

VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

JUNE 2026 - PART 2



Head Office

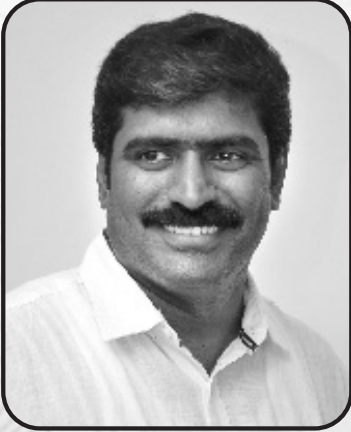
Old No. 52, New No. 1, 9th Street,
F Block, 1st Avenue Main Road, (Near Isha Siddhi Vinayakar Temple), Anna Nagar East – 600 102.
Ph: 044-2626 5326 | 98844 21666 | 98844 32666

Branches

SALEM: No. 189/1, Meyanoor Road, Near ARRS Multiplex, (Near Salem New Bus Stand), Opp. Venkateshwara Complex, Salem - 636 004. Ph: 95001 22022 | 99436 22022. **KOVAI:** No. 347, D.S. Complex, (3rd floor), Nehru Street, Near Gandhipuram Central Bus Stand, Ramnagar, Kovai - 641 009. Ph: 7502165390. **MADURAI:** No. 199, Dharshini Tower, 1st Floor, Vaigai Colony, Anna Nagar, Madurai - 625 020. Ph: 91500 21999 | 91500 21998. **TIRUNELVELI:** No. 58, IVY Towers, 3rd Floor, Palayamkottai, Near Palai Bus Stand, (Next to Muthamil Hospital), Tirunelveli - 627 002. Ph: 91500 10079. **THANJAVUR:** Muthu Complex, (Pantaloons Showroom Basement) No. 243, Cauvery Nagar, Opp. New Housing Unit, Thanjavur - 613 005. Ph: 78711 69099 | 78715 71819. **KOVILPATTI:** No. 4, Santhaipettai Street, (Near Sowbakya Towers), Opposite to Old Bus Stand, Kovilpatti 628 502. Ph: 90037 90335 | 81222 80685. **TIRUCHENGODE:** Vivekananda Educational Institutions, Elayampalayam (Po), Thiruchengode (TK), Namakkal - 637 205. Ph: 78457 79908. **TRICHY:** No. 48, Karur Bypass Road, Chatram Bus Stand (Opp. to St. Joseph College) Trichy - 620 002. Ph: 9500278085 | 9500278086. **TIRUVANNAMALAI:** MSTs Building, Vettavalam Main Road, Near Vijaya Mall Tiruvannamalai - 606601. Ph: 9884043666. **KRISHNAGIRI:** 7 D, Anna Salai, Next to Anna Arch, near New Bus station, Krishnagiri - 635001. Ph: 86374 23404. **DHARMAPURI:** No. 53, Nethaji Bypass Road, Dharmapuri - 636701. Ph: 7092922022 | 8489822022. **TIRUPPUR:** Balamurugan Complex, 2nd Floor, No. 33, Bungalow Street Main Road, Avinashi Road, Near Yes Bank, Tiruppur - 641602. Ph: 63850 66044 / 63850 66055. **KARAIKUDI:** No. 11, First Floor, Magarnombu Agraharam, Amman Sannathi, Karaikudi - 630001. Ph: 8940322022 / 9159622022. **VIRUDHACHALAM:** 410/E5, Ulundurpet Main Road, Pudukkuppam, Virudhachalam, Cuddalore - 606001. Ph: 98844 21666 / 98844 32666.

www.vetriias.com

Preface



M. SHUNMUGAM

Director

Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

© All rights reserved with the publisher. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the written permission of the publisher, will be responsible for the loss and may be punished for compensation under copyright act.

My Dear Aspirants,

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

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

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

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

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

Published by:

VETRII IAS STUDY CIRCLE

F Block New No. 1, 9th Street,
1st Avenue Main Road, Chinthamani,
Anna Nagar (E), Chennai – 102.

Phone : 044-2626 5326

98844 72636 | 98844 21666 | 98844 32666

E-mail : enquiry@vetriias.com

Web : www.vetriias.com

INDEX

SCIENCE

Latest Inventions In Science & Technology

1. Smart Seed Coating Technology 01
2. Smartphone-Based Earthquake Early Warning System 01

Space

3. GRAPES-3 (Gamma Ray Astronomy PeV Energies) 01
4. TRISHNA Mission 02
5. ISRO Successfully Tests Semi-Cryogenic Engine 02

GEOGRAPHY

Social Geography

1. Mahadev Koli Tribe 04

Environment And Ecology

2. Biochar: Turning Farm Waste into 'Black Gold' 04
3. Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs) / Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) 05

INDIAN POLITY

1. First constitutional Amendment act 07
2. Supreme Court Recognises Right to Walk as a Fundamental Right 07

INDIAN ECONOMY

1. Wholesale Price Index 08
2. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Inflows Surge 09

TAMIL NADU

Initiatives /Schemes

1. Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme – Tamil Nadu 10
2. Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant 11
3. New Space Infrastructure in Thoothukudi: CTF and Industrial Park 11
4. Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme 12
5. TNGECL to Create Five Zones to Speed Up Green Projects 13
6. 'Sol Pudhithu' Initiative 13
7. Thaaimaaman Thanga Mothira Thittam 14

Polity

8. CWMA Meeting Scheduled Amid Monsoon Concerns 14

History & Culture

9. CWMA Meeting Scheduled Amid Monsoon Concerns 15
10. Megalithic Burial Urns Discovered 16

Economy

11. White Paper on Fiscal Management of Tamil Nadu (2021–22 to 2025–26) 17

Environment

12. Ammonia Gas Leak in Tamil Nadu 18

NATIONAL - NEWS

1. Biopharma SHAKTI Initiative 20
2. National Institute of Urban Affairs 20
3. WT-MARUT Portal 21
4. Yoga Park Portal 21
5. India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management (IIIDEM) 22
6. Air Pollution Reaches Remote Himalayas 22
7. National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) 24
8. IITM-ARIES MoU for BCON Climate Monitoring 25
9. Abhigyan App 25
10. Initiatives for Women's Safety and Gender Equality in India 25
11. Bhavishya Portal 26
12. Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project 27
13. Ground-level Ozone Pollution 27
14. India Becomes the World's Leading Ship Recycling Nation (2025) 27
15. Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL) Granted Navratna Status 28
16. National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) 28
17. Unique Land Parcel Identification Number / Bhu-Aadhaar 29
18. President Appreciates Project Cheetah Support 30
19. V.O.C. Port 31
20. Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) 32
21. Integration of Pharma Jan Samadhan and Pharma Sahi Daam 32
22. World's First Nuclear Process Heat-Based Hydrogen Production Facility 33
23. Draft Amendments to the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 34
24. Operation Amistad 35
25. Shatayu Dashboard 35
26. Narcotics Coordination Centre (NCORD) 36
27. Mann Ki Baat 36
28. Rural Internal Audit Portal 37
29. Muzhiyan Kulam 37
30. PM-Family Care Tracker (PM-FCT) 38
31. GST – 10 Years: Use of AI to Enhance Efficiency 38
32. Pax Silica Summit 39
33. National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) 40

NATIONAL SCHEMES

1. Great Indian Bustard (GIB)	41
2. 'Kavach'	41
3. Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana	42
4. DISHA Scheme	42
5. Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)	43
6. Nasha Mukht Bharat Saptah 2026	44
7. PMAY-U 2.0	45
8. Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan	46
9. SHe-Box 2.0: Strengthening Workplace Safety for Women	46
10. REWARD Programme	47
11. Price Support Scheme (PSS)	47
12. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)	48
13. BHARATI Programme – APEDA's Export Acceleration Initiative	48
14. REPM Manufacturing Scheme	49
15. ASPIRE Scheme	50
16. Bharat Taxi	50
17. Kisan Sarathi	50
18. Samagra Shishu Bal Swasthya Karyakram (SSBSK)	51
19. Anaemia Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (AMB)	52
20. Corporate Mitra Scheme	53
21. e-Sushrut Clinic	54
22. DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) – India's 'One Nation, One Digital Platform'	54

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Crocodile Day	55
2. World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	55
3. Sustainable Gastronomy Day	55
4. National Fishing Day	55
5. World Sickle Cell Day	55
6. International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict	55
7. Autistic Pride Day	55
8. National Reading Day	55
9. World Refugee Day	55
10. Paschimbanga Divas	55
11. World Camel Day	55
12. International Day of Yoga	56
13. Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2026	56
14. United Nations Public Service Day	56

15. International Day of Women in Diplomacy	56
16. International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	56
17. International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	57
18. International MSME Day	57
19. International Day for the Deaf and Blind	57
20. International Fisherman Day	57
21. National Statistics Day	57
22. International Day of the Tropics	57
23. World Social Media Day	57
24. International Asteroid Day	57
25. International Day of Parliamentarism	

REPORTS AND INDICES

1. Global Peace Index (GPI)	58
2. QS Rankings 2027	58
3. QS Global Future Skills Index 2027 – India	58
4. Index of Service Production (ISP)	58
5. International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026 & Food Sovereignty	59
6. Release of SDG Publications on the Occasion of 20th Statistics Day (29th June 2026)	60

SPORTS AND GAMES

1. National Senior Athletics Championship	61
---	----

EMINENT PERSONALITIES

1. Vanchinatha Iyer (Sankara Iyer)	62
2. Rani Lakshmibai	62
3. Rani Durgavati	62
4. Ma Po Si	63
5. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee	64
6. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917)	64

DEFENCE

1. Exercise Pitch Black	66
2. Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM)	66
3. Exercise KHAAN QUEST	66
4. Indian Navy Inducts Three Indigenous Warships	66
5. Netra AEW&C System	67

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Order of the White Double Cross | 68 |
| 2. Sangeetha Natak Academy Awards 2024-25 | 68 |
| 3. Wolf Prize 2025 | 68 |
| 4. Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar | 68 |
| 5. 'Guardian of the Blue Horizon' | 69 |

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. Bhawaiya folk music | 69 |
| 2. Air Force Chief releases astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's memoir | 69 |

APPOINTMENTS

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. National Statistical Commission (NSC) | 70 |
|--|----|

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1. India Advocates Human-Centric AI Approach | 71 |
| 2. Financial Action Task Force (FATF) | 71 |

CURRENT FACTS

72

SCIENCE

LATEST INVENTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Smart Seed Coating Technology

- **Context:** ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research (ICAR-IIOR), Hyderabad, has developed and demonstrated an innovative **biopolymer-based Smart Seed Coating Technology** designed to enhance seed quality, crop establishment, and resilience against biotic and abiotic stresses across a wide range of agricultural crops.

About Smart Seed Coating Technology

- The biodegradable biopolymeric coating forms a multifunctional protective layer that carries beneficial microorganisms, nutrients, micronutrients, crop-protection agents and growth promoters directly to the seed-soil interface.
- It promotes **rapid germination, vigorous seedling and root growth**, and tolerance to **biotic and abiotic stresses** (drought, temperature extremes, soil degradation, pests) during the critical crop establishment phase.
- Field demonstrations in **Telangana** recorded nearly **30% higher yields in groundnut and soybean** over conventional practice; tested across soybean, maize, groundnut, chickpea, cotton, mustard and pigeon pea under AICRP-Seed trials.
- ICAR-IIOR is promoting partnerships with public and private seed systems for large-scale adoption, especially in rainfed agriculture.

Smartphone-Based Earthquake Early Warning System

- **Context:** Following the recent earthquake in Venezuela, many Android users reported receiving earthquake alerts on their

smartphones moments before the tremors were felt.

- **Both Android and Apple iOS** support earthquake and emergency alerts through built-in notification systems.

Android Earthquake Alerts Work

- Most smartphones are equipped with an **accelerometer**, a motion sensor used to detect device orientation and movement.
- The accelerometer can also **detect the initial ground shaking** caused by an earthquake.
- It identifies the **Primary (P) waves**, which travel faster than the more destructive **Secondary (S) waves**.
- When a phone detects possible earthquake vibrations, it anonymously sends the data to Google's servers.
- Google analyses data from multiple nearby devices to:
 - Confirm that an earthquake is occurring.
 - Estimate its location and magnitude.
 - Send early warning alerts to users in affected areas.

Effectiveness of the System

- According to Google:
 - The system has issued around 790 million earthquake alerts.
 - It has detected and warned users about more than 2,000 potentially dangerous earthquakes since April 2021.
- The technology provides **valuable seconds of advance warning**, allowing people to take protective actions before stronger shaking begins.

SPACE

GRAPES-3 (Gamma Ray Astronomy PeV Energies)

- **Context:** Researchers from India and Japan used the GRAPES-3 muon telescope to study 22 years of cosmic-ray data. This helped in understanding the Earth's upper atmosphere and the Sun's magnetic field.

- Muons are tiny particles formed when cosmic rays hit gases like oxygen and nitrogen in the atmosphere.

About GRAPES-3

- GRAPES-3 (Gamma Ray Astronomy PeV EnergieS-Phase 3) is a cosmic ray observatory situated at Ooty, Tamil Nadu, at an elevation of nearly 2,200 metres above sea level.
- It is managed by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).

Objective

- The facility is intended to investigate the origin, acceleration, and propagation of cosmic rays.

Working

- GRAPES-3 examines extensive air showers, which are streams of secondary particles generated when high-energy cosmic rays or gamma rays interact with the Earth's atmosphere.
- It detects particles in the tera-electronvolt (TeV) to peta-electronvolt (PeV) energy range, representing some of the highest-energy particles found in nature.

Other Areas of Study

- Apart from cosmic rays, the observatory also focuses on:
 - Solar phenomena, especially the effects of solar activity on cosmic rays.
 - Thunderstorm-related processes, including atmospheric electric fields and their interaction with cosmic ray muons.
- The observatory employs:
 - A network of plastic scintillator detectors to record extensive air showers.
 - A large area muon detector based on proportional counters to detect high energy muons reaching the Earth's surface.

TRISHNA Mission

- **Context:** Prime Minister announced that India and France will jointly launch the TRISHNA

satellite in 2027, a mission designed to contribute to **global water and food security**.

About TRISHNA Mission

- TRISHNA (Thermal Infrared Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment) is a joint mission of Indian Space Research Organisation and CNES.

Objective

- It aims to provide high-resolution data on **land surface temperature, vegetation condition, and water cycle processes**.
- It will also support studies on urban heat islands, volcanic and geothermal activity, glacier melt, and snow runoff, along with atmospheric parameters like aerosols, water vapour, and clouds.

Payloads

- **TIR Payload (CNES):** A four-channel infrared sensor for accurate surface temperature mapping.
- **VNIR-SWIR Payload (ISRO):** A seven-band sensor for detailed surface reflectance and biophysical analysis.

Function

- Combined data will help estimate surface energy balance and heat flux.

Orbit & Life

- The satellite will operate in a sun-synchronous orbit at **761 km altitude** (12:30 PM equatorial crossing), with **57 m resolution** for land/coastal areas and 1 km for oceans/polar regions, and a **mission life of 5 years**.

ISRO Successfully Tests Semi-Cryogenic Engine

- **Context:** Indian Space Research Organisation successfully conducted the **8th hot test of the Semi-Cryogenic Engine Power Head Test Article (PHTA)** on 24 June 2026.

- The test was carried out at the **ISRO Propulsion Complex**.

Power Head Test Article (PHTA)

- PHTA includes all engine systems except the thrust chamber.
- It is used to validate the engine's performance before integrating the complete engine.

Highlights of the 8th Hot Test

- Successfully tested at **175-tonne thrust (88% of full capacity) for the first time**.
- Previous PHTA tests were conducted at: **94 tonne (47%) thrust, 120 tonne (60%) thrust**
- Objectives achieved:
 - Studied engine build up after pre burner ignition.
 - Demonstrated steady-state operation at higher thrust levels.
 - Successfully operated the main turbopumps delivering:
 - **400 bar outlet pressure**
 - **500 bar outlet pressure**
- All engine parameters performed as predicted.

Significance of the Test

- Provides confidence for testing the engine at **200-tonne (100%) thrust level**.
- Marks a major milestone in the **indigenous development** of India's Semi-Cryogenic Engine.

Semi-Cryogenic Propulsion Stage (SC120)

- The **SC120 stage** is powered by the **2000 kN-class SE2000 engine**.
- It is being developed to replace the existing **L110 core stage** of the **LVM3 launch vehicle**.
- Expected benefits:
 - Higher payload capacity
 - Improved operational efficiency
 - Enhanced launch performance for future missions.

Propellant Used

- Uses cleaner, non-toxic propellants:
 - Liquid Oxygen (LOX) as oxidizer.
 - Purified Kerosene (ISROSENE) as fuel.
- Offers better performance and efficiency compared to conventional propulsion systems.

Strategic Importance

- Supports ISRO's roadmap to increase the payload capability of LVM3.
- Combined with an uprated cryogenic upper stage, the **semi-cryogenic propulsion system** will significantly enhance India's heavy lift launch capability.
- Strengthens India's self-reliance in advanced rocket propulsion technology and future space missions.

About the Semi-Cryogenic Engine

- A **Semi-Cryogenic Engine (SCE)** is a type of **liquid-fuel rocket engine** that uses **Liquid Oxygen (LOX)** as the oxidizer and **refined kerosene (RP-1/ISROSENE)** as the fuel.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation is developing a **2000 kN-thrust semi-cryogenic engine** to power the core/booster stages of its present and future heavy-lift launch vehicles.

Advantages of the Semi-Cryogenic Engine

- **Better Performance:** The combination of LOX and kerosene provides a higher density impulse, enabling rockets to generate more thrust with a compact fuel system.
- **Lower Cost:** Refined kerosene is cheaper to produce, transport, and use than liquid hydrogen, making space missions more economical.
- **Easier Storage and Handling:** Unlike liquid hydrogen, kerosene can be stored at normal atmospheric temperatures, reducing the complexity of fuel storage and launch operations.

GEOGRAPHY

SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

Mahadev Koli Tribe

- **Context:** The Mahadev Koli tribe, an Indigenous forest-dwelling community of Maharashtra's Western Ghats, has preserved generations of ecological knowledge that helps monitor climate change, conserve biodiversity, and sustainably manage natural resources.

About Mahadev Kolis

- An Indigenous tribal community residing in the Western Ghats, one of the world's richest biodiversity hotspots.
- Traditionally hunter-gatherers and warriors, they are now primarily engaged in: Agriculture, Livestock rearing, Dairy farming.
- Major crops include: Rice, Finger millet, Barnyard millet, Wheat.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)

- The community possesses extensive knowledge of local ecosystems acquired through centuries of close interaction with nature.
- The tribe interprets climate change through natural indicators such as:
 - Delayed or early flowering of trees.
 - Changes in bird migration.
 - Declining medicinal plant populations.
 - Drying of streams.
 - Altered crop-growing seasons.
- These ecological indicators complement modern scientific climate monitoring.

Conservation Practices

- Conservation is an integral part of the tribe's daily life.
- They promote:
 - Sustainable harvesting of forest resources.
 - Biodiversity conservation.

- Protection of forests and water sources.
- Responsible use of natural resources for future generations.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Biochar: Turning Farm Waste into 'Black Gold'

India's Agricultural Paradox

- Large quantities of agricultural biomass that could enrich soils are instead burned.
- Punjab and Haryana burn over **20 million tonnes of paddy straw annually** due to short post-harvest windows and lack of viable alternatives.
- Residue burning releases greenhouse gases and particulate matter, causing severe air pollution and loss of valuable organic matter.

Declining Soil Health

- Many agricultural regions, from Maharashtra's black soils to Kerala's red soils, suffer from:
 - Low soil organic carbon,
 - Poor water-holding capacity,
 - Rapid nutrient depletion.
- These factors reduce crop productivity despite improved seeds and irrigation.

Biochar

- Biochar is produced by heating agricultural waste under **low-oxygen conditions (pyrolysis)**.
- The process yields a carbon-rich material that decomposes very slowly, enabling long-term carbon storage.
- It is considered a **carbon-negative technology**.

Benefits of Biochar

- Enhances soil structure and microbial activity.
- Improves water retention and nutrient-use efficiency.
- Increases crop yields by **10-30%**.
- Raises water-holding capacity by **10-25%**, especially in nutrient-poor soils.

- Helps maintain soil fertility and crop productivity over the long term.

Successful Field Studies in India

- In **Akola district, Maharashtra**, biochar from maize stalks improved soil organic carbon and fertility.
- Studies in **Kerala** found that biochar made from coconut leaf stalks enhanced soil quality across different cropping systems.
- Emphasizes the importance of utilizing locally available biomass resources.

Supporting Climate-Resilient Agriculture

- Biochar can help crops withstand droughts, heatwaves, and erratic rainfall.
- Reduces dependence on external agricultural inputs.
- Particularly beneficial for **small and marginal farmers** vulnerable to climate change.
- Can complement initiatives on:
 - Natural farming,
 - Soil health management,
 - Carbon farming.

Carbon Credit Opportunities

- Biochar can be integrated into **carbon credit markets**, creating economic incentives for farmers and cooperatives.
- It qualifies as a **persistent carbon dioxide removal technology** under international standards.
- Under the **VM0042 Agricultural Land Management Methodology**, each tonne of certified biochar can generate **2-2.8 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent carbon credits**.
- Carbon credits can provide an additional source of income.

Indian Innovation: KISAN Kiln

- Projects using the **KISAN kiln**, developed by **IIT-Kharagpur**, enable small farmers to convert farm waste into biochar and earn revenue from carbon markets.

Utilising Urban Organic Waste

- Biochar feedstock is not limited to crop residues.
- It can also be produced from:
 - Municipal biodegradable waste,
 - Sewage sludge,
 - Other organic waste streams.
- India generates about **62 million tonnes of municipal solid waste annually**, with over **50% being biodegradable**.

Promoting a Circular Economy

- Converting organic waste into biochar diverts waste from landfills and reduces methane emissions.
- Supports sustainable agriculture while contributing to climate mitigation.

Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs) / Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)

- **Context:** The **Western Ghats**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and **global biodiversity hotspot**, may soon receive stronger legal protection through the notification of **Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs)**.
- The proposed ESA in the Western Ghats covers over **56,000 sq km across six states**, based largely on the recommendations of the **K. Kasturirangan Committee (2013)**.

About Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs)

- ESAs, also known as **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)** in certain contexts, are areas identified for special environmental protection due to:
 - Rich biodiversity
 - Fragile ecosystems
 - Critical ecological functions
 - Historical or environmental significance
- They are notified under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- ESAs act as **“shock absorbers”** around ecologically important regions by regulating activities that may harm the environment.

Origin and Purpose

- The concept gained prominence under the **National Wildlife Action Plan (2002–2016)**.
- ESAs help:
 - Maintain ecological connectivity
 - Protect wildlife corridors
 - Reduce human pressure on protected areas
 - Ensure long-term survival of flora and fauna

Extent of ESAs

- Around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, ESZs **may extend up to 10 km from the boundary**.
- Ecologically important corridors and landscape linkages beyond 10 km can also be included.
- In June 2022, the Supreme Court of India directed that every protected forest, national park, and wildlife sanctuary should have a **minimum 1-km Eco-Sensitive Zone around its boundary**.

Protection and Restrictions in ESAs**Prohibited or Highly Restricted Activities**

- Mining and quarrying
- Thermal power plants
- Highly polluting (Red Category) industries
- Large construction and infrastructure projects

Regulated Activities

- Felling of trees
- Establishment of hotels and resorts
- Commercial use of natural water resources
- Erection of electrical transmission lines

- Road widening projects

- Major changes in agricultural practices involving heavy technology and pesticides

Encouraged Activities

- Organic farming
- Rainwater harvesting
- Sustainable livelihoods
- Adoption of green technologies
- Environment-friendly development practices

Western Ghats ESA Proposal

- Proposed restrictions include:

- Ban or strict regulation of new mining and quarrying projects
- Restriction on thermal power plants
- Prohibition of Red Category industries
- Ban on new construction or expansion projects exceeding 20,000 sq m built-up area

Important ESA/ESZ Areas in India

- Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary
- Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong Landscape
- Gir National Park
- Ranthambore Tiger Reserve
- Sundarbans
- Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone
- Chilika Lake
- Deepor Beel
- Great Indian Bustard habitats in Rajasthan and Gujarat

INDIAN POLITY

First constitutional Amendment act

- **Context:** 2026 marks 75 years of passage of **The Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951**, amending the constitution for the first time.

About the First Amendment

Land Reforms and Right to Property

- Amendments were made to **Article 19(1)(f)** and **Article 31** to give the State authority to place reasonable limits on property rights.
- This made it possible to carry out land reforms and acquire land for public purposes, helping abolish the **zamindari system**.

Freedom of Speech and Expression

- Changes to **Article 19(2)** widened the scope for restricting free speech.
- Grounds such as public order, national security, and relations with foreign countries were added as valid reasons for such restrictions.

Social Justice for SCs and STs

- New provisions, **Article 15(4)** and **Article 16(4)**, were introduced.
- These allow reservations in education and government jobs for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward classes.

Protection of Land Reform Laws

- **Article 31A** was added to safeguard land reform laws from being challenged on the basis of property rights.
- **Article 31B** along with the Ninth Schedule was introduced to keep such laws beyond judicial review.

Directive for Welfare of Weaker Sections

- **Article 46** was reinforced to ensure the State actively promotes the educational and economic welfare of SCs, STs, and other weaker sections with special attention.

Supreme Court Recognises Right to Walk as a Fundamental Right

- **Context:** The Supreme Court ruled that the right to walk on demarcated footpaths is a fundamental right.
- The judgment was delivered by a bench comprising **Justices P.S. Narasimha and A.S. Chandurkar**.

Right to Walk Recognised Under Fundamental Rights

- The Court held that the right to walk forms part of:
 - **Article 19(1)(d)** – Right to move freely throughout the territory of India,
 - **Article 19(1)(a)** – Freedom of speech and expression,
 - **Article 19(1)(b)** – Right to assemble peacefully,
 - **Article 19(1)(c)** – Right to form associations, and
 - **Article 21** – Right to life and personal liberty.
- The right includes access to **safe and properly demarcated footpaths**.

Pedestrian Rights Take Priority

- The Court declared that pedestrians' rights on designated footpaths are **primary** and must take precedence over the movement of motor vehicles.
- It emphasized that the **fundamental right to walk overrides the privilege enjoyed by motorised vehicles**.

Enforceable Right and Remedies

- Citizens can seek **constitutional and legal remedies**, including: Restitution, and Compensation, if their right to walk on safe footpaths is violated.
- Such remedies are independent of those available under the **Motor Vehicles Act, 1988**.

INDIAN ECONOMY

Wholesale Price Index

- **Context:** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has released a new series of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) with an updated base year of 2022-23.
- The revised WPI has a broader coverage of goods and aligns with global best practices and IMF recommendations.
- Wholesale inflation rose to 9.7% in May 2026, the highest since April 2024, mainly due to rising prices of crude oil, natural gas, mineral oils, and manufactured products.
- Historical comparison beyond April 2024 is unavailable because of the change in the base year.
- Alongside the WPI, the government introduced:
 - Output Producer Price Index (OPPI),
 - Input Producer Price Index (IPPI), and
 - Service Producer Price Index (Service PPI).
- The Service PPI currently covers seven sectors:
 - Banking,
 - Securities Transactions,
 - Insurance,
 - Pension Fund Management,
 - Railways,
 - Passenger Air Transport, and
 - Telecommunications.
- The government announced that the **Producer Price Index (PPI)** will gradually replace the **WPI** over the next **five years**.
- WPI will continue to be published during the transition period because of its extensive use in **price escalation clauses** and contracts.

- The shift from WPI to PPI is consistent with practices followed by **advanced economies** and recommended by the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.
- The sharp increase in wholesale inflation in May 2026 was largely caused by the **West Asia crisis**, which pushed up global fuel prices.
- Inflation in the **crude oil and natural gas** category rose to **61.5%** in May 2026, compared with **56.3%** in April.
- Inflation in the **mineral oils** category accelerated to **49.8%** from **40.7%** in the previous month.
- Inflation in the **manufacturing** and **food** sectors also increased, though at a slower pace than fuel-related categories.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI)

About

- The **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** is an important macroeconomic indicator that tracks the **average movement in the prices of commodities sold in bulk at the wholesale stage**.

Key Features

- **Goods-Oriented Index:** WPI captures changes in the prices of **physical commodities only** and does not include services such as healthcare, education, and telecommunications.
- **Measures Producer-Level Prices:** It reflects prices at the **first point of transaction (wholesale/producer level)** and is therefore a useful measure of **supply-side inflation**.
- **Base Year:** The updated WPI series adopts **2022-23 as the base year (100)** for calculating price variations.

Major Components of WPI

- **Manufactured Products (Largest Weight):**
 - Comprises items such as processed food products, textiles, chemicals, machinery, metals, and other industrial goods.

▪ Primary Articles:

- Includes raw and unprocessed commodities like cereals, vegetables, oilseeds, and minerals.

▪ Fuel and Power:

- Covers energy-related products including coal, petroleum products, natural gas, and electricity.

Producer Price Index (PPI)

About

- The **Producer Price Index (PPI)** gauges the average variation over time in the prices that domestic producers obtain for the goods and services they supply.
- It measures inflation from the **producer's viewpoint**, recording price movements before they are passed on to consumers.
- Unlike the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, which reflects the prices paid by consumers, the PPI captures the prices received by manufacturers and service providers.
- The PPI acts as an **early signal of inflationary trends** and helps analyse how changes in production and input costs influence the prices of final products and services.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Inflows Surge

- **Context:** Despite the ongoing conflict in West Asia, India witnessed a **sharp rise in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows in April 2026**.
- The increase came even as **Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)** recorded significant net outflows from the Indian market.

April 2026 FDI Performance

- Gross FDI inflows increased to \$15.3 billion in April 2026 from \$9.3 billion in April 2025.
- Net FDI inflows rose to \$6.6 billion from about \$1.6 billion during the same period.

- According to the **Reserve Bank of India**, **higher gross inflows and lower repatriation supported the rise in net FDI**.

FY26 FDI Performance

- Gross FDI inflows rose by 17.3% to \$94.8 billion in FY26 from \$80.6 billion in FY25.
- Net FDI inflows increased to \$6.9 billion in FY26 from around \$1 billion in FY25.

Significance

- The strong rise in FDI indicates continued long-term investor confidence in India's economy despite global geopolitical uncertainties.
- **Higher FDI inflows support:**
 - Capital formation
 - Employment generation
 - Technology transfer
 - Industrial and infrastructure development
- The trend contrasts with volatile portfolio flows, highlighting the relatively stable nature of FDI investments.

About Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

- 'FDI' means investment through equity instruments by a **person resident outside India in an unlisted Indian company**; or in 10% or more of the post issue paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis of a listed Indian company.
- In case an existing investment by a person resident outside India in equity instruments of a listed Indian company falls to a level below 10% of the post issue paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis, the investment shall continue to be treated as FDI.
- 'Fully diluted basis' means the total number of shares that would be outstanding if all possible sources of conversion are exercised.

TAMIL NADU

INITIATIVES / SCHEMES

Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme – Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** The Chief Minister has announced the expansion of the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme to cover students **up to the 8th standard**.
- He has directed **Social Welfare Department** officials to take steps to launch this expanded scheme on **September 17, the birth anniversary of Periyar**.
- The Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme was **originally introduced in government primary schools for students in classes 1 through 5** during the previous administration.
- The scheme was inaugurated by the **then Chief Minister on September 15, 2022, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Anna**.
- Subsequently, the scheme was extended to government-aided primary schools; the Chief Minister inaugurated this expansion on **August 25, 2023**. Currently, 17.55 lakh students are benefiting from the scheme.

About the Scheme

- Tamil Nadu became the **first State in India** to introduce a government-funded breakfast programme for schoolchildren.
- It is a **social welfare initiative** aimed at improving the nutrition and health of students in government schools.
- The scheme was formally launched by the Tamil Nadu Government on **15 September 2022**, the birth anniversary of **Perarignar Anna**, at **Madurai**.

Objectives

- To provide nutritious breakfasts to children studying in primary schools.

- To ensure that students do not attend school on an empty stomach.
- To enhance children's health, concentration, self-confidence, and learning outcomes.
- To strengthen and complement the existing school nutrition programmes in the State.

Beneficiaries and Implementation

- The scheme covers students of **Classes I to V**.
- Around **1.14 lakh students** benefited from the first phase.
- The programme is implemented through **local bodies** and is intended to be expanded across the State.

Food Menu

- Students are provided with cooked breakfasts weighing **150–500 grams**, accompanied by **sambar and vegetables**.
- A separate menu has been prepared for each working day from **Monday to Friday**.

Need for the Scheme

- Many children leave for school early and often skip breakfast.
- Missing breakfast can lead to tiredness, irritability, and reduced attention in classrooms.
- The scheme aims to ensure that children receive the day's most important meal before beginning their studies.

Evolution of School Meal Programmes in Tamil Nadu

- The world's earliest school meal programme was initiated in **Madras in 1920**.
- The scheme was introduced under the leadership of **Sir P. Theagaraya Chetty**, who is regarded as the pioneer of the mid-day meal programme in Corporation school of **Thousand Lights**.
- In **1956**, Chief Minister **K. Kamaraj** extended the free noon meal scheme across Tamil Nadu.
- The programme was inaugurated at

Ettayapuram, the birthplace of **Subramania Bharati**.

- In **1982**, Chief Minister **M.G. Ramachandran** upgraded it into the **Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme** and extended coverage to Anganwadi children.
- The scheme was subsequently expanded to include children aged **5–9 years** and later students from **Classes VI to X**.
- In **1989**, Chief Minister **M. Karunanidhi** introduced the provision of **boiled eggs** as part of the nutrition programme.
- The scheme, later named the **Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Nutritious Meal Programme**, was expanded to urban areas.
- During **Jayalithaa's tenure (2011–16)**, variety meals and **masala eggs** were added to the menu.
- The **Mid-Day Meal Scheme** is a flagship school feeding programme of the **Government of India**.
- It aims to improve the nutritional status of children studying in primary and upper primary schools.
- India ratified the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** on **11 December 1992**, committing to ensure adequate nutrition for children.
- The scheme is backed by the **National Food Security Act, 2013**.
- It provides **free cooked lunches on school working days** to students across the country.

Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant

- **Context:** The **320-tonne reactor pressure vessel** has been successfully installed in Unit 5 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tirunelveli district.
- The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant operates with Russian collaboration.
- The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has announced the successful installation of the reactor pressure vessel inside the reactor building of Unit 5.
- The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board had granted permission to install key equipment at Unit 5 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant.
- Following this, the installation of major power plant equipment is proceeding in full swing.
- Accordingly, the reactor **pressure vessel weighing 320 tonnes** has been successfully installed within the reactor building.
- With this, **NPCIL has achieved a significant milestone**, serving as a testament to India's engineering prowess.
- This achievement marks the commencement of the installation of equipment for the nuclear steam supply system.
- A strong partnership continues between NPCIL and Russia's ASE.
- Once fully operational, the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant will generate **6,000 megawatts of electricity**.

New Space Infrastructure in Thoothukudi: CTF and Industrial Park

- **Context:** Tamil Nadu is set to establish a **new Common Technology Facility (CTF) for space vehicles in Thoothukudi**, marking a significant step in strengthening the state's aerospace ecosystem.
- The agreement for the facility was signed between the **State Industries Department** and the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)**.

Common Technology Facility (CTF)

- Provides advanced testing services such as vibration and shock testing
- Supports **thermal-vacuum testing**
- Handles **electromagnetic interference and compatibility (EMI/EMC) testing**

- Offers pressure and flow testing facilities
- Includes support for propulsion systems
- Enables launch vehicle assembly and component integration
- Acts as a key support system for space-related activities
- Allows space companies across India to use high-quality testing infrastructure

Space Industrial Park

- Being developed near the upcoming launch site at **Kulasekarapattinam**.
- Will function as a manufacturing centre for space-related components.
- Aims to strengthen **India's space manufacturing ecosystem**
- **Focus areas include:** Launch vehicle parts, Satellite systems, Propulsion systems, Aerospace electronics, Advanced composite materials.

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

- It is an **independent organization** functioning under the **Department of Space (DoS)**.
- It was set up after the **Space Sector Reforms of 2020** to encourage private sector involvement and boost India's space economy through cooperation between government and private players.

Main Functions:

- **Promotion:** Supports the growth of the private space sector by offering funding opportunities and transferring technology from ISRO.
- **Facilitation:** Helps reduce costs for startups by giving them access to ISRO's facilities, infrastructure, and laboratories.
- **Authorization:** Acts as the main regulatory body responsible for approving private space launches and related ground activities.

Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu government has announced that the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme will be **extended to students of Classes VI to VIII from 17 September 2026**.

About Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme is the **social welfare scheme** of Tamil Nadu Government for School Students.
- Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme was announced on 07-05-2022.
- And on the birth date of Perarignar Anna i.e. on 15-09-2022, Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme was officially launched at Madurai by Tamil Nadu Government.
- **Objective**
 - To encourage children to join school for study.
 - To keep children out for suffering malnutrition.
 - To improve the nutritional status of school going children.

- Tamil Nadu Government will provide **Free Breakfast to all students of primary schools** under Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme.
- Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme of Tamil Nadu will be rolled out in phases.
- In first phase **1,54,108 students of 1969 schools** will be covered under Tamil Nadu Breakfast Scheme.
- And In Second Phase, **around 18,00,000/- students of 30,122 Tamil Nadu Government Primary School** will be covered.
- On **26-08-2028**, the state government expand the benefits of TN Breakfast scheme to the students of Government Aided Schools.
- The expansion will benefit **2,23,536 children in 3,995 government aided primary schools** of the state.

- After deep analysis, Government of Tamil Nadu observes that the attendance in Government Schools of Tamil Nadu is increased by on **average of 30 percent**.
- Every Student studying from **Class 1st to Class 5th** are eligible for free breakfast in their government primary school.

Scheme Benefits

- The following benefits will be provided to Students of Primary School under Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme :-
 - Free Breakfast will be Provided to **all Government and Govt Aided Primary School Students**.
 - Breakfast has **13 Types of Food Items** which will be distributed among Students.
 - Free Breakfast will be distributed daily from Monday to Friday on School Working Days.

TNGECL to Create Five Zones to Speed Up Green Projects

- **Context** : Tamil Nadu is restructuring its renewable energy administration, with the state granting approval to the **Tamil Nadu Green Energy Corporation Limited (TNGECL)** to create **five new Non-Conventional Energy Source (NCES) zones** across the state to speed up the implementation of wind and solar power projects.

Establishment of New Renewable Energy Zones

- Five dedicated renewable energy zones have been created to improve project coordination and execution.
- These zones will function under the supervision of Assistant Executive Engineers.
- Additional monitoring and implementation roles have also been set up at the **Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB)** headquarters in Chennai.

Headquarters and Regional Coverage

- The five zones are headquartered in: **Chennai, Tiruchy, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, Madurai**.

Objective of the New System

- To reduce delays in approvals for renewable energy projects.
- To streamline administrative and technical processes.
- To ensure faster project implementation and coordination.

Key Functions of the Zones

- Repowering of old windmills.
- Conducting technical feasibility studies.
- Coordinating power evacuation infrastructure.
- Monitoring renewable energy project progress.

Benefits for Investors

- Introduction of transparent single-window clearance systems.
- Faster approvals and reduced bureaucratic delays.
- Improved ease of doing business in the renewable energy sector.

Major Green Energy Initiatives Covered

- **Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)**
- **PM-KUSUM 2.0** scheme
- **PM Rooftop Solar Scheme**
- **Model Solar Village projects**
- **Solar installations in government buildings**
- **Upcoming floating solar power projects.**

‘Sol Pudhithu’ Initiative

- **Context:** The **Tamil Development Department** has released Tamil equivalents for **22 foreign-language** words that have recently come into common usage.
- The ‘Sol Pudhithu’ initiative was launched to create and introduce to the **public pure Tamil equivalents for English and other foreign-language words** that are newly entering common usage.

Tamil equivalents for foreign terms

- Vegetarian hotel – காய்கறி உணவகம்
- Non-vegetarian hotel – மீன்கறி உணவகம்,
- Bike ride – உந்துருளிப் பயணம்
- Bike tour - உந்துருளி உலா
- Bike taxi – வாடகை உந்துருளி
- Handband – கைப்பட்டை
- Community villa/flat – சமூகச் சீர்மனை
- Delimitation – மறு வரையறை
- Digital hub – மின்னணு இணைய மையம்
- Prebiotic – நன்னுயிருட்டி
- Review of related literature – முன் ஆய்வுப் பார்வை; Sense of serenity – ஆழ்மன அமைதி
- Unified Payment Interface – தனித்த பணம் வழங்கிடை முகம்
- Peri-urban – புறநகர்
- Stand-up comedy – தனி நபர் நகைச்சுவை
- Black comedy – கருங்கூத்து நகை
- Sketch comedy – சித்திரக் குறுநகை
- Surreal comedy – இயல் மிகை நகை
- Cringe comedy – கடி நகை
- Prebiotic atmosphere – உயிர் முன்வளி மண்டலம்
- Pub – மயக்க மையம்

Thaaimaaman Thanga Mothira Thittam

- **Context:** The Tamil Nadu Government has launched the **Thaaimaaman Thanga Mothira Thittam**, under which a **one-gram gold ring** will be provided to babies born in government hospitals.
- The scheme has an annual allocation of ₹755.83 crore.
- It is applicable to **parents who are permanent residents of Tamil Nadu**.
- The scheme will be inaugurated on **15 September**, the birth anniversary of C. N. Annadurai.
- The benefit will be provided retrospectively from 22 June.

- The initiative forms part of the 'Vetri Tamizhagam' Vision Document.
- The objective is to **honour every child born in government hospitals and recognize the contribution of mothers**.
- The scheme builds on Tamil Nadu's long-standing maternal and child welfare initiatives, including:
 - Financial assistance for pregnant women
 - Free delivery and newborn care services
 - Emergency obstetric care
 - Nutrition programmes
 - Birth planning services
 - PICME (Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation) software for tracking pregnant women and children
- According to the government, these initiatives have contributed significantly to improving maternal and child health indicators in the State.

POLITY**CWMA Meeting Scheduled Amid Monsoon Concerns**

- **Context:** The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) will convene the meeting comes during the initial phase of the **southwest monsoon** to assess the impact of the weak onset of rains on water availability.

Tamil Nadu Seeks New Tribunal on Mekedatu Project

- The **Mekedatu** issue has gained fresh momentum with Tamil Nadu demanding the constitution of a **new tribunal**.
- The proposed **₹9,000-crore Mekedatu balancing reservoir-cum-drinking water project** is at the centre of the dispute.

About Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)

- In **June 2018**, the Central Government constituted two important institutions under the **Cauvery Water Management Scheme, 2018**—the **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)** and the **Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)**.
- Established under **Section 6A of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956**, the CWMA is a **statutory and quasi-judicial body**.
- It was created to enforce the revised award of the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT)** in accordance with the directions issued by the **Supreme Court in 2018**.

Major Functions of CWMA

- Its chief responsibility is to ensure adherence to and execution of the final allocation of Cauvery waters among the basin states.
- The Authority supervises and controls the discharge of water from major reservoirs in the basin, including the **Krishnarajasagara (KRS)** and **Kabini** reservoirs in Karnataka and the **Mettur Dam** in Tamil Nadu.
- During years of inadequate rainfall, the CWMA decides how the shortfall in water availability should be shared proportionately among the concerned states.
- With support from the **Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)**, it gathers daily information on reservoir storage, water inflows, and water levels.
- The Authority advises states to enhance water-use efficiency through measures such as **micro-irrigation techniques** and suitable modifications in cropping patterns.

Cauvery River

- The **Kaveri River** is one of the most important rivers of southern India and is popularly known as the **"Ganga of the South"** (**Dakshin Bharat ki Ganga**).

- The sharing of its waters has given rise to one of India's oldest and most intricate inter-state river disputes.
- The river originates at **Talakaveri**, situated in the **Brahmagiri Hills of the Western Ghats** in **Kodagu district of Karnataka**.
- Flowing southeastward for nearly **800 km**, the Kaveri traverses Karnataka and Tamil Nadu before draining into the **Bay of Bengal** near **Poompuhar**.
- The river basin extends across parts of **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala**, and the **Union Territory of Puducherry**.

Major Tributaries

- **Left-bank Tributaries:** Harangi, Hemavati, Shimsha, Arkavati
- **Right-bank Tributaries:** Lakshmana Tirtha, Kabini, Suvarnavathi, Bhavani, Noyyal, Amaravati

Important Dams

- **Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) Dam** in Karnataka.
- **Mettur Dam (Stanley Reservoir)** in Tamil Nadu.

HISTORY & CULTURE

Discovery of a New Prehistoric Site

- **Context:** A student from the **University of Madras** has discovered a **new prehistoric archaeological site** at **Ayilam village** in **Ranipet district, Tamil Nadu**, about **127 km** from Chennai.
- The site contains a **rock shelter, rock art, stone tools, pottery fragments, and megalithic burial structures**, making it an important archaeological discovery.

Key Findings

- The **rock shelter** is located on an elevated hillock in the **Eastern Ghats** and is considered an ideal habitation site for prehistoric humans.

- A variety of **quartz-based stone tools** were discovered, including: Discoidal cores, Multiplatform cores, Scrapers, Burins, Notched tools, Debitage (stone flakes).
- The abundance of **scrapers** suggests the site may belong to the **Middle Palaeolithic period**, though further studies are needed for confirmation.

Pottery Discoveries

- Several types of pottery fragments were found, indicating continued human occupation:
 - Red ware
 - Red slipped ware
 - Rusticated ware
 - Black-and-red ware

Megalithic Burial Structures

- Researchers identified **four small megalithic burial structures**, likely **dolmens**.
- Of these:
 - Two are located at the foothills.
 - Two are situated on the hilltop.
- The burials consist of **orthostats (upright stone slabs)** and **capstones**, forming small stone chambers.

Rock Art

- The rock shelter contains **faded rock art** created using **white ochre**.
- The artwork features an **abstract motif**.
- Researchers believe it may date to the **Iron Age or Early Historic Period**, based on associated pottery and similar findings in nearby regions.
- Parts of the artwork are obscured by **calcium deposits**, highlighting the need for conservation.

Significance

- This is the **first recorded site in the region** where **rock art and quartz-based lithic tools** have been found together.
- The discovery provides valuable evidence for understanding:

- Prehistoric human habitation
- Stone Age technology
- Cultural continuity from the **Middle Palaeolithic to the Iron Age/Early Historic period**
- The evolution of early human societies in **South India**.

Megalithic Burial Urns Discovered

- **Context:** Villagers discovered **megalithic burial urns (Muthumakkal Thazhis)** near **Mudukulathur in Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu**, during construction work near a temple.
- The discovery has attracted archaeological interest due to the **small size of the urns**, which may provide insights into ancient burial customs.

Key Findings

- The burial urns are approximately **3 feet in height**, considered too small to accommodate a complete human body.
- Archaeologists suggest two possible explanations:
 - Secondary burial practice: After natural decomposition or scavenging, only the bones were collected and placed inside the urn along with offerings.
 - Infant burials: The urns may have been used to bury children.

Associated Artefacts

- Clay objects recovered include: Goblets, Plate, Bowl, Kumbha (pot), Small pots.
- Pottery fragments found include: Black-and-red ware, Red ware.
- Some pottery bears symbols such as: Multiplication mark, Inverted trident, Ladder-like sign.

Evidence of Settlement

- Archaeologists believe the burial site extends across **more than 10 acres**.

- A nearby location, **Raja Kovil Thidal at Vikramapandiyapuram**, contains extensive pottery remains spread over **30–50 acres**, indicating an ancient habitation site.
- The presence of pottery of different colours suggests a **nearby settlement associated with the burial ground**.
- These small burial urns, discovered in the plains, predate the large megalithic monuments commonly found in hilly regions.
- This discovery provides valuable evidence regarding the early burial rituals, pottery technology, and cultural practices of prehistoric South India.
- These artifacts are **estimated to be around 5,000 years old**, making them one of the earliest known megalithic-era remains in the region.

Dating the Site

- No **carbon dating** has been conducted yet.
- Literary evidence from **Manimekalai** (about 1,800 years old) mentions **urn burial** as one of the burial practices in ancient Tamil society.

ECONOMY

White Paper on Fiscal Management of Tamil Nadu (2021–22 to 2025–26)

- **Context:** Finance Minister released the White Paper titled **“Fiscal Management of Tamil Nadu – An Examination of Public Finances 2021-22 to 2025-26.”**

Actual Outstanding Debt

- Tamil Nadu’s total outstanding debt is **₹13.18 lakh crore**, including debts of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- The headline figure of **₹10 lakh crore** represents only the State government’s direct borrowings.
- PSU borrowings and liabilities guaranteed by the State add another **₹3.18 lakh crore**.

Power Sector – Largest Contributor to PSU Debt

- The power sector accounts for **₹2.47 lakh crore** of PSU debt.

Comparison with Peer States

- Tamil Nadu’s fiscal indicators were compared with **Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujarat**.
- These States have similar:
 - Per capita income levels.
 - Industrial structures.
 - Urban populations.
 - Historical fiscal positions.

Rapid Growth in State Debt

- State debt increased from **₹5.13 lakh crore (April 1, 2021)** to nearly **₹10 lakh crore (March 31, 2026)**.
- Debt has almost doubled in five years.

Rising Interest Burden

- Interest payments account for:
 - **23% of total revenue receipts.**
 - **35% of State’s Own Tax Revenue (SOTR).**
- Annual interest payments for 2025-26 are estimated at **₹67,050 crore**.
- Interest payments exceed annual capital expenditure by nearly one-third.

Structural Revenue Deficit

- Revenue deficit for 2025-26 is projected at **₹78,324 crore**.
- It equals **2.2% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)**.
- It is the highest ever in absolute terms and exceeds the COVID-19 period level.
- The State is borrowing to finance current expenditure rather than investment.

Demographic Challenges

- Elderly population is projected to reach **18.2% of total population by 2031**.

- Tamil Nadu is expected to have the **highest proportion of elderly people among major States**.
- The report highlights:
 - Declining working-age population.
 - Rising dependency ratio.
 - Shrinking tax base.
 - Increasing social security obligations.

Suggested Corrective Measures

- The report stresses the need for long-term reforms in:
 - Revenue mobilisation
 - Expenditure management
 - Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) reforms
 - Debt management

ENVIRONMENT

Ammonia Gas Leak in Tamil Nadu

- **Context:** An ammonia gas leak occurred at a shrimp processing factory in **Kannagiper village near Periyapalayam, Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu**.

About Ammonia

- **Ammonia (NH_3)** is a colourless gas with a strong, sharp odour, consisting of nitrogen and hydrogen atoms.
- It is the most basic stable compound formed by these elements and serves as a key raw material for producing numerous commercially valuable nitrogen-based chemicals.

Occurrence in Nature

- Ammonia occurs naturally in the human body as well as in the environment.
- It forms an important component of the nitrogen cycle, being generated in soils through the action of bacteria.
- The decomposition of organic matter, including plants and animals, also releases ammonia naturally.

Industrial Production

- On an industrial scale, ammonia is mainly produced through the **Haber-Bosch process**, which combines nitrogen and hydrogen under controlled conditions.

Physical Properties

- Ammonia gas readily dissolves in water to form **aqueous (liquid) ammonia**.
- When exposed to the atmosphere, **liquid ammonia rapidly evaporates and returns to its gaseous state**.

Uses of Ammonia

- The principal application of ammonia is in the manufacture of fertilizers.
- It is a crucial ingredient in **producing ammonium nitrate**, which supplies nitrogen, an essential nutrient required for plant growth.
- Nearly 90% of global ammonia production is utilized for fertilizer manufacture.
- Other important uses include:
 - As a refrigerant,
 - A stabilizing agent,
 - A neutralizer and purifier, especially in water treatment and food transportation,
 - Production of plastics, explosives, textiles, dyes, and pharmaceutical products.

Health Effects

- Exposure to elevated concentrations of ammonia in the air can irritate the: **Skin, Eyes, Nose and throat, Respiratory tract and lungs**.
- Symptoms may include coughing, breathing difficulty, and chemical burns.

Safety Precautions

- Ammonia should never be mixed with other chemicals, particularly chlorine bleach, as the reaction can generate dangerous toxic gases.
- Proper handling and storage are essential to prevent the release of harmful fumes.

Chemical Disaster Management in India

About Chemical Disasters

- Chemical disasters are major industrial hazards arising from the manufacture, storage, transportation, and use of hazardous chemicals.
- They can cause:
 - Loss of human lives,
 - Injuries and suffering,
 - Damage to property, and
 - Environmental degradation.
- Chemical disasters have become a serious concern for governments, industries, and communities.

Bhopal Gas Tragedy (1984)

- India witnessed the world's worst industrial disaster, the **Bhopal Gas Tragedy**, in 1984.
- The accident occurred due to the leakage of **Methyl Isocyanate (MIC)** gas.
- Thousands of people lost their lives, making it one of the most devastating chemical accidents in history.

National Action Plan on Chemical Industrial Disaster Management (NAP-CIDM)

- The **National Action Plan on Chemical Industrial Disaster Management (NAP-CIDM)** has been finalized.
- It serves as the **roadmap for chemical disaster management in India**.
- The plan aims to strengthen preparedness, prevention, mitigation, and response mechanisms for chemical accidents.

About National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is the **apex body for disaster management in India**.
- It is headed by the **Prime Minister of India**.
- The establishment of NDMA and institutional mechanisms at the State and District levels is mandated under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005**.

Since 2011

NATIONAL - NEWS

Biopharma SHAKTI Initiative

India's Biopharmaceutical Ambition

- India aims to emerge as a **global leader in the biopharmaceutical sector**.
- The Government is committed to strengthening:
 - Innovation,
 - Manufacturing,
 - Clinical research, and
 - Regulatory capabilities.

- The objective is to establish India as a leading **global biopharmaceutical hub**.

Biopharma SHAKTI Initiative

- The **Biopharma SHAKTI Initiative** aims to launch **100 biologics by 2047**.
- It seeks to contribute to the goals of:
 - Viksit Bharat**, and
 - Swasth Bharat**.
- The initiative aims to position India as a global centre for the development and manufacturing of **high-value biologics and biosimilars**.

Growing Importance of Biologics

- Biologics are expected to account for nearly **40% of prescription drugs by 2031**.
- India seeks to strengthen its capabilities in **next-generation biologics** while maintaining its leadership in affordable **generic medicines**.

Government Initiatives Supporting Biopharma

- Key initiatives supporting innovation and manufacturing include:
 - Promotion of Research and Innovation in Pharma-MedTech Sector (PRIP) Scheme**,
 - National Biopharma Mission**,
 - Biotech Ignition Grant (BIG)**,

- Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI)**, and
- Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme (BIPP)**.

- These programmes are implemented through the **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)**.

Expected Outcomes of Biopharma SHAKTI

- The initiative is expected to:
 - Strengthen research and innovation,
 - Expand clinical research infrastructure,
 - Develop a skilled workforce, and
 - Enhance India's competitiveness in the **global biopharmaceutical value chain**.

National Institute of Urban Affairs

- Context:** The **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)**, under the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, celebrated its **50th anniversary** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**.
- The celebrations were organized under the theme **"Resilient Urban India @2047"**.

Significance of NIUA

- NIUA is a premier think tank supporting **integrated and sustainable urban development** in India.
- Since its establishment in **1976**, it has acted as a bridge between:
 - Research and policy,
 - National priorities and local realities,
 - Knowledge and implementation.

About the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)

- National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** is a premier institution dedicated to **research, capacity building, and knowledge dissemination** in the fields of urban development and urban management.
- It is headquartered in **New Delhi**.

- The Institute was established in **1976** as an **autonomous organization** under the **Societies Registration Act**.
- NIUA receives support from the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, State Governments, urban and regional development agencies, and various organizations dealing with urban issues.
- Serving as a centre of excellence for urban research and policy, NIUA promotes **innovative and evidence-based solutions** to address the challenges arising from rapid urbanisation and to foster **inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities** in India.
- Strengthen collaboration among stakeholders.
- Enhance export preparedness.

Growth in India's Wind Energy Sector

- India added a record **6.1 GW** of wind power capacity during **FY 2025-26**.
- This represents a **46% increase** over the previous year.
- It is the highest annual wind capacity addition recorded so far.

Installed Wind Energy Capacity

- India currently has more than **56.1 GW** of installed wind energy capacity.
- The country is the **fourth-largest wind energy market** in the world.
- Only a small portion of the estimated **1,164 GW** wind energy potential has been utilized.

Export Projections

- India is expected to account for:
 - **10% of global wind turbine exports by 2030.**
 - **20% of global wind turbine exports by 2040.**

WT-MARUT Portal

- **Context:** Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy launched **WT-MARUT**, India's first dedicated **Wind Turbine Supply Chain Management Portal**.
- The portal aims to strengthen the domestic wind manufacturing ecosystem and support India's clean energy transition.
- The portal was unveiled during the **Global Wind Day Conference** held in Goa.

Development of WT-MARUT

- WT-MARUT has been developed under the aegis of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** with support from the **Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers Association (IWTMA)**.

Objectives of the WT-MARUT Portal

The portal is designed to:

- Improve visibility across the wind energy supply chain.
- Facilitate compliance with domestic sourcing requirements under the **Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)** framework.
- Support supplier identification and qualification.

Yoga Park Portal

- **Context:** The **Ministry of Ayush** launched the **Yoga Park Portal** to convert existing parks into community wellness centres.
- The initiative aims to **integrate yoga, meditation, and healthy living** into people's daily lives.

Launched By

- The portal was launched by **Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ayush and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare**.
- It was unveiled during the **25-day countdown event for International Day of Yoga 2026** at **Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh**.
- The portal was launched alongside the revamped **Yoga Sangam Portal**.

Objective of the Initiative

- To transform parks from mere recreational spaces into **community wellness hubs**.
- To promote: Regular yoga practice, Meditation, Preventive healthcare, Community participation, Healthy lifestyles.

Significance of Yoga Parks

- Yoga Parks are envisioned as permanent community assets.
- They are intended to:
 - Strengthen India's preventive healthcare ecosystem.
 - Ensure easy access to wellness facilities at the neighbourhood level.
 - Encourage long-term healthy habits.

Alignment with International Day of Yoga 2026

- The initiative aligns with the theme of International Day of Yoga 2026: "Yoga for Healthy Ageing"

India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management (IIIDEM)

- **Context:** India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) is celebrating its **15th Foundation Day**. To commemorate the event IIIDEM organised a **two-day Conference** on Capacity Building and Strategic Roadmap on **16-17 June, 2026** in New Delhi.

About India International Institute of Democracy & Election Management (IIIDEM)

- The India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) is the **training and research wing of the Election Commission of India (ECI)**.
- It was set up in **2011** to train election officials and other people involved in elections so that elections in India are free, fair, and smooth.

- IIIDEM also works as an international centre that shares knowledge and builds skills to improve democracy and ensure honest election processes.
- It is one of the few institutes in the world that not only trains Indian election officials but also helps **Election Management Bodies (EMBs)** from other countries.
- The institute has a team of experienced experts who manage its training, teaching, and research work.
- It conducts many training programmes and courses for both Indian and foreign participants. These programmes can be residential (stay at the institute) or non-residential.
- Earlier, IIIDEM functioned from the Election Commission of India's office. Now, it operates from its own full campus located in Dwarka, Delhi.

Air Pollution Reaches Remote Himalayas

- **Context:** A recent study has shown that even pristine Himalayan regions are being affected by air pollution.
- The study focused on **Munsyari**, a high-altitude tourist destination in the Himalayas.
- Researchers warned of potential long-term health risks from continued exposure to pollutants.

About the Study

- Conducted by researchers from the **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)**.
- ARIES is an autonomous institute under the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**.
- Measurements were carried out during **2022-2023**.
- The study monitored **Non-Methane Hydrocarbons (NMHCs)**.

About NMHCs

- **Non-Methane Hydrocarbons (NMHCs)** are reactive gases released from: **Fuel combustion, Vehicular emissions, Industrial and other human activities.**
- They play an important role in the formation of: **Ozone (O₃), Secondary aerosols.**
- These secondary pollutants affect air quality, climate, and human health.

Role of Aromatic Hydrocarbons

- Aromatic hydrocarbons such as: **Benzene, Xylene**
- Were found to significantly contribute to the formation of: **Tropospheric ozone, Secondary organic aerosols (SOA).**
- These pollutants adversely affect: **Climate, Air quality, Human health.**

National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)

- **Context:** National Internet Exchange of India marked its 23rd Foundation Day on June 19.

About

- A **non-profit organization** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.**
- Registered under **Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.**
- **Objective:** To expand internet access in India and globally.
- **Main role:** Enables exchange of domestic internet traffic among ISPs and other networks.

Functions

- Strengthens **India's internet system** by **managing .IN and .Bharat domains.**
- Provides **Internet Exchange services.**
- Allocates **IP addresses (IPv4/IPv6)** through **IRINN.**
- Promotes a secure and inclusive digital ecosystem.
- Operates **79 Internet Exchange Points (IXPs)** across India.

- Supports domain names in **22 Indian languages.**

IITM-ARIES MoU for BCON Climate Monitoring

- **Context:** The **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune,** and the **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital,** have signed a long-term **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to establish a climate observation station in the Himalayan region, a move aimed at strengthening climate change research and long-term atmospheric monitoring under the **Bharat Climate Observation Network (BCON).**

BCON Initiative

- **Bharath Climate Observation Network** is a national programme launched by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences** and implemented by **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.**
- It aims to establish a long-term and high-accuracy climate monitoring system across India.

Purpose of the Programme

- To generate reliable and high-quality climate data.
- To help identify long-term climate patterns and changes.
- To strengthen **climate research and informed policymaking.**

Role in Climate Modelling

- The data collected will be used to validate and enhance **Earth System Models.**
- It will improve the performance of **Earth System Model,** including IITM's model.
- This will lead to better climate predictions and future projections for India.

Abhigyan App

- **Context:** The **Union Home Minister** inaugurated the **Abhigyan app,** which has

- been developed by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**.
- The application is integrated with the **National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS)**, enabling fingerprint records of accused persons, convicted offenders, and prison inmates to be maintained on a single centralized database.
 - Fingerprint impressions captured through the app can be compared with the NAFIS repository, with results generated in approximately **35 seconds**.
 - The app allows law enforcement personnel to carry out biometric verification of suspicious individuals during routine vehicle inspections or street checks.
 - This capability helps authorities quickly identify persons who are wanted or have links to criminal cases.
- ‘Nirbhaya Chetna’ is a key component of the broader ‘**Nirbhaya Raho**’ scheme.
- The initiative is implemented under the ‘**Nirbhaya Fund**’.
- It will cover all Panchayats across India.
- Training will be provided to over 17.5 lakh elected male representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions.
- **The training will cover the following:**
- Gender equality
 - Women’s rights
 - Women’s safety
 - Responsibilities of elected representatives
- The overarching objective is to ensure a safe environment for women in local communities.

Initiatives for Women’s Safety and Gender Equality in India

- **Context:** The Ministry of Panchayati Raj organized a three-day ‘Training of Trainers’ program on ‘**Nirbhaya Chetna**’ in New Delhi under the ‘**Nirbhaya Fund**’ scheme. During the event, the Ministry also launched the ‘**Nirbhaya Chetna**’ training module.
- Nirbhaya Chetna**
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched a **national-level initiative called ‘Nirbhaya Chetna’**.
 - This initiative focuses on **raising awareness among men regarding issues concerning women, particularly women’s safety and health**.
 - It is recognized as the **largest initiative of its kind in the world**.
 - The initiative aims to place women’s safety and gender equality at the core of **grassroots-level administration in India**.
- Nirbhaya Fund**
- The ‘Nirbhaya Fund’ was established by the **Government of India in 2013 following the ‘Nirbhaya’ case**.
 - Its primary objective is to support initiatives **aimed at enhancing the safety of women**.
 - The fund is administered by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
 - An ‘**Empowered Committee**’ chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and comprising representatives from various ministries is responsible for recommending projects to receive financial assistance from this fund.
 - Key initiatives supported under this fund include
 - Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCf)
 - One Stop Centres (OSCs) – Integrated service centres
 - Expanded use of the Women Helpline (WHL)
 - Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV) scheme
 - Since its inception, the ‘Empowered Committee’

has approved projects worth approximately ₹9,800 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund.

Bhavishya Portal

- **Context:** Over the past 12 years, pension rules have been improved to simplify the lives of pensioners, and a centralized pension processing system named 'Bhavishya' has been introduced.

About Bhavishya

- Bhavishya is an online pension processing system launched by the **Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare**.
- It has been made mandatory for all Central Government departments since **January 1, 2017**.

Objective

- To minimize the delays, errors, financial losses, and hardships faced by pensioners during the pension processing stage.

Key Features of Bhavishya

Automated Registration

- Employees nearing retirement are automatically registered through payroll systems.
- Departments can view the number of employees due to retire in the next 15 months.

Self-Registration

- Officials and retirees can register themselves.
- Retirees can fill out pension forms independently, reducing errors.

Timely Processing

- The pension process begins 15 months prior to retirement.
- Automated reminders are sent to ensure deadlines are met.

Transparency

- The entire process is transparent, making it easier to track delays and ensure accountability.

Accurate Calculations

- Benefits are calculated automatically, minimizing manual errors and complaints.

Instant Updates

- Pensioners receive updates via SMS and email at every stage.

e-PPO System

- Digital Pension Payment Orders (e-PPOs) are generated.
- These are transmitted directly to the CPAO and the bank for faster processing.

Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project

- **Context:** The Prime Minister is laying the foundation stone for India's first commercial 'Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project' at Lakhanpur in the Jharsuguda district of Odisha.

About the Project

- This is **India's first large-scale plant to convert coal into ammonium nitrate**. The project is being set up at Lakhanpur in the Jharsuguda district of Odisha.
- **Objective:** To produce ammonium nitrate domestically using the country's coal reserves, reduce imports, and support the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India) initiative.

Highlights

- Formed by BCGCL (a joint venture of BHEL and Coal India Limited).
- Converts coal into chemical grade ammonium nitrate.
- Produces around 2,000 tonnes daily.
- Uses 100% indigenous coal gasification technology.
- Received government funding of ₹1,350 crore under a national scheme.
- Helps promote industrial use of coal and better utilization of land.

Production Process

- Instead of burning high-ash coal, it is heated with steam and oxygen in a specialized unit.

- This process converts the coal into a gas known as 'syngas' (primarily a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen).
- The gas is purified and adjusted to achieve the precise ratio required for ammonia production.
- The syngas is converted into ammonia (NH₃).
- The ammonia undergoes further processing to produce nitric acid; this is then combined with ammonia to produce ammonium nitrate (NH₄NO₃).
- Ship recycling volume rose to **2.99 million Gross Tons (GT)** in 2025 from **1.86 million GT** in 2024, registering nearly **60% growth**.
- India achieved the **Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030** target of becoming the world's leading ship recycling nation **five years ahead of schedule**.

Significance

- The achievement reflects the impact of maritime sector reforms, ease-of-doing-business measures, and infrastructure development initiatives undertaken by the Government of India.
- It strengthens India's position as a global hub for **responsible, sustainable, and environmentally sound ship recycling**.

Importance for Sustainability

- Ship recycling promotes:
 - Resource recovery and reuse
 - Circular economy principles
 - Environmentally sound disposal of end-of-life vessels
 - Sustainable maritime development
- India's leadership demonstrates a successful blend of **regulatory reforms, environmental compliance, infrastructure development, and industry collaboration**.

Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL) Granted Navratna Status

- **Context:** The Government of India has conferred **Navratna status** on **Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited**, one of India's leading oil refining companies.
- CPCL has been upgraded from a **Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE)** to a **Navratna CPSE**.
- With this elevation, **CPCL becomes the 28th Navratna CPSE** in the country.

Ground-level Ozone Pollution

- **Context:** A study based on 21 years (2004–2024) of climate and air quality data reveals that severe heatwaves in India **exacerbate ground-level ozone pollution**.

About Ground-level Ozone Pollution

- Ground-level ozone is formed when **nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react in the presence of sunlight**.
- High temperatures accelerate this reaction. Ozone pollution levels can remain elevated for 3 to 4 days even after the heatwave subsides.

Vulnerable Regions

- Northwest India
- Indo-Gangetic Plain
- Western Himalayan region

Impact

- More than 800 people in India lost their lives due to ozone exposure during the 2024 heatwaves; heart diseases and lung diseases (COPD) were the primary underlying causes.

India Becomes the World's Leading Ship Recycling Nation (2025)

- **Context:** India emerged as the **world's top ship recycling nation in 2025**, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- India's share of global ship recycling increased from **30.1% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025**, the highest in the world.

About Navratna Status

- The Navratna Scheme was launched by the **Government of India in 1997** to grant selected public sector enterprises greater autonomy in financial and operational decision-making.
- The objective is to **enhance their competitiveness, efficiency, and ability to expand without excessive government intervention.**

Benefits of Navratna Status

A Navratna company is empowered to:

- Invest up to **₹1,000 crore or 15% of its net worth in a single project without seeking prior approval from the government.**
- Establish joint ventures and subsidiaries overseas.
- Expand into new business areas and markets with greater flexibility.
- Undertake mergers and acquisitions more efficiently.
- Enter into strategic partnerships and technology collaborations to strengthen innovation and growth.

National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

- **Context:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** to establish an 'NHAI Centre' at NCAER dedicated to the **economics of transport, mobility, and logistics.**

About the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

- NCAER is one of India's oldest and most **well-known independent economic research organizations.**
- **Established in 1956 and headquartered in New Delhi,** it focuses on applied economic research, data analysis, and policy recommendations. It

bridges the gap between academic research and real-world policy formulation.

- NCAER was established during the period when India embarked on its journey of planned economic development following independence.
- The need for an independent organization to conduct reliable economic research led to its creation.
- It was registered in December 1956 under **the Societies Registration Act of 1860.**
- The organization received support from the Government of India, the Ford Foundation, and major Indian business groups such as the Tata Group.
- John Mathai served as its first Chairman.

Objectives and Goals

- To conduct research on economic issues related to India's development.
- To provide accurate data and independent analysis for policy formulation.
- To support the decision-making processes of both the public and private sectors.
- To promote evidence-based policies for economic growth and welfare.

Key Research Areas

- Agriculture and rural development
- Human development
- Industry and trade
- Infrastructure and energy
- Investment and growth
- Household-based studies and data

Key Contributions

- Conducted the 'Market Information Survey of Households' (MISH), one of India's early large-scale household surveys; developed the 'India Human Development Survey' in collaboration with the University of Maryland.

- Provided research-based support to bodies such as the Planning Commission (for India's Five-Year Plans) and NITI Aayog.

Evaluated major government schemes, including:

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
- Smart Cities Mission
- Analyzed the impact of foreign investment, tax reforms, and globalization on the Indian economy.

Unique Land Parcel Identification Number / Bhu-Aadhaar

- Context: The 'Unique Land Parcel Identification Number' (ULPIN) also known as 'Bhu-Aadhaar' is a 14-character alphanumeric code assigned to land parcels in India.
- As of November 2025, under the land records modernization framework, ULPINs have been assigned to over 36 crore land parcels across 29 states and Union Territories.

Details about ULPIN

- ULPIN stands for 'Unique Land Parcel Identification Number'.
- It is a 14-character alphanumeric code used for land parcels.
- It links land-related data with maps and spatial information.
- It helps maintain accurate and transparent land records.

Related Scheme

- 'Bhu-Aadhaar' is a component of the 'Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme' (DILRMP).
- The DILRMP scheme was launched in 2016.
- The scheme aims to improve land administration by digitizing records, ensuring clear ownership, reducing disputes, and effectively integrating revenue and registration offices.

- The scheme has been extended until the year 2025-26.
- The budget allocation for this is approximately ₹875 crore.

Legal and Administrative Aspects

- Under the Constitution of India, land is a subject falling under the State List.
- The responsibility for maintaining land records lies with the states.

Modernization activities include

- Cadastral maps
- Title documents
- Digital mutation

Objectives

- Enhancing transparency in land ownership.
- Reducing land-related disputes and fraud.
- Supporting digital governance in land administration.

President Appreciates Project Cheetah Support

- Context: President interacted with Cheetah Mitras and members of the Sahariya tribe at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district.

- She appreciated their contribution to Project Cheetah and said that the active participation of local communities is playing an important role in the success of the ambitious conservation programme.

Project Cheetah

- Project Cheetah is India's premier wildlife conservation initiative focused on bringing back cheetahs, a species that disappeared from the country in 1952.
- It is a landmark ecological effort, making India the first nation to attempt the reintroduction of an extinct large carnivore through translocation from another continent.

History and Background

- The cheetah was officially declared extinct in India in 1952.
- Project Cheetah was launched in 2022.
- The first group of cheetahs was brought from Namibia and released into **Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. Another group arrived from South Africa in 2023.**
- The project is being executed by **the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** with support from Indian and international wildlife specialists.
- They usually reside in separate hamlets known as **"Seharana"**, consisting of clusters of houses.
- Traditional houses are constructed using stone blocks, with roofs made from locally available stone slabs called **Patore**.

Language and Religion

- The Sahariya have largely lost their original tribal language and now speak the regional dialects prevalent in their areas.
- Their religious practices combine elements of **Hinduism** with the worship of local deities such as **Bhavani, Gond Devta, and Bijasur**.
- They also retain animistic traditions that reflect their long association with forest environments.

Objectives of Project Cheetah

- To restore cheetahs to India after an absence of over seven decades.
- To develop a self-sustaining and free-ranging cheetah population in suitable habitats.
- To revive and conserve grassland and savannah ecosystems, which have received relatively little conservation attention.
- To enhance biodiversity by restoring the ecological role of a top predator.
- To generate eco-tourism opportunities and improve livelihoods for local communities through their participation in conservation efforts.
- To reinforce India's position as a global leader in wildlife protection, species recovery, and ecosystem restoration.

Culture and Traditions

- The Sahariya are famous for **Saharia Swang**, a traditional folk dance performed during the **Holi** festival.
- The dance is accompanied by musical instruments such as the **dhol, nagari, and matki**.
- A distinctive feature of the performance is a male dancer dressed in female attire who performs alongside other male dancers.

Livelihood

- The Sahariya mainly depend on forests for their sustenance and income.
- They collect and sell forest products, cultivate small agricultural plots, and often work as agricultural labourers.
- The community is particularly renowned for its expertise in producing **catechu (katha)** from **khair trees**.

Sahariya Tribe

- The Sahariya are recognized as one of India's **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**. They are known by several alternative names, including **Seher, Sair, Savar, Saonar, and Sahra**.

Habitat and Settlements

- The tribe primarily inhabits forested and rural areas of **Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan**.

V.O.C. Port

- **Context:** The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways commended the **V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority**

for transforming into a national model for sustainable maritime development.

- He also highlighted the port's significant achievements in reducing carbon emissions, utilizing renewable energy, driving digital innovation, and developing social infrastructure.
- The Minister drew attention to data from the port's inaugural sustainability report, which indicates that renewable energy now meets approximately 94 percent of the port's energy consumption needs.
- Furthermore, the report highlighted a reduction of about 45 percent in net carbon emissions.

About V.O.C. Port

- Formerly known as Tuticorin Port, it was renamed **V.O.C. Port in 2011 in honor of V.O. Chidambaram Pillai**, who established the **Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in 1906 to challenge British dominance** in maritime trade.
- It is **an artificial, all-weather, deep-draft port situated** on the Coromandel Coast.
- It plays a pivotal role in India's trade with the Mediterranean region, Europe, and the Americas.

Location and Strategic Importance

- The port is located in the **Gulf of Mannar along the Coromandel Coast**.
- Situated near the **East-West international shipping route, it serves as a key gateway for international trade**.
- This strategic location offers a significant advantage for India's exports to and imports from major global markets.

Port Modernization

- By implementing a pilot project starting in late 2025, the **V.O.C. Port became India's first port to produce and utilize green hydrogen within its own premises**.
- Furthermore, it is the first Indian port to introduce a **'Digital Twin' platform**. This creates a real-time virtual model of port operations to enhance monitoring, predictive maintenance, and overall efficiency.
- In February 2026, it became **the first Indian port to install an advanced anti-drone system utilizing radar and radio-frequency technology** to safeguard critical infrastructure.

Outer Harbour Project

- The ongoing Outer Harbour Project **aims to handle large vessels and mega-carriers**.
- This expansion is expected to transform the V.O.C. Port into a major cargo transshipment hub for South India.

Significance

- The V.O.C Port is **one of India's most important strategic ports**; it contributes significantly to maritime trade, technological innovation, and the growth of South India's cargo handling and export sectors.

Launch of PortGPT Mobile App

- The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways launched **the PortGPT mobile app**.
- With this, the VOC Port becomes the first major port in the country to offer an enterprise-level **'Generative' Artificial Intelligence platform via a dedicated mobile app**.

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)

- **Context:** INCOIS has started issuing special 'El Niño' bulletins to inform the maritime community about the potential impacts of the prevailing 'El Niño' conditions.

About INCOIS

- INCOIS was established in 1999 as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- It operates under the Earth System Science Organization (ESSO).
- Its primary mandate is to provide ocean information and advisory services to the public, industries, government agencies, and researchers through sustained ocean observations and scientific research.
- INCOIS is a permanent member of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.
- It has established the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre; this centre issues tsunami warnings within 10 minutes and provides services to India and 28 other countries in the Indian Ocean region.
- Its headquarters is located in Hyderabad.

Key Initiatives of INCOIS

Search and Rescue Aid Tool (SARAT)

- SARAT assists the Indian Coast Guard, the Indian Navy, and the Coastal Security Police in locating missing persons, boats, or objects at sea.

SynOPS Visualization Platform

- The SynOPS platform integrates real-time oceanographic and meteorological data to

enhance coordination and decision-making capabilities during disasters and extreme weather events.

Significance

- INCOIS plays a pivotal role in ocean monitoring, disaster management, maritime safety, and early warning services, thereby helping to protect lives, property, and marine resources.

Integration of Pharma Jan Samadhan and Pharma Sahi Daam

- **Context:** The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) integrated the 'Pharma Jan Samadhan' portal with the 'Pharma Sahi Daam' portal on June 23, 2026.
- This integrated government platform provides a single interface for checking medicine prices and registering complaints related to drug pricing.

Pharma Sahi Daam and Price Verification

- Pharma Sahi Daam facilitates access to the prices of both scheduled and non-scheduled medicines.
- This tool allows consumers to verify whether a medicine is being sold within government-approved limits and to report overpricing via the app or website.

Pharma Jan Samadhan and Grievance Redressal

- Pharma Jan Samadhan was launched on April 8, 2015, as a grievance redressal system concerning the pricing and availability of medicines.

World's First Nuclear Process Heat-Based Hydrogen Production Facility

- **Context:** The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has inaugurated the world's first hydrogen production facility that uses

- **nuclear process heat from a Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR).**
- The pilot plant is located at the **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.**
- The initiative marks a significant step in using **nuclear energy for clean hydrogen production**, in addition to electricity generation.
- The Copper-Chloride (Cu-Cl) hydrogen production cycle was designed and developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in Mumbai.
- The engineering, development, installation, testing, and commissioning of this project were carried out jointly by BARC and IGCAR.
- According to the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), this facility serves as a technology demonstration tool.

Key Highlights

- It uses **process heat from the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR)**, India's only operational fast reactor research facility.
- The project expands **India's three-stage nuclear power programme** into the field of **low-carbon hydrogen production.**
- It demonstrates the feasibility of producing hydrogen using nuclear heat, scaling up from the laboratory level to the pilot-plant level.

Copper-Chlorine (Cu-Cl) Thermochemical Cycle

- The pilot plant produces hydrogen using the **Copper-Chlorine (Cu-Cl) thermochemical cycle.**
- **IGCAR integrated the system with the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR).**

Significance

- It is a **thermochemical water-splitting process** that:
 - Uses **high-temperature heat** instead of electricity.
 - Splits water into **hydrogen and oxygen** through a sequence of chemical reactions involving **copper and chlorine compounds.**
- It is considered an alternative to **electrolysis**, reducing electricity requirements.
- The heat required for this process is supplied by the **40 MWth Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR).**
- This is a **sodium-cooled fast nuclear reactor** that achieved criticality on October 18, 1985.
- Demonstrates the use of **nuclear energy for producing clean hydrogen.**
- Supports **India's energy security** by diversifying the use of nuclear power.
- Contributes to **decarbonisation** by producing **low-carbon hydrogen.**
- Showcases the potential of nuclear reactors to provide both:
 - Carbon-free electricity.
 - High-temperature process heat for industrial applications.
- It supports the **National Green Hydrogen Mission**, which aims to produce **5 million metric tonnes (MMT) of green hydrogen annually by 2030.**

- It introduces a third carbon-free hydrogen production pathway integrating carbon-free heat with **electrolysis and steam methane reforming for large-scale hydrogen production**.
- It highlights the broader benefits of India's Fast Breeder Reactor and three-stage thorium-based nuclear power programme, demonstrating their potential not only for electricity generation but also for clean fuel production and long-term energy security.

Draft Amendments to the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

- **Context:** The Union Food and Public Distribution Department has released a draft amendment to the **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013**.

Proposed Amendment

- A new provision in Section 3 of the NFSA, 2013 proposes:
 - Every person in an Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) **household will receive 7 kg of foodgrains per month**, subject to a maximum of 35 kg per household.
 - Foodgrains for **AAY beneficiaries will continue to be provided free of cost**.
- **Current Provision:** Every AAY household receives **35 kg of foodgrains** per month, irrespective of family size.

Reason for the Amendment

- The government states that the existing household-based allocation creates inequities:
 - Smaller households receive higher per-capita foodgrains.
 - Larger households receive lower per-capita foodgrains, sometimes less than priority households.
- **Objective:**
 - Remove intra-category inequities.
 - Ensure more rational foodgrain allocation.
 - Better align foodgrain entitlements with nutritional requirements.

Salient Features of NFSA

- Public Distribution System (PDS) is now governed by provisions of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- Coverage under PDS is de-linked from the erstwhile 'poverty estimates'.
- The Act provides coverage for nearly **2/3rd of the country's total population, basis Census 2011 population estimates**.
- **75% of Rural and 50% of Urban population** is entitled to receive highly subsidised foodgrains under two categories of beneficiaries - Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH).
- The Act entitles 35 kg of foodgrains per AAY Household per month, whereas 5 Kg of foodgrain per PHH Person per month.
- Identification of beneficiaries/households under NFSA is done by respective State/UT Government, which is required to frame its own criteria.
- Highly subsidised Central Issue Prices of Re.1, Rs.2 and Rs.3 for Coarse-grains, Wheat and Rice respectively, kept unchanged till June 2019.
- No reduction in foodgrains allocation to any State/UT under NFSA. Allocation gaps if any, are covered with Tide-Over allocation

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)

- Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) is a flagship food security programme launched in

December 2000 to provide food support to the poorest and most vulnerable households in India.

- Through the Public Distribution System (PDS), the scheme supplies essential food grains at highly subsidised rates to improve nutrition and reduce hunger in both rural and urban areas.
- Implemented by the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**.
- Aims to **ensure food security for the poorest sections of society** and move towards a hunger-free India.
- Initially covered 1 crore households, with coverage later expanding to around 2.5 crore families.
- Beneficiaries receive food grains through the **Public Distribution System (PDS)**.
- The Central Government, through the Food Corporation of India (FCI), is responsible for procurement, storage and allocation of food grains, while State Governments identify beneficiaries and distribute food grains.
- The scheme is currently integrated with the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)**.

Operation Amistad

- **Context:** Two major earthquakes struck the **San Felipe and Yumare areas in Venezuela's Yaracuy province**. They registered 7.2 and 7.5 on the Richter scale, respectively.
- India launched **'Operation Amistad'** to provide humanitarian relief. ('Amistad' means 'friendship' in Spanish.)

BHISHM Cube Emergency Mobile Hospitals **About BHISHM**

- BHISHM stands for 'Bharat Health Initiative for **Sahyog Hita and Maitri**' (India's Health Initiative for Cooperation and Friendship).
- As part of the relief effort, India provided two BHISHM Cube emergency mobile hospitals to Venezuela.
- Each BHISHM Cube contains 1,000 medical items and essential medicines.
- It can treat up to 200 patients per day.
- It facilitates up to 20 surgeries per day.
- **A temporary hospital can be set up in 12 minutes** using the integrated tent system.
- It is equipped with facilities to instantly generate electricity and medical oxygen.
- It includes a dedicated communication app that supports 180 languages for patient interaction.
- India has previously supplied 'Bhishm Cube' emergency hospitals to the following countries: **Ukraine, Maldives, Jamaica, and Kyrgyzstan.**

Shatayu Dashboard

- **Context:** The Shatayu Dashboard has recently expanded its network of elderly caregivers to enhance care and support for senior citizens across India.

About Shatayu

- The 'Shatayu' dashboard dedicated to comprehensive **care assistance and training for the elderly** was launched on **May 22, 2026**.
- The expansion of the acronym Shatayu stands for '**Comprehensive Care Assistance and Training for Your Use (for Senior Citizens)**.'
- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.

Key Features

- Connects users with verified elderly caregivers and support agencies at the district level.
- Monitors caregiver training programs and certification standards to ensure quality and consistency.
- Consolidates information from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), healthcare skill councils, and other entities involved in elderly care.

Objectives

- To create and maintain a verified database of trained elderly caregivers.
- To assist families in accessing qualified and reliable professional caregivers for senior citizens.

Related Platform

- The 'Jeevan' app is a mobile application designed for senior citizens.
- It provides emergency assistance services and information regarding geo-tagged old-age homes.

Support Service

- Senior citizens can seek immediate assistance through the National Helpline for the Elderly – 14567.

Narcotics Coordination Centre (NCORD)

- **Context:** The Union Home Minister is set to chair the 10th high-level meeting of the Narcotics Coordination Centre (NCORD) in New Delhi.

Details about NCORD

- NCORD was established by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2016 to enhance coordination between the Central Government and the States in combating drug trafficking and drug abuse.

- In 2019, the mechanism was strengthened by introducing a **four-tier coordination structure**.

Objectives

- To ensure effective coordination among States, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and other relevant stakeholders in tackling the drug menace.
- To enhance communication, inter-agency cooperation, and intelligence sharing among law enforcement and drug enforcement agencies.
- To adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach towards drug prevention and law enforcement operations.

Key Initiatives of NCORD**Mission Spandan**

- It encourages collaboration with spiritual and religious organizations to create awareness about drug abuse and prevention.

MANAS Helpline

- 'MANAS' is a toll-free helpline (1933) launched to enable citizens to report drug-related information and seek assistance.

Mann Ki Baat

- **Context:** The Prime Minister addresses the nation every month on the last Sunday through the 'Mann Ki Baat' (Voice of the Heart) radio programme.
- Accordingly, the Prime Minister's address during the 135th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', broadcast on Sunday (June 28), highlighted the following:

- He spoke about the achievements of the Pradhan Mantri Accident Insurance Scheme and the Pradhan Mantri Life Insurance Scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Accident Insurance Scheme

- The Pradhan Mantri Accident Insurance Scheme is a **one-year accident insurance plan**. It provides coverage for death or disability resulting from an accident and can be renewed annually.
- **Individuals aged between 18 and 70** who hold a personal bank account or a post office account are eligible to join this scheme.
- By paying an **annual premium of Rs. 20, a sum of Rs. 2 lakh** is provided in the event of accidental death or disability (Rs. 1 lakh for partial disability).

Achievements

- So far, more than **58 crore people** have joined this scheme.
- Of these, over **28 crore** are women.
- More than **Rs. 3,700 crore** has been disbursed to affected families through this scheme to date.

Pradhan Mantri Life Insurance Scheme

- The Pradhan Mantri Life Insurance Scheme is a **one-year life insurance plan**.
- It is renewable annually. It provides compensation upon death, regardless of the cause.
- **Individuals aged between 18 and 50** who hold a personal bank account or a post office account can register under this scheme.
- Individuals who join the scheme before turning 50 can continue the life insurance coverage up to the **age of 55** by paying the regular premium.
- For those paying an **annual premium of ₹436**, a **life insurance payout of ₹2 lakh** is provided in the event of death due to any cause.

Achievements

- Similarly, the **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)** is a significant scheme.
- If an insured person under this scheme unfortunately passes away, their family receives an insurance payout of **₹2 lakh**.
- **Over 27 crore people** have joined this scheme so far.
- To date, **approximately 11 lakh families** have received insurance payouts **totaling nearly ₹22,000 crore**.

Rural Internal Audit Portal

- **Context:** Ahead of the implementation of the **Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin)** from **July 1**, Union Rural Development Minister launched a **"Rural Internal Audit Portal"**.

Key Features of the Rural Internal Audit Portal

- End-to-End Digital Audit Management
- Action Taken Reports (ATRs) and Para Settlement
- Centralized Audit Repository
- Multilingual and User-Friendly Interface
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Advanced Analytics

Objectives of the Rural Internal Audit Portal

- Digitize the internal audit process.
- Simplify audit procedures.
- Improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability.
- Create a centralized audit repository.
- Enable risk-based audit planning.
- Detect systemic weaknesses using technology.

Benefits

- Replaces manual, paper-based audit processes.
- Makes audits faster, transparent, and efficient.

- Supports better monitoring and decision-making.

Muzhiyan Kulam

- **Context:** The Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister inaugurated the renovated Muzhiyan Kulam, a historic pond that is over 400 years old.

About Muzhiyan Kulam

- **Location:** A two-acre water body near Thavalakuppam in Pooranankuppam, Puducherry.
- **Historical background:** Originates from the Pallava era.
- **Significance:**
 - Traditionally used as a key source of drinking water and irrigation for the local community.
 - Contains four natural wells fed by springs.
 - **Restoration basis:** Inspired by the traditional Naangu Mozhi system, an ancient South Indian water management technique focused on rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge.
- **Structure:** A central pond (kulam) connected through underground channels to four separate wells (mozhi), forming an integrated water system.

PM-Family Care Tracker (PM-FCT)

- **Context:** Union Home Minister launched the pilot project of the PM-Family Care Tracker (PM-FCT) here and said the integrated digital platform would ensure no beneficiary of the Centre's welfare schemes related to women and children is left out.

- The digital platform would ensure that **pregnant women, mothers and children** receive all eligible government benefits through continuous monitoring and timely intervention.

Key Features

- Integrated digital platform developed for **Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency**.
- Combines data from **ICDS, RCH, Poshan Abhiyaan, and School Health Programmes**.
- Uses the **Birth Registration Number (BRN)** as a unique ID to link records.
- Integrates **TeCHO+, Poshan Tracker, and Child Tracking System (CTS)** databases.
- Tracks the **health, nutrition, and education** of children from pregnancy to 18 years.
- Covers **16 welfare schemes** across health, nutrition, education, and social welfare.

Working mechanism

- Sends alerts if a child misses vaccination.
- Flags school dropouts for follow-up by officials.
- Identifies underweight, stunted, or special-care children for early support.
- Monitors maternal health from pregnancy to the breastfeeding period.

Schemes Covered

- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)
- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)
- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)
- PM Poshan
- Mission Vatsalya
- Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK)
- Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY)

Monitoring & Alerts

- Tracks maternal health, child vaccination, malnutrition, school enrolment, dropouts, adolescent girls' health, and education.
- Uses an automated alert system to notify officials at taluka, district, and state levels until action is completed.

GST – 10 Years: Use of AI to Enhance Efficiency

- **Context:** July 1, 2026, marks the completion of 10 years since the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- In this regard, the Central Government is taking steps to make GST administration more efficient through Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data integration.

Introduction of GST

- GST was launched by the then President Pranab Mukherjee at midnight on July 1, 2017, in the Central Hall of the old Parliament House.
- The then Prime Minister noted that this tax system would alleviate the various indirect tax-related complexities faced by traders and small business owners.
- The former Finance Minister played a pivotal role in implementing GST by securing the cooperation of the states.

Changes in Tax Rates

- Initially, there were four tax slabs: 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%.
- Subsequently, the structure was simplified into two main rates: 5% and 18%.
- A decision was made to levy a 40% tax exclusively on luxury goods.

GST Growth (2017–2025)

- Average monthly GST collection in 2017–18: ₹89,700 crore.
- It rose to ₹1.85 lakh crore in 2025–26.
- Registered taxpayers:
 - 2017: 66.5 lakh
 - 2025: Approximately 1.6 crore

New Measures to Enhance GST Efficiency

- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for:
 - Detecting tax evasion.
 - Improving risk assessment.
- Strengthening information sharing by integrating data from GST, Income Tax, and Customs departments.
- Accelerating the tax refund process.
- Expanding technological facilities to enable Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to easily comply with tax regulations.

Significance

- Enhances transparency, speed, and efficiency in tax administration.
- Helps curb tax evasion and fraudulent billing practices.
- Provides businesses with simplified compliance procedures.
- Strengthens digital tax administration while increasing government revenue.

Pax Silica Summit

- **Context:** The second Pax Silica summit was held in Washington.
- **Thirty-five nations**, including India, joined and signed a **US-led initiative** to create secure and reliable global supply chains for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and critical technologies.

About Pax Silica

- Pax Silica is a multinational technology partnership initiative launched by the **US in December 2025**.
- Its objective:
 - To build secure and robust global supply chains for:
 - Semiconductors,
 - Artificial Intelligence (AI), and
 - Rare Earth Elements (REEs).
- Meaning of the name '**Pax Silica**'
- "**Pax**" – Signifies peace, stability, and cooperation.
- "**Silica**" – Refers to the silicon raw material used in semiconductor manufacturing.
- The name represents a secure, stable, and cooperative global technology ecosystem.

Key objectives of the Pax Silica Declaration

- Reducing over-reliance on a single country for critical technologies and raw materials.
- Creating secure, reliable, and resilient supply chains for semiconductors, AI, and other critical technologies.
- Building secure and reliable digital infrastructure through cooperation among partner nations.

Significance

- Helps mitigate economic and geopolitical risks arising from excessive dependence on a single country for essential technologies and critical minerals.
- Strengthens resilience and international cooperation in the technology sector by diversifying supply sources.

- It makes a significant contribution to establishing a secure supply system for the global AI and high-tech sectors.
- Improves farmers' access to scientific, localized, and real-time agricultural information.
- Enhances awareness and accessibility of government schemes.
- Supports better farm decision-making, higher productivity, and improved farm incomes through technology-driven advisory services.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)

- **Context:** The **Union Cabinet** has approved an additional investment by the Government of India of **₹30,000 crore** in the **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** to be used for its upcoming funds.

About National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)

- The **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** is a fund manager that invests in infrastructure and related sectors in India.
- It was established in **2015** and is India's **first Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF)**.
- NIIF is supported by the Government of India and provides a platform where both Indian and foreign investors can invest in infrastructure projects.
- It mainly invests in infrastructure, private equity, and other sectors with the aim of earning good returns while managing risks.
- The fund invests in **greenfield projects** (new projects), **brownfield projects** (existing projects), and stalled projects.

- The **Government of India** owns **49%** of **Funds Managed by NIIF**
NIIF, while the remaining share is held by institutional investors.
 - NIIF manages over **US\$4.9 billion** in assets, making it India's largest infrastructure investment fund.
 - Although it is backed by the government, NIIF takes investment decisions independently.
 - It is managed by experienced investment and infrastructure professionals.
 - NIIF's funds are registered as **Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
 - It raises money from Indian and international institutional investors.
- NIIF Master Fund
 - Invests mainly in infrastructure sectors such as: **Roads, Ports, Airports, Power**
 - It is the **largest infrastructure fund** in India.
 - NIIF Private Markets Fund
 - Invests in funds managed by other professional fund managers that focus on infrastructure and related sectors.
 - NIIF Strategic Opportunities Fund
 - Invests in and develops large businesses and **new (greenfield) projects** that are important for India's long-term growth.



NATIONAL SCHEMES

Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

- **Context:** Under **Project GIB**, three Great Indian Bustard chicks have been successfully hatched, taking the captive breeding population to **94** birds.

About the Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

- The Great Indian Bustard is a terrestrial bird that inhabits **grasslands, scrublands, and semi-arid ecosystems**.
- It is **native to the Indian subcontinent** and is presently found mainly in **Rajasthan**, with remnant populations in **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh**.
- The **Desert National Park** in Rajasthan, extending across the **Jaisalmer and Barmer districts** and containing several human settlements, constitutes one of the species' most important natural habitats.
- It is among the **world's heaviest flying birds** and has an omnivorous diet consisting of **grass seeds, insects, small reptiles, and rodents**.
- The species faces severe threats from **loss and fragmentation of habitat**, infrastructure expansion, and **fatal collisions with overhead transmission lines**.

Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Critically Endangered
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Listed under Schedule I
- **CITES:** Included in **Appendix I**
- **Conservation Programme:** Protected under the **Species Recovery Programme** of the **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH)** Scheme.
- **State Symbol:** It is the **State Bird of Rajasthan** and is popularly known as **"Godawan"** in the region.

'Kavach'

- **Context:** The Ministry of Railways has approved the 'Kavach' scheme, valued at ₹341 crore, for the Northern and Western Railway zones.
- 'Kavach' is an automatic train protection **system developed indigenously by Indian Railways**.
- It prevents accidents by performing functions such as preventing head-on collisions between trains, automatically halting the train if a driver passes a **signal due to inattention, and providing warnings during foggy conditions**.
- The train's speed is continuously monitored, and it is regulated whenever it exceeds the prescribed limit.

About Kavach System

- **Kavach** is an indigenous **Automatic Train Protection (ATP)** system developed to improve the safety of railway operations.
- It has been developed by the **Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO)** of Indian Railways.
- Kavach is an advanced digital safety network comprising **five key interconnected components**, including continuous **Optical Fibre Cable (OFC)** along railway tracks and telecom towers to ensure seamless communication.
- The system employs a mix of **electronic equipment and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)** devices installed on locomotives, signalling infrastructure, and tracks, which communicate through **ultra-high-frequency radio signals**.
- Using predefined safety algorithms, Kavach can **warn locomotive pilots, initiate automatic braking, and avert dangerous train movements**.
- Extensive field testing on passenger trains has

been underway since 2016, ahead of its wider implementation across the railway network.

Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana

- **Context:** About 60 lakh first-time employees, including over 18 lakh women have benefitted under Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY).
- PM-VBRY is the Centre's Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) scheme operational from August 1, 2025.

About Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)

- The Union Cabinet approved the Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme on 1 July 2025.
- The scheme is named Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY).
- It aims to:
 - Promote employment generation.
 - Enhance employability.
 - Strengthen social security.
 - Support MSMEs and rural enterprises.
 - Give special emphasis to the manufacturing sector.

Duration of the Scheme

- Incentives are applicable to jobs created during the **two-year registration period**:
 - 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027.
- The scheme seeks to create **more than 3.5 crore jobs** across the country over two years.

Part A – Incentives for First-Time Employees

- Applicable to first-time employees in both existing and new establishments.
- Employees will receive an incentive equivalent to **one month's EPF wage**, subject to a maximum of **₹15,000**.
- The incentive is paid in **two instalments**:
 - **First instalment:** Up to **₹7,500** after completion of **six months** of continuous employment.

- **Second instalment:** After completion of **twelve months** and successful completion of the prescribed **Financial Literacy Programme**.

- The second instalment will be credited to an appropriate **savings instrument or savings account** for a specified period.

Part B – Incentives for Employers

- Employers will receive up to **₹3,000 per month** for each additional employee.
- The employment must be sustained for at least **six months**.

Coverage

- Covers all sectors of the economy, including:
 - MSMEs
 - Rural enterprises
 - Manufacturing sector (special focus)

DISHA Scheme

- **Context:** The Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, is organizing a Regional Workshop under the DISHA Scheme.

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** being implemented by **Department of Justice and 'Reforms Utsav'**.

- A major highlight of the event will be the launch of **"Nyaya Prabodh – Awakening to Justice,"** a year-long legal awareness campaign aimed at deepening citizens' understanding of their constitutional and legal rights and responsibilities.

- Under the Nyaya Prabodh initiative, several citizen-centric activities will be launched, including:

- **Know Your Rights in 90 seconds**, a legal awareness initiative designed to promote greater understanding of legal rights and remedies among citizens;
- **Nyaya Quiz**, an interactive platform aimed at enhancing awareness of constitutional

values, legal institutions and citizens' rights, particularly among youth and students; and

- **Pro Bono Pledge**, encouraging advocates, law students and legal professionals to voluntarily contribute their knowledge and expertise for the benefit of the underprivileged and vulnerable sections of society.

DISHA Scheme (Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice)

- The **DISHA Scheme** is a comprehensive initiative of the Government of India aimed at ensuring **people-centric access to justice** while also providing **early intervention and developmental support for children with disabilities**.
- Implemented across the country, the scheme addresses both **legal empowerment** and the developmental requirements of children with special needs.
- The scheme is guided by the principles enshrined in the **Preamble of the Constitution of India** and draws support from **Articles 14, 21, and 39A**, which guarantee equality, protection of life and liberty, and free legal aid to disadvantaged sections of society.
- Under the provisions of the **National Trust Act**, the scheme also focuses on early identification and school preparedness of children with developmental disabilities, facilitating their inclusion in mainstream education and society.

Objectives of the DISHA Scheme

- The scheme seeks to promote inclusive growth and improve access to justice and developmental support throughout the country.
- To provide free legal assistance and pre-litigation counselling to vulnerable and marginalized citizens.
- To increase awareness regarding legal rights and strengthen citizens' interaction with the justice delivery system.

- To identify developmental disabilities in children at an early stage and ensure timely intervention.
- To provide therapeutic services and training to prepare children for inclusive schooling.
- To equip parents and caregivers with guidance and skills necessary to support children's development.
- To encourage physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development for overall well-being.
- To reduce barriers between marginalized communities or children with disabilities and the mainstream population.
- To improve quality of life and promote self-reliance and social integration.
- **Community-Based Delivery:** Services are implemented through CSCs, recognized DISHA centres, and organizations registered under the National Trust.
- **Use of Technology:** Employs mobile applications, e-Courts, and other ICT-based platforms to ensure efficient and accessible service delivery.

Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)

- **Context:** Union Minister launched the **Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)**.
- The portal was launched during the National Workshop on "Strengthening the National Green Hydrogen Mission: Through State Policies, Hubs & Infrastructure."
- Developed by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- It will facilitate:
 - Transparent certification.
 - Regulatory compliance under the **Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India**.

National Green Hydrogen Mission

- Launch and Outlay

- Launched in **2023**.
- Total outlay: **₹19,744 crore**.
- Mission Targets
 - Establish **5 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) of green hydrogen production capacity**.
- Support with **125 GW** of dedicated renewable energy capacity.
- Mobilise investments exceeding **₹8 lakh crore**.
- Create over 6 lakh jobs.
- Reduce **annual carbon emissions by 50 million tonnes**.

SIGHT Programme

- Incentives awarded for **8,62,000 MTPA of green hydrogen production capacity**.
- About SIGHT
 - SIGHT (Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition) is a major component of the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** aimed at supporting domestic manufacturing and green hydrogen production through financial incentives.
- Significance
 - Strengthens India's clean energy transition.
 - Promotes industrial decarbonisation.
 - Enhances domestic manufacturing capabilities.
 - Reduces dependence on fossil fuels and imports.
 - Supports India's net-zero and climate commitments.

Expected Outcomes of the National Green Hydrogen Mission by 2030

- Achieve a minimum annual green hydrogen production capacity of **5 million metric tonnes (MMT)**.
- Add around **125 GW** of renewable energy capacity to support green hydrogen production.

- Attract investments exceeding **₹8 lakh crore**.
- Generate more than six lakh employment opportunities.
- Cut fossil fuel import expenditure by over **₹1 lakh crore**.
- Prevent nearly **50 MMT** of greenhouse gas emissions every year.

Hydrogen Demand in India

- India currently consumes about **6 million tonnes** of hydrogen annually, with the fertiliser sector and oil refineries accounting for the largest share of demand.
- Hydrogen demand is projected to increase significantly to **28 million tonnes** by **2050**, and the country aims to meet around 80% of this requirement through green hydrogen.

Nasha Mukh Bharat Saptah 2026

- **Context:** The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE) launched 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Saptah 2026' from 17-26 June 2026.
- **Theme:** "Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan - Viksit Bharat Ki Pehchaan."
- The campaign is being observed in connection with the **International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (26 June)**.

Major Launches

- **Nasha Mukh Bharat Saptah 2026** was formally launched.
- A **Personal Dashboard for Nasha Mukti Mitra (NMM)** was introduced to strengthen volunteer engagement and monitor grassroots activities.

Objective

- To strengthen the **Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)** and promote drug demand reduction through mass awareness and community participation.

About Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)

- **Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)** was launched on **15 August 2020** by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (DoSJE).

- Initially implemented in 272 identified vulnerable districts.
- Expanded to all districts of the country from 15 August 2023.
- Objective:** To spread awareness and reduce substance abuse through mass participation.

About NMBA App 2.0

- Launched under the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR).
- Serves as a centralized digital platform for monitoring and implementation.
- Facilitates real-time reporting, coordination and data-driven governance at National, State, District and institutional levels.

Existing Features of NMBA App

- Enables States, districts, spiritual organisations and stakeholders to upload and monitor activities.
- Provides a consolidated dashboard with near real-time visibility.
- Offers Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials.
- Supports Nasha Mukti Mitras in awareness campaigns.
- Facilitates onboarding and management of master volunteers.
- Allows institutions to organize pledge-taking activities.

National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR)

- A flagship initiative of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- Focuses on:**
 - Preventive education and awareness.
 - Treatment and rehabilitation.
 - Capacity building.
 - Community participation.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of drug demand reduction efforts.

PMAY-U 2.0

- Context:** The Government approved more than 2.13 lakh additional houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0.
- With these approvals, the total number of houses sanctioned under PMAY-U 2.0 has crossed 16.13 lakh

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0)

About

- PMAY-U 2.0, launched in 2024, is the upgraded version of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) introduced in 2015.
- It seeks to provide all-weather pucca houses to one crore poor and middle-class urban families through construction, purchase, or rental options.
- The scheme will be implemented for five years by States, Union Territories, and Primary Lending Institutions (PLIs).
- The Centre has earmarked ₹10 lakh crore for the programme, including ₹2.30 lakh crore as subsidy support.

Eligibility

- Beneficiary families should not own a pucca house anywhere in India in the name of any family member.
- The scheme covers:
 - Economically Weaker Section (EWS):** Annual income up to ₹3 lakh.
 - Low Income Group (LIG):** Annual income between ₹3 lakh and ₹6 lakh.
 - Middle Income Group (MIG):** Annual income between ₹6 lakh and ₹9 lakh.
 - An adult earning member without ownership of a house is treated as a separate household for eligibility purposes.

Coverage

- PMAY-U 2.0 covers all statutory towns identified in Census 2011 and those notified later by State Governments.

- Areas under Urban Development Authorities, Industrial Development Authorities, and notified Planning Areas are also included.
- Under In-situ Slum Redevelopment, eligible slum dwellers receive a grant of **₹1 lakh per house**.

Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS)

- Provides a **4% interest subsidy** on housing loans up to **₹25 lakh**, for houses costing up to **₹35 lakh**.
- The subsidy applies to the first **₹8 lakh of the loan** with a repayment period of **12 years**.
- Beneficiaries can receive a maximum subsidy of **₹1.80 lakh**, credited in five annual instalments to their bank accounts.

Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

- **Context:** Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare chaired a high-level review meeting with all States and Union Territories to assess the progress of the **TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan** and chart the way forward towards achieving a TB-free India.

About

- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** launched this initiative to speed up India's efforts to **eliminate tuberculosis (TB) by 2025**.

Objectives

- To give extra **support to TB patients** so that their treatment is more effective.
- To increase participation of the community in achieving the goal of ending TB.
- To make use of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** contributions for TB elimination efforts.
- Components
- Ni-kshay Mitra Initiative:
 - Aims to provide additional help such as diagnosis, nutrition, and skill development support to TB patients during treatment.
 - Ni-kshay Mitras (donors) can adopt:

- Health facilities (individual donors)
- Blocks, urban wards, districts, or even states

- Their role is to strengthen and support government actions in fighting TB.

Ni-kshay Digital Portal:

- An online platform that connects donors and community members to support TB patients.
- Helps organize and track assistance provided to people undergoing TB treatment.

SHe-Box 2.0: Strengthening Workplace Safety for Women

- **Context:** The Government has undertaken several structural and policy measures to promote women's safety, dignity, and participation across sectors.
- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** implements **Mission Shakti**, which provides an integrated framework for convergence of schemes and strengthening institutional mechanisms.

SHe-Box Portal

- The **Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box) portal** was created to implement the provisions of the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SH Act)**.
- To enhance its effectiveness, the Government launched **SHe-Box 2.0 on 29 August 2024**.

Features of SHe-Box 2.0

- Provides a single-window platform for women from: **Organised sector, Unorganised sector, Public sector, Private sector**
- Enables women to register and track complaints related to workplace sexual harassment.
- Facilitates seamless coordination among stakeholders and strengthens implementation

of the SH Act through a structured and monitorable system.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Offers a secure, confidential, and **user-friendly interface**.
- Allows women to report incidents without fear of stigma or retaliation.
- Available in **22 languages**, including Hindi and English, ensuring wider accessibility and inclusiveness.

Objective

- To create a **safer work environment** and strengthen the redressal mechanism for workplace sexual harassment, thereby promoting women's empowerment and participation in the workforce.

REWARD Programme

- **Context:** The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) recently convened a meeting to discuss the draft **National Technical Guidelines (NTG)** for improved watershed management under the **REWARD Programme**.

About REWARD Programme

- **Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development** is a watershed development initiative backed by the **World Bank**.
- Duration: **2021 to 2026**.
- It is currently being carried out in the states of **Karnataka and Odisha**.

Key Features

- The programme focuses on **adopting advanced and scientific approaches for watershed management**.
- It is implemented by the **Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development**.
- It follows the **Program-for-Results (PforR)** funding approach.

- Under this model, the World Bank releases funds only after specific performance targets, known as **Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs)**, are achieved.

Objectives

- To build stronger institutions at **both national and state levels** for better watershed governance.
- To improve the ability of farmers to handle climate-related risks.

Focus Areas

- Promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices.
- Enhancing livelihood opportunities for farmers.
- Supporting value chain development in selected watershed regions.

Impact

- Development of stronger institutions and policies for effective watershed management.
- Implementation of science-based watershed practices to improve climate resilience and livelihoods.

Price Support Scheme (PSS)

- **Context:** The Central Government has recently approved the large-scale procurement of pulses and oilseeds under the PSS.

About the Price Support Scheme (PSS)

- PSS - A Central Government agricultural procurement scheme.
- Operates under the **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** scheme.
- Nodal Ministry - **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- When initiated - Only when the market price of produce meeting Fair Average Quality (FAQ) standards falls below the announced Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Beneficiaries and Eligibility

- **Farmers must register in advance** on portals approved by the State Government, providing valid land records.
- Produce must meet FAQ criteria.
- All payments will be made directly to the farmer's registered bank account.
- Procurement operations continue until market prices stabilize above the MSP or for a period of 90 days (whichever is earlier).

Objectives

- To protect farmers from economic losses during market slumps and to make essential commodities available to consumers at affordable prices.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- **Context:** The 23rd installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme was recently released.

About PM-KISAN

- Launched by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** on **24 February 2019**
- A **Central Sector Scheme**
- Provides **₹6,000 annually** to eligible farming families in **three installments** of **₹2,000 each** via **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**

Objective

- To supplement farmers' income for agricultural needs and daily expenses, and to reduce reliance on informal credit

Eligibility

- Covers all land-holding farming families (husband, wife, and minor children)
- Selection based on State/Union Territory land records
- Aadhaar-linked bank account and e-KYC are mandatory

Key Features

- Direct Benefit Transfer to Aadhaar-linked accounts ensures transparency

- Beneficiary lists displayed in villages for public awareness
- Annual physical verification of 5% of beneficiaries
- Online grievance redressal system

Technology Used

- **e-KYC via OTP, biometrics, and facial recognition**
- **PM-KISAN mobile app** for registration and status tracking
- **Kisan-eMitra AI chatbot** for multilingual support (in collaboration with EkStep Foundation & Bhashini)

BHARATI Programme – APEDA's Export Acceleration Initiative

- **Context:** The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority has successfully completed the first cohort of **BHARATI (Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Innovation)**, a flagship programme aimed at promoting innovation-driven growth in India's agri-food export sector.

About BHARATI

- Launched by APEDA under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- Designed to identify, mentor, and support startups developing innovative products, technologies, and solutions for agricultural and processed food exports.
- Supports India's goal of achieving **USD 50 billion in APEDA-scheduled product exports by 2030**.
- Focuses on entrepreneurship, technology adoption, value addition, export readiness, and global market access.

Key Features of BHARATI

- The programme focuses on promoting the export of **high-value agricultural and food products**, including **GI-tagged products**,

organic produce, superfoods, processed foods, livestock products, and AYUSH-based products.

- It encourages the adoption of emerging technologies such as **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **Blockchain**, **Internet of Things (IoT)**, and **Agri-FinTech** to address challenges related to packaging, shelf life, sustainability, traceability, and supply chain management.
- BHARATI supports startups and innovators in developing **export-oriented solutions** by helping them comply with global food safety, quality, and regulatory standards through a structured **three-month acceleration programme**.
- The initiative complements national programmes such as **Atmanirbhar Bharat**, **Vocal for Local**, **Digital India**, and **Start-up India**.
- APEDA collaborates with **state agencies, universities, IITs, NITs, industry associations, and startup accelerators** to build a robust innovation ecosystem and ensure the programme's expansion on a larger scale every year.

About APEDA

- The **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** is a statutory organization established under the **APEDA Act, 1985**.
- It functions under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- APEDA is responsible for promoting and facilitating the export of agricultural and processed food products from India.
- It provides assistance in areas such as **export marketing, quality improvement, infrastructure development, transportation, packaging, and value addition** to enhance the competitiveness of Indian products in international markets.

REPM Manufacturing Scheme

- **Context:** The **Ministry of Heavy Industries** has extended the deadline for submitting global tenders under the scheme to promote the manufacturing of '**Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets**' (REPM).

About the REPM Manufacturing Scheme

- **Objective:** To establish an REPM manufacturing facility with a production capacity of 6,000 Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA).
- Supports the complete manufacturing process:
 - Rare earth oxides to metals
 - Metals to alloys
 - Alloys to finished REPMs
- Through this scheme, India aims to set up its first integrated REPM manufacturing facilities.

Key Features

- Total financial outlay: ₹7,280 crore
- Production capacity: 6,000 MTPA
- Beneficiaries: 5 companies (up to 1,200 MTPA each)
- Selection method: Global competitive bidding
- Duration: 7 years

About Rare Earth Magnets

- These are a type of permanent magnet made from alloys of rare earth elements.
- **Properties:** Compared to other types of magnets, they possess superior magnetic strength, high energy density, and excellent performance.

Types

- **Neodymium (Nd-Fe-B):** Composed of Neodymium, Iron, and Boron
- **Samarium Cobalt (SmCo):** Composed of Samarium and Cobalt
- Both are classified as powerful permanent magnets.

Applications

- Electric Vehicles (EVs)
- Renewable energy (wind turbines)

- Electronic devices
- Aerospace sector
- Defense equipment

ASPIRE Scheme

- **Context :** India's ASPIRE scheme is helping transform rural livelihoods by supporting aspiring entrepreneurs with training, incubation and business development assistance

About Aspire scheme

- Launched in **2015**.
- Implemented by the **Ministry of MSME**.
- Aims to promote **entrepreneurship, innovation, and job creation**, especially in rural and agro-based sectors.
- Provides financial, technical, and mentoring support through incubation centres and cluster development.

Key Features

- Promotes rural entrepreneurship through incubation support.
- Sets up **Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs)** in rural and underdeveloped areas.
- Encourages agro-based and rural enterprises with high job potential.
- Supports **Technology Business Incubators (TBIs)** for innovation and start-ups.
- Provides capital grants to establish incubation centres.
- Government institutions and PSUs can receive up to **₹1 crore** support.
- Private or PPP incubators can receive up to **₹75 lakh** support.
- Offers up to **₹1 crore** operational assistance for incubators.
- Provides seed funding for early-stage entrepreneurs.
- Supports cluster-based development to improve productivity and market access.

Bharat Taxi

- **Context:** The 'Bharat Taxi' service was launched in Delhi under the Union **Ministry of Cooperation—a first-of-its-kind initiative** in the country.
- This ride-hailing service was introduced to challenge the dominance of corporate entities like **Ola and Uber**.
- The **Union Home Minister** inaugurated the Bharat Taxi service at an event held yesterday in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.
- Private ride-hailing companies currently in the market systematically exploit their workers. To counter corporate dominance, the government has established a cooperative framework modeled after the '**Amul**' milk cooperative.
- This new alternative model ensures a fair system where neither the customer nor the service provider (driver) faces any form of exploitation.

Kisan Sarathi

- **Context:** **Kisan Sarathi**, launched in **July 2021**, is India's largest integrated digital agro-advisory platform.
- It provides timely, authentic, and multilingual agricultural advisories along with weather updates, government scheme information, and expert consultations.

Implementing Agencies

- A joint initiative of the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** and the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- Implemented by the **Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI)** and the **Digital India Corporation**.

Interactive Information Dissemination System (IIDS)

- **Kisan Sarathi** operates through the **Interactive Information Dissemination System (IIDS)**.
- Enables **two-way communication** between **farmers and agricultural experts**.

- Facilitates the lab-to-land transfer of agricultural knowledge.

Integrated Digital Platforms

- Kisan Sarathi brings together several national digital platforms on a single interface:
 - Kisan Call Centre
 - Common Service Centre (CSC)
 - India Meteorological Department (IMD)
 - MyScheme
 - BHASHINI
- Kisan Sarathi Helps Farmers
 - Connects farmers directly with agricultural experts.
 - Provides region-specific, real-time advisories on: **Weather, Market prices, Crop management**

- Helps farmers identify suitable government schemes and track benefits such as PM-KISAN.
- Covers both Central and State/UT Government schemes.

Key Features

- Personalized advisories based on farmer and farm profiles.
- Live interaction with agricultural experts in **13 regional languages**.
- Call and conferencing facilities as per farmers' requirements.
- Access to a comprehensive agricultural knowledge database.
- Location-specific push alerts and advisory messages.
- Simple registration through a **toll-free mobile number** or the web portal.

Significance

- Strengthens digital agriculture by integrating multiple advisory services on a single platform.

Samagra Shishu Bal Swasthya Karyakram (SSBSK)

- **Context:** Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda will launch the

Samagra Shishu Bal Swasthya Karyakram (SSBSK) during the **16th Conference of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare (CCHFW)** at Vigyan Bhawan.

- The programme aims to provide comprehensive, accessible, and quality healthcare for children from **birth to 36 months**.

About SSBSK

- A unified national programme providing a continuum of home- and community-based care for children from **birth to three years**.
- Based on the vision of "**Comprehensive care for the first three years**", recognizing the importance of early childhood for survival, nutrition, growth, and brain development.

Integration of Existing Programmes

- Merges two flagship initiatives into a single framework:
 - Home-Based Newborn Care (HBNC)
 - Home-Based Care for Young Child (HBYC)
- Ensures uninterrupted care from **birth to 36 months**.

Risk-Stratified Care

- Introduces a risk-based approach for the first time.
- '**At-risk**' newborns will receive up to **9 home visits during the first 42 days**.
- '**At-risk**' children will receive up to **8 home visits up to 36 months**.

Community-Based Healthcare

- Joint home visits by:
 - Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)
 - Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs)
 - Community Health Officers (CHOs)
 - Anganwadi Workers (AWWs)

- Introduces:

- Well-Baby Sessions during every **Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Day (VHSND)**.

- **Monthly Shishu Shivir at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** for early identification and management of at-risk children.

Maternal and Early Childhood Care

- Includes post-partum maternal mental health screening.
- Integrates Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development (ECD) by promoting: **Responsive caregiving, Early learning, Age-appropriate play, Child safety, Family participation.**

Use of Digital Technology

- **Utilizes:** Decision Support Systems (DSS), Child tracking applications, Referral and alert mechanisms.
- **Integrated with:** JANANI Portal, U-WIN Portal, MPCDSR Portal, RBSK 2.0 Portal, POSHAN Tracker.
- Ensures seamless data exchange using ABHA and Baal-ABHA IDs.

Urban and Digital-Era Focus

- Includes special strategies for: Urban slums, Migrant families, Underserved populations.
- Addresses challenges of the digital age by:
 - Promoting physical activity and age-appropriate play.
 - Discouraging excessive screen time to support healthy brain, emotional, and social development.

Significance

- Strengthens child survival, nutrition, growth, and early childhood development through an integrated approach.
- Ensures early identification and management of high-risk children.
- Improves coordination among frontline health workers.
- Enhances digital monitoring and continuity of care.
- Reinforces the Government's commitment to equitable maternal and child healthcare and the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Anaemia Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (AMB)

- **Context:** The Union Health Ministry is set to launch revised operational guidelines for the **Anaemia Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (AMB)**, expanding the **national programme's strategy** to include a new beneficiary group, greater emphasis on dietary interventions, and digital tracking of beneficiaries.

Key Changes

- Added **low birth weight babies (0-6 months)** as the 7th beneficiary group.
- Introduced **"Eating Right"** as the 7th intervention to promote iron-rich and diverse diets.
- Strengthened digital tracking for monitoring and evaluation.
- Replaced **T3 Strategy with T4 Strategy: Test, Treat, Talk, Track**

Objectives of T4 Strategy

- Routine haemoglobin testing.
- Treatment as per national protocols.
- Track beneficiaries for referral and follow-up.
- Counsel on healthy and iron-rich diets.

NFHS-5 Anaemia Data

- **Children (6-59 months):** 67.1%
- **Women (15-49 years):** 57%
- **Pregnant women:** 52.2%
- **Adolescent girls (15-19 years):** 59.1%.

About Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Abhiyaan

- It was officially launched in **2018**.
- It is an intensified public health initiative by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** and **POSHAN Abhiyaan** to combat widespread anemia in India.
- It targets children, adolescents, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.

Anemia Mukh Bharat: 6x6x6 Strategy

- The Anemia Mukh Bharat strategy is designed to reduce the prevalence of Anemia by **3%**

points per year between the years 2018 and 2022 with 6 beneficiaries, 6 interventions, and 6 institutional mechanisms.

6 Beneficiaries

- Children (6-59 months), Adolescent boys (15-19 years), Adolescent girls (15-19 years), Women of reproductive age, Pregnant women, Lactating women.

6 Interventions

- Prophylactic Iron and Folic Acid supplementation
- Deworming
- Year-round awareness campaign “Solid Body, Smart Mind” and delayed cord clamping (3 minutes after birth) to improve the baby’s iron levels.
- Use digital and quick blood tests for anaemia, with special focus on pregnant women and school-going adolescents.
- Provide iron- and folic acid-fortified foods through government programmes, including staple foods like rice, milk, and salt.
- Increase screening and treatment for anaemia caused by diseases, with focus on malaria, genetic blood disorders (hemoglobinopathies), and fluorosis.

6 Institutional Mechanisms

- National Anemia Mukht Bharat Unit
- Intra Ministerial Coordination
- Strengthening Supply Chain and Logistics
- Convergence with other ministries
- National Centre of Excellence and Advanced Research on Anemia Control
- Anemia Mukht Bharat Dashboard and Digital Portal- One-stop Shop for Anemia.

Corporate Mitra Scheme

- **Context :** The Corporate Affairs Ministry announced that the Corporate Mitra Scheme will commence with 2,000 participants, including 200 candidates from the North East region.

Objective

- To support MSMEs through trained and certified Corporate Mitras.
- Helps MSMEs handle compliance and focus on **growth and innovation**.
- Improves ease of doing business.

Role of Corporate Mitras

- Provide affordable support in:
 - GST and tax compliance
 - Accounting and financial advisory
 - Cost accounting
 - Company secretarial services

Focus Area

- Mainly targets **Tier-II and Tier-III cities** to expand professional support beyond metros.

Implementation

- Jointly implemented with: ICAI, ICSI, ICAI
- Training structure: **6 months academic training, 6 months practical training.**
- Includes:
 - 144 hours of online learning
 - Webinars/physical sessions
- Real-world exposure through firms and LLPs.
- Managed through **SWAYAM Plus Portal**.

Eligibility

- Age limit: **Up to 30 years.**
- Graduates from recognized universities and final-year students eligible.
- On-the-job training in ICAI/ICSI/ICMAI-recognized firms/LLPs.

Eligibility

- **Government bodies, PSUs, and private/PPP institutions** can set up incubators.
- MSMEs with valid registration are eligible for support.
- Open to individual entrepreneurs, innovators, and start-ups.
- Priority given to rural, agro-based, and tech-driven sectors.

- Institutions must have required infrastructure and capacity to run incubation centres.

e-Sushrut Clinic

- **Context:** The Central Government has introduced 'e-Sushrut Clinic,' a low-cost, lightweight **Hospital Management Information System (HMIS)** software designed for small medical centers.

Key Features

- Cloud-based HMIS software developed for small hospitals and clinics.
- Created as an alternative to the expensive and complex HMIS systems currently in use.
- Designed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)**.
- Does not require specialized IT expertise.
- Easily accessible via various internet-enabled devices.

Automated Services

- Patient registration
- Generation of payment receipts
- Management information reports
- Speech-to-text facility
- Clinical decision support
- Automation of hospital administrative functions.

DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) – India's 'One Nation, One Digital Platform'

- **Context:** The Central Government has stated that **DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)** has emerged as India's 'One Nation, One Digital Platform' for school education.
- It provides curriculum-aligned digital learning resources to students and teachers across the country.

About DIKSHA

- Launched in **2017**.
- Implemented under the leadership of the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** in collaboration with the **Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET)**.

- Supports foundational literacy and numeracy (covering education up to the higher secondary level).

- Adopted by education boards across most Indian states and Union Territories.

Key Features

- States can customize content in their regional languages and align it with their respective curricula.

- Ensures continuous learning through digital technology.

- Provides the following digital learning resources: **Videos, 2D and 3D animations, Augmented Reality, Virtual labs, Simulations, Indian Sign Language videos, QR-coded books, Accessibility features**

- For students with disabilities:

- DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) format
- Text-to-Speech facility
- Indian Sign Language videos
- Personalized learning
- Teacher training

- Teacher training is provided under the **NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement)** program.

- State-level training courses are also offered.

Objective

- To provide quality, equitable, and accessible digital school education across India under the vision of **"One Nation, One Digital Platform."**

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Crocodile Day

- **World Crocodile Day** is celebrated annually on **17 June** to raise awareness about crocodiles and emphasize the importance of their conservation.
- The theme for World Crocodile Day 2026 is **"Legacy in Every Scale."**

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is being observed on **June 17**.
- The theme for this year is **"Rangelands: Recognise. Respect. Restore"**

Sustainable Gastronomy Day

- On **June 18**, we celebrate 'Sustainable Gastronomy Day,' recognizing that everyone has a role to play in making sustainable choices for a future of healthy eating and food security.

National Fishing Day

- National Fishing Day (also known as National Go Fishing Day) is celebrated annually on **June 18**.

World Sickle Cell Day

- World Sickle Cell Day is observed annually on **June 19** to raise global awareness about Sickle Cell Disease (SCD).
- The official global theme for World Sickle Cell Day is **"Closing the Survival Gap: Equity in Sickle Cell Disease"**.

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

- The International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is a United Nations observance marked annually on **June 19**.

- The theme for the 2026 International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is **"Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Against Children: Safeguarding Futures and Empowering Caregivers."**

Autistic Pride Day

- 'Autistic Pride Day 2026' will be observed worldwide on **June 18, 2026**, to celebrate neurodiversity and promote acceptance, dignity, and social inclusion for individuals with autism.
- The theme of this day is based on three interconnected key aspects: **recognition, representation, and reform.**

National Reading Day

- The day is celebrated annually on **19th June** to honour the birth anniversary of **Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker**, the **father of the Library Movement in Kerala**.
- In 2017, Prime Minister launched the **National Reading Day and Reading Month**.

World Refugee Day

- World Refugee Day is an annual international observance on **June 20**, designated by the United Nations to honour refugees worldwide.
- The theme for World Refugee Day 2026 is **"Until Everyone Is Safe"**.

Paschimbanga Divas

- **Paschimbanga Divas (West Bengal Day)** is observed on **June 20** to commemorate the rich history, cultural heritage, and unique identity of West Bengal.

World Camel Day

- World Camel Day is celebrated annually on **June 22**.
- The theme for the 2026 International Camel Conference is **"Camel as Climate Resilient Dairy Animal."**

International Day of Yoga

- Yoga Day is observed to recognize the practice of Yoga; following its adoption by the United Nations in 2014, it is celebrated worldwide every year on June 21.
- The theme for the 12th International Day of Yoga, to be observed on June 21, 2026, is "Yoga for Healthy Ageing."

Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2026

- The Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2026 was published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in partnership with Accenture.
- India secured the 70th position, moving up two places compared to the previous edition of the index.
- The country emerged as one of the best-performing nations in terms of improvement in energy transition preparedness.
- India's advancement was attributed to enhanced transition readiness, aided by:
 - the expansion of renewable energy capacity,
 - development of power grid infrastructure,
 - promotion of green hydrogen programmes, and
 - greater investments in sustainable and clean-energy projects.
- At the global level, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark continued to occupy the top three ranks, respectively.

United Nations Public Service Day

- United Nations Public Service Day is observed every year on 23 June.
- The theme for the 2026 observance is: "Transforming Public Institutions: Advancing Innovation, Participation, and Inclusion."

International Day of Women in Diplomacy

- The International Day of Women in Diplomacy is observed annually on June 24.
- The theme for the International Day of Women in Diplomacy for the year 2026 is "Advancing Equal Leadership in Global Affairs."

Samvidhan Hatya Diwas

- 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' (meaning 'Constitution Murder Day') is observed annually in India on June 25.
- Established by the Government of India, this day commemorates the declaration of a nationwide Emergency by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975, and honors the millions of citizens who were affected by it.

Day of the Seafarer

- Observed annually on June 25, the 'Day of the Seafarer' is an official special day designated by the United Nations.
- The theme for the Day of the Seafarer for the year 2026 is "Carrying world trade. Carrying the risks."

World Vitiligo Day 2026

- World Vitiligo Day was observed across the globe on 25 June 2026 to raise awareness about vitiligo, support those living with the condition
- The global theme for the World Vitiligo Day 2026 is "From Stigma to Strength."

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

- The 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' – also known as 'World Drug Day' – is observed globally every year on June 26.
- The theme for World Drug Day 2026 is "The evidence is clear: Invest in prevention."

- As part of the nationwide observance of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, **launched 'Nasha Mukht Bharat Saptah' (Drug-Free India Week) from June 17 to 26, 2026**, under the local theme **"Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan - Viksit Bharat Ki Pehchan"** (Drug-Free India - The Identity of a Developed India).

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

- The United Nations' 'International Day in Support of Victims of Torture' is observed annually on June 26.
- The theme for the 'International Day in Support of Victims of Torture' in 2026 is **"Torture: a crime against humanity."**

International MSME Day

- **Every year on 27 June**, the world marks Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day to recognise the vital contribution of MSMEs to economic growth, employment generation, innovation, and sustainable development.
- The 2026 Theme is the **"Empowering MSMEs through Innovation and Sustainable Industrial Development"**

International Day for the Deaf and Blind

- The International Day for the Deaf and Blind is observed globally on June 27.
- The theme for 2026 is **"Connected by Touch: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges."**

International Fisherman Day

- International Fisherman Day is observed annually on **June 29**.
- This annual observance recognizes the global fishing community and their essential work in providing food and sustaining livelihoods.

National Statistics Day

- National Statistics Day is celebrated every year on **June 29th** in India.
- The day commemorates the birth anniversary of **Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis**, widely recognized as the **Father of Indian Statistics**
- The theme for India's 20th National Statistics Day in 2026 is **"Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data"**.

International Day of the Tropics

- The International Day of the Tropics is observed globally every year on **29 June**.
- The International Day of the Tropics was established by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 14 June 2016**.
- The day was declared to commemorate the release of the **State of the Tropics Report**, which was launched on **29 June 2014** by Nobel Laureate **Aung San Suu Kyi**.

World Social Media Day

- **World Social Media Day** is celebrated annually on **June 30** to recognize the profound impact digital platforms have on global communication, human connection, and business.
- It was originally established by the media and technology website **Mashable in 2010**.

International Asteroid Day

- International Asteroid Day is an official United Nations observance held annually on **June 30**.
- The theme for International Asteroid Day 2026 is **"Planetary Defence and Asteroid Impact Hazards"**.

International Day of Parliamentarism

- The International Day of Parliamentarism, also known as World Parliament Day, is celebrated annually on June 30.
- The theme for the International Day of Parliamentarism on June 30, 2026, is **"Bring human rights into focus"**.

REPORTS & INDICES

Global Peace Index (GPI)

- The **Global Peace Index (GPI)** measures the overall level of peacefulness of countries.
- **1st Iceland – World's Most Peaceful Country, 2nd New Zealand, 3rd Switzerland**

QS Rankings 2027

- **Context:** The QS World University Rankings 2027 has been released by Quacquarelli Symonds, assessing higher education institutions worldwide.

Key Findings

- The ranking covers over 1,500 universities from 106 countries and regions.
- India has 52 universities featured, making it the fifth most represented country globally.
- Indian Institute of Technology Delhi is the highest-ranked Indian institute, placed at 118th position worldwide.
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay and Indian Institute of Technology Madras are also included among the top 200 universities globally.

Top Global Institution

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA, has secured the No. 1 rank for the 15th consecutive year.

QS Global Future Skills Index 2027 – India

Overall Ranking

- India ranked 13th globally in the QS Global Future Skills Index 2027.
- The index was released by QS Quacquarelli Symonds on June 23, 2026.

- India secured an overall score of 89.4 out of 100.

'Future of Work' Category

- India ranked 5th in the 'Future of Work' category.
- India achieved a high score of 96.0 in this category.

Details about the Index

- The QS Global Future Skills Index measures the extent to which countries are prepared for economic shifts driven by artificial intelligence.
- It assesses readiness based on skills, education, and economic transformation.
- As a new methodology was employed for the 2027 edition, comparing it with the 2025 pilot edition would not be reliable.

Index of Service Production (ISP)

- **Context:** The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** is set to launch the '**Index of Service Production**' (ISP) in July 2026 a new monthly macroeconomic index aimed at measuring short-term fluctuations in the growth of India's services sector.
- Designed as a services-sector counterpart to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), the ISP will provide continuous and accurate data on the performance of the formal services sector and strengthen the country's economic monitoring framework.

About Index of Service Production (ISP)

- The Index of Service Production (ISP) is an index proposed to continuously measure and monitor the performance and growth of India's service sector.
- It has been proposed by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.

- Its framework has been developed by adhering to international best practices and following the guidance of the Technical Advisory Committee for the ISP.
- The ISP will function alongside the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) to provide continuous information on the service economy.
- The **base year for this index will be 2024–25**.
- It will primarily utilize data obtained from the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN).
- The index will cover key service sectors such as trade, transport, banking, insurance, hospitality, real estate, and professional services.
- It will assess data availability, sectoral coverage, and appropriate price adjustment factors in accordance with global standards.
- It is proposed that services from the informal sector will not be included in the index for the time being due to a lack of adequate data.
- The health and education sectors which **contribute approximately 10% to the service sector's Gross Value Added (GVA)** will also be temporarily excluded until data from the 'Annual Survey of Registered Service Sector Enterprises' becomes available.

International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026 & Food Sovereignty

- **Context:** The United Nations has designated **2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer**.
- The initiative recognizes women farmers as central to achieving **food sovereignty**, sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, and social justice.

About Food Sovereignty

- Food sovereignty is the **right of people and communities to decide how food is produced, distributed, and consumed**.
- It promotes:
 - Local and sustainable food systems.
 - Community control over agriculture.
 - Protection of biodiversity and traditional knowledge.
 - Equitable access to food and natural resources.

Role of Women Farmers

- Women are the backbone of:
 - Agricultural production.
 - Household nutrition.
 - Seed conservation.
 - Biodiversity protection.
 - Climate adaptation.
- They preserve traditional farming knowledge and contribute significantly to sustainable food systems.

Challenges Faced by Women Farmers

- Limited ownership of land and productive assets.
- Restricted access to:
 - Credit and financial services.
 - Agricultural inputs and technology.
 - Government welfare schemes.
- Underrepresentation in agricultural policymaking and decision-making.
- Heavy burden of unpaid labour in farming, household work, and caregiving.
- Increased responsibilities due to **male out-migration** from rural areas.

Women and Climate Resilience

- Women farmers are adapting to climate change by:

- Modifying cropping patterns.
 - Diversifying crops.
 - Conserving seeds.
 - Improving local water management.
- Despite these efforts, their contributions remain largely **unrecognized and unpaid**.

Significance of Food Sovereignty

- Goes beyond food security by emphasizing:
 - Community control over food systems.
 - Cultural identity and indigenous knowledge.
 - Ecological sustainability.
 - Social and economic justice.
- Challenges centralized, corporate-controlled food systems and promotes local decision-making.

Government Initiatives Supporting Women Farmers

- NAMO Drone Didi Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)
- Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
- Krishi Sakshis
- National Gender Resource Centre in Agriculture (NGRCA)

Release of SDG Publications on the Occasion of 20th Statistics Day (29th June 2026)

- **Context:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released a series of publications on the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to mark the 20th Statistics Day**, highlighting India's progress across social, economic and environmental indicators under the **National Indicator Framework (NIF)**.
- On the occasion of the **20th Statistics Day, on 29th June 2026**, the Ministry of Statistics

and Programme Implementation released the following publications on **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**:

- Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2026
- Data Snapshot on Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2026;
- Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework, 2026 (along with metadata);
- Transforming Lives: India's Achievements under the People Dimension of the SDGs.

National Indicator Framework (NIF) for SDGs

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) developed the National Indicator Framework (NIF) to monitor India's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The NIF was prepared in consultation with: **Concerned Ministries and Departments, NITI Aayog, United Nations (UN) agencies, Other stakeholders**

- The report is prepared using data provided by different Ministries and Departments.
- MoSPI releases the SDG Progress Report every year on **29 June**.

Publications Released on 29 June 2026

- Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2026**
 - Presents the latest time-series data on India's SDG indicators.
 - Helps track India's progress in achieving all **17 Sustainable Development Goals**.
 - Serves as an important source of information for: **Policymakers, Planners, Researchers, Other stakeholders**

Thematic SDG Bulletin – “Transforming Lives: India’s Achievements under the People Dimension of the SDGs”

- It is part of a series of data-based SDG bulletins based on the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: **People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnerships**

People Dimension of the SDGs

- The bulletin highlights India’s achievements in human development and social welfare, focusing on: **SDG 1: No Poverty, SDG 2: Zero Hunger, SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 5: Gender Equality**

Key Focus of the Bulletin

- Highlights major government schemes and policy initiatives that support human development.
- Shows India’s progress in improving people’s lives.
- Reaffirms India’s commitment to the SDG principle of “**Leave No One Behind.**”

Highlights of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – National Indicator Framework (NIF) Progress Report, 2026

- The **National Indicator Framework (NIF) 2026** has **277 indicators** covering all **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- The report shows that India has made good progress in achieving the SDGs.

Major Highlights

- Social Protection:** People covered under social protection schemes increased from **22% (2016) to 65.3% (2026)**.
- Conservation of Genetic Resources:**
 - Plant genetic resources increased from 4,32,564 (2014–15) to 4,91,864 (2025–26).
 - Animal genetic resources increased from 1,40,364 to 3,61,794.
 - Fish genetic resources increased from 47 to 105.
 - This shows better conservation of plants, animals, and fish for agriculture and food security.
- Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** MMR reduced from 122 (2015–17) to 87 (2022–24) per 1,00,000 live births.
- Sex Ratio at Birth:** Improved from 896 girls per 1,000 boys (2015–17) to 918 girls per 1,000 boys (2022–24)
- Renewable Energy:** Installed renewable energy capacity increased from 64.04 watts per person (2014–15) to 193.36 watts per person (2025–26).
- Unemployment Rate:** The unemployment rate fell from 6.1% (2017–18) to 3.1% (2025).

SPORTS & GAMES

National Senior Athletics Championship

- The Inter-State National Senior Athletics Championship was held in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**.
- Tamil Nadu won the overall championship title.

EMINENT PERSONALITIES

Vanchinatha Iyer (Sankara Iyer)

- **Context:** Vice President paid floral tributes to Freedom Fighter Vanchinathan on his **death anniversary** at Uprashtrapati Bhavan.

Early Life and Background:

- Birthplace: **Shenkottai**, Tamil Nadu.
- Family: He was the son of **Shri Raghupathy Iyer**
- Education: He studied up to **primary school level**
- **Occupation:** After completing his schooling, he worked in the Forest Department

Role in the Freedom Struggle

- He took part in revolutionary movements against British rule in India

Assassination of Robert Ashe and Its Consequences

- Assassination of Robert Ashe: On **17 June 1911**, at the age of 25, **Vanchinatha Iyer shot and killed Robert Ashe**, the District Collector of Tirunelveli, also called "**Collector Dorai**"
- The incident occurred at **Maniyachi Railway Station** when Ashe was travelling to kodaikanal.
- **Aftermath:** Soon after carrying out the attack, **Vanchinatha Iyer** ended his life.

Revolutionary Network and Bharatha Matha Sangam

- **Nilakanta Brahmachari** played a major role in recruiting revolutionaries across the Madras Presidency and planning attacks on British officials.
- **Connections:** **Shankar Krishna Iyer**, who was Vanchinatha's brother-in-law, introduced him to Nilakanta Brahmachari.
- **Organization:** Vanchinatha Iyer, along with **Nilakanta Brahmachari**, **Shankar Krishna Iyer**, and others, established the **Bharatha Matha Sangam**

- This group was involved in planning assassinations of important British officials.

Honour and Remembrance

- The **Maniyachi Railway Station**, where the assassination took place, was later renamed **Vanchi Maniyachi** in his memory.

Rani Lakshmibai

- **Context:** Home Minister paid homage to the great warrior queen **Rani Lakshmibai** on her **martyrdom day**.

Early Life

- She was born on **19 November 1828** in **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**.
- Her father was **Moropant Tambe**.
- Her birth name was **Manikarnika**, and she was lovingly called "**Manu**."
- She had a son named **Damodar Rao**, who passed away within four months of his birth.
- After this loss, the Maharaja adopted a relative's child, **Anand Rao**, who was renamed **Damodar Rao** shortly before the Maharaja's death.

Role in India's Freedom Struggle:

- **Rani Lakshmibai** was one of the most courageous figures in India's struggle for independence.
- In **1853**, after the death of the Maharaja of Jhansi, **Lord Dalhousie** rejected the adopted heir and applied the **Doctrine of Lapse** to annex Jhansi.
- She strongly resisted the British and fought to protect her kingdom from being taken over. She attained martyrdom on **18 June 1858** while fighting on the battlefield.
- When the **Indian National Army** formed its **first women's unit in 1943**, it was named in honour of the brave Queen of Jhansi.

Rani Durgavati

- **Context:** The Union Home Minister paid tribute to **Rani Durgavati** on the day commemorating her sacrifice.

Early Life and Reign

- Rani Durgavati was born in **1524 into the Chandela dynasty at Mahoba**, located near the border of present-day Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- The Chandela rulers are renowned for constructing the Khajuraho temples in the 11th century.
- She ruled the '**Garha-Katanga**' region, which encompassed the Narmada Valley and parts of northern Madhya Pradesh.

Resistance against the Mughals

- She fiercely resisted the expansion of the Mughal Empire during the 16th century.
- She fought **valiantly against Asaf Khan, a commander of Akbar**.
- She also engaged in conflicts with Baz Bahadur.
- She is remembered for the courage and strong leadership she demonstrated on the battlefield.

Notable Battle

- The most significant of the battles she fought against the Mughals was the '**Battle of Narrai**' (1564).

Ma Po Si

Birth and Early Life

- Birth: He was born on **June 26, 1906**, in Mylapore, Chennai, to the couple Ponnusamy and Sivakami Ammal.

Honours

- He was conferred the title '**Silambu Chelvar**' by '**Sollin Chelvar**' Ra. Pi. Sethupillai.
- **The Universities of Madras and Annamalai** honoured him by awarding him honorary doctorates.
- Madurai University conferred upon him the title '**Peravai Chelvar**'.
- The Central Government honoured him with the **Padma Shri award**.
- In **2006**, marking his centenary, the Government of Tamil Nadu honoured him by **nationalizing his literary works**.

Literary Works

Books

- Vallalarum Bharathiyum [1965]
- Engal Kavi Bharathi [1953]
- Bharathiyarum Angilamum [1961]
- Bharathi Kanda Orumaippadu [1962]
- Ulaga Mahakavi Bharathi [1966]
- Bharathiyar Paathaiyile [1974]
- Bharathiyin Porkkural [1979]

Sahitya Akademi Award-winning book

- Vallalar Kanda Orumaippadu- 1966

Historical works

- Kappalottiya Tamilan (Biography of V.O. Chidambaranar)
- Viduthalai Poril Tamilagam (Tamil Nadu in the Freedom Struggle - Volumes 1 & 2)
- Viduthalaikku Pin Tamil Valarndha Varalaru (History of Tamil's Growth After Independence)
- Naan Arindha Rajaji (The Rajaji I Knew)

Works on Silappathikaram

- Kannagi Vazhipadu
- Madhaviyin Maanbu
- Kovalan Kutravaliya

The Legacy of Kappalottiya Tamilan

- Ma.Po.Si. was the one who brought the sacrifices made by V.O. Chidambaranar to the attention of the world. **Ma.Po.Si.'s book titled *Kappalottiya Tamilan* (The Tamil Who Steered the Ship)**, which chronicles the life of V.O.C., is a distinguished work.
- Consequently, V.O.C. came to be celebrated across Tamil Nadu by that very title **Kappalottiya Tamilan**.

Struggles

- He campaigned to rename '**Madras State**' to '**Tamil Nadu**'. When states were being reorganized on a linguistic basis and people from Andhra demanded Chennai claiming "**Madras Manadhe**" (**Madras is ours**) he fought against this and ensured Chennai remained the capital of Tamil Nadu.

- He also fought to **include Thiruvengadam (Tirupati)** in Tamil Nadu, though he did not succeed in that effort; however, **that struggle resulted in Thiruttani** being secured for Tamil Nadu.
- He campaigned for the inclusion of the **Kumari district, Sengottai, Peermade, and Devikulam in Tamil Nadu**. While Kumari and Sengottai were successfully secured for the state, **Peermade and Devikulam were merged with Kerala**.

Periodicals run by Ma.Po.Si

- He published a weekly magazine named 'Sengol'.
- He also published a magazine named 'Tamil Murasu'.

Beginnings in the Congress

- He started his political career as a supporter of the Indian National Congress.
- He participated in the 'Quit India' movement and endured imprisonment for several years.
- While active in the Congress movement, he also raised his voice for the rights of Tamils.

The Tamil Arasu Kazhagam and the Border Reclamation Struggle

- He founded the organization known as the Tamil Arasu Kazhagam in 1946.
- When the Andhra state was being carved out, he championed the cause of retaining Chennai as the capital of Tamil Nadu, famously declaring, "We shall safeguard the capital even at the cost of our lives."

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

- **Context:** The Prime Minister **paid tribute to Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** a renowned litterateur and nationalist thinker on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

About Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

- Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was born on **June 26, 1838, in Naihati, West Bengal**.
- His famous **novel 'Anandamath'** which was later banned by the **British was based on the Sannyasi Rebellion**.

- **This novel evoked a sense of patriotism** and became closely associated with India's freedom struggle.

- India's national song, "**Vande Mataram**," was taken from the novel 'Anandamath'; it served as a powerful slogan during the freedom struggle.

Notable Works

- 'Rajmohan's Wife' was the first English novel written by an Indian.

- **His well-known Bengali novels include:**

- Durgeshnandini (1865)
- Kapalkundala (1866)
- Vishavriksha (1873)

- These literary works addressed important social issues such as women's rights, child marriage, and caste discrimination.

- His renowned religious work is 'Krishna Charitra'.

Role in the Bengal Renaissance

- In 1872, Bankim launched a literary magazine named '**Bangadarshan**'.

- This magazine helped propagate Bengali nationalism and fostered literary and cultural growth.

- Bankim wanted the magazine 'Bangadarshan' to serve the purpose of bridging the gap between the educated and the **common people, as well as strengthening the Bengali identity**.

- Rabindranath Tagore was deeply impressed by the magazine; he later revived it and used it to publish nationalist ideas and writings.

Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917)

- **Context:** Dadabhai Naoroji, widely known as the "**Grand Old Man of India**," passed away on **June 30, 1917**, in Bombay. His death anniversary is commemorated annually to honor his foundational role in the Indian freedom struggle and his pioneering economic theories.

- Dadabhai Naoroji was a famous Indian nationalist, economist, social reformer,

educationist, and scholar. He was also the first Indian to become a Member of the British Parliament.

Early Life and Education

- Born on **4 September 1825 in Bombay** (some sources mention Navsari) in a middle-class Parsi family.
- Studied at the **Elphinstone Institute**, where he was an excellent student, especially in Mathematics and English.
- Became the **first Indian Professor at Elphinstone College**, marking an important step in modern Indian education.

Contributions to the Indian Freedom

Movement

Economic Contributions

- Proposed the **Drain of Wealth Theory**, which explained that British rule was making India poor by taking away its wealth through: Salaries of British officials, Pensions, Money sent to Britain
- Wrote important books:
 - Poverty and Un-British Rule in India
 - Poverty of India
- His efforts led to the formation of the **Welby Commission (1895)** to examine India's financial burden, and he served as one of its members.
- Promoted economic nationalism, which later inspired the Swadeshi Movement and the idea of self-reliance.

Political Contributions

- One of the founding members of the Indian National Congress (INC).
- Served as INC President three times: **1886, 1893, 1906**
- In **1892**, became the **first Indian elected to the British Parliament**, representing Central Finsbury as a Liberal Party candidate.
- Supported self-government (Swaraj) through constitutional and democratic methods.

- Helped maintain unity between the Moderates and Extremists in the INC.
- Presided over the **1906 Calcutta Session**, where Swaraj was officially accepted as the national goal.
- Guided future national leaders like **Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and Mahatma Gandhi**.

Social Reforms

- Strong supporter of women's education and helped organise special classes for girls at Elphinstone.
- Started the **Rast Goftar**, a Gujarati newspaper that promoted social reform.
- Co-founded the **Rahnumai Mazdayasan Sabha (1851)** to reform Parsi society.
- Along with **Jyotiba Phule**, gave recommendations to the **Hunter Commission (1882)** for introducing compulsory primary education.

Institution Building

- Founded important organisations to spread awareness about India's issues in Britain:
 - London Indian Society (1865)
 - East India Association (1866)
- These organisations later supported the activities of the Indian National Congress and helped present India's concerns internationally.

Important Facts

- Known as the **"Grand Old Man of India."**
- Also called the **"Unofficial Ambassador of India"** because he represented India's interests in Britain.
- **Taught Gujarati at University College London**, becoming one of the first Indians to do so.
- Among the first economists to study poverty in India using facts and statistical data.
- His **1906 INC Presidential Address** was the first to officially declare **"Swaraj"** (self-rule) as the goal of the Indian National Congress.

DEFENCE

Exercise Pitch Black

- **Context:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) will participate in Exercise Pitch Black 2026, the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) premier multinational air combat exercise, scheduled to be held in Australia's Northern Territory.
- Exercise Pitch Black is the RAAF's largest international exercise.

Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM)

- **Context:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of the Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM).
- The test was carried out from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha.

Indigenously Developed Missile

- The LRLACM is a fully indigenous missile system.
- All its sub-systems have been developed by various DRDO laboratories in collaboration with Indian industry partners.

Achievement of Test Objectives

- According to the Ministry of Defence, all the objectives of the flight test were successfully achieved.
- The missile met all mission requirements during the test.

Validation of Critical Technologies

- The successful trial validated several critical technologies.
- It demonstrated India's growing capability in long-range precision strike systems.

Boost to Defence Self-Reliance

- The achievement marks another important

step towards the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

- It strengthens India's indigenous defence ecosystem and enhances national security.

Exercise KHAAN QUEST

- **Origin:** Launched in 2003 as a joint exercise between the United States and Mongolia, it evolved into a multinational peacekeeping exercise in 2006.
- **Host:** Conducted by the Mongolian Armed Forces.
- **Objective:** Aims to strengthen peacekeeping skills, improve interoperability among participating forces, and boost military preparedness in line with Chapter VII of the UN Charter.
- **Exercise KHAAN QUEST 2026**, scheduled to be held from 20 June to 3 July at the Five Hills Training Area in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

Indian Navy Inducts Three Indigenous Warships

- **Context:** The Indian Navy is set to commission three indigenously built frontline platforms Dunagiri, Sanshodhak and Agray in Kolkata on June 21 marking a significant milestone in India's maritime capability development.

Dunagiri

- Dunagiri, the fifth stealth frigate under Project 17A, is equipped with advanced weapons and sensor systems, including BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles and the Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) system.
- The vessel is expected to significantly enhance the Navy's combat capabilities.

Sanshodhak

- Sanshodhak, the fourth Survey Vessel (Large), has been designed to undertake coastal and deep-water hydrographic surveys and collect oceanographic and geophysical data for both defence and civilian applications.

- The ship is equipped with advanced survey technologies, including **Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) and Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs)**.

Agray

- Agray, the **fourth vessel of the Arnala-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft series**, is fitted with lightweight torpedoes, indigenous rocket launchers and shallow-water sonar systems.
- The platform is designed to detect and engage underwater threats in littoral and coastal waters.

Significance

- The three platforms underscore the growing maturity of India's indigenous shipbuilding ecosystem, with indigenous content exceeding **75 per cent**.
- Their construction involved extensive participation from domestic industry, including more than **200 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)**, generating substantial direct and indirect employment.

India's First Indigenous C295 Transport Aircraft

- **Context:** India is set to achieve a major milestone in defence manufacturing with the delivery of its first Made-in-India C295 transport aircraft to the Indian Air Force (IAF) in September 2026.
- Built by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) in collaboration with Airbus, it will be the first military aircraft produced in India by a private-sector company.

About the C295 Aircraft

- The C295 is a medium-range tactical transport aircraft developed by Airbus Defence and Space.
- It is capable of performing a variety of missions, including troop deployment, cargo transportation, medical evacuation, disaster

response, and special operations.

- It can operate from short, semi-prepared, or unpaved airstrips, making it suitable for remote and challenging locations.
- Several countries already use the C295 for tactical airlift missions due to its operational efficiency and versatility.

Significance for India

- The aircraft marks a historic step in India's defence-industrial growth as the first military aircraft to be assembled domestically by a private company.
- It reflects the country's efforts to strengthen indigenous defence production and reduce dependence on imports.

Netra AEW&C System

- **Context:** The indigenous Netra Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) system has received **Final Operational Clearance (FOC)**.
- It serves as a major force multiplier for the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and played a crucial role during the **2019 Balakot air strikes** and **Operation Sindoor**.

About Netra AEW&C

- Developed indigenously by the **Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS)**, Bengaluru, under the DRDO.
- Integrated on the **Brazilian Embraer EMB-145I** aircraft platform.
- India is the **fifth country in the world** to develop indigenous AEW&C capability.

Objective

- The Netra programme was launched to establish **indigenous capabilities in airborne surveillance and early warning systems**.
- It enhances the Indian Air Force's ability to monitor national airspace, detect hostile activities, protect sensitive borders, and support **network-centric military operations** through real-time intelligence and coordination.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Order of the White Double Cross

- During his first official visit to Bratislava on 15 June 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded Slovakia's highest civilian distinction, the Order of the White Double Cross (First Class).
- The honour was bestowed by Slovak President Peter Pellegrini

Sangeetha Natak Academy Awards 2024-25

- Sangeetha Natak Akademi is a **national academy for music, dance and drama**.
- It is **India's highest national organization for the arts**.
- It was **established in 1953** and functions under the **Ministry of Culture of the Central Government**.
- Seven people have been shortlisted for the **Akademi Ratna award, including Tamil Bharatanatyam artist Sudharni Raghupathi**.
- Tamil Nadu's N.Vijay Siva and A.S.Krishnan** were selected for the 12 awards for music artists.
- The 12 awardees for dance include **Tamils Roja Kannan for Bharatanatyam**, K. Hariprasad of Kalashetra and Nagajyothi and Seetha Nagajyothi for Kuchupudi.
- Among the couple from Delhi is Nagajyothi, former vice-president of Delhi Tamil Sangam, Delhi Education Corporation.
- Tamil actor Vagai Chandrasekhar** is among the 10 recipients of the award for theater actors.
- Puducherry's K. Murugan** is one of the 13 awardees for folk arts. Also, 5 artists have been

shortlisted for the award in all categories. 40 people have been selected for the fellowships.

- They will be honored with a **cash prize of Rs.3 lakh**.
- 106 young artistes have been selected for Sangeet Natak Akademi Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar award.
- These awards are presented by the President.**

Wolf Prize 2025

- Rajasthan-born theoretical physicist **Jainendra K. Jain** has been awarded the **2025 Wolf Prize in Physics**.
- The award was presented by **Israeli President Isaac Herzog** at a ceremony in the Knesset, Jerusalem on 18 June 2026.
- He was honoured for the **discovery of composite fermions**, related to the **fractional quantum Hall effect**.

Wolf Prize in Physics

- Wolf Prize in Physics is an annual award given by the **Wolf Foundation**.
- It was established in **1978** and is among the most prestigious global physics awards.
- The prize can be shared by multiple winners in a single year.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar Introduction

- The 'Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar' is the **highest national award for children in India**.
- It recognizes and honors the talent, bravery, and achievements of children aged between 5 and 18 years.
- These awards are presented annually in **New Delhi by the President of India**.

Awards presented on Veer Bal Diwas

- These awards are presented on '**Veer Bal Diwas**' (December 26).

- This day commemorates **Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh**.
- They were the sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

Award Categories

- Approximately 25 awards are presented across six fields: Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Art and Culture, and Science and Technology.

Eligibility Criteria

- **Must be an Indian citizen residing in India.**
- Must be between the ages of **5 and 18**.
- Must not have received this award previously.

Objective

- To encourage children's talents and achievements.
- To motivate the younger generation to contribute to society.
- To recognize exceptional talents demonstrated in various fields at a young age.

'Guardian of the Blue Horizon'

- **Context:** The Prime Minister visited **Seychelles** and met with the country's President. During this visit, **19 key agreements** were signed between the two nations across sectors such as **education, defense, fisheries, space, and energy**.
- In this backdrop, the Prime Minister was conferred with Seychelles' highest honor, the '**Guardian of the Blue Horizon**' award, at an event held yesterday.
- The President of Seychelles presented the award. It was conferred in recognition of the Prime Minister's contributions to environmental protection, climate change initiatives, and his commitment to fostering the development of small nations.
- With this latest honor, the Prime Minister has received a total of **33 international awards to date**.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Bhawaiya folk music

- The Vice President released a book titled "**Sanskriti Ratna Bhandar: Bhawaiyar Itibritto**" (**Bhawaiya: A Cultural Treasure and Its Historical Journey**).
- The book has been authored by **Lok Sabha Member Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy and Sangeeta Roy**.
- Bhawaiya is a **traditional folk music** genre originating from North Bengal, Assam, and surrounding regions.

Air Force Chief releases astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's memoir

- Air Force Chief Amar Preet Singh released the memoir of Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, titled '**Second Orbit: One Man's Hope... Dreams of 1.4 Billion Hearts**'.
- The book chronicles Group Captain Shukla's journey from fighter pilot to astronaut and his historic mission to the International Space Station as part of the Axiom-4 mission.

APPOINTMENTS

National Statistical Commission (NSC)

- **Context:** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) officially approved the appointment of **Dr. Saibal Chattopadhyay as Chairperson**, along with three prominent domain experts as part-time members of the **National Statistical Commission (NSC)**.

About National Statistical Commission (NSC)

- The National Statistical Commission (NSC) was established in 2005.
- It serves as the nodal body for core statistical activities in the country.
- Its mandate is to:
 - Evolve, monitor and enforce statistical priorities and standards.
 - Ensure coordination among statistical agencies.
 - Improve public trust in official statistics.

Composition of NSC

- Part-time Chairperson.
- Four part-time Members with expertise in statistics and related fields.
- CEO of NITI Aayog serves as an ex-officio Member.

- Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) acts as the Secretary to the Commission.

- Dr. Saibal Chattopadhyay appointed as the chairperson of National Statistical Commission.

Functions of the NSC

- Formulates national policies and priorities relating to the statistical system.
- Recommends measures to enhance public confidence in official statistics.
- Standardizes statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies.
- Prescribes national quality standards for core statistics.
- Suggests measures for effective implementation of statistical standards.
- Promotes coordination:
 - Between the Centre and States/UTs.
 - Among Ministries, Departments and agencies of the Central Government.
- Conducts statistical audits to ensure quality and integrity of statistical outputs.
- Monitors and reviews the functioning of the statistical system and recommends measures for improved performance.

INTERNATIONAL

India Advocates Human-Centric AI Approach

- **Context:** India presented a human-centric and inclusive approach to Artificial Intelligence at **VivaTech 2026 in Paris and at the G7 Summit session in France in June 2026**. Prime Minister described India's AI vision as **"AI for all"**, with an emphasis on access, safety, accountability, and global benefit.

AI for All & Human-Centric Design

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) involves machines performing human-like tasks such as recognizing patterns, understanding language, and aiding decisions.
- India promotes a people-focused approach, termed **"AI for all,"** ensuring inclusive and widespread access.
- At **VivaTech 2026**, where India was the AI Country Partner, this vision was linked to growth, accessibility, and sustainability.

India's Four Suggestions for Safe AI

- **Safe-by-design:** Integrating safety features during development.
- **Regulatory sandboxes:** Testing innovations in supervised settings.
- **Deepfakes:** AI-generated fake media content.
- **Global South:** Refers to developing regions across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania.

M.A.N.A.V. Vision

- Focuses on **Moral and Ethical Systems, Accountable Governance, National Sovereignty, Accessible and Inclusive AI, and Valid and Legitimate Systems**.
- It was highlighted at the **AI Impact Summit 2026** and later at the **G7 Summit 2026**.
- India also initiated AI governance guidelines through its IT ministry, based on principles like trust, fairness, and people-first.

Global Cooperation

- At the **G20 Summit 2025**, India supported open, human-centric AI systems.
- It reaffirmed this stance at the **UNAOC Dialogue on AI for One Humanity**, emphasizing inclusive and collaborative AI development.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- **Context:** In a major global recognition, India has for the **first time assumed the Vice-Presidency of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**.
- **Vivek Aggarwal**, Secretary, **Ministry of Culture**, has been appointed to this post.

About FATF

- Financial Action Task Force is an **international body** that monitors and **combats money laundering and terrorist financing**.
- It was created in **1989 following a G7 initiative in Paris**.
- The headquarters/secretariat is located at the **OECD headquarters in Paris**.

Objectives

- Initially focused on preventing money laundering.
- After 2001, its scope expanded to include terrorist financing.
- In 2012, it further added measures against financing of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

Membership

- The FATF consists of 39 member countries, representing major financial systems worldwide.
- It also has observer participation, with Indonesia being the only observer country.

India's Position

- India became an observer in 2006 and a full member in 2010.
- It follows FATF standards through laws like the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

CURRENT FACTS**G7**

- The Group of Seven (G7) is an informal association of seven major industrialized nations – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It was originally established in 1975 as the G6, and Canada joined the grouping in 1976, leading to its expansion into the G7.

Brain-Eating Amoeba

- Brain-eating amoebae are free-living, microscopic single-celled organisms commonly present in warm freshwater environments such as lakes, rivers, and hot springs, as well as in soil.
- Among the various free-living amoebae, three are known to cause serious infections in humans:
 - Acanthamoeba – responsible for Granulomatous Amoebic Encephalitis (GAE).
 - Naegleria fowleri – causes Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis (PAM).
 - Balamuthia mandrillaris – associated with rare but severe infections affecting the brain and other organs.
- These amoebae can gain entry into the body through the nasal passages, broken skin, or inhalation, and in certain cases may reach and infect the brain.
- They are referred to as brain-eating amoebae because they damage and destroy brain tissue, resulting in serious and often fatal infections of the central nervous system.

Battle of Haldighati

- 450 years have passed since the Battle of Haldighati, which took place on 18 June 1576 in the Aravalli hills, in present-day Rajsamand district of Rajasthan.
- The battle was fought between the forces of Mewar, led by Maharana Pratap, and the Mughal army of Emperor Akbar. The Mughal side was commanded by Asaf Khan I and Man Singh I of Amber.

WT-MARUT (Wind Turbine Materials and Resources Utility Tracker)

- WT-MARUT is India's first specialized digital platform designed to strengthen and organize the domestic wind turbine supply chain. It was introduced by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy during the Global Wind Day Conference 2026.
- The platform enables digital logging and monitoring of each component used in wind turbines, ensuring complete traceability across the supply chain. It also supports adherence to regulations and promotes transparency in documentation and processes.

Project Super 50

- The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) organizes "Project Super 50", a Civil Services Examination Guidance Programme aimed at mentoring Scheduled Caste (SC) youth under the theme "Guide • Mentor • Empower".
- The event involves serving officers and Commission members providing strategic guidance on the exam.

'Kanchan Devi Committee'

- The Kanchan Devi Committee is a committee constituted by the Supreme Court on May 25, 2026, to reconsider its earlier decision regarding the protection of the Aravalli mountain range.

Vibe Coding

- Vibe Coding is an AI-assisted software development approach where developers describe what they want in natural language, and the AI generates the majority of the code.

Kalamkari Painting

- This is a highly popular art form from Andhra Pradesh, involving hand-painted or block-printed designs on cotton fabric.
- It emerged as a textile-based art tradition during the reign of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, which ruled Golconda in the 16th and 17th centuries.
- The word 'Kalam' refers to a pen, while 'Kari' signifies craftsmanship.

Dongria Kondh Tribe

- This is a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) community.
- The Dongria Kondhs are ancient inhabitants of the Niyamgiri Hills, spread across the Kalahandi and Rayagada districts of Odisha.

OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries)

- OPEC is a permanent intergovernmental organization of major petroleum-exporting nations; it coordinates petroleum policies to stabilize global oil markets and crude oil prices.
- Baghdad Conference (1960): Established on September 14, 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- Headquarters: Relocated from Geneva, Switzerland, to Vienna, Austria, in 1965.

Article 99 in Constitution of India

- Every member of either House of Parliament shall, before taking his seat, make and subscribe before the President, or some person appointed in that behalf by him, an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the Third Schedule.

Project BRAHMANK

- Project BRAHMANK is a Border Roads Organisation project in Arunachal Pradesh that was formally commissioned in December 2011. It completed 16 years of Raising Day on 29 June 2026 at Ranaghat in Arunachal Pradesh.

TIRUKKURAL

The foes who thought to triumph, find their thoughts were vain,
If hosts advance, seize vantage ground, and thence the fight maintain

- Explanation: If they who draw near (to fight) choose a suitable place to approach (their enemy), the latter, will have to relinquish the thought which they once entertained, of conquering them.

A minister is he who grasps, with wisdom large,
Means, time, work's mode, and functions rare he must discharge

- Explanation: The minister is one who can make an excellent choice of means, time, manner of execution, and the difficult undertaking (itself).

No kinsman's love, no strength of friends has he;
How can he bear his foeman's enmity

- **Explanation** : How can he who is unloving, destitute of powerful aids, and himself without strength overcome the might of his foe?

Say not, 'Tis hard', in weak, desponding hour,
For strenuous effort gives prevailing power

- **Explanation** : Yield not to the feebleness which says, "this is too difficult to be done"; labour will give the greatness (of mind) which is necessary (to do it).

Wisdom restrains, nor suffers mind to wander where it would;
From every evil calls it back, and guides in way of good

- **Explanation** : Not to permit the mind to go where it lists, to keep it from evil, and to employ it in good, this is wisdom.

Without ally, who fights with twofold enemy o'ermatched,
Must render one of these a friend attached

- **Explanation** : He who is alone and helpless while his foes are two should secure one of them as an agreeable help (to himself).

By punishment of death the cruel to restrain,
Is as when farmer frees from weeds the tender grain

- **Explanation**: For a king to punish criminals with death, is like pulling up the weeds in the green corn.

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.

FACTS

Since 2011

- Priyadarshini' free travel scheme for all women and transgender persons on ordinary buses operated by the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC).
- The Centre constituted a committee chaired by retired Supreme Court judge Justice P.P. Naolekar to study demographic changes in India.
- Surface ozone is a harmful air pollutant that affects the heart and lungs and is formed through sunlight-driven reactions among other pollutants. Besides ozone, gases such as nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and formaldehyde (HCHO) also contribute to ozone formation and directly harm the respiratory system.
- Tripura's traditional musical instrument, the Sarinda, has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, marking another significant achievement for the state in safeguarding and promoting its rich cultural heritage.
- Following a recommendation by the National Testing Agency – amidst allegations that fraudsters misused Telegram's 'edit message' feature to deceive candidates participating in the NEET UG 2026 re-examination – the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology temporarily blocked the Telegram service in India under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

- Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology said India has emerged as a major electronics manufacturing hub and is now the world's sixth-largest exporter of electronics.
- Yoga Park Portal : Digital initiative of the Ministry of Ayush to transform existing public parks into community wellness hubs for yoga, meditation, and preventive healthcare.
- The Supreme Court of India declared the freedom to walk on demarcated and well-maintained footpaths a fundamental right. The ruling linked this right with Article 19(1) (d), Article 19(1) (a), Article 19(1)(b), Article 19(1)(c), and Article 21 of the Constitution of India.
- On June 22, 1897, in Pune, the Indian national revolutionaries known as the Chapekar brothers (Damodar and Balkrishna) killed Walter Charles Rand, the British Plague Commissioner, along with the military officers accompanying him as his security.
- According to the latest data from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, India's vast road network is the second-largest in the world; it handles 64 percent of the country's freight traffic and 90 percent of its passenger traffic.
- SDG 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (reducing global Maternal Mortality Ratio to less than 70 deaths per 1,00,000 live births and to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under five years of age by 2030)
- Kunal Shah, a leading Indian fintech entrepreneur, has been appointed as the Global CEO of WhatsApp.
- Bangladesh joined the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) as its 27th member nation on June 24, 2026.
- Kamarajar Port, commissioned 25 years ago, now stands as one of the major ports in the country and has a cargo handling capacity of 58.44 million tonnes with nine operational berths. In 2024-25, the port registered its highest cargo handling volume of 48.41 million metric tonnes (MMT).
- The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in Scotland has unveiled a statue honouring Sushruta, the ancient Indian physician believed to have lived around 2,600 years ago and widely associated with the early development of plastic surgery.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation and Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) today launched AIR SUVIDHA 2.0, an upgraded contactless Passenger Health Self-Declaration Portal, to strengthen public health surveillance at Points of Entry in response to the ongoing Ebola disease outbreak.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has announced the 'Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2026', which significantly overhaul the 2011 rules by introducing stringent regulatory compliance requirements for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and associations in India that receive foreign funding.
- TANTIA - Tamil Nadu Small and Tiny Industries Association
- TANSIDCO - Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation Limited
- SIDCO - Small Industries Development Corporation

- China has surpassed the United States to secure the top position in the global supercomputing rankings. The LineShine supercomputer, installed at the National Supercomputing Center in Shenzhen, has been recognised as the fastest supercomputer in the world.
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has stated that a passport is primarily a "travel document" and not conclusive proof of citizenship.
- The Battle of Plassey was fought on June 23, 1757. This year marked the 269th anniversary of the Battle of Plassey (1757), which laid the foundations for British colonial expansion in India.
- e-Zero FIR is a digital initiative of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) that automatically transforms verified high-value cyber financial fraud complaints into Zero FIRs, allowing police to begin investigations immediately without waiting for jurisdiction-related procedures.
- June 30 marks Hool Diwas (or Hul Day) in the Indian National Movement, commemorating the outbreak of the historic Santhal Rebellion of 1855.
- The Sujalam Sufalam Jal Abhiyan is a water conservation campaign in Gujarat linked with pond deepening, check dam desilting, check dam repair, and groundwater recharge.

