introduced in **2017**.
- The platform aims to **reduce the digital gap** by providing quality education to students who were previously unable to benefit from the digital revolution or become part of the knowledge-based economy.
- SWAYAM is **an indigenously created IT platform** that enables learners to access courses **taught from Class 9 to postgraduate level**. These courses can be studied by anyone, anytime and from anywhere.
- The courses available on the platform are interactive in nature and are designed by some of the country's finest teachers. Moreover, all the learning materials are provided free of cost to residents of India.

## Ayush Grid Initiative

- The **Ayush Anudan Portal** was introduced under the **Ayush Grid Initiative** to make the submission, evaluation, approval, and tracking of grant proposals completely digital and more efficient.

## About the Ayush Grid Initiative

- The Ministry of AYUSH launched the **Ayush Grid Initiative in 2018** as a digital programme aimed at creating an integrated, transparent, and citizen-focused digital system for the AYUSH sector.
- As part of this initiative, several digital platforms have been developed, such as the **Ayush Hospital Management Information System (A-HMIS)** and **e-Aushadhi**.
- The initiative is aligned with the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)** and covers areas like education, research, medicinal plant management, drug regulation, and other AYUSH-related services.

## Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board

- **Establishment:** Founded in **September 1970** under the **Tamil Nadu Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act, 1971**.
- Officially renamed from "**Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board**" to Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board in September 2021 to better represent urban poor welfare and housing infrastructure.
- The motto of Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board is "**GOD WE SHALL SEE IN THE SMILE OF THE POOR**".
- **Core Mandate:** Clearing slums, building tenements with proper sanitation, providing affordable multi-story housing, and undertaking resettlement programs across urban Tamil Nadu.

## Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)

- CPGRAMS is an online platform that enables citizens to **submit grievances related to public service delivery at any time**.
- CPGRAMS was created and launched in **June 2007**.
- **Developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG)**.

- It acts as a single integrated portal **connected with all Ministries, Departments of the Government of India, and State Governments.**
- Every Ministry and State Government has role-based access to manage and resolve grievances through the system.
- CPGRAMS can also be accessed through a dedicated mobile application.
- The platform is integrated with the UMANG platform for easier public access.
- Citizens can track the status of their complaints using the **unique registration number generated** at the time of grievance submission.
- If the complainant gives a "Poor" rating, the option to **file an appeal becomes available.**
- The status of the appeal can also be monitored using the grievance registration number.

#### 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan'

- The campaign promotes soil health, soil test-based nutrient management, and balanced fertilizer use to prevent the degradation of long-term soil fertility.
- **Implemented: Indian Council of Agricultural Research**
- Objectives:
  - **Balanced nutrient use:** Promote soil testing and reduce excess chemical fertilizers; encourage organic farming.
  - **Soil protection:** Use green manure and bio-fertilizers to maintain fertility.
  - **Dealer awareness:** Prevent sale of fake pesticides and substandard seeds.
  - **Crop diversification:** Shift from only paddy-wheat to pulses, oilseeds, and cash crops.

#### Thirukkural (Verse 667) – Chapter: Firmness in Action

**Despise not men of modest bearing; Look not at form, but what men are: For some there live, high functions sharing, Like linch-pin of the mighty car.**

**Explanation:** Let none be despised for (their) size; (for) the world has those who resemble the linch-pin of the big rolling car.

- **Lake Kariba** is the largest artificial reservoir in the world in terms of water volume. It is situated on the Zambezi River and lies **between Zambia and Zimbabwe along their shared border.**
- **Kumbhalgarh Fort in Rajasthan**, often referred to as the "**Great Wall of India**," has received international recognition after a UNESCO survey identified its 36-kilometre fortification wall as the **second longest uninterrupted and intact wall in the world, after the Great Wall of China.**
- **The Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) was established in 1969.**

#### Padma Awards 2026

- The Padma Awards the country's highest civilian honors are conferred upon individuals who have made exceptional contributions in various fields, including Art, Social Service, Public Affairs, Science and Engineering, Medicine, Literature and Education, and Sports.
- Padma Awards were announced for a total of 131 individuals.
- Padma Vibhushan – 5 recipients
- Padma Bhushan – 13 recipients
- Padma Shri – 113 recipients
- Padma Awards have been announced for **13 individuals hailing from Tamil Nadu.**

## Thirukkural

- Plan and perform no work that others may despise;  
What misbeseems a king the world will not approve as wise

## Explanation

- Let a man reflect, and do things which bring no reproach; the world will not approve, with him, of things which do not become of his position to adopt.

## Parambikulam-Aliyar Project Agreement

- This project **aims to transform the drought-prone regions** located in the Coimbatore, Tiruppur, and Erode districts of Tamil Nadu, as well as the Palakkad district of Kerala.
- The project involves **the diversion and integration of eight west-flowing rivers**; of these, **six rivers (Anaimalaiyar, Sholayar, Thunacadavu, Nirar, Peruvuripallam, and Parambikulam) are situated in the Anaimalai Hills, while two rivers (Aliyar and Palar) are located in the plains.**
- On May 29, 1970, the two states jointly signed an agreement, **which came into force with retrospective effect from November 1958.**
- In 2019, during a Chief Minister-level conference held regarding inter-state water agreements, approval was granted to renew this agreement.

## About the Sakura Science Program

- This is a prestigious initiative known as the '**Japan-Asia Youth Science Exchange Program**'; it is widely recognized by the name '**Sakura Science Program**.'
- **Launched globally in 2014**, this program aims to cultivate scientific interest among the youth and foster international cooperation.
- **India joined the Sakura Program in 2016.**
- The program is implemented by the '**Japan Science and Technology Agency**' (JST).
- This initiative offers young students an excellent opportunity **to explore cutting-edge scientific fields and immerse themselves deeply in Japanese culture.**

## Right to Information Act, 2005

- It serves as a crucial mechanism **for ensuring transparency and accountability in administration.**
- It empowers Indian citizens **to obtain information from public authorities and strengthens the fundamental principles of democracy.**

## Objectives of the Right to Information Act

- To promote transparency in the functioning of public authorities.
- To empower citizens by providing them with the opportunity to access information held by the government.
- To curb corruption and foster accountability among public authorities.
- To strengthen democratic principles by ensuring the people's right to be informed about administrative decisions and policies.
- The Shirui Lily Shawl is crafted by the Tangkhul Naga community of Manipur. This design is based on the Shirui Lily, the State Flower of Manipur.
- Manipur's Black Rice (Chak-hao) is a traditional grain that is cultivated by the region's indigenous hill communities. Widely recognized for its nutritional and medicinal properties, Chak-hao reflects the rich agricultural traditions that have been preserved by these tribal communities for generations.

### Fort St. George

- Fort St. George is a historic fortress situated in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
- Built by **the British East India Company in 1644**, it was the first English fortress established in India.
- Initially, it served as both a **trading post and a defensive stronghold in the Coromandel Coast region**.
- Constructed using bricks and stones, the fort features thick defensive walls and sturdy gateways.
- Designed for defensive purposes, it is laid out in a rectangular configuration featuring fortified gateways.

### Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)

- The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) was **established in 2023 through the Anusandhan National Research Foundation Act, 2023**.
- It functions under the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**.
- The 'Science and Engineering Research Board' (SERB) has been subsumed into the ANRF.
- **Objective:** To lay the foundation for, nurture, and promote Research and Development (R&D) activities across universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories throughout India; as well as **to foster a culture of research and innovation**.
- In accordance with the recommendations of the National Education Policy, it serves as an **apex body providing high-level strategic guidance for scientific research in the country**.
- **Fund Mobilization Target:** It aims to mobilize funds amounting to ₹50,000 crore over the 2023–28 period through various channels, including the ANRF Fund, Innovation Fund, Science and Engineering Research Fund, and Special Purpose Funds.

### Gond Painting

- Gond painting is a traditional art form belonging to **the Gond tribe, originating from Patangarh village in the Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh**.
- Gond painting was granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag **in April 2023**.
- It is renowned for its intricate patterns of **dots and lines, vivid natural colors, and themes inspired by nature**.

### Muga Silk

- Muga silk is popularly known as the **"Golden Silk" of Assam**.
- It is a rare and valuable silk fabric primarily produced in the **Brahmaputra Valley of Assam**.
- Muga silk is widely used in **traditional Assamese attire**, such as sarees, Mekhalas, and Chaddars.
- Muga silk was granted a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2007**.

### Thirukkural

- 'Each hindrance shun', 'unyielding onward press, If obstacle be there,'  
These two define your way, so those that search out truth declare

### Explanation

- Not to perform a ruinous act, and not to be discouraged by the ruinous termination of an act, are the two maxims which, the wise say, from the principles of those who have investigated the subject.
- **Article 142** - Enforcement of decrees and orders of Supreme Court and orders as to discovery, etc

## Thirukkularal

**When burthens press, it bears; Yet, With unfailing hand  
To king due tribute pays: that is the 'land'**

### Explanation

- A kingdom is that which can bear any burden that may be pressed on it (from adjoining kingdoms) and (yet) pay the full tribute to its sovereign.

### PAIMANA Portal

- PAIMANA Portal is a flagship digital initiative of the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**. The portal was officially launched on 25 September.
- PAIMANA stands for **Project Assessment Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building**.

### Purpose of the Portal

- PAIMANA serves as a unified digital platform for:
  - Monitoring infrastructure projects
  - Evaluation of project performance
  - Dissemination of project-related data
- It aims to **strengthen transparency, accountability, and data-driven governance**.

### Key Features

- Provides real-time access to reliable project information.
- Supports evidence-based policy making and efficient governance.
- Tracks implementation status of projects costing ₹150 crore and above.

### Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL)

- It is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) operating under the administrative control of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Government of India.
- The Corporation was registered as a **Public Limited Company in September 1987 under the Companies Act, 1956**.
- In accordance with **the Atomic Energy Act, 1962**, and consistent with the plans and policies of the Government of India, the Corporation's objectives include operating nuclear power plants for the purpose of electricity generation and implementing nuclear power projects.
- NPCIL also holds equity capital in **'BHAVINI' another Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy which is currently implementing the 'Fast Breeder Reactor' program in India**.
- NPCIL is responsible for the design, construction, commissioning, and operation of nuclear power reactors.
- Mission: "Our mission is to attain global excellence in nuclear power technology and contribute to the nation's long-term energy security."

### Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017

- As a regulatory framework for the conservation and management of wetlands in India, the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** has notified **the 'Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017'** under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- This constitutes a significant step taken to **conserve, manage, and maintain the ecological character of wetlands**, without imposing any restrictions on their wise use.

- These Rules not only strengthen the legal framework for environmental concerns but also reinforce the institutional structure through the establishment of State/Union Territory Wetland Authorities and a National Wetland Committee.

### The 'Blue Flag' Scheme

- The 'Blue Flag' scheme is a globally recognized **eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating tourism operators** that meet high standards across the fields of environmental management, safety, accessibility, water quality, and environmental education.
- This 'Blue Flag' certification is granted by the 'Foundation for Environmental Education' (FEE), based in Denmark, to beaches that fulfill **33 specific criteria** related to cleanliness, aesthetics, and environmental sustainability.
- In 2001, the scheme expanded globally and has since emerged as one of the world's most recognized voluntary eco-awards.
- The selection process is conducted by an international jury representing organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the FEE, and the IUCN.

### India's 'Blue Flag' Beaches:

- Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Golden Beach (Odisha), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad and Thalassery (Kerala), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), **Kovalam (Tamil Nadu)**, Kadmat Island (Lakshadweep), **Eden Beach (Puducherry)**.

### Tamil Nadu Power Finance and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (TNPFDCL)

- The Tamil Nadu Power Finance and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (TNPFDCL) was established on **June 27, 1991**, as a wholly state-government-owned Public Sector Undertaking; it is also registered with the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** as a '**Non-Banking Financial Company**' (a deposit-taking institution).
- The Corporation was classified as a 'Public Financial Institution' by **the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, on January 9, 2007**.
- TNPFDCL primarily mobilizes its funds through **deposits received from the general public**; furthermore, it provides the necessary financial support for infrastructure projects undertaken by TANGEDCO.
- In addition to accepting deposits from the Government of Tamil Nadu for the implementation of various welfare schemes, the Corporation also generates attractive returns for the beneficiaries of these schemes.

### Cotton Textile Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL)

- **Origin:** Established by the Government of India in 1954, it was the first council set up after independence.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Textiles.
- **Type:** A government-funded, autonomous, non-profit organization.
- **Role:** It serves as the international face of India's cotton textile sector, facilitating exports across the globe.

### Mekedatu Project

- The Mekedatu Project is a proposed multipurpose balancing reservoir and drinking water project initiated by the Government of Karnataka.
- It is located near Kanakapura in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka, close to the Tamil Nadu border.

- The project is situated at the confluence of the Cauvery River and its tributary, the Arkavathi River.
- The project proposes the construction of a concrete gravity dam with a height of 99 meters and a length of 735 meters.
- The reservoir is planned to store approximately 66 TMC feet of water.
- It is expected to generate around 400 MW of hydroelectric power.

### Arkavathi River

- Arkavathi River is an important mountain river in Karnataka, and is a major tributary of the Cauvery River.
- It originates from the **Nandi Hills in Chikkaballapura district of Karnataka.**
- The river flows southwards through **Bengaluru, Ramanagara and Mandya districts.**
- The total length of the river is about **190 km.**
- The river forms the **famous Chunji Falls near Haroshivanahalli.**

### Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Zone

- The **Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board in Tamil Nadu has declared an area of about 193.215 hectares in Aritapatti, Madurai district as a biodiversity zone.** It is the habitat of about 250 species of birds, anteaters, and devang. Also, **the Anaikondan pond built during the Pandava period** and several water springs are being protected.
- **Kasampatti Veera Temple in Dindigul district, Elathur Lake (37.42 hectares) in Erode district, and Nagamalai Hills** have been declared as important biodiversity hotspots.
- About 349 species of biodiversity such as various species of birds, insects, bees, wasps, and rare frogs are being maintained in an area of about 32.22 hectares in Nagamalai Hills.

### Thirukkural (No. 672)

**Sleep and act: Sleep**

**The verb to do not sleep.**

- **Meaning:** Things that should be delayed should be done with delay; things that should be done quickly without delay should not be delayed.

### Thirukkural (No. 428)

**Fear is ignorance;**

**fear is the profession of the wise.**

- **Meaning:** Not to fear what is worthy of fear is ignorance; to fear what is worthy of fear is the profession of the wise.
- **Chapter: Possession of knowledge**

### Transgender Persons Protection of Rights (Amendment) Act 2026

- It restricts **legal gender recognition** by **shifting away from self-identification to mandatory medical certification** and introduces strict penal provisions to prevent forced gender conversions or coerced identities.

### Key Provisions & Amendments

- **Shift from Self-Perceived Identity:** The 2026 Act **removes the right to self-identification.**
- **Narrowed Legal Definition:** It **limits the definition** of transgender persons to specific socio-cultural identities and intersex variations.
- **New Criminal Offenses:**
  - To stop the coercion of individuals into adopting transgender identities, the act introduces new criminal categories.
  - Kidnapping an adult to force a transgender identity is punishable by 10 years to life in prison

### Hydrogen-powered train

- Indian Railways is set to introduce the **country's first indigenous hydrogen fuel cell-based train on the Jind-Sonipat** section of Northern Railway in **Haryana**.
- Hydrogen fuel **cell technology** produces electricity through a chemical reaction using hydrogen, with **water vapor being the only emission**, making it a **clean alternative to fossil fuel** based railway traction systems.

### Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Re-port 2024.

- **Nationally, 2.1% of women** who got married in 2024 were **below 18 years** of age, while **24.5% married be-tween 18 and 20 years**.
- **Nearly three-fourths - 73.5% married at 21 years or above**.
- Overall, more than one in -four women in India still got married before the age of 21 in 2024, the report showed.
- **Bengal recorded the country's highest proportion** of girls marrying before 18 years at 6.3%, followed by Jharkhand at 4.9%.
- Chhattisgarh was also identified among states where a consid-erable proportion of girls (2.9%) continue to marry before adulthood.

### Thirukkural

**Abroad to guard, at home to punish, brings  
No just reproach; 'tis work assigned to kings**

- **Explanation**
  - In guarding his subjects (against injury from others), and in preserving them him-self; to punish crime.
- **Chapter: Righteous Governance**

### Sanchi Stupa

- The Sanchi Stupa is **located in the town of Sanchi**, within the Raisen district of the state of **Madhya Pradesh**.
- It was **built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE**.
- The sacred bodily relics of Gautama Buddha and his revered disciples are preserved within this stupa.
- The first systematic survey and excavation works at Sanchi were undertaken by Alexander Cunningham in 1851.
- The Sanchi Stupa was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1989.

### Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) Scheme

- This scheme was **launched in 2016** by restructuring the previously existing 'Indira Awaas Yojana' (IAY).
- It aims to provide permanent houses equipped with basic amenities to eligible rural families – specifically those who are homeless, or who reside in temporary-roofed houses comprising zero, one, or two rooms.
- Initially, the scheme targeted the construction of 2.95 crore houses spanning the period from the financial year 2016-17 to the financial year 2023-24.
- The Central Government has extended this scheme for a further five years – from the financial year 2024-25 to 2028-29 – and has set a new target to construct an additional 2 crore houses.
- Beneficiaries are selected based on the housing deficiency parameters and exclusion criteria prescribed under the **Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) of 2011**.
- Financial assistance of ₹1.20 lakh per house is provided for construction in plain areas.
- Financial assistance of ₹1.30 lakh per house is provided for construction in hilly regions and

difficult terrains, including the Northeastern states, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

- In plain areas, the expenditure for this scheme is shared between the Central and State governments in a ratio of **60:40**.
- For the Northeastern and Himalayan states, the financial sharing pattern between the Central and State governments is in a ratio of **90:10**.
- For Union Territories without a Legislative Assembly, the Central Government provides **100% of the funding**.
- The implementation and monitoring of this scheme are carried out through digital platforms such as the **'AwaasSoft' Management Information System (MIS) and the 'AwaasApp'**.
- PMAY-G is a flagship rural housing scheme introduced to achieve the goal of **'Housing for All'**.

### 'Mission Queen Pineapple' Scheme

- This is a coordinated collaborative initiative aimed at promoting Tripura's **'Queen' pineapple**, which holds a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.
- The scheme is spearheaded by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.
- The total financial outlay for this mission is **₹236 crore**.  
The scheme will be implemented over a period of three years, spanning from the **second quarter of the financial year 2026 (Q2 FY 2026)** to the **fourth quarter of the financial year 2028 (Q4 FY 2028)**.

### Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited (TNGECL)

- Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited (TNGECL) is a newly formed **state-owned public sector undertaking** established by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- Establishment: Incorporated in **early 2024 under the Companies Act 2013**.
- It was formed by **merging the Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA) with the dedicated Renewable Energy Wing of TANGEDCO**.
- It acts as the operational vehicle to hit Tamil Nadu's target of deriving **50% of its total power consumption from green energy and cutting carbon emissions down by 70% by the year 2030**.

### Samadhan Didi

- In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Government of India launched "Samadhan Didi", an AI enabled, voice first chatbot for the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), enabling citizens to register grievances simply by speaking in their preferred language.
- The chatbot is designed to help citizens lodge grievances with ease, particularly those who are unsure where to submit a complaint or whom to address it to, and those who are unable to draft complaints in Hindi or English.
- The launch as the "democratisation of the public grievance mechanism", highlighting the Government's commitment to enhancing citizens' access to public services.

### Indian National Congress flag adoption (1921)

- The **flag of the Indian National Congress**, which later evolved into the national flag, was adopted on May 31, 1921.
- This symbol of freedom and unity galvanized the nation's struggle for independence from colonial rule.