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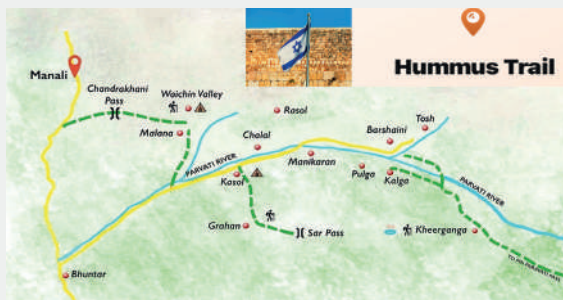
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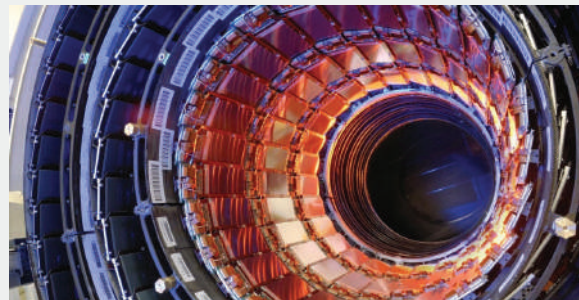
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Prelims UPSC CSE

Monthly Magazine



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PREFACE

Current Affairs UPSC CSE Prelims 2027

This high-quality monthly compilation of Current Affairs for Civil Services Exam Prelims 2027 is designed to help Civil Services Exam aspirants by:

1. **Saving preparation time:** Consolidates key current affairs from multiple sources for CSE Prelims.
2. **Reinforcing static concepts:** Links static concepts with current affairs
3. **Enhancing revision:** Combines important current affairs and static concepts for effective revision.

After reading this Current affairs magazine, you can test your concepts by taking our Current Affairs Test Series in Multiple Choice Question format which helps in the following ways:

- Aligns with the CSE prelims exam pattern.
- Aids understanding and recall by offering multiple perspectives on current affairs.
- Saves time, consolidates and aids quick revision

Details of our Current Affairs Test Series are on the back cover and inside this magazine.

Our team of content developers have worked rigorously to create this high-quality compilation, and we hope that all Civil Services and other competitive exam aspirants will make the best use of it. All the Best!

R. C. Reddy IAS Study Circle
Hyderabad



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POLITY

1. FCRA 2.0 Portal

Context: The Union Home Minister launched the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) 2.0 Portal and the Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card.

FCRA 2.0 Portal

- The Portal has been developed to simplify compliance under the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act** and to strengthen the monitoring and enforcement mechanism.
- All major processes related to applications, renewals, annual returns, and other services have now been made fully digital.
- This portal, hosted on the **National Government Cloud (MeghRaj)**, includes features such as **process re-engineering, an integrated dashboard, Aadhaar-based authentication, e-Sign facility, and OCR-based document analysis.**
- The portal is integrated with major government databases and banks, including **PAN, Aadhaar, OCI, NGO Darpan, and the ICAI's UDIN system.**

e-OCI Card

- **The Electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) Card** is a citizen-centric initiative aimed at transforming OCI services for the global Indian diaspora through a fully digital system.
- Under this system, applicants can complete the entire OCI process online - from submitting the application and uploading supporting documents to downloading the digitally generated card after approval.

2. 130th Constitution Amendment Bill

Context: The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) examining the 130th Constitution Amendment Bill is expected to adopt its report soon.

About

- **Background:** The bill was introduced in 2025 and was subsequently referred to a **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** following intense opposition protests.
- **Major Features:** The Bill provides for the removal of a minister if he/she is accused of an offence **punishable with five or more years of imprisonment**, and has been **arrested and detained for 30 consecutive days.**
 - If the **Prime Minister or a Chief Minister remains in custody for 30 consecutive days**, they must resign; otherwise, they would automatically cease to hold office on the 31st day.
 - **The removal can be directed by the President or Governor** upon the advice of the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister, respectively, or automatically on the 31st day of detention.
- **At present**, ministers leave office through **resignation, dismissal by the Prime Minister or Chief Minister, or disqualification** following conviction under existing laws.
 - The proposed amendment introduces **prolonged custody, rather than conviction, as a ground for vacating public office.**
 - **The provision is intended to protect the integrity of public office and ensure that individuals facing serious criminal proceedings do not continue in executive positions for extended periods.**

About JPC:

- **Ad-hoc Status:** Unlike Standing Committees (which are permanent and reconstituted annually), a JPC is purely temporary. It ceases to exist once it completes its investigation and submits its report to the Parliament.

- **Proportional Strength:** By established parliamentary convention, the representation follows a 2:1 ratio. The number of members from the Lok Sabha is always double the number of members from the Rajya Sabha.
- **Political Composition:** Members are elected or nominated based on the proportional strength of political parties in Parliament, ensuring that both the ruling coalition and opposition benches find representation.
- **Motion for JPC:** A motion to constitute a JPC can be initiated by any member of the House, though in practice, it is typically moved by the government (often the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs) following a consensus or strong demand from the Parliament, not exclusively by the Leader of the Opposition.

3. Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967

Context: The Ministry of Home Affairs has designated 23 more individuals as 'terrorists' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA).

About

- The designations were made under **Section 35 of UAPA**, which empowers the Central Government to add the name of an individual in the Fourth Schedule to the UAPA, if it believes that individual is involved in terrorism.
- The provision was inserted in the UAPA through an amendment in 2019.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)

- It is India's primary anti-terrorism law aimed at preventing unlawful activities, and terrorist activities that threaten the sovereignty and integrity of India.
- It was enacted in 1967 by the Parliament of India.
- The Central Government can designate organizations as terrorist organizations.

- Accused can be detained for a longer period without filing chargesheet up to 180 days in certain cases.
- Cases are often investigated by the National Investigation Agency.

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- **Established under:** NIA Act, 2008 after 26/11 Mumbai attacks.
- **Function:** Central counter-terrorism law enforcement agency.
- **Mandate:** Investigates offences affecting India's sovereignty, security, international treaties, etc.
- **NIA (Amendment) Act, 2019:**
 - **Jurisdiction extended:** Can investigate scheduled offences committed outside India involving Indian citizens/interests.
 - **Expanded mandate:** Covers offences under Explosive Substances Act, 1908 Human Trafficking, Cyber Terrorism Arms Act, 1959.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Special Courts:** Total NIA Special Courts: 52
 - Exclusive NIA Courts: 3 (Ranchi, Jammu and Mumbai).

4. Doctrine of Per Incuriam

Context: In a significant ruling, the Supreme Court recently clarified the circumstances under which a judicial decision can be declared per incuriam legal doctrine that allows courts to disregard a precedent rendered in ignorance of binding law or an earlier authoritative judgment.

About Doctrine of Per Incuriam

- The term "per incuriam," meaning 'through lack of care,' refers to judgments passed without reference to, or in ignorance of, a statute or an earlier judgement/precedent which would have been relevant and therefore affected the result of the case.
- As per legal principles, these judgments, which are decided based on incorrect interpretations of the law, may cause legal and practical issues.

- Therefore, they are not treated as binding precedent, and the courts often take steps to correct them.
- Since per incuriam decisions involve precedent, the doctrine bears a direct relation to the doctrine of “stare decisis” which translates to, “let the decision stand” or “to stand by that which is decided”, and gives binding force to decisions of the courts.
- The doctrine is an exception to Article 141 of the Constitution of India, which embodies the precedents as a matter of law. However, this principle is applied only in exceptional cases.
- The present doctrine is strictly and rightly applicable to the maxim ratio decidendi, which is the point that determines the judgement and is binding in nature, and not to the obiter dicta i.e., a remark made during the course of the discussion having persuasive value.

5. Right to be forgotten

Context: The Delhi High Court has laid down the principles governing the right to be forgotten.

More about the News

- In **Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India**, the court held that the right to be forgotten flows from **Article 21's guarantee of dignity and informational privacy**.
- The HC followed the Supreme Court's judgment in **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)** that held privacy is a fundamental right under Article 21, including the right to informational privacy.
- The court said the structured proportionality test is that retention must have a legitimate purpose and that the **harm to privacy must be balanced against the public interest**.

What is the 'right to be forgotten'?

- The “right to be forgotten” is the right to have **information erased or de-indexed from the public digital environment** when its continued accessibility is harmful and serves no public interest.

- The concept came to the fore in 2014, when a **Spanish citizen, Mario Costeja González**, complained to the European Court of Justice that Google continued to display an old newspaper notice about the auction of his repossessed house even though the debt had been settled.
- The court ruled in his favour, laying the groundwork for the right to erasure, which was later incorporated into **Article 17 of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.

6. Civil Registration System

Context: India officially recorded more than 99% of its estimated births and deaths in 2024, according to the latest official data released by the Civil Registration System (CRS).

Civil Registration System

- Data on births, deaths and stillbirths are recorded under a continuous and compulsory mechanism known as the **Civil Registration System (CRS)**.
 - It serves as a **foundational source of India's population data** such as **estimated births and deaths**, for the accurate estimation of **mortality, fertility and sex ratio at birth**.
- It functions under the **Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Home Ministry**.
- The CRS has been legally **operational since 1970**, though the coverage and completeness of reporting were historically poor.
- **The system operates under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, which was amended in 2023**.
- Births and deaths are ordinarily required to be **reported within 21 days**.
 - **In hospitals**, the medical officer in charge or an authorised official is responsible for reporting such events.
 - **For events at home**, responsibility generally lies with the head of the household or another prescribed informant.

- Birth and death certificates issued through the CRS are legally valid documents and serve as official proof of birth and death.

7. Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023

Context: The proposed invocation of trial in absentia under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 has gained attention after a Special NIA Court in Jammu issued a non-bailable warrant against Hafiz Saeed in connection with the Pahalgam terror attack case.

What is trial in absentia?

- A trial in absentia refers to a criminal trial conducted in the **absence of the accused**.
- **Section 356 of the BNSS provides that if a person declared a proclaimed offender has absconded to evade trial and there is no immediate prospect of arrest, the court may treat the accused's absence as a waiver of the right to be present during the proceedings.**

Whom does it apply to?

- It applies **only to a "proclaimed offender"**, as defined under **Section 84** of the BNSS.
- **Under Section 84(4)**, where a proclamation has been issued against a person accused of an offence punishable with **imprisonment of 10 years or more**, life imprisonment, or death under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, or any other law, and the person fails to appear at the specified place and time, the court may, after

making such inquiry as it considers necessary, **declare the person a proclaimed offender.**

What are the procedural safeguards under Section 356?

- **Section 356** lays down several procedural safeguards before a trial can commence in the absence of the accused.
- These include the **issuance of two consecutive warrants of arrest within an interval of at least 30 days**.
 - A notice must also be published in a local or national newspaper, giving the accused **30 days to appear** before the court.
- In addition, the notice must be displayed at the accused's last known place of residence, and a relative or friend of the accused must be informed about the trial.
- **The trial cannot commence until 90 days have elapsed from the date of framing of charges, giving the accused sufficient opportunity to appear before the court.**



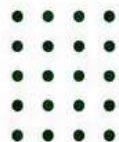
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S.NO	TEST NAME	DATE OF TEST
1	CA April 2026	14.06.2026
2	CA May 2026	05.07.2026
3	CA June 2026	26.07.2026
4	CA July 2026	16.08.2026
5	CA August 2026	13.09.2026
6	CA September 2026	11.10.2026
7	CA October 2026	15.11.2026
8	CA November 2026	13.12.2026
9	CA December 2026	10.01.2027
10	CA January 2027	14.02.2027
11	CA February 2027	14.03.2027
12	CA March 2027	11.04.2027
13	CA April 2027	09.05.2027

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ECONOMY

1. Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025

Context: The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025, has come into effect from 1st July.

Key features of VB-G RAM G

- **Increased guaranteed wage employment days:** The VB-G RAM G Act increases the number of working days from 100 to 125.
- **Pause in employment guarantee during agriculture season:** VB-G RAM G provides for a 60-day pause in the scheme during the peak agricultural sowing and harvesting seasons to ensure the availability of farm labour.
- **States to share funding burden:** Departing from MGNREGA, the VB-G RAM G Act proposes a higher share of states in the funding of the rural job programme.
 - Unlike MGNREGS, where the Centre paid 100% of the wage bill, VB-G RAM G shifts 40% of the funding burden onto states.
 - The exceptions to this are the northeastern and Himalayan states as well as Union Territories (UTs) with a legislature, where the Union government will bear 90% of the funding burden. As for UTs without a legislature, the Centre will bear the complete funding burden.
- **Top-down resource allocation approach:** It also flips the MGNREGS model of Central allocations based on state labour budgets, with the Centre now determining the devolutions.
- **New rules:** The Ministry of Rural Development has issued eight draft rules under the VB-G RAM G scheme covering governance, grievance redressal, administrative expenses, transition provisions, fund allocation norms, wage and unemployment allowance payments, a central monitoring council, and expenditure procedures

for states and UTs, aimed at ensuring smooth and transparent implementation.

2. CLAA Framework in India

Context: The Central Government has amended the Drugs Rules, 1945 to bring Cell or Stem Cell derived products, Gene therapeutic products and Xenografts under the ambit of the Centrally License Approving Authority (CLAA) framework.

The CLAA Framework in India

- It is a **regulatory mechanism under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945**, through which the **Central Government** exercises **oversight** over the licensing of certain **critical categories of drugs**.
- The framework is administered by the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- **Objective:**
 - To ensure uniform national standards in the manufacture of critical drugs.
 - To strengthen quality control, safety, and regulatory oversight.
 - To prevent variations in licensing practices among different States.
- **How the CLAA Framework Works?**
 - The manufacturer submits a licence application to the State Licensing Authority (SLA).
 - The SLA inspects the manufacturing facility and examines compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).
 - If the application is satisfactory, the SLA forwards its recommendation to the CLAA.
 - The CLAA independently evaluates the proposal and grants or rejects the licence.

- **Drugs Covered under the CLAA Framework:** The Central Government specifies the categories of drugs requiring CLAA approval. These generally include:
 - Blood and blood products, vaccines, intravenous (IV) fluids/Large Volume Parenterals (LVPs), recombinant DNA (r-DNA) products and other critical biological products notified by the Government.
- **Role of CDSO:**
 - It functions as the Central License Approving Authority.
 - Approves licences for specified critical drugs.
 - Regulates imports, new drug approvals, and clinical trials.
 - Coordinates with State Drug Control Organisations to ensure uniform enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

3. International Renewable Energy Agency

Context: According to a new report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), renewable energy projects commissioned in 2025 helped avoid an estimated \$480 billion in fossil fuel costs globally.

About International Renewable Energy Agency

- It is an intergovernmental organisation that was founded in 2009 to support countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future.
- **Mandate:** It serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, a centre of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.
- **Member countries:** It has 170 Members (169 States and the European Union). India is also one of the founder members of IRENA.
- **Headquarter:** Its headquarter is in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Governance of International Renewable Energy Agency

- **Assembly:** It is IRENA's ultimate decision-making authority, made up of one representative from each Member.
- **Council:** It is composed of 21 Member States elected for a two-year term and is accountable to the Assembly.
- Council members serve on a rotating basis to ensure the effective participation of both developing and developed countries and a fair and equitable geographical distribution.
- **Secretariat:** It comprises the Director-General and his staff, provides administrative and technical support to the Assembly, the Council and their subsidiary bodies.
- It is an official United Nations observer.

4. SHE-LEAPS

Context: Self-Help Entrepreneur-Livelihoods and Enterprise Application for Prosperity and Sustainability (SHE-LEAPS) was recently launched and is implemented under the LokOS platform.

About

- It is a digital platform for empowering women associated with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) across rural India, it is developed by the Digital India Corporation.
- It provides a unified platform for enterprise creation, performance tracking, and business management.
- It supports farm and non-farm enterprises, strengthening a sustainable and resilient rural economy.

About LokOS Platform

- LokOS (Lok = People, OS = Operating System) is a web and mobile platform under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- It was developed by the Digital India Corporation (DIC) under the aegis of

the **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** and was **launched in 2022**.

- It helps in managing **Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** by digitizing member records, profiles, savings, lending, repayments, financial transactions, livelihoods, and convergence initiatives.

5. Matcha

Context: Assam has become the first state in India to commercially produce Matcha tea, with production commencing at the Chota Tingrai Tea Estate in eastern Assam's Tinsukia district.

Matcha

- Matcha is made after shading *Camellia sinensis* tea leaves for three to four weeks before harvest.
- Blocking 90% of sunlight from the leaves boosts their chlorophyll and amino acid levels, and gives its characteristic bright green colour and rich umami flavour.
- Matcha originated through cultural exchanges between China and Japan during the premodern period.
 - It developed from earlier powdered tea practices in China that were later introduced to Japan by Zen Buddhist monks.
- China is the largest producer of matcha tea.
- The USA, Canada, UK, Germany, France, Australia, Singapore, South Korea and Middle Eastern countries are some of the main markets for match tea exports.

6. Specialised Investment Fund

Context: Recently, it was observed that the newly introduced Specialised Investment Funds (SIFs) have witnessed rapid adoption, with the category crossing Rs 13,814 crore in assets under management (AUM).

About Specialised Investment Fund

- It is a new investment product introduced by **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
- It was introduced to bridge the gap between regular mutual funds and high-ticket Portfolio Management Services (PMS).
- This framework has been introduced through amendments to the SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996.

Minimum Investment

- The minimum investment in a SIF will be Rs 10 lakh per investor.
- The fund house can offer a systematic investment plan (SIP) and systematic withdrawal plan (SWP), but it must comply with the minimum threshold amount.
- The SIF can be open-ended, closed-ended, or interval-based.

Categories of Investment Strategy

- Equity-oriented strategies: Such as equity long-short funds, equity ex-top 100 long-short funds and sector rotation long short funds.
- Debt-oriented strategies: Such as debt long-short funds and sectoral debt long-short funds.
- Hybrid strategies: Like active asset allocator long-short funds and hybrid long-short funds. The current framework allows only one strategy per category per SIF.

Eligibility Criteria for SIFs

- The eligibility criteria for Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to establish an SIF include two routes:
- The fund house must be in operation for three years at least and have average assets under management (AUM) of Rs 10,000 crore immediately preceding the three years.
- The alternative route is that the AMC must appoint a chief investment officer (CIO) with at least 10 years of experience and managing assets of Rs 5,000 crore or more.

- The AMC must also have an additional fund manager and have at least three years of experience managing an AUM of Rs 500 crore.

7. Modified UDAN Scheme

Context: The Prime Minister recently inaugurated the new terminal building at Jodhpur airport and launched the modified UDAN Scheme.

About Modified UDAN Scheme

- With an allocation of Rs 28,840 crore over the next 10 years, the scheme aims to accelerate the next phase of aviation-led development.
- A key emphasis is on the development of 100 aerodromes from existing unserved airstrips, supported by an outlay of over Rs 12,000 crore, to expand aviation infrastructure across the country.
- Over Rs 2,500 crore has been earmarked for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) support to ensure the viability of regional airports during their initial years of operation.
- Additionally, an investment of ₹3,661 crore will fund the creation of 200 modern helipads, and a continued Viability Gap Funding of ₹10,043 crore for airlines to sustain regional airline operations.
- The scheme promotes the induction of indigenous aircraft and helicopters, including HAL Dhruv and Dornier platforms, for operations in underserved and remote regions.

Phase-by-phase Summary:

- UDAN 1.0 (2017): 128 routes awarded; first commercial flight Delhi-Shimla.
- UDAN 2.0 (2018): added priority areas including the North-East, hill states, islands; helicopter routes introduced.
- UDAN 3.0 (2018-19): tourism-focused routes, seaplane operations, and select international connectivity.
- UDAN 4.0 (2020): further expansion to remote areas and water aerodromes, longer stage length allowed.

- UDAN 5.0 onwards: stage length raised to enable longer regional links; relaxation of viability period rules; helicopter and small-aircraft sub-schemes (Sagarmala Seaplane, Krishi UDAN, etc)

8. India handmade

Context: India handmade is a dedicated digital marketplace that brings India's handloom and handicraft traditions into the online economy.

About

- India currently has an estimated **64.66 lakh handloom and handicraft artisans**.
 - **Women form a major part of this workforce**, accounting for **71% of handloom weavers and 64% of total artisans** as of 2025.
- **India handmade was launched in 2023, to strengthen the visibility of handmade products and open wider market opportunities for sellers.**
- **Developed By: Digital India Corporation** under the Ministry of Textiles.

Salient Features:

- **Specialised Online Marketplace:** It enables weavers and artisans to sell their handloom and handicraft products online.
- **Direct Buyer Access:** Artisans and weavers are directly connected with buyers, helping reduce intermediaries and support fair compensation.
- **Digital Empowerment:** Artisans and weavers are provided with digital tools and visibility to participate more effectively in online commerce.
- **It offers a wide range of products**, including apparel, home décor, furnishings, paintings, furniture, religious items, stationery, musical instruments, jewellery, bags and footwear.
 - It also highlights special product categories such as **GI-tagged and ODOP products**.

9. Chief Labour Commissioner

Context: The Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) Organisation continues to strengthen labour welfare and industrial harmony across the country through sustained awareness programmes, effective grievance redressal mechanisms, and timely conciliation efforts.

About Chief Labour Commissioner (Central)

- The organization of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), also known as the Central Industrial Relations Machinery, is an apex organization in the country responsible for maintaining harmonious industrial relations mainly in the sphere of central Government.
- It is under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India.
- Headquarters: New Delhi.

Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) Formation

- In pursuance of the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, the organization was set up in April 1945 by combining the former organizations of the conciliation Officer (Railways), Supervisor of Railway Labour and the Labour Welfare Advisor.
- It was then charged mainly with duties of prevention and settlement of industrial disputes, enforcement of labour laws, and to promote welfare of workers in the industrial establishments falling within the sphere of the Central Government.
- It started with a small complement of staff comprising a Chief Labour Commissioner (C) at New Delhi, 3 Regional Labour Commissioners at Bombay, Kolkata & Lahore, 8 Conciliation Officers, and 18 Labour Inspectors.
- The Conciliation Officers and Labour Inspector were redesignated as Assistant Labour Commissioner (C) and Labour Enforcement Officer (C).
- The organization was further augmented gradually by establishing regional offices at various places across India.

Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) Functions

- Prevention and settlement of industrial disputes through conciliation/mediation.
- Enforcement of labour laws and rules made there under the Central Sphere.
- Quasi-Judicial functions
- Verification of trade union membership.
- Miscellaneous functions.

10. Masala Bonds

Context: The Enforcement Directorate's (ED) recent decision to issue notices to the Kerala Chief Minister in the KIIFB masala bond investigation marks a significant escalation in a long-running conflict between the LDF government and central agencies over the state's financing model.

About Masala Bonds

- They are rupee-denominated bonds issued outside India by Indian entities.
- The International Finance Corporation (IFC), an arm of the World Bank, issued the first masala bonds in October 2013 as part of its \$2 billion dollar offshore rupee programme.
- They are debt instruments which help to raise money in local currency from foreign investors.
- That means the currency risk if exchange rates change is on the investor, not the issuer. This helps Indian companies manage their risks better.
- To offset the risk of exchange rate fluctuations, bonds typically offer attractive interest rates that are frequently greater than those offered in the investors' home countries.
- Both the government and private entities can issue these bonds.

Who Can Invest?

- Investors outside India who would like to invest in assets in India can subscribe to these bonds.
- Any resident of that country can subscribe to these bonds which are members of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

- That includes individuals, institutions, and even financial organisations from countries that follow international standards for fair and secure investing, like those under IOSCO (International Organisation of Securities Commissions).
- It also covers multilateral and regional financial institutions of which India is a member.

Ineligible Investors:

- **Resident Indian individuals and domestic Indian companies** are explicitly **not eligible** to subscribe to/invest in Masala Bonds.
- **Indian Banks** incorporated in India cannot invest in or access these bonds as primary buyers (though they can act as underwriters/arrangers).

11. Performance Grading Index

Context: Recently, the Union Ministry of Education released the Report on Performance Grading Index 2.0 for States/UTs (PGI-S) and Performance Grading Index for Districts (PGI-D) for 2025-26.

About Performance Grading Index

- It is an index that measures the performance of states in school education undertaken by the Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL).
- PGI strives to evaluate the relative performance of all the State/UTs and districts respectively in a uniform scale to encourage them to perform better.
- The PGI 2.0 is constructed based on 73 indicators from 2 Categories containing 6 Domains.
- Performance Grading Index (PGI) - States/UTs
- It is devised by the Department of School Education & Literacy, Union Ministry of Education.
- It evaluates the performance of States and Union Territories by categorizing them into different grades or levels.
- Total weightage: The PGI- States/UTs structure comprises total weightage of 1000 points across 70 indicators.

- It consists of 2 Categories: Outcome and Governance & Management; comprising six domains:
 - Learning Outcomes and Quality
 - Access
 - Infrastructure & Facilities
 - Equity
 - Governance Processes
 - Teachers Education & Training
- The framework is fully aligned with data from the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, PM POSHAN Portal, PRABAND Portal, and Vidyanjali Portal.

12. Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization

Context: The Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) expands access for small farmers, women, and disadvantaged groups through targeted mechanization support nationwide.

About

- **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) was launched in 2014-15.**
- **It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).**
- SMAM aims to “reach the unreached” by extending the benefits of mechanization to underserved sections.
 - It includes small and marginal farmers, including women, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Farmer-Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and rural entrepreneurs.
- **The scheme promotes the establishment of Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs).**
 - These are units comprising a set of farm machinery, implements, and equipment meant for hiring by farmers.

13. World Intangible Investment Highlights (WIIH) 2026

Context: The World Intangible Investment Report 2026, launched by World Intellectual Property Organization and Luiss Business School, reaffirms India's emergence as a global innovation powerhouse.

World Intangible Investment Highlights (WIIH) 2026

- It is a joint publication of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Luiss Business School (LBS).
- It covers 29 economies accounting for around 57% of global GDP in nominal terms and about 45% on a purchasing power parity basis.
- The largest investors in absolute terms are the United States, Japan and Germany, whereas the most intensive investors are Sweden, the US and France.
 - India, Japan and the Philippines saw the strongest growth.
- The 2026 edition also underscores the strategic importance of brands and looks at how the relationship between artificial intelligence (AI) and intangible investments is changing.

14. Financial Intelligence Unit-India

Context: The Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) has earned another significant international recognition with its case regarding a large-scale cyber fraud, securing the Runner-up position at the prestigious Best Egmont Case Award (BECA) 2026.

About Financial Intelligence Unit-India

- It was set by the Government of India in 2004.
- It is the central national agency responsible for receiving, processing, analyzing and disseminating information relating to suspect financial transactions.
- FIU-IND is an independent body reporting directly to the Economic Intelligence Council (EIC) headed by the Finance Minister.

Function of Financial Intelligence Unit-India

- **Collection of Information:** It acts as the central reception point for receiving Cash Transaction reports (CTRs), Non-Profit Organisation Transaction Report (NTRs), Cross Border Wire Transfer Reports (CBWTRs), Reports on Purchase or Sale of Immovable Property (IPRs) and Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) from various reporting entities.
- **Analysis of Information:** Analyze received information in order to uncover patterns of transactions suggesting suspicion of money laundering and related crimes.
- **Sharing of Information:** It shares information with national intelligence/law enforcement agencies, national regulatory authorities and foreign Financial Intelligence Units.
- **Central Repository:** It establishes and maintains a national database on the basis of reports received from reporting entities.
- **Coordination:** It coordinates and strengthens collection and sharing of financial intelligence through an effective national, regional and global network to combat money laundering and related crimes.
- **Research and Analysis:** Monitor and identify strategic key areas on money laundering trends, typologies and developments.

15. Negotiated Dealing System-Order Matching

Context: Bloomberg has introduced the first electronic trade in Indian government bonds (IGBs) through its terminal by directly connecting to the Negotiated Dealing System-Order Matching (NDS-OM).

About Negotiated Dealing System-Order Matching

- It was launched in 2005 by the Reserve Bank of India.
- It is a screen based electronic anonymous order matching system for secondary market trading in Government securities owned by RBI.

- Presently the membership of the system is open to entities like Banks, Primary Dealers, Insurance Companies, Mutual Funds etc.
- **All central government securities, state government securities and treasury bills are tradable on the NDS-OM Web Module.**
- Additionally, it allows members to negotiate bilaterally through the "Request for Quote" segment.
- The system is designed to bring transparency to secondary market transactions while enabling members to place bids and offers directly on the NDS-OM screen.
- There are two types of NDS-OM members, including
 - Direct Members: Direct members have current accounts with the RBI and can directly settle trades on NDS-OM.
 - Indirect Members: Indirect members do not have current accounts with the RBI and must settle through NDS-OM members that have direct accounts.
- Most foreign institutional investors have indirect access, while resident entities may have direct access.
- Trade Settlement: Under this trades are settled at T+1 and guaranteed by Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL).
- **Benefits**
 - Wider market access; level playing field for all.
 - Immediate dissemination of market info
 - Lower transaction cost.

16. Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment Scheme

Context: Recently, the Centre has approved all 28 major projects proposed by the Delhi government under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme.

About Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment Scheme

- It is an important scheme of the Central government under which states and Union Territories receive interest-free financial aid for infrastructure projects.
- **It is managed by the Ministry of Finance.**
- SASCI was launched in 2020-21 amid the financial stress caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Salient features of SASCI Scheme
 - Under this, the Centre provides long-term, 50-year interest-free loans to states and union territories to boost capital spending.
 - It also provides incentives tied to reforms and capital investment by states.
 - It has an endeavor of developing end to end tourist experience, funding support to the shortlisted proposals, strengthening all points of the tourist value chain, harnessing quality expertise for design and development, sustainable operations and maintenance etc.
- Under this scheme projects have been identified based on the project proposals submitted by the concerned State Governments.

17. Direct Seeding of Rice

Context: Recently, the Chhattisgarh government issued an advisory to focus on prioritising Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) over the traditional transplanting method against the backdrop of the uncertainty of rainfall due to El Niño.

Direct Seeding of Rice

- It refers to the practice of sowing rice seeds directly onto the main field without using a nursery to transplant seedlings. It is also known as the 'tar-wattar' technique.
- It can be accomplished by sowing pre-germinated seed into wet soil (wet seeding via

broadcast or drum seeder) or by planting dry seed (dry seeding by broadcast and seed-cum-fertilizer drill) on prepared ground.

Benefits of DSR

- It can reduce water use by 15% to 20% (the traditional puddling method requires 3,600 to 4,125 litres of water to grow a single kilo of rice).
- It requires less labour and it matures 7 to 10 days faster, giving farmers more time to manage paddy straw.
- It offers low production cost and provides better soil physical conditions for following crops and less methane emission.

Challenges associated with DSR

- Weeds are the biggest significant impediment to the success of DSR.
 - Weeds are more problematic in DSR than in puddled transplanting because sprouting weeds compete with simultaneously emerging DSR seedlings.
- Direct planting can help to reduce methane emissions, aerobic soil conditions can also increase nitrous oxide emissions.
 - Nitrous oxide generation increases with redox potential.
- Micronutrient deficiencies are a prominent cause of concern in DSR such lack of iron content of the soil can severely impact yields and lead to major financial losses for farmers.

18. Bureau of Port Security

Context: The union Home minister reviewed the progress in the establishment of the Bureau of Port Security (BoPS).

About

- The Bureau of Port Security is being established as a statutory body under Section 13 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.
- It is to be headed by a director general, the Bureau will function under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

- The Bureau is being modelled on the lines of the **Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)**.
- **Functions:**
 - It will be responsible for **regulating and inspecting the security of ships and port facilities**.
 - The Bureau will also ensure the **timely collection, analysis and sharing of security-related information**, with a special focus on **cybersecurity**.
 - A dedicated division will **safeguard the IT infrastructure of ports against cyber threats**.
- The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has been designated as a Recognised Security Organisation (RSO) for port facilities with responsibility for undertaking security assessments and preparation of security plans for ports.

19. Index of Services Production

Context: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the country's first trial Index of Services Production (ISP) for 19 sub-sectors.

About

- The **Index of Services Production (ISP)** is a short-term indicator designed to **measure changes over time in the volume of output produced by the services sector** relative to a specified base period. It measures changes in the real output of service-producing industries over time.
- It serves as the services sector **counterpart to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**, which measures industrial output.
- The **base year** of the index has been fixed at **2024-25**.

Key Findings

- **Fourteen** out of nineteen service sub-sectors recorded **double-digit growth** during April 2026.

- Among the top performers, **Accommodation and Food Services registered the highest growth at 37.2 per cent**, followed by Retail Trade (30.8 per cent), Administrative and Support Services (28.7 per cent) and Real Estate (27.7 per cent).
- **Telecommunications** expanded by 22.8 per cent, while **Wholesale Trade, Banking, Insurance and IT services** also recorded healthy double-digit growth.
- However, **Air Transport contracted by 13.9 per cent**, while Railway Transport recorded a marginal decline of 0.4 per cent during the month.

20. Digital Threat Report 2025-26

Context: In July 2026, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), released the second edition of the Digital Threat Report 2025-26 for the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) and payments ecosystem.

- The report was jointly released by the MeitY, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), the Computer Security Incident Response Team in Finance (CSIRT- Fin) and SISA (SISA Information Security).

Highlights of the Report:

- **Research Foundation:** The report is based on extensive Digital Forensics and Incident Response (DFIR) research, analysis aligned with CERT-In and CSIRT-Fin observations, and in-depth research on adversarial Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **Timeline:** The report sets out an **18-month** roadmap for financial institutions.
- **New Framework:** The report introduces a new analytical framework called the '**Anatomy of Cyber Failure- 4-layer Gap Archetype Framework**'.
- It is a model that explains how a cyberattack progresses from initial weakness to a **full-scale**

security breach by identifying gaps across four layers of an organisation's cybersecurity.

21. Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana

Context: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has highlighted serious irregularities in the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) and utilisation of District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT) funds in Chhattisgarh.

Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

- **Launched:** In 2015 by the Ministry of Mines.
- **Objective:** To ensure that mining-related revenues are utilised for the **socio-economic development** and welfare of mining-affected people and areas.
- **Funding Mechanism:** Implemented through District Mineral Foundation Trusts (DMFTs), which receive mandatory contributions from mining leaseholders under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act)**.
- **Focus Areas:** Drinking water supply, healthcare, education, skill development, women and child welfare, environmental restoration, sustainable livelihood generation, infrastructure in mining-affected regions.

22. Investment Friendliness Index

Context: NITI Aayog has released the report titled "Investment Friendliness Index (IFI)".

About

- It presents a **structured and data-driven framework** for assessing how effectively States and Union Territories **create, enable, and sustain an environment conducive to investments**.
- It **evaluates investment attractiveness across the following eight pillars:** Infrastructure,

Business climate, Resources, Government policy, Regulatory Ease, Institutional Environment, Financial Health; and Environmental Resilience.

- **The framework comprises 84 indicators**, incorporating both secondary data and perception-based measures derived from a primary survey of investors.
- **State Categorisation:** States and Union Territories have been classified into **four performance categories**:
 - Top Performers (scores above 50).
 - Frontrunners (45-50).
 - Emerging Performers (≥ 40 - < 45).
 - Aspiring States (below 40).

23. E-Commerce Council of India

Context: The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) recently launched the E-Commerce Council of India (ECCI), a first-of-its-kind national platform dedicated to unify India's \$120 billion digital commerce ecosystem.

About E-Commerce Council of India

- It is a first-of-its-kind national platform dedicated to advancing the country's digital commerce ecosystem through collaborative engagement between industry, government, and other key stakeholders.
- It was launched by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).
- The ECCI aims to bring together policymakers, e-commerce marketplaces, brands, retailers, logistics providers, technology companies, payment solution providers, startups, exporters, MSMEs, industry experts, and academic institutions.
- The council will focus on policy advocacy, research, and industry engagement across areas such as
 - product and service e-commerce
 - cross-border trade
 - logistics and Supply chain
 - mobility
 - travel technology

- MSME enablement
- digital payments
- consumer trust
- artificial intelligence.

24. Boss Scam

Context: SEBI recently cautioned regulated entities and listed firms against a 'Boss Scam', wherein fraudsters impersonate chief executives or senior officials to trick finance teams into transferring funds.

About Boss Scam

- It is an emerging cyber fraud where fraudsters impersonate Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), Managing Directors (MDs) and other senior officials to trick finance executives into transferring funds.
- Cyber criminals are using two major methods to carry out the fraud.
 - Under the first method, fraudsters use deepfake technology, including AI-generated voice cloning, fake video calls and false social media groups to impersonate top executives.
 - Finance officials are then instructed to transfer money to a specified bank account.
 - In some cases, they are also told not to disclose the transaction by claiming that it relates to Unpublished Price Sensitive Information (UPSI).
 - Another method involves sending compressed ZIP files containing malicious executable programs.
 - Once opened, these files can compromise systems and hijack the active WhatsApp Web sessions.
 - The fraudster gets access to the finance officer's WhatsApp account and then contacts accounts or finance employees, instructing them to make immediate payments to specified bank accounts
 - In some instances, attackers modify contact lists by saving their own numbers under the names of CEOs or MDs, making fraudulent messages appear genuine.

25. Electronic Gold Receipts

Context: In 2026, the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) introduced Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs).

About

- Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs) are exchange-traded securities representing ownership of physical gold (specified purity) stored in SEBI-regulated vaults.
- They can be held electronically in a demat account, bought and sold in different denominations and converted into physical gold via prescribed process.
- The EGRs are available in two purity standards: 999 (99.9% pure gold) and 995 (99.5% pure gold).
 - In each purity category, investors have six different denominations such as 10 mg, 100 mg, 1 g, 10 g, 100 g and 1 kg.
 - EGRs offer denominations to suit first-time buyers and seasoned investors.
- Those who prefer physical gold can convert EGRs into gold whenever needed.

26. Monthly Index of the ICI

Context: The Union Government has released an updated series of its Index of Core Industries (ICI).

The Monthly Index of the ICI

- It is a **production volume index** to provide an **advance indication on production performance of industries of 'core' nature** before the release of **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** by the Central Statistics Office.
- ICI measures collective and individual performance of production in **selected eight core industries viz.** Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Petroleum Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity.
- The Index is compiled and released by **Office of the Economic Adviser (OEA), Department of**

Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

- The Eight Core Index broadly has a combined weight of **37.90% in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** and is published about **12 days prior to IIP.**

27. Nifty500 Ahimsa Index

Context: NSE Indices Limited (NSE's index-building arm) has rolled out the Nifty500 Ahimsa Index, a stock market index built entirely around the idea of non-violence towards animals.

About

- The Nifty500 Ahimsa Index picks companies from the **Nifty 500** that don't profit from harming animals, and tracks their combined stock performance. Instead of just screening for environment or governance scores like a typical ESG index, this one asks a simpler question: does this company's business hurt animals or not? As of now, it holds **326 companies.**
- The idea is to give investors a ready-made way to put their money only into "cruelty-free" businesses.
- It's a joint effort between **NSE Indices Limited** and the **Ahimsa gain Foundation.**

How Companies Get Sorted?

Every company gets a colour band under the AIM framework:

- **Green:** Business is aligned with Ahimsa. These are the only ones that make it into the index.
- **Orange:** Limited or indirect involvement in animal-related harm (think hotels serving non-vegetarian food, some FMCG or apparel firms, and most financial companies). Excluded.
- **Red:** Direct involvement in meat, dairy, leather, animal testing and interestingly, also alcohol, tobacco, weapons, and gambling, since these fall foul of the broader non-violence principle the Foundation follows.
- **Exclusions:** Excludes companies involved in meat, dairy, poultry, leather, cosmetics, fashion

using wool/leather, and pharmaceutical firms engaging in animal testing.

28. Karlapat Bauxite Block

Context: Some of India's biggest industrial groups are eyeing Odisha's Karlapat bauxite block.

About Karlapat Bauxite Block

- Karlapat is among Odisha's largest bauxite deposits. It accounted for 41 per cent of India's bauxite resources.
 - Odisha is the largest **bauxite-producing state in India**, accounting for over **70% of the country's total output**. Other major bauxite-producing states include Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.
- According to the Directorate of Geology, Government of Odisha, it has an estimated resource of about 207 million tonnes, comprising 153 million tonnes of proved reserves and 54 million tonnes of possible reserves.
- Karlapat bauxite deposit is a **greenfield mining block**, which means it has not previously been commercially mined.

29. Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Pvt. Ltd.

Context: Recently, Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Pvt. Ltd. (BRBNMPL) invited Expressions of Interest (Eoi) for supplying polymer substrate sheets with embedded security features.

Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Pvt. Ltd. (BRBNMPL)

- It is a wholly owned subsidiary of RBI, established in 1995 under the Companies Act to augment India's banknote printing capacity and ensure a secure supply of currency.
- Headquarters: Bengaluru, Karnataka.

- **Primary Role:** Printing banknotes for the RBI and supporting the country's currency management system.
- **Printing Presses:** BRBNMPL operates two high-security currency printing presses:
 - **Mysuru (Karnataka):** Operational since 1996
 - **Salboni (West Bengal):** Operational since 2000
- **Functions:**
 - Prints banknotes as per RBI's requirements.
 - Uses advanced security printing technologies to deter counterfeiting.
 - Procures specialised banknote paper, inks and other security materials.
 - Supports research and adoption of new currency technologies, including **polymer (plastic) banknotes**.

30. State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2026 report

Context: The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2026 report, highlights progress in reducing hunger in India while underscoring persistent challenges in ensuring access to affordable and nutritious diets.

Key Findings of the Report

- **Global Scenario:** An estimated **7.8 percent** of the global population faced hunger in 2025, down from 8.1 percent in 2024 and 8.6 percent in 2022.
- **Indian Scenario:**
 - **Undernourished Population:** Undernourishment fell to 142.5 million people (9.8% of the population) in 2023–2025, down from 243.9 million (21.1%) in 2004–2006.
 - **Healthy Diet Cost:** The cost of a healthy diet reached PPP \$4.11 per person per day in 2025, a nearly **48%** increase since 2017.

- **Affordability Crisis:** Around 520.1 million people (35.5% of India's population) could not afford a healthy diet in 2025.
- **Malnutrition Indicators:** Child stunting declined to 32.9% and wasting stood at 18.7%, while childhood overweight, adult obesity, and women's anaemia continued to rise.

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)

- This report is the annual global monitoring report for Sustainable Development **Goal (SDG) 2 (targets 2.1 and 2.2)** – to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms.
- Jointly Released by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations agency for children (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

31. Portfolio Management Service

Context: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed a sweeping review of the SEBI (Portfolio Managers) Regulations, 2020, seeking to modernise the framework governing portfolio management services (PMS).

What's a Portfolio Management Service (PMS)?

- Portfolio management service (PMS) is registered under the **SEBI (Portfolio Managers) Regulations, 2020**.
- It is a professional investment service where a qualified fund manager takes charge of the equity, debt and other securities portfolio of a customer, who is a high net-worth individual.
- **Only corporate entities, companies or LLPs with SEBI registration can legally offer these services in India.**
- SEBI mandates that no PMS provider can accept less than **Rs 50 lakh per client**.

32. BHAVYA - Rasayan Scheme

Context: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister, approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA - Rasayan) Scheme.

The BHAVYA - Rasayan Scheme:

What It Is?

- BHAVYA - Rasayan is a central sector industrial park development scheme focused on expanding India's chemical and petrochemical manufacturing. It provides capital support to build modern plug-and-play common infrastructure facilities and basic utilities for chemical manufacturing units.

Ministry: Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Implementation Period: 5 years, running from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.

- **Aim:** To build an integrated, eco-friendly, and cost-competitive manufacturing ecosystem for the chemical industry, lowering logistics costs, attracting domestic and foreign direct investments (FDI), driving import substitution, and strengthening India's role in Global Value Chains (GVCs).

Key Features of the Scheme:

- **Total Financial Allocation:** Total outlay of **₹3,030 crore**, comprising **₹3,000 crore** for Common Infrastructure Facilities & Basic Utilities and **₹30 crore** for administrative expenditure.
- **Three Dedicated Chemical Parks:** Sets up **three world-class, specialized chemical industrial parks across participating states**.
- **Central Grant & State Funding Pattern:** The Centre will offer financial support of up to **₹1,000 crore per park**, provided the concerned state government contributes a minimum matching grant of **₹500 crore**.

- **Selection via Challenge Route:** State government sites will be evaluated and chosen competitively using a **Challenge Route** selection framework.
- **Minimum Contiguous Land Norms:** Participating states must provide a minimum contiguous area of **8 sq. km. (2,000 acres)** of encumbrance-free land for each park.
- **Plug-and-Play Infrastructure & Utilities:** Parks will equip industrial occupants with state-of-the-art shared facilities, including:
 - Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP)
 - Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities (TSDF) for hazardous waste
 - Solvent recovery and distillation plants
 - Steam generation and distribution systems
 - Interconnected industrial pipeline networks, logistics, and warehousing facilities.

33. Corporate Mitra Scheme

Context: The Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) Shillong organized an awareness webinar on the Corporate Mitra Scheme for youth, students, and MSMEs in Arunachal Pradesh.

The Corporate Mitra Scheme:

What It Is?

- The Corporate Mitra Scheme is a central initiative designed to create a certified cadre of trusted, trained para-professionals known as Corporate Mitras.
- These individuals provide accessible and affordable business compliance, accounting, and advisory services to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Ministry: Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Government of India.

- **Aim:** To empower MSMEs in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities by reducing their regulatory and secretarial compliance burden, enhancing Ease of Doing Business (EODB), and equipping young graduates with practical, industry-relevant skills to foster employment.

Key Features of the Scheme:

- **Target Capacity:** Initial pan-India target of 2,000 participants, with 200 seats reserved exclusively for the North Eastern Region (NER).
- **Financial Concessions for NER:** Candidates from the North Eastern states receive a **50% fee concession** on registration and training fees.
- **Scope of Services:** Accredited Corporate Mitras handle non-core business operations for MSMEs, including regulatory filings, secretarial compliance, basic accounting, tax filings, financial documentation, and governance-related tasks.
- **Digital Training Integration:** The formal 'Corporate Mitra' training course is hosted and accessible through the government's **Swayam Plus** educational portal.
- **Skill Development Bridge:** Bridges the gap between academic education and industry needs by training young graduates to work as qualified para-professionals for local businesses.



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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Mali

Context: India and Mali institutionalized their growing economic partnership by holding the inaugural India-Mali Forum for the Promotion of Exports in Bamako, paving the way for deeper trade across key sectors.

The Mali:

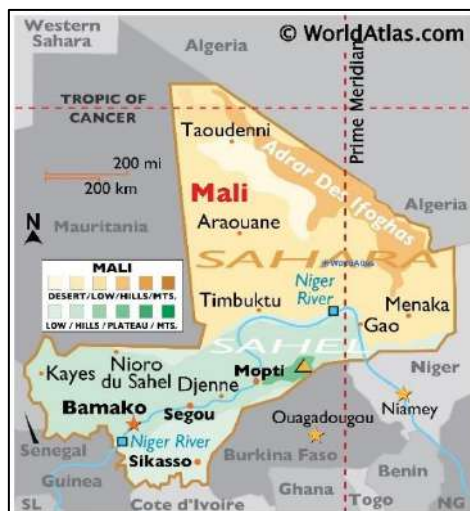
What It Is?

- Mali (officially the Republic of Mali) is a sovereign, landlocked nation in West Africa with a rich precolonial legacy, having once formed the core of the great Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires.
- Currently managed by a transitional government, it features a unique cultural fabric where the Bambara language and ethnic group predominate alongside Fulani, Dogon, and Tuareg communities.

Geographical Position: Located in the interior of Western Africa, it stretches across the massive hyper-arid Saharan desert in the north and the semi-arid Sahelian transition region in the south.

National Capital: Bamako.

Bordering Nations: Bounded by seven countries- Algeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and Mauritania.



2. Hummus Trail

Context: A rights organisation has filed a 'war crimes' complaint with India against an Israeli soldier spotted along 'hummus trail'.

About

- The **Hummus Trail** is an informal term for a network of destinations in India that are especially popular among **young Israeli travellers**.
- These places often have **Hebrew signboards, Israeli cafés, Chabad houses, and hostels**, creating a familiar environment for visitors.

Background

- Every year, around **80,000 Israelis** visit India, many after completing their **mandatory military service**.
- This long post-service journey, known as **Tiul Gadol** ("The Big Trip"), usually lasts **6–12 months** and is considered a cultural rite of passage.
- In **2026**, Israel allocated **4 million NIS** to strengthen tourism cooperation with India.

Legal Aspect

- India is a party to the **Fourth Geneva Convention**.
- Under the **Geneva Conventions Act, 1960**, Indian courts can prosecute persons accused of **grave breaches** of the Geneva Conventions if they are found in India, regardless of where the alleged offence took place.

Key Features

- Major destinations include **Kasol, Old Manali, Dharamkot, Pushkar, Goa, Hampi, Kerala, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands**.
- Many visitors use the trail as a period of **rest and recovery** after military service, including coping with combat-related stress.

- Some locations have also witnessed concerns over **rave parties, drug abuse, and narcotics-related activities**, prompting closer monitoring by authorities.

3. Permanent Court of Arbitration

Context: The US, the UK and other Western and Asian countries reasserted that China's expansive claims in the South China Sea are illegal based on a 2016 arbitration ruling.

Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)

- The Permanent Court of Arbitration is the oldest international **dispute-resolution institution** in the world.
- The permanent court of arbitration offers **six key services**:
 - Arbitration
 - Mediation/Conciliation
 - Guest tribunals
 - Appointing authorities
 - Fact-finding/Commissions of Inquiry
 - Hearing Facilities
- There are **no permanent judges**, therefore it is not a court.
- It is a permanent bureaucracy that assists temporary tribunals in resolving disputes arising from international agreements involving governments (and similar bodies), multilateral organisations, and even private persons.
- The Permanent Court of Arbitration meets in secret and **maintains absolute confidentiality**.
- Conflicts between **international organisations**, as well as between **nations and international organisations**, are also resolved by the Court.
- The PCA is organised into three parts:
 - Administrative Council- to oversee its policies and budgets,
 - Members of the Court- a panel of independent potential arbitrators,
 - International Bureau- its Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General.
- India** is a PCA member. In 1950, India ratified the treaty of 1899.

- The PCA is the oldest global institution for international dispute resolution, established in 1899 during the First Hague Peace Conference. It shares the historic **Peace Palace** in The Hague with the ICJ.
- While the ICJ's contentious jurisdiction is strictly limited to disputes between sovereign States (State vs. State), the PCA handles arbitrations involving a wider array of parties, including sovereign States, state-owned enterprises, private corporations, and international organizations (such as under UNCITRAL rules or bilateral investment treaties).

4. BIMSTEC

Context: The National Security Chiefs of BIMSTEC member states met in New Delhi, reaffirming their commitment to strengthen regional cooperation against terrorism, cyber threats, maritime security challenges, and emerging security risks.

About

- They adopted **guidelines for the maritime component of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief**.
 - These guidelines will help BIMSTEC member states to undertake relief operations in the region in an expeditious manner
- They also endorsed a set of **guiding principles on the conduct of maritime law enforcement agencies** during interactions at sea.

What is BIMSTEC?

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** is a grouping of **seven Member States** lying in the **littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal**.
- The organization was formed in **1997** with the signing of the **Bangkok Declaration**.
 - It unites South and **Southeast Asian nations bordering the Bay of Bengal**.
- Founding Members (1997):** Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand.

- **Current Members (7):** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- **Objective:** To help countries in their economic growth, to support social development, and to encourage development in other areas, like science, technology and economic development.
- The BIMSTEC region brings together **1.7 billion people** - **22%** of world population with a combined GDP of **US\$ 5 trillion**.
- **BIMSTEC Secretariat:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.

	List I (Primary Sectors in BIMSTEC)	List II (Leading countries)
A.	Security	India
B.	People-to-People Contact	Nepal
C.	Connectivity	Thailand
D.	Trade, Investment & Development	Bangladesh

5. United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

Context: The 60th anniversary of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) was observed.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

- The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), established in 1966.
- It is a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly and works to modernise and harmonise international trade law.
- It convenes annually in New York and Vienna in turn to promote its work in the field of international trade law.

Membership

- It has **70 member States**, elected by the **UN General Assembly for six-year terms**, with **half the membership renewed every three years**.
- It has grown from 29 members in 1966 to 70 in 2022 and its membership is balanced to reflect the world's various geographical regions and major economic and legal systems.
 - **India is a member of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).**

Functions

- It develops legal instruments such as conventions, model laws and legislative guides to ease international trade and business by setting common legal standards.
- Its work contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by developing modern, harmonised and predictable international trade laws that strengthen the rule of law, promote sustainable economic growth, facilitate trade and investment and enhance access to markets and finance.



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ENVIRONMENT

1. Climate Tipping Points

Context: Climate tipping points emerged as a major area of debate during the Bonn Climate Change Conference held in Germany.

What are Climate Tipping Points?

- A climate tipping point is a **critical threshold in the Earth's climate system**, beyond which a small additional change can **trigger large, self-reinforcing and potentially irreversible changes**.
 - Once a tipping point is crossed, the affected climate system may continue changing even if the original cause is reduced.
- It operates through **positive feedback loops**, where one change reinforces another.

Major Potential Climate Tipping Points

- **Arctic Sea Ice Loss:** Continued melting reduces the Earth's reflectivity (albedo), leading to faster global warming.
- **Amazon Rainforest Dieback:** Rising temperatures, deforestation and declining rainfall can transform large parts of the Amazon into savannah, reducing one of the world's largest carbon sinks.
- **Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC):** Weakening of this major ocean current can disrupt rainfall patterns, agriculture and weather systems across Europe, Africa and Asia.
- **Greenland Ice Sheet Melting:** Accelerated ice-sheet loss could contribute substantially to long-term global sea-level rise.
- **Coral Reef Collapse:** Increasing ocean temperatures and acidification can lead to irreversible coral bleaching and biodiversity loss.

Note: While "Atlantification" (the process where warmer, saltier Atlantic water flows into the Arctic Ocean and prevents sea ice formation) is a significant and concerning environmental shift, it is

not one of the major potential climate tipping points.

2. Bengal Fox

Context: Researchers and conservationists from many districts in the state of Tamil Nadu, where the Bengal fox used to thrive, have reported no sightings of the species in the last few years.

About Bengal Fox

- It is also known as Indian Fox or the Indian desert fox, is a small-sized carnivorous mammal.
- **Habitat:** It generally prefers foothills and non-forested regions such as open grassland, thorny scrub, semi-desert and arid environments.
- **Distribution:** It is native to the Indian subcontinent, including India, Nepal and Pakistan and is widespread throughout its range.
- **These foxes are found in the Himalayan foothills to the tip of the Indian peninsula.**
- **Behaviour:** It is known for their monogamous behaviour, forming lifetime bonds.
- Bengal fox populations alter their active periods from daytime to crepuscular and nocturnal habits.
- **These foxes are 'edge species', inhabiting habitats between forests and agricultural areas.**
- **Breeding:** Its breeding season typically occurs from December to January and gestation period is 50-60 days.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN: Least Concern.**
 - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule II
 - **Threats:** Habitat loss, the fragmentation of open scrubland, direct persecution during traditional festivals, and the encroachment of feral dogs bringing disease into fox territories.

3. Hasdeo-Arand forests

Context: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has granted environmental clearance for mining in the Kente Extension Integrated Coal Block in Chhattisgarh's Hasdeo-Arand forests.

Hasdeo-Arand forests

- The Hasdeo-Arand forests, spread across Chhattisgarh's Korba, Surguja, and Surajpur districts, cover about 1.7 lakh hectares and are considered the **Green Lungs of Central India**.
- They are home to around 640 plant species and nine schedule-1 wildlife species, which are accorded highest legal protection.
- It is also the **catchment area of the Hasdeo river**, the largest tributary of the Mahanadi.

4. Radio Telemetry

Context: Recently the death of a radio-tagged white-rumped vulture has highlighted the importance of radio telemetry in monitoring wildlife and identifying conservation threats.

What is Radio Telemetry?

- It is a **technique to locate animals and track their movements**. It uses radio signals to determine location.
- A radio telemetry system is made up of **three parts**: a radio transmitter, a radio antenna and a radio receiver.
- **Working:**
 - The radio transmitter is **worn by the animal** and is the part that **transmits, or sends, the radio signal**.
 - The antenna is used to pick up the radio signals, which are then transformed into a beeping sound by the receiver.
 - As the receiver gets closer to the transmitter, the beeps get louder, meaning the animal wearing the transmitter is close by.

- The researcher uses this sound to locate and follow the animal wearing the transmitter.

- VHF (Very High Frequency) transmitters and GPS radio collars attached to animals allow researchers to track movement patterns, dispersal routes, and habitat utilization (home ranges).
- Modern biotelemetry implants or external transmitters monitor real-time physiological metrics (heart rate, body temperature, activity levels) in unrestrained animals in the wild.
- Oceanographic telemetry uses anchored or drifting buoys equipped with sensor arrays to transmit hydrological data (salinity, sea surface temperature, surface currents) via radio or satellite link back to land stations.
- Estimating Forest biomass and canopy cover from space relies on **optical remote sensing, LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)**, not radio telemetry.

5. Zebra Finches

Context: An American scientist, Dr Julie Elie at the University of California has won the the Collier Dolittle Challenge award for her work on how zebra finches communicate with each other.

About Zebra Finches

- **The Zebra Finch is a small, colorful songbird native to Australia.**
 - They can also be found **natively in parts of Indonesia and East Timor**.
- **It is one of the most widely studied bird species in the world because of its simple care requirements, social behavior, and vocal learning abilities.**
- **Scientific Name:** Taeniopygia guttata.
- **Family:** Estrildidae (Waxbills and Grass Finches).
- **Habitat:** Grasslands, scrublands, and areas near water sources.
- **IUCN Status:** Least Concern (LC).

6. Behali Wildlife Sanctuary

Context: Serious allegations of illegal encroachment, large-scale tree felling, and firing on forest personnel have surfaced recently from the Behali Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam's Sonitpur.

About Behali Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is located at the foothills of the Eastern Himalaya, in the Biswanath district of Assam.
- Situated in the north of the Brahmaputra River, Behali is situated at a disputed border between Assam and Arunachal.
- With Kaziranga National Park as its close neighbour, it serves as an important elephant corridor.
- It is part of the Sonitpur Elephant Reserve that was notified in 2003.
- **Flora:**
 - The forest is Tropical Wet Evergreen and Semi-evergreen.
 - Some fine patches of primary rainforest are still to be seen in the area.
 - The top canopy consists of species such as Tetrameles nudiflora, an emergent deciduous species, which is widely used by hornbills for nesting.
- **Fauna:**
 - It is home to several threatened wildlife species, including the Asian Elephant, Tiger, Bengal Slow Loris, White-winged Duck, Hog Deer, and Chinese Pangolin, along with critically endangered species such as the Black Softshell Turtle and Red-necked Vulture.
 - It has also been declared an "Important Bird Area". Common bird species include the Wreathed Hornbill, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Great Hornbill, Woolly-necked Stork, Lesser Adjutant Stork, etc.

7. Mugger Crocodile

Context: Recently, an investigation has revealed that a banned pesticide named Aldrin was responsible for the deaths of mugger crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*) in the Chandraloi river of Rajasthan's Kota district.

About Mugger Crocodile

- It is a medium-sized crocodile and a member of the genus *Crocodylus*.
- **Appearance:** It has the broadest snout among living crocodiles. It has a powerful tail and webbed feet. Its visual, hearing, and smelling senses are acute.
- **Habitat:** It is found in a number of freshwater habitat types including rivers, lakes and marshes.
- **Distribution:** It occurs in the Indian subcontinent as well as surrounding countries: Sri Lanka in the east, Iran in the west, and also Pakistan and Nepal.
- **It is a hole-nesting species, with egg-laying taking place during the annual dry season.**
- **Diet:** Muggers are primarily carnivorous, eating mostly fish, frogs, crustaceans, insects etc.
- **Threats:** The main threats to this animal come from the destruction of its habitat and illegal hunting for its skin and for the alternative medicine market.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN: Vulnerable.**
 - CITES: Appendix I
 - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I.

8. Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo persica*)

Context: The National Zoological Park (Delhi) has recorded the birth of three Asiatic lion cubs. The breeding programme at Delhi Zoo is part of ex-situ conservation, which involves protecting and breeding threatened species outside their natural habitats.

Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo persica*)

- It is one of the **five big cat species** found in India.

- **Physical Characteristics:** Asiatic lions are slightly **smaller than African lions**.
 - Males have **less developed manes**, leaving their ears visible.
 - Prominent **longitudinal fold of skin** along the belly (a distinguishing feature from African lions).
- **Distribution:** In India, concentrated in the state of Gujarat in and around the **Gir Forest** mainly in;
 - Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Mityala Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Barda Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Population Increase:** As per the **16th Lion Population Estimation**, India has reported a **32% increase (from 674 in 2020 to 891 in 2025)** in its lion population, exclusively concentrated in Gujarat, between 2020 and 2025.

9. Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary

Context: Researchers recently discovered a new disease-causing fungal genus named **Hyalokamalamyces** during a research on another plant disease at the Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary in Chandauli.

About Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is located in the Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh.
- It is spread over an area of 78 sq.km and lies on the Naugarh and Vijaigarh hillocks on the north slope of the Kaimur Range.
- It is named after the Chandraprabha River, meaning 'The Luminescence of Moon'.
- The river is a tributary of the Karamnasha River, and both flow through the forest to finally meet the Ganges.
- In the early 18th century, this area became a hunting ground for the rulers of Varanasi, but eventually, in 1957, the sanctuary was established here.
- Asiatic lions were introduced at Chandra Prabha in 1958.

- The exercise was successful in the beginning, with the number of lions increasing from three to eleven by 1969. However, the following year the lions were found missing.
- The predominant geological formations consist of limestone and sandstone, exhibiting a high thermal mass that moderates temperature fluctuations within the habitat.
- **Vegetation:** The sanctuary's vegetation is predominantly deciduous forest, interspersed with grasslands, which supports a diverse range of species.
- **Flora:**
 - Tendu, Blue Berries, Mahua, Goose-berry, Palash, Sal, Neem, Semal, and many other varieties of plantation are found in abundance.
 - Unique and rare medicinal plants used in the formulation of Ayurvedic medicines like Musli, Chitawar, Ashwagandha, Chirata, Sarpagandha, etc. are also found.
- **Fauna:**
 - Wild animals that dot this sanctuary include Leopard, Sloth bear, Chinkara/Cheetal, Hyena, Fox, Jackal, etc.
 - Many colourful and different species of birds, like Peacock, Red Jungle Fowl, Quail, Partridge, Eagle, Vulture, Wild Mynah, Parakeet, Cuckoo, Barn Owl and the Bulbul are natural inhabitants of this sanctuary.

10. Lion-Tailed Macaque

Context: A Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change expert committee on the proposal for diversion of forest and non-forest land from the Sharavathi Valley Lion-Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary and its eco-sensitive zone has strongly recommended against approving the proposed 2000 MW Sharavathi Pumped Storage Project.

Lion-Tailed Macaque:

- Lion-tailed macaque (or **wanderoo**), sometimes called **bearded monkey**, is an **Old-World monkey endemic to the Western Ghats**.
- **Physical description:** They are covered in black fur and have a striking gray or silver mane that surrounds their face, which can be found in both sexes. The mane that surrounds its face gives it the nickname "**beard ape**".
- **Unlike other macaques**, they are **shy** and **avoid humans** when possible. **Males define the boundaries** of their home ranges **by calls**.
- They are **arboreal** and **diurnal** (active exclusively in daylight hours).
- **Distribution:** Found in three states, namely, **Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu**.
- **Habitat:** Prefers **tropical evergreen rainforests but also found in monsoon forests**.
- **Diet:** They are **omnivorous**, but their diet consists mainly of fruit. They also eat a wide variety of vegetation such as leaves, stems, flowers, buds, and fungi.
- **Threats:** Habitat loss, hunting and wood harvesting.
- **Conservation**
Status: IUCN: Endangered ; CITES: Appendix I ; Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I.
- **Significance:** It is an **indicator** of the **health of rainforests**. It is an **Umbrella species** for the conservation of other wildlife species in the region.

11. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Context: Wildlife experts from around the world are meeting in Geneva, Switzerland for the 34th meeting of the Animals Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

About Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

- CITES was adopted in 1973 and entered into force in 1975.

- CITES is a global agreement between **185 Parties (184 countries and the European Union)** that regulates international trade in wild animals and plants.
- It aims to ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants is legal, sustainable and traceable, and does not threaten the survival of the species in the wild.

Functions

- CITES regulates international trade in specimens of species of wild animals and plants based on a system of permits and certificates issued under certain conditions.
- It covers export, re-export, import and landing from the high seas of live and dead animals and plants and their parts and derivatives, including any processed products.
- Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties – in other words, they have to implement the Convention—it does not take the place of national laws.
- **CITES Secretariat:** Geneva, Switzerland (administered by the United Nations Environment Programme).
- Representatives of CITES nations meet every two to three years at a Conference of the Parties (or COP) to review progress and adjust the lists of protected species, which are grouped into three categories with different levels of protection
- **Appendix I:**
 - It includes species threatened with extinction and provides the greatest level of protection, including a prohibition on commercial trade.
- **Appendix II:**
 - It includes species that are not currently threatened with extinction but may become so without trade controls.
 - Regulated trade is allowed if the exporting country issues a permit based on findings that the specimens were legally acquired and the

trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species or its role in the ecosystem.

- **Appendix III**

- It includes species for which a country has asked other CITES parties to help control international trade.
- Trade in Appendix III species is regulated using CITES export permits (issued by the country that listed the species in Appendix III) and certificates of origin (issued by all other countries).
- Countries may list species for which they have domestic regulations in Appendix III at any time.

12. Indian Grey Hornbill

Context: Gujarat has added another landmark achievement to its growing conservation story with the successful return of the Indian Grey Hornbill to the Gir forests after an absence of more than 60 years.

About Indian Grey Hornbill

- **The Indian gray hornbill (*Ocyrceros birostris*) is a tropical bird that can be found on the Indian subcontinent.**
- It is commonly sighted in pairs.
- These birds are known to be arboreal, i.e. spend most of their time on tall trees, but may descend for food and to collect mud pellets for nesting.

Appearance

- It has grey feathers all over the body with a light grey or dull white belly.
- The horn is black or dark grey with a casque extending to the point of curvature of the horn.
- **Unlike a lot of other birds, the male and female look similar.**
- **Habitat:** It is mainly found in deciduous forests, open woodlands and thorn forest as well as rural cultivation and urban gardens and parks.
- **Distribution:** Indian subcontinent; found from north-east Pakistan and south Nepal east to

north-west Bangladesh and south throughout most of India except in Assam.

- **Behaviour:** They have various social activities, including bill-grappling and aerial jousting. Indian grey hornbills are quite noisy producing squealing calls.
- **Diet:** The food is mainly fruits, particularly figs.
- **Ecological Role:** They play an essential role in the ecosystem as prime dispersers of seeds, helping regenerate forests by transporting seeds of fruit-bearing trees across large areas.
- **Conservation status:**
 - **IUCN: Least Concern.**

13. *Colobus congoensis*

Context: A team of researchers recently confirmed the discovery of a previously unknown species of African monkey named *Colobus congoensis* in the rainforests of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), marking one of the most significant primate discoveries in decades.

About *Colobus congoensis*

- It is a new species of monkey.
- It was discovered in the rainforest between the Lomami and Congo (Lualaba) rivers in the east-central region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- Locally known as the Likweli, it is only the fifth new monkey species identified in Africa in the past 75 years.
- It belongs to the genus *Colobus* while revealing that it diverged from its closest known relative, *Colobus satanas*, approximately 4 to 5 million years ago.
- The monkey is immediately recognizable by its glossy black coat, long cape-like fur, sweeping tail, and striking orange-cream facial markings.
- Weighing about 15 pounds, it is smaller than its closest relatives and possesses distinctive cranial, dental, and skeletal characteristics that separate it from every other known African colobus monkey.

- It also has a distinctive “roaring” call.”
- Given their restricted range, small population size, and the pressures of hunting and habitat loss, the researchers recommend that *Colobus congoensis* be classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

14. CapaCITIES Programme

Context: Recently, an event ‘Scaling Urban Climate Resilience: The CapaCITIES Legacy and Way Forward’, celebrated the progress made over a decade of the CapaCITIES programme.

About CapaCITIES Programme

- **It was launched in 2016.**
- The Capacity Building Project on Low Carbon and Climate Resilient City Development in India (CapaCITIES) programme strengthens the capacities of Indian cities to promote low-carbon, climate-resilient urban development.
- **Funding:** It is funded by the Embassy of Switzerland to India and Bhutan.
- **Implemented By:** The initiative was implemented through a collaborative partnership involving ICLEI South Asia, South Pole and econcept.
- **Knowledge Partner:** the National Institute of Urban Affairs.
- **Phases:** First phase (2016-19) AND second phase (2019-23)

Key Features

- It has equipped Indian cities with the knowledge, tools, and institutional capacities to mainstream low-carbon, climate-resilient development into urban governance.
- **City Support:** It has supported cities like Coimbatore, Thiruchirappalli Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Vadodara, Udaipur and Siliguri and the state governments of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu.
- **Institutional Governance:** Established permanent Net-Zero and Climate Action Cells in six project cities to enable long-term

implementation, monitoring, and climate budgeting.

15. Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve

Context: Recently, a special task force comprising Erode district administrative sealed 21 unauthorized resorts in the buffer zones of the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve

About Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve

- **Location:** It is located in the state of Tamil Nadu.
- It is nestled at the junction of the Eastern and the Western Ghats in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve
- It is contiguous with the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Bandipur Tiger Reserve (Karnataka), and BR Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary (Karnataka).
- **Terrain:** The terrain is hilly and undulating with altitude ranging between 750 m and 1649 m.
- **Climate:** It is subtropical and dry.
- **Rivers:** Some of the prominent rivers in the region include the Bhavani, Moyar, and Noyyal rivers.
- **Tribal Communities:** It is home to several indigenous tribal communities, including the Irula and Kurumba tribes.
- **Vegetation:** It consists of southern tropical dry thorn forests, mixed deciduous forests, semi-evergreen forests, and riparian forests.
- **Flora:** It includes teak, sandalwood, bamboo, Terminalia, and Albizia, alongside medicinal plants and shrubs that support both wildlife and local communities.
- **Fauna:** The major species are Elephant, Tiger, Panther, Sloth bear, Gaur, Black Buck, Spotted deer, Wild boar, Black napped hare, Common langur Nilgiri langur, Striped neck mongoose, and Bonnet macaque.

16. Hoolock gibbons

Context: Assam's Hoollongapar Sanctuary, which is home to the endangered western hoolock gibbon, is also one of the richest butterfly habitats in the state

where several of the rare winged beauties are found, says a new book.

Hoolock gibbons:

- The Hoolock gibbons (or the **white-browed gibbons**) are **one of 20 species of apes** on Earth.
- **They are the only ape species found in India.**
- **Hoolock gibbons are the second largest of the gibbons, after the Siamang.**
- **Appearance:**
 - Both male and female gibbons are **similar in size** but **differ significantly in colouration**. Males are **black** with striking white brows, while females have **grey-brown fur**, darker at the chest and neck.
 - White rings around the eyes and the mouth give their face a **mask-like appearance**.
- **Behaviour:**
 - **They are diurnal and arboreal. With slender, long arms, they swing from tree to tree in a mode of locomotion known as Brachiation.** They can brachiate at speeds up to **55km/hr** and can cover **6m** in just one swing. They spend much of their time on the upper canopy of tall trees, mostly the **hollong**.
 - They live together in **monogamous pairs**, which **stake out a territory**.
 - They are known for their **vocalisation**, through which they locate family members and ward off other gibbons from their territory.
 - **Their diet consists mainly of fruits, insects and leaves.**
- **Reproduction:** Females give birth to one offspring **every 2-3 years**. Young hoolocks are born after a **7-month** gestation with **milky white fur**. They become fully mature after 8 to 9 years.
- **Life expectancy:** About **25 years** in the wild.

17. Kawal Tiger Reserve

Context: The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) recently identified Kawal Tiger Reserve in Telangana as a 'priority recipient site' for tiger recovery.

About Kawal Tiger Reserve

- It is located in the state of Telangana.
- It is along the banks of the river Godavari, forming part of the Deccan peninsula-central highlands.
- The reserve is nestled in the Sahyadri Mountain Ranges.
- Geographically, the reserve is situated at the southernmost tip of the Central Indian Tiger Landscape, having linkages with the Tadoba-Andhari (Maharashtra) and Indravati (Chhattisgarh) tiger reserves.
- **Rivers:** It is a major catchment of the river Godavari and local rivulets like Peddavagu and Kadam.
- **Habitat:** It has diverse habitats comprising dense forests, grasslands, rivers, streams, and water bodies.
- **Vegetation:** Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest.
- **Flora:** It consists of teak along with bamboo and other species like Anogeissus latifolia, Mitragyna parviflora, Terminalia crenulata, Terminalia arjuna, Boswellia serrata, etc.
- **Fauna:**
 - It has a faunal diversity which is typical of the Deccan Plateau.
 - The major wild animals include: tiger, nilgai, chousinga, chinkara, black buck, sambar, spotted deer, wild dog, wolf, jackal, fox, leopard, and the jungle cat.

18. Bornadi Wildlife Sanctuary

Context: Recently, camera-trap evidence confirmed the return of the Dhole in the Bornadi Wildlife Sanctuary.

About Bornadi Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Location:** It is located in Udalguri district & Baksa District of Assam.
- The sanctuary is sited on the eastern Himalayan foothills and shares the Indo-Bhutan international transboundary landscape.
- This sanctuary is named after the river Bornadi which flows on its western border.
- The Nalapara River which originates from Bhutan flows from north to south along its eastern edge.
- It was established in 1980 to protect the hispid hare (*Caprolagus hispidus*) and pigmy hog (*Porcula salvania*).
- **Climate:** It has a typical subtropical monsoon climate.
- **Vegetation:** It consists of tropical semi-evergreen, moist and dry deciduous.
- **Flora:** Euphorbiaceous Scrub, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Garuga pinnata*, *Aphanamixis polystachya*, *Toona ciliata*, *Mesua ferrea*, *Terminalia chebula*,

Bischofia javanica, *Bridelia retusa*, *Mellotus Repandus* etc.

- **Fauna:** Pigmy Hog and Hispid hare, Asiatic Elephant, Royal Bengal Tiger, India Bison, Hog Deer, Wild Boar, etc.



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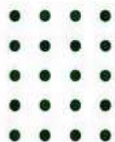
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S.NO	TEST NAME	DATE OF TEST
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2	CA May 2026	05.07.2026
3	CA June 2026	26.07.2026
4	CA July 2026	16.08.2026
5	CA August 2026	13.09.2026
6	CA September 2026	11.10.2026
7	CA October 2026	15.11.2026
8	CA November 2026	13.12.2026
9	CA December 2026	10.01.2027
10	CA January 2027	14.02.2027
11	CA February 2027	14.03.2027
12	CA March 2027	11.04.2027
13	CA April 2027	09.05.2027

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Private Point-in-Space (PinS) instrument approach procedure for helicopter

Context: India has achieved a major milestone with the approval of the country's first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) instrument approach procedure for helicopter operations at Undavalli Heliport.

About

- It was developed by the **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** and approved by the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**.
 - It has been designed in accordance with **DGCA regulations and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards**.
- PinS procedures use advanced satellite-based navigation technology** to enable helicopters to conduct safe and precise instrument approaches to heliports that do not have conventional instrument landing infrastructure.
 - PinS is **particularly beneficial during adverse weather conditions** and in areas where **ground-based navigation aids are not available**.
- Application:** The approval is expected to pave the way for the development of **similar PinS procedures across the country**, benefiting emergency medical services, disaster relief operations, tourism, offshore activities, pilgrimage services, corporate aviation, and regional connectivity.
 - It will enable safer Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations to remote and strategically important locations and improve operational reliability.

2. Gait Analysis

Context: During the high-profile investigation into the Ketan Agarwal murder case at Lohagad Fort, a Pune court extended the police custody of the accused to allow investigators to conduct a forensic gait analysis.

Gait Analysis:

What It Is?

- Gait analysis is the systematic and scientific study of human loco motion specifically how an individual walks, hops, or runs.
- It involves a detailed biomechanical breakdown of how the nervous system coordinates continuously with bones, muscles, and joints to move the body forward, producing a highly distinct "biomechanical signature" for every individual.

How It Works?

The basic unit of measurement is the **gait cycle**, which tracks the series of structural movements from the exact moment one foot strikes the ground until that same foot touches the ground again. The cycle is split into two primary operational phases:

- The Stance Phase (Approx. 60% of the cycle):** Begins with a heel strike and ends when the toe pushes off. In this phase, the foot is in firm contact with the surface, absorbing shock while supporting the body's full weight.
- The Swing Phase (Approx. 40% of the cycle):** Occurs when the foot leaves the ground and swings forward to prepare for the next step. The body shifts focus to ensure the toes clear the floor without dragging.

Application:

- Gait analysis is highly critical in **medical diagnostics** (tracking neurological or orthopedic conditions affecting walking patterns), **sports science** (enhancing athletic performance and developing biomechanical gear), and **biometrics** (identifying individuals by their unique walking style in surveillance).

Note: While conveyor belts move, the term "gait" specifically refers to biological movement patterns, not the mechanical diagnostics of industrial machinery.

3. I-2SEA: the cable system

Context: A consortium comprising tech giant Microsoft, Singtel, Tata Communications and AI connectivity platform Lightstorm will build a submarine cable system connecting India, Malaysia and Singapore.

I-2SEA: the cable system

- **Route and Design:** It will link India's east coast, home to the fastest-growing AI and hyperscaler data centre clusters in Hyderabad and Chennai, directly to Singapore, which is the region's cloud interconnect and AI hub as well as Malaysia's emerging data centre corridor in Kuala Lumpur.
 - It will have dual landings in India, with the one at Machilipatnam providing shortest subsea access to Hyderabad and the other at a new diverse landing location in South Chennai.
- **Purpose:** It is designed to cater to the rapidly growing demand from hyperscalers, GPU infrastructure providers and enterprises running AI training and inference workloads across the India–Southeast Asia corridor.
 - To serve high demand AI workloads, particularly in between major data centre hubs in Hyderabad, Chennai and Singapore.
- **Timeline:** I-2SEA is targeted to be ready-for-service in 2029 and the estimated length of the high-capacity cable is 3,600 km from Singapore to Machilipatnam with onward connectivity to Hyderabad.

4. Rutile

Context: When a team at IIT-Delhi recently compared the members of a family of minerals called rutile oxides, they found a significant difference between metals and insulators that a well-known mathematical model could not explain.

About Rutile

- It is a mineral composed primarily of titanium dioxide, TiO₂.

- It is the most common and stable form of titanium dioxide found in nature.
- It is one of the three main minerals of titanium, along with ilmenite and leucoxene.
- It forms red to reddish brown, hard, brilliant metallic, slender crystals, often completely surrounded by other minerals.
- Natural Rutile can contain up to 10% iron and large amounts of niobium and tantalum.
- Rutile was first described in 1803 by Abraham Gottlob Werner.

Rutile Occurrence

- It is found in igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks throughout the world.
- Rutile has a high specific gravity and is often concentrated by stream and wave action in "heavy mineral sands" that exist today in both onshore and offshore deposits.
- Much of the world's rutile production is mined from these sands.
- Rutile ore is largely available in countries like Australia, India, South Africa, Ukraine, and Sierra Leone.
- India has significant rutile deposits in the coastal sands of states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh.

5. Methadone Maintenance Therapy

Context: On June 26, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Punjab inaugurated six Methadone Maintenance Therapy clinics in government hospitals.

About

- **Methadone Maintenance Therapy (MMT)** also known as **Methadone Treatment Therapy (MTT)**, is a medically supervised treatment for people addicted to opioids such as heroin, opium and prescription opioid painkillers.
- It uses **methadone**, a **long-acting opioid agonist**, under medical supervision to **reduce cravings** and **prevent withdrawal**.

symptoms without producing the intense high associated with illicit opioid use.

- **An agonist** is a substance (like a drug or hormone) that binds to a cell receptor and triggers a physiological response.
- The treatment is combined with **counselling, psychosocial support and regular medical follow-up** to help patients recover and reduce the risk of overdose, relapse and the spread of infectious diseases.
- It is recommended by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** and implemented under the **guidelines of the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO)** under strict medical supervision.
- **Methadone Maintenance Therapy** was first introduced in India in 2012 through pilot projects supported by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, NACO and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**.
- **Punjab** became the first state in the country to introduce MMT in 2012.

6. IMAT-05 Test

Context: ISRO successfully executed the fifth Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT-05) at the Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) drop zone in Sheopur.

The IMAT-05 Test:

What It Is?

- IMAT-05 is a high-altitude structural qualification test designed to evaluate the physical integrity, deployment mechanics, and aerodynamic efficiency of the Gaganyaan crew module's final deceleration system. It simulates the harsh dynamic forces a spacecraft faces as it plunges back through Earth's atmosphere before ocean splashdown.

Developed and Executed By:

The test was a highly coordinated multi-agency operation planned and executed jointly by:

- **ISRO** (The Indian Space Research Organisation)

- **DRDO (Specifically its specialized laboratory, the Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment – ADRDE).**

Objective: The objective of IMAT-05 was to validate the maximum design limits and structural safety margins of the primary main parachute under the most punishing load conditions expected during the upcoming uncrewed G1 flight.

Key Operational and Technical Features:

- **Airdrop Logistics:** A dummy payload mimicking the mass of the actual crew module was dropped from an altitude of **2.5 km** using an Indian Air Force **IL-76 heavy transport aircraft**.
- **The 10-Parachute Deceleration Matrix:** The total system architecture relies on four distinct types of parachutes to manage the capsule's terminal velocity:
 - **Apex Cover Separation Parachutes (2 units):** Jettison the protective top cover of the capsule to expose the parachute bay.
 - **Drogue Parachutes (2 units):** Deploy into the high-speed airflow to stabilize the capsule and bring down its initial descent rate.
 - **Pilot Parachutes (3 units):** Act as small extractors to physically pull out the main canopies.
 - **Main Parachutes (3 units):** Ultra-large canopies that deploy sequentially to reduce the crew module's speed down to a safe terminal velocity for impact.
- **Sequential Disreefing Integrity:** The test successfully verified the disreefing sequence a vital feature where a parachute opens in controlled stages rather than popping open all at once, protecting the fabric and lines from tearing under sudden, intense dynamic pressures.

7. Earendil-1 Mission

Context: the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) officially granted a limited two-year operating license to space-tech startup **Reflect Orbital** for its upcoming **Earendil-1 mission**.

The Eärendil-1 Mission:**What It Is?**

- Eärendil-1 named after the legendary mariner who carried a shining silmaril gem across the skies in J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy epic *The Silmarillion* is a pioneering proof-of-concept technology demonstration satellite. It is engineered to test the commercial and mechanical viability of orbital sunlight reflection, effectively acting as an adjustable space mirror.

Organization: The satellite is developed and operated by **Reflect Orbital**, a California-based commercial aerospace startup.

Objective: Eärendil-1 aims to redirect sunlight to specific locations after sunset, extending solar power generation and providing emergency illumination for disaster relief and rescue operations.

Key Orbital and Technical Features:

- **Deployable Thin-Film Reflector:** Uses an ultra-light, mirror-like reflector that stays folded during launch and automatically unfurls once deployed in space.
- **Motorized Precision Gimbaling:** The reflector can be remotely rotated to capture sunlight and precisely redirect it toward selected locations on Earth's night side.
- **Low Earth Orbit (LEO):** Operates in a non-geostationary orbit at approximately **625 km altitude**, enabling relatively close proximity to Earth.
- **High-Inclination Path:** Its **88° orbital inclination** provides near-polar coverage, allowing access to solar installations across much of the globe.

8. Helium

Context: The Ministry of Commerce and General Administration of Customs, China, has temporarily banned helium exports from the country.

About Helium

- Helium is an **odorless, nontoxic, colorless, tasteless** gas. It has a very **low chemical reactivity** and it is lighter than air.
- Helium exists as a gas except under extreme conditions. At temperatures near **absolute zero**, **helium is a liquid**.
- On Earth, Helium is a **non-renewable natural resource** that is mostly recovered from **natural gas deposits**.
 - It is formed deep inside the Earth through the **radioactive decay of uranium and thorium**, which releases alpha particles that capture electrons to form helium atoms.
- **The world's major helium producers** are the **U.S. (43% of total supply)**, followed by **Qatar, Russia, Canada, and Algeria**.

Applications

- Liquid helium is used to **cool down magnets in MRI machines** that doctors use to examine people for **cancer and other diseases**.
- A mixture of **80% Helium-20% Oxygen** mixtures is used for deep sea diving.
- Helium is used in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation pumps during heart surgery
- Helium is critical in **rare document preservation** (like the Declaration of Independence of the United States).
- Helium is used as a **leak detection agent** for extremely small leaks since it won't react with other gases due to its inert properties.
- **Helium-Neon lasers** are used in **eye surgery**.

9. White Rabbit Technology Demonstration Network

Context: Union Minister inaugurated the **White Rabbit Technology-based Indian Standard Time (IST) - Distribution Demonstration Network** at the **Regional Reference Standards Laboratory (RRSL)** in **Jakkur, Bengaluru**.

About the White Rabbit Technology Demonstration Network:

What It Is?

- The Jakkur demonstration network is India's first high-precision, Ethernet-based time distribution facility that uses advanced synchronisation protocols to transmit Indian Standard Time (IST) seamlessly over wide-area digital networks.

Developed By: The project is led by the Legal Metrology Division under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, in collaboration with NPL, ISRO, BSNL, and SEBI.

How It Works?

- **Atomic Time Source:** NPL and ISRO generate a sovereign Indian Standard Time (IST) reference, reducing dependence on foreign GPS systems.
- **Precision Time Protocol (PTP):** Time is transmitted through Ethernet/fibre-optic networks using the IEEE 1588 standard for highly accurate synchronization.
- **Automatic Clock Calibration:** Devices continuously correct clock drift using phase-locking, ensuring stable, sub-nanosecond synchronization.

Key Features of White Rabbit (WR) Technology:

- **Ultra-High Precision:** Delivers sub-nanosecond (<1 ns) synchronization across connected devices.
- **Deterministic Communication:** Ensures data reaches devices with predictable and fixed latency for synchronized operations.
- **Highly Scalable:** Supports thousands of devices across networks extending beyond 1,000 km.
- **Open-Source Platform:** Based on CERN's White Rabbit technology, enabling customized indigenous development.

Strategic Applications:

- **Securing Critical Infrastructure:** Protects defence, power, and nuclear networks from GPS

spoofing and external timing attacks through an indigenous timing system.

- **Strengthening Financial Systems:** Enables accurate timestamping for stock exchanges and digital banking, reducing fraud and improving transaction reliability.
- **Supporting Future Technologies:** Provides precise timing for 5G/6G networks, quantum communication, and space operations, ensuring seamless high-speed connectivity.

10. AI hallucinations

Context: Recently, researchers warned that AI hallucinations are opening a new front in cybersecurity.

AI hallucinations

- AI hallucination is a phenomenon where, in a large language model (LLM) often a generative AI chatbot or computer vision tool, perceives patterns or objects that are nonexistent or imperceptible to human observers.
- AI hallucinations have evolved from a reliability issue into a cybersecurity threat.
 - Attackers exploit these predictable errors through techniques such as **Phantom Squatting and Hallu Squatting**, creating fake websites and malicious software packages that AI is likely to recommend, thereby enabling phishing attacks and malware distribution.

Major Terms

- **Squatting :** Squatting is a cybercrime technique in which attackers manufacture fake domain names or software packages that resemble the real thing.
 - The classic types are typo squatting (misspelt websites), brand squatting (copying a famous brand), and package squatting (malicious software packages with similar names).
 - All of these rely on human error.
- **Phantom Squatting:** It is a cyberattack where cybercriminals take advantage of AI

hallucinations to register fake internet domains that are incorrectly suggested to users by large language models (LLMs).

- These domains often resemble legitimate sites, like customer portals or support pages.
- Attackers register the unused domains and use them to host phishing, malware or credential stealing sites.
- Unlike traditional phishing, victims willingly visit these malicious websites because they trust the AI-generated recommendation.
- **Hallu Squatting:** It is a software supply chain attack where attackers exploit the tendency of AI coding assistants to hallucinate nonexistent names of software packages, libraries, or repositories.
 - Attackers register these bogus, but plausible, package names and upload malicious code.
 - Developers copy and paste installation commands generated by AI and end up installing malware instead of the software they intended, not realising the security risk they've created.

11. WAICO

Context: China formally launched the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) in Shanghai, at the 2026 World Artificial Intelligence Conference.

About WAICO

- It is an **intergovernmental body for AI cooperation**, capacity building, and shared governance standards among developing nations, headquartered permanently in Shanghai.
- It's the first standing institution of its kind aimed squarely at the Global South. It has **representatives from 29 countries**.
- China will provide 5,000 AI training opportunities and establish joint AI cooperation centres with ASEAN, African Union, BRICS, SCO, League of Arab States, and CELAC.

- It will promote open-source AI models, technology sharing, and collaborative AI development.
- The nations aligning with WAICO's framework won't need AI regulations compatible with the EU AI Act, OECD AI Principles, or G7 Hiroshima Process.

Why it matters?

- The platform will strengthen China's influence in global AI governance with the Global South.
- It's the first real institutional rival to Western-led AI governance (OECD, EU AI Act, G7 Hiroshima Process) built specifically around Global South membership.

12. Embodied AI & Scientific Foundation

Context: The recent integration of Google DeepMind's Gemini Robotics-ER 1.6 and Boston Dynamics' Spot robot exemplifies the rise of Embodied Artificial Intelligence (Embodied AI).

About Embodied AI & Scientific Foundation

- Embodied AI is a kind of AI that claims **intelligence is not separate from the physical body** interacting with the environment.
- It learns from **movement, perception, feedback and physical experience**, not like conventional artificial intelligence systems that learn from digital data.
- The idea is more than just putting AI in a robot, and the form of the body, its sensors, and how it interacts with the world affect cognition.

Basic Principles

- Intelligence is distributed across the brain, the body and the environment.
- Learning takes place **through constant interaction with real-world conditions**.
- Some of the **computation occurs in the physical structure of the body (morphological computation)**.

- The behaviour arises from **sensor-motor feedback**, rather than complex internal world models alone.
 - Co-evolution of robot bodies and neural controllers, as in biological evolution.
- **Embodied AI** moves beyond pure software models (like chatbots or image generators) by situating the intelligence inside an entity that can physically act upon the world-such as autonomous robots, humanoids, drones, or self-driving vehicles.
- Traditional AI learns passively from vast static datasets (text corpora or labeled image databases). Embodied AI learns dynamically through **sensorimotor control**-where every action the agent takes changes its sensory input, creating a continuous loop of perception, decision-making, and physical interaction.
- High latency in cloud processing can be dangerous for physical machines operating in real-world environments. Therefore, Embodied AI heavily depends on **Edge AI** and localized processing (using specialized neuromorphic or TPU hardware) to execute split-second spatial calculations locally without relying exclusively on cloud connections.

13. Geothermal energy

Context: India has commissioned its first and deepest geothermal wells at Puga Valley of Ladakh, a major milestone in the country's clean energy transition.

Geothermal energy

- It refers to the **heat and electricity produced by using the heat from the interior of the Earth**.
- It exists because the **Earth grows progressively hotter** with increasing depth. Where the geothermal gradient is high, high temperatures are found at shallow depths.
- Due to the high temperature, the groundwater in such areas absorbs heat from the rocks and becomes hot, which turns into steam. This steam

is used to drive turbines and generate electricity.

- It is a site-specific renewable source of energy specifically suitable for catering to the energy needs of remote/interior localities.

	Geothermal Sites	Locations
1.	Puga Valley	Ladakh
2.	Tattapani	Chhattisgarh
3.	Bakreshwar	West Bengal
4.	Surajkund	Jharkhand

14. Beta Pictoris

Context: NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) has identified a new exoplanet named Beta Pictoris d. Exoplanets or extrasolar planets, are any planets orbiting stars outside our solar system.

Beta Pictoris

- Beta Pictoris is located in the easel-shaped southern constellation Pictor and 63 light-years from Earth.
- It is a **nearby system in the Milky Way** offering a rare glimpse of the interactions between newborn planets and the disk of dust and debris left behind from their formation.
- **Beta Pictoris d** is the third known planet orbiting the star **Beta Pictoris**, after **Beta Pictoris b** and **Beta Pictoris c**.
 - This makes Beta Pictoris only the second planetary system known to have three directly imaged exoplanets.
- It is slightly bigger than Jupiter and takes 91 years to orbit its star, a little longer than it takes Uranus to orbit our Sun.

15. Borophene

Context: Scientists in India recently achieved a significant breakthrough in sustainable lubrication by demonstrating, for the first time, the use of borophene as a high-performance lubricant additive in castor oil.

About Borophene

- It is an allotrope of boron.
- It is composed of a single-atom-thick sheet of boron atoms arranged in a two-dimensional (2D) lattice.
- Unlike graphene, which consists of carbon atoms in a perfect hexagonal structure, borophene is highly polymorphic meaning its atomic structure can vary depending on the synthesis conditions, leading to multiple possible configurations.
- First predicted by theory in the mid-1990s, different borophene structures were experimentally confirmed in 2015.

Properties:

- It is known for its ultra-light weight, flexibility, and exceptional strength.
- It has excellent properties, including thermal and electrical conductivity, high capacitance, metallic nature, etc.
- Its electrical and mechanical properties vary with direction, offering tunable features for specialized applications.
- It is highly reactive, allowing strong interaction with other atoms or molecules, which is valuable in catalysis, energy storage, and sensor technologies.
- Due to these outstanding properties, borophene is mainly used in a range of applications in the fields of thin-layer electronics, optoelectronics, capacitors, and biosensors.

Why Are Recent Findings Important?

- Friction and wear are major causes of energy loss and equipment failure in industries worldwide.
- Developing advanced lubricants that can effectively minimize these losses is therefore a key scientific and technological challenge.

16. 123 agreement

Context: USA and Saudi Arabia had signed a peaceful nuclear cooperation agreement commonly known as a 123 agreement.

About

- This agreement is named after **Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act of 1954**.
 - It is a **legally binding agreement** that the USA requires **before engaging in significant nuclear cooperation with another country**.
- These agreements facilitate the **transfer of nuclear materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes**, while ensuring compliance with international non-proliferation standards.
 - They also provide a framework for **technical exchanges, scientific research, and safeguards discussions**.
- **India's 123 Agreement with USA:** It also known as the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement aims to facilitate **civilian nuclear cooperation between the two countries**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Nuclear Trade:** It allows the U.S. to supply India with nuclear fuel, technology, and reactors for civilian energy purposes.
 - **Non-Proliferation Commitment:** India, in exchange, agrees to separate its civilian and military nuclear programs and place its civilian reactors under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.
 - **No Restrictions on Military Programs:** Unlike the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the agreement does not require India to forgo nuclear weapons development, as India is not a signatory to the NPT.
 - **Energy and Economic Cooperation:** The agreement aims to enhance energy security, support India's growing energy demands, and promote economic cooperation between the two nations.

17. Digital and Virtual Digital Assets

Context: The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, in its report on the Securities Market Code (SMC), has called for an "appropriate regulatory framework" for Virtual Digital Assets (VDAs) such as cryptocurrencies.

Digital and Virtual Digital Assets

- The term '**Asset**' is a resource having **economic value** and the same may be **owned by an individual, entity, or country**.
 - **Assets are classified based on:** convertibility, physical existence, and usage.
- A '**digital asset**' should be a digital file owned by an individual or company, be of value (economic benefit) to the individual or company, and be searchable, discoverable, and available for use.
- **Virtual Digital Assets (VDA)** are **subsets of all digital assets** transacted on a blockchain, such as non-fungible tokens (NFTs), cryptocurrencies and other virtual assets.

Explicitly Excluded from the VDA definition:

- **Indian Currency and Foreign Currency**
- **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)** issued by the RBI (e.g., e-Rupee)
- **Gift cards, discount vouchers, reward/loyalty points**, and subscriptions to websites/apps (specifically excluded via Central Board of Direct Taxes notifications).

Taxation of VDAs

- In India, the term VDA is legally defined **under Section 2(47A) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 (inserted by the Finance Act, 2022)**.
- The Union Budget for 2022-23 included **provision for taxation of VDAs**. It included **cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens ('NFTs')**.
 - They are subject to a **30% income tax and 1% TDS** on transfers, with no set-off for losses.
- Expenses related to mining, transaction fees, and platform commissions cannot be deducted when calculating taxable income.

18. Brown dwarf

Context: Using the radial velocity method, astronomers have found a large body orbiting a brown dwarf, CD-35 2722 B, which orbits a star.

About Brown dwarf:

- Brown dwarfs are sometimes called failed stars because they're lighter than stars, but heavier than gas giant planets.

Features

- These objects have a size between that of a giant planet like Jupiter and that of a small star.
- Brown dwarfs accumulate material like a star, not like a planet.
- They can also have clouds made out of precipitates in their atmospheres. However, while we have water clouds on Earth, the clouds on brown dwarfs are much hotter and likely made up of hot silicate particles.
- Thus, they hold onto their lighter elements (hydrogen and helium) more effectively than planets and have a relatively low metal content.
- They do not have enough mass for their cores to burn nuclear fuel and radiate starlight. This is why they are sometimes referred to as "failed stars."
- The difference between brown dwarfs and stars is that, unlike stars, brown dwarfs do not reach stable luminosities by thermonuclear fusion of normal hydrogen.
- Both stars and brown dwarfs produce energy by fusion of deuterium (a rare isotope of hydrogen) in their first few million years.

19. Zoopharmacognosy

Context: A 2026 study by G. Allen et al. published in Scientific Reports found that orangutans in Indonesia's Sebangau Forest self-medicate by mixing saliva with Dracaena leaves and applying the paste to their bodies to relieve muscle and joint pain, especially while carrying their young.

What is Zoopharmacognosy?

- **Zoopharmacognosy** is the self-medication behavior in animals, where non-human species ingest or topically apply non-nutritive plants, insects, soils, or minerals to treat or prevent diseases, parasites, and infections.

Species showing Zoopharmacognosy:

- **Chimpanzees:** Known to swallow whole, rough leaves (like *Aspilia*) without chewing to physically scrape parasitic worms out of their intestines, and eat bitter pith (*Vernonia amygdalina*) to treat gut infections.
- **Honeybees:** Collect plant resins high in antimicrobial properties to line their hives (creating propolis), which protects the colony against bacterial and fungal pathogens.
- **Elephants:** Pregnant female elephants in Kenya have been observed eating leaves of certain trees (*Boraginaceae* family) to induce labor or facilitate childbirth.
- **Woolly Bear Caterpillars:** Ingest plant toxins (alkaloids) when infected by parasitic flies to kill the parasite larvae inside them without harming themselves.

20. BitChat

Context: The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) directed GitHub to remove repositories hosting BitChat, stating that the app could be exploited to coordinate unlawful assemblies and circumvent lawful restrictions imposed by competent authorities.

What is BitChat?

- BitChat is a **decentralised peer-to-peer messaging application** that operates over **Bluetooth** mesh networks. It requires no internet connection, no servers and no phone numbers.
 - It is developed by X (formerly Twitter) co-founder **Jack Dorsey**.
- BitChat creates ad hoc communication networks using only **devices in physical proximity**, with each device acting as both a client and a server, automatically discovering peers and relaying messages across multiple hops to extend the network's reach.
 - According to the platform, this approach **provides censorship resistance**,

surveillance resistance and infrastructure independence.

- The network remains **functional during internet outages**, natural disasters, protests or regions with limited connectivity.
- Traditional messaging apps depend on centralised infrastructure that can be monitored, censored or disabled.

21. PRAXIS

Context: NASA has selected PRAXIS, an innovative mission concept to develop the first spacecraft capable of directly collecting and studying particles from planetary rings, such as those around Saturn.

What is PRAXIS?

- PRAXIS stands for **Planetary Rings Autonomous EXploration with In-situ Sampling**.
- It proposes a **bio-inspired robotic spacecraft** powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- It aims to become the first mission to directly **collect samples from planetary ring particles**.

	List I (NASA Missions)	List II (Objectives)
A.	Psyche	Metallic asteroid exploration
B.	SPHEREx	Entire-sky infrared survey
C.	DAVINCI	Venus atmospheric probe
D.	PRAXIS	Planetary Rings Exploration

22. Blue Straggler Star

Context: Recently, Indian astronomers, along with their international collaborators, have reported the rare discovery of a Blue Straggler Star (BSS).

About Blue Straggler Star

- These are a peculiar class of stars found in star clusters that appear hotter, brighter, and more massive than their peers.
- They have a different trajectory of evolution from the norm.

- These are observed in old, dense stellar systems such as globular clusters.
- They lie on an extension of the main sequence star and are bluer and brighter than the main-sequence turn-off stars.
- These objects are found in star clusters, dwarf galaxies, and in the field

How are Blue Straggler Stars Different?

- There are a few stars, when they are expected to start expanding in size and cooling down, do just the opposite.
- They grow brighter and hotter as indicated by their blue colour, thus standing out from the cooler red stars in their vicinity in the colour-magnitude diagram.
- Since they lag behind their peers in evolution, they are called stragglers, more specifically, blue stragglers, because of their hot, blue colour.

23. Large Hadron Collider

Context: CERN officially switched off the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) to begin its 4-year Long Shutdown 3 (LS3).

What It Is?

- The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) is the world's largest, highest-energy, and most powerful particle accelerator. Built by the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), it accelerates subatomic particles (protons or heavy lead ions) to near the speed of light and smashes them together to study fundamental physics and the origin of the universe.

Key Features:

- **27-Kilometer Superconducting Ring:** Features a 26.7 km circular tunnel housing over 9,000

superconducting magnets cooled to temperatures colder than deep outer space (-271.3°C).

- **Massive Energy Output (13.6 TeV):** Operates at record collision energies up to **13.6 Teraelectronvolts (TeV)**, creating thermal conditions similar to those fractionally after the Big Bang.
- **Discovery of the Higgs Boson (2012):** Famous for experimentally confirming the **Higgs Boson** (God Particle) in 2012, completing the theoretical framework of the Standard Model of particle physics.
- **Four Flagship Detector Experiments:** Houses four giant subterranean detection stations **ATLAS, CMS, ALICE, and LHCb** each specialized in probing dark matter candidates, antimatter asymmetry, and quark-gluon plasma.
- **Global Science Collaboration:** Built and operated by an international network of over 10,000 scientists and engineers across more than 100 countries.



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GEOGRAPHY AND MAPPING

1. Greece

Context: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry witnessed the live launch of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) services in Greece through a strategic Eurobank-NIPL partnership.

Greece:

What It Is?

- Greece is a sovereign, multi-party parliamentary republic with a deeply rooted maritime heritage. Uniquely shaping Western history, the modern nation acts as a cultural and political bridge, heir to the historical legacies of Classical Greece, the Byzantine Empire, and nearly four centuries of Ottoman rule.

Geographical Position: Situated at the strategic juncture of Europe, Asia, and Africa, it occupies the southernmost tip of the Balkan Peninsula. It is bounded by the Aegean Sea to the east, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, and the Ionian Sea to the west.

National Capital: Athens.

Bordering Nations: Albania, Republic of North Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

- As shown on the western side of the map, the **Ionian Sea** lies to the west of the Greek mainland (flanking the Peloponnese and the Ionian Islands).
- The **Aegean Sea** occupies the large body of water situated between the eastern coast of mainland Greece and the western coast of Anatolia (Turkey).
- The **Sea of Crete** is explicitly marked just north of the elongated island of Crete, acting as a sub-basin that transitions into the broader Mediterranean Sea further south.



2. Taal Volcano

Context: Taal Volcano recently produced a brief four-minute phreatomagmatic eruption, sending a plume about 450 meters above its crater as magma interacted with water.

About Taal Volcano

- It is a stratovolcano located in Batangas province about 70 kilometers south of Manila, Philippines.
- It is classified as a “complex” volcano by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS).
- It does not rise from the ground as a distinct, singular dome but consists of multiple stratovolcanoes, conical hills, and craters of all shapes and sizes.
- It is one of the active volcanoes in the Philippines and part of the “Pacific Ring of Fire”.
- It had at least 38 recorded eruptions in the last 450 years.
- It has a massive caldera which presently holds Taal Lake, a picturesque expanse of water 100-

150 meters deep, spanning approximately 265 sq.km

- Within Taal Lake lies Volcano Island, which covers an area of about 24 sq.km.
- Volcano Island cradles Crater Lake, which is 1.2 sq.km. and contains a prominent rock formation known as Vulcan Point.

What is a Phreatomagmatic Eruption?

- It is a type of volcanic eruption that results from the explosive interaction between magma and water.
- When magma touches groundwater, surface water, or water-rich rocks, it rapidly converts water into steam.
- The explosive release of steam and the fragmentation of magma and surrounding rocks produce a mix of ash and other pyroclastic materials and fragments of overlying and adjacent rocks.

3. Thailand

Context: Thailand's Foreign Ministry denied on July 2 that French President Emmanuel Macron knelt before the country's king during his state visit to Paris this week, after an AI-generated picture circulated online.

Thailand:

- Thailand is a country located at the center of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula in Southeast Asia.
- It is located in Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- **Thailand is bordered by five countries. Myanmar to the north; Laos to the north and east, Cambodia to the east, and Malaysia to the south. The Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea lie to the south and west of Thailand respectively.**
- The country shares its maritime borders with Vietnam in the Gulf of Thailand in Southeast; and Indonesia and India on the Andaman Sea in the Southwest.

The Isthmus of Kra:

- The Isthmus of Kra is the narrowest point of the Malay Peninsula. Its western shore is washed by the **Andaman Sea** (an arm of the Indian Ocean), while its eastern shore faces the **Gulf of Thailand** (which opens into the South China Sea and the broader Pacific Ocean).



4. Nigeria

Context: The United States has withdrawn most of the forces it deployed for an operation against Islamic State militants in Nigeria and is now providing intelligence support at Abuja's request, the head of U.S. Africa Command said.

Nigeria:

- Nigeria is a West African country located in the Northern and Eastern Hemispheres of the Earth. It is bordered by four countries. These are Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin to the north, northeast, east, and west respectively. Nigeria also has a coastline on the Gulf of Guinea.
- The Niger River is the principal river of West Africa. It flows southeast through Guinea, Mali, Niger, along the border of Benin, and then through Nigeria, where it forms the massive

Niger Delta and empties into the **Gulf of Guinea** (Atlantic Ocean).

- The Prime Meridian (0° longitude) does **not** pass through Nigeria. In Africa, it passes through **Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Togo**. Nigeria lies further east, between roughly 2°E and 14°E longitude.



5. Peru

Context: Recently, the 9th round of India-Peru trade agreement was successfully concluded in Peru.



About Peru

- Location:** It is situated just to the south of the Equator in South America.
- It is the third largest country in South America, after Brazil and Argentina.
- Bordering Countries:** Ecuador (North), Brazil (East), Bolivia (Southeast) and Chile (South)
- Bordering Ocean:** Its western border lies along the Pacific Ocean.
- Capital City:** Lima.

6. Germany

Context: The far-right Alternative for Germany is in a buoyant mood as it holds a convention on July 4-5.

Germany:

- Germany is located in central Europe. It is positioned both in the Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- Germany is bordered by 9 countries: by Denmark in the north; by Poland and Czech Republic in the east; by Austria in the southeast; by Switzerland in the southwest; by France, Luxembourg and Belgium in the west; and by Netherlands in the northwest.
- Germany is bounded by the North Sea in the northwest and by the Baltic Sea in the northeast.



7. Indonesia

Context: India's Ambassador to Indonesia, announced that Indonesia will celebrate a 15-month commemoration (2026–2027) marking the centenary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's historic 1927 visit.

About Indonesia:

What It Is?

- Indonesia (officially the Republic of Indonesia) is a massive archipelagic sovereign nation in Southeast Asia. Comprising over 17,000 islands straddling the equator, it stands as the world's largest island country and the most populous Muslim-majority nation.

Geographical Position: Situated between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, it bridges the continents of Asia and Oceania (Melanesia), anchoring the maritime highway between the South China Sea and the southern oceans.

National Capital: Jakarta (new capital is being relocated to Nusantara).



Land-Bordering Nations: Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and East Timor.

- The Equator (0° latitude) passes directly through Indonesia, traversing several of its major island regions, including Sumatra, Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi, and Maluku.
- East Timor (Timor-Leste) shares its **only land border** with Indonesia, specifically bordering the

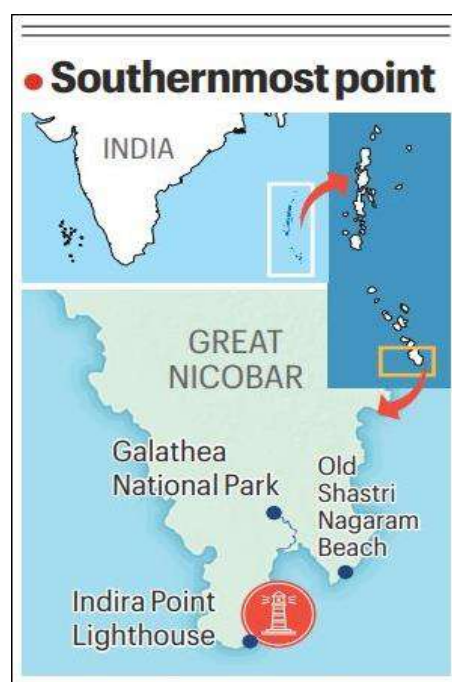
Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara on the western half of Timor Island (West Timor), as well as encircling East Timor's coastal exclave of Oecusse.

8. Indira Point

Context: The Directorate of Lighthouses and Lightships at Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) has approached the Andaman and Nicobar Coastal Zone Management Authority and the Environment Ministry seeking approval for protection and development work at Indira Point.

What is Indira Point?

- Indira Point is India's southernmost point, located on Great Nicobar Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It lies south of Galathea Bay, where the proposed Great Nicobar mega infrastructure project is being developed.
- The Indira Point lighthouse, built in 1972 on 11.5 hectares of land, stands 35 metres tall and is made of cast iron.
- The 2004 tsunami caused the southern shoreline of Great Nicobar Island to subside by roughly 4.25 metres, pushing the sea closer to the lighthouse.



9. Spain

Context: Hemingway's masterpiece on Spain's bull runs turns 100 with its allure intact.

Spain:

- Spain is a country located on the Iberian Peninsula in southwestern Europe. It is situated in both Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- Spain is bordered by 5 countries: by Portugal in the west, by France and Andorra in the northeast, by Gibraltar and Morocco (the Spanish territories of Ceuta and Melilla in North Africa), in the south.**
- The country is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea in the east and southeast, by the Atlantic Ocean in the northwest and southwest and by the Bay of Biscay in the north. Spain shares its maritime borders with Algeria and Italy.
- The Prime Meridian (0° longitude) passes through northeastern and eastern Spain (including regions like Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia).**



10. Norwegian Sea

Context: Recently, UK fighter jets intercepted a Russian maritime patrol aircraft after it "repeatedly approached" a carrier strike group in the Norwegian Sea.

About Norwegian Sea

- It is a marginal sea of the Arctic Ocean, bordered by Norway to the northwest, Greenland to the southeast, and Iceland to the east.
- Borders:** The Barents Sea (northeast), separated from the Atlantic Ocean in the southwest by a submarine ridge that spans from Iceland to the Faroe Islands.
- In the north, the Norwegian Sea is separated from the Greenland Sea by the Jan Mayen Ridge.
- It was formed when the Eurasian Plate and the North American Plate began to separate approximately 250 million years ago.

Islands/Archipelagos located in Norwegian Sea:

- Jan Mayen:** A volcanic island governed by Norway, situated on the boundary between the Norwegian Sea and the Greenland Sea.
- Lofoten Islands:** A major coastal archipelago located in Northern Norway, completely surrounded by the Norwegian Sea.
- Faroe Islands:** Located between the Norwegian Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, marking the southwestern boundary of the Norwegian Sea (along the submarine Faroe–Iceland Ridge).

While,

- Svalbard (Spitsbergen):** Located further north between the **Greenland Sea, Arctic Ocean, and Barents Sea** (outside the primary boundaries of the Norwegian Sea).

11. Sudan

Context: Recently, UNICEF reported that over 300 children were killed or wounded in Sudan's civil war over six months.

About Sudan

- Location:** It is a Northeast African country.
- Bordering Countries:** It shares its border with Egypt (north), Eritrea, and Ethiopia (east), Central African Republic and Chad (west), Libya (northwest) and South Sudan (south),

- Maritime Border: It shares its border with the Red Sea.
- Capital City: Khartoum.



12. Uganda

Context: Four Ugandan farmers launched a “first-of-its-kind” case in Britain on July 7 against a \$5.6 billion oil pipeline project led by French energy giant TotalEnergies, rights NGO Avaaz said.

Uganda:

- Uganda is a landlocked country located in East-Central Africa in the African Great Lakes region. It is located in the Eastern Hemisphere of the Earth. As observed on the location map above, the Equator passes through Uganda. Thus, the country has territory in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
- Being a landlocked nation, it is bordered by neighboring countries on all sides.
- It shares its borders with five African countries. **South Sudan bounds it to the north, Kenya to the east, Tanzania to the south, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Rwanda to the south-west.**



13. Costa Rica

Context: Recently, India and Costa Rica held the first joint economic and trade committee meeting.

About Costa Rica

- Location: It is a small country located in Central America.
- **Bordered By:** It is bordered by Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south.
- Maritime Borders: To the west, it meets the Pacific Ocean, and to the east lies the Caribbean Sea.
- Capital City: San Jose.



14. Kyrgyzstan

Context: India and Kyrgyzstan jointly established the International Centre for Civilizational Studies “Manas and Mahabharata” in Bishkek to strengthen cultural and academic cooperation.

Kyrgyzstan:

- Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked mountainous country in Central Asia. It is located in the Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- It is bordered by four nations; **Kazakhstan in the north, Uzbekistan in the west and southwest, Tajikistan in the southwest and China in the east.**
- Kyrgyzstan is occasionally referred as “the Switzerland of Central Asia” as the beautiful ‘Tian Shan Mountains’ covers major part of the country.



15. Democratic Republic of The Congo

Context: New suspected cases of Ebola have been reported in parts of Congo that were previously unaffected, the government said on July 9, as the death toll in the country's latest Ebola outbreak reached 600.

Democratic Republic of The Congo (DRC):

- The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is located in Central Africa. As it straddles the Equator, it has territories in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
- It is located to the east of the Prime Meridian in the Eastern Hemisphere. Nine countries border the DRC.
- These are the Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, and South Sudan to the northwest, north, and northeast respectively. Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda bound it to the east.
- Tanzania is located to the east across Lake Tanganyika. Zambia lies to the southeast and Angola to the southwest respectively. DRC also has a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Angola's Cabinda exclave also borders DRC in this direction.
- The Congo River forms part of the natural international boundary between the **DRC and the Republic of the Congo** (its neighbour to the west), as well as parts of the border with Angola.
- The Equator (0° latitude) cuts directly through the northern portion of the DRC, making it one of the seven African nations traversed by the Equator (along with Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, and São Tomé and Príncipe).



16. New Zealand

Context: Prime Minister of India arrived in Auckland on July 10, 2026, for a high-stakes two-day state visit at the official invitation of New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon.

New Zealand:

- New Zealand is an island country and one of the many islands that make up Oceania. It is located in the South Pacific Ocean to the southeast of Australia, south of New Caledonia, Fiji and Tonga Islands.
- New Zealand is geographically positioned both in the Southern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth. The island country is completely surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. New Zealand shares maritime borders with Australia, Tonga, Fiji and the other island countries in Oceania.
- The **Cook Strait** is the narrow body of water that separates the **North Island** and **South Island** of New Zealand.
- New Zealand does not share a similar time zone with Australia. New Zealand operates mainly on New Zealand Standard Time (NZST: UTC+12) or NZDT (UTC+13) during daylight saving time.



17. Phu Quoc Island

Context: At least 15 Indian tourists were killed after a boat carrying visitors capsized off Vietnam's southern island of Phu Quoc recently.

About Phu Quoc Island

- Phu Quoc, also known as Pearl Island, is a Vietnamese island located in the Gulf of Thailand.
- About the size of Singapore, this teardrop-shaped island anchors an archipelago of 22 islands, with the main island stretching 567 sq.km. and extending 49 km in length.
- **On the map, it lies closer to Cambodia than mainland Vietnam, making it the country's largest island and one of the most geographically strategic.**
- It is famous for its endless stretches of white sand beaches.
- A large part of the island is protected under Phú Quốc National Park, which is recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- The island is a major tourism destination, known for beach resorts, scuba diving, snorkeling, and nature-based tourism.
- The highest point on the island reaches 630 meters and is located on Mount Chua.

18. Syria

Context: Syria's transitional Parliament began its first session on July 12, state television reported, tasked with drafting the country's new constitution and laying the groundwork for democracy after decades of authoritarian rule.

Syria:

- Syria is a Western Asian country located in Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- It is bordered by five Asian Nations: **Turkey in the north, Lebanon in the west, Iraq in the east, Jordan in the south and Israel in the southwest.**

- Located to the west is the Mediterranean Sea, which stretches along the entire Syrian coastline.



19. Turkey

Context: On July 15, 2016, officer cadet Alper Kalin was about to leave his base in Ankara for a friend's wedding when he was told to stay behind for an anti-terrorism exercise.

Turkey:

- Turkey is a transcontinental Eurasian country. The major part of the country lies in the Anatolian Plateau of Western Asia while a small part is located on Southeastern Europe's Balkan Peninsula.
- The Turkish Straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles) and Sea of Marmara separate the European part of Turkey called East Thrace from Anatolia.
- Turkey is located in the Northern and Eastern Hemispheres of the Earth. It is bordered by seven countries: Greece and Bulgaria to the northwest, Georgia to the northeast, Armenia and Iran to the east, Iraq to the southeast, and Syria to the south.
- Nakhchivan, an exclave of Azerbaijan also borders Turkey to the east. The country has coastlines on the Black Sea to the north Aegean Sea to the west and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.
- **Lake Van** is an **endorheic lake** (a closed basin lake with no natural outlet), meaning water flows into it, but no river originates or exits from it.
- **Ankara** is located inland in **Central Anatolia** (the Asian/Anatolian part of Turkey), hundreds of kilometres **east** of the Bosphorus Strait.



20. Greater Tunb Island

Context: The U.S. military's Central Command recently said that it had launched airstrikes on Greater Tunb Island in the Strait of Hormuz, targeting Iranian defence installations and missile sites.

About Greater Tunb Island

- It is a small island in the Persian Gulf near the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz.
- Area: Approximately 10.3 sq. km.
- The island, under Iranian control since 1971, is regarded as a strategically important location in the strait.
- Iran has established military facilities, including naval installations and an airstrip, on the island.
- Along with Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, Greater Tunb overlooks the approach to the Strait of

Hormuz, a vital waterway through which about one-fifth of the world's oil supply passes.

- It plays an important role in monitoring and influencing traffic through one of the world's busiest maritime trade routes.
- Point of contention between Iran and UAE:
- Iran assumed control of three islands, Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, in 1971.
- Since then, the United Arab Emirates has maintained its claim over them.
- The sovereignty of the three islands has remained a longstanding source of dispute between Tehran and Abu Dhabi.

21. Myanmar

Context: Myanmar's leader Min Aung Hlaing will make an official visit to Thailand next month as Bangkok seeks to bring the once pariah state back into the diplomatic fold, the Thai Foreign Minister told AFP on July 15.

Myanmar:

- Myanmar is a Southeast Asian country. It is situated in the Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth. Myanmar is bordered by the Indian states of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh and by the Chittagong division of Bangladesh in the northwest; by Tibet Autonomous Region and Yunnan province of China in the north and northeast; by Laos in the east and by Thailand in the southeast. Myanmar is bounded by the Andaman Sea in the south and by the Bay of Bengal in the southwest.
- The **Tropic of Cancer** (23.5° N) passes through northern Myanmar, cutting across Chin State, Sagaing Region, and Kachin State before entering Yunnan Province in China. In South/Southeast Asia, it passes through India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and China.
- Myanmar **does NOT share any land border with Vietnam**. Vietnam lies further east, separated from Myanmar by Laos and Thailand.



22. Iraq

Context: The U.S. military will leave Iraq by the end of September, Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi said on July 14, following a 23-year presence.



Iraq:

- Iraq is a sovereign Western Asian country. It is located in Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.

- It is bordered by six nations: **Iran to the East; Kuwait to the southeast; Turkey to the north; Syria to the west; Jordan to the southwest and Saudi Arabia to the south.** The country has a short 36 miles (58 km) coastline along the northern end of the Persian Gulf.

23. Falkland Islands

Context: During Argentina's celebrations after reaching the 2026 FIFA World Cup final, players displayed a banner reading The Falkland Islands are Argentine, prompting a FIFA review for violating rules against political messages in sporting events.

About The Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas):
What It Is?

- The **Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)** are a **self-governing British Overseas Territory** in the South Atlantic Ocean, claimed by both the **United Kingdom and Argentina**.

Location:

- Located about 480 km east of the Strait of Magellan and northeast of the southern tip of South America.
- Stanley**, on **East Falkland**, is the capital and largest settlement.

Physical Features:

- Covers about 12,200 sq km, comprising East Falkland, West Falkland, and over 700 smaller islands.
- Features **rolling hills, peatlands, indented coastlines**, and a cool, windy maritime climate.

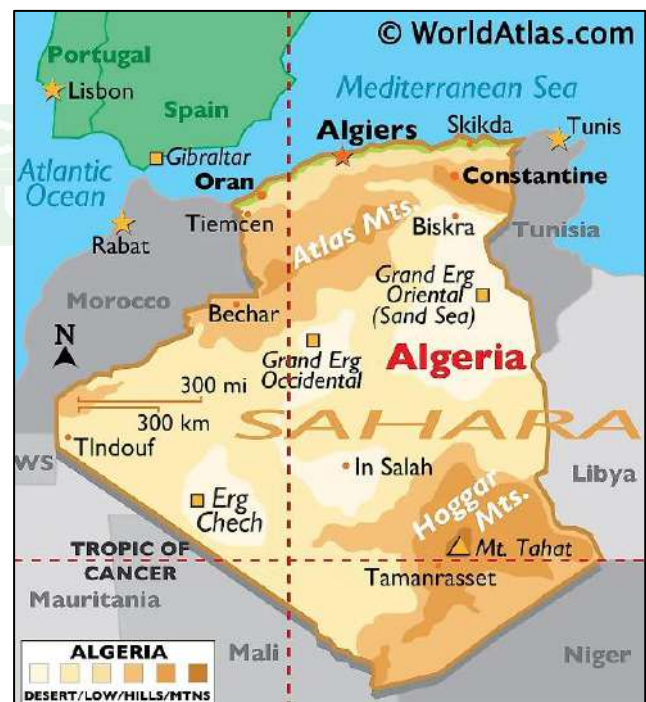
Historical Background:

- First settled by the French (1764), followed by British and Spanish control.
- Britain re-established control in 1833, while Argentina continues to claim sovereignty.
- The 1982 Falklands War, fought for 74 days, ended with the restoration of British control.



24. Algeria

Context: A fire at an orphanage near the Algerian capital on July 16 killed 11 children and injured 19 people, authorities said.



Algeria:

- Algeria is a country located in the Maghreb region of North Africa. It is located in the Northern Hemisphere. As the Prime Meridian passes through the country, it has territory in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. Algeria is bordered by seven countries. These are Tunisia, Libya, and Niger to the northeast, east,

and southeast respectively. Mali, Mauritania, and Western Sahara lie to the southwest. Morocco borders Algeria to the west. The country also has a coastline on the Mediterranean Sea to the north.

- Algeria is not the only country in the world, from where both the Tropics of Cancer and Prime Meridian line pass. Mali is also one such country.
- Algeria is a major constituent country of the **Maghreb region** of Northwest Africa, alongside Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania.

25. Finland

Context: Recently, India and Finland discussed strengthening economic and financial cooperation, enhancing trade and investment ties, and expanding collaboration in digitalisation and emerging sectors.



About Finland

- Location:** It is located in Northern Europe.
- Bordering Countries:** Norway (north), Sweden (northwest) and Russia (east).
- Bordering water bodies:** It is bounded by the Gulf of Finland (south), Gulf of Bothnia (southwest) and Baltic Sea.

- Capital City: Helsinki
- It is a member of the European Union (EU) and NATO.

26. Mexico

Context: Southern Mexico and parts of Central America were hit by a 7.3 magnitude earthquake on July 17, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), with a tsunami alert issued for a stretch of the Pacific coast.

Mexico:

- Mexico is a country located in the southern part of North America. The country is dissected by the Tropic of Cancer and is positioned in the Northern and Western hemispheres of the Earth.
- Mexico shares land borders with the United States of America to the north and with Guatemala and Belize to the southeast.
- It is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean to the south and west; by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea to the east. Mexico shares its maritime borders with Cuba and Honduras.



27. Belgium

Context: Recently, the first meeting of the India-Belgium Strategic Dialogue was held in Brussels.

About Belgium

- It is a Western European nation.
- **Bordering countries:** It is bordered by 4 countries: by the Netherlands in the north; by Germany in the east; by Luxembourg in the southeast and by France in the southwest.
- **Water bodies:** It is bounded by the North Sea in the northwest.
- **Capital City:** Brussels.



28. Hungary

Context: Hungary's president signed a constitutional amendment into law on that ends his term in office, bringing to a close a dispute between him and the country's new government.

About Hungary

- **Location:** It is a landlocked Central European Nation, situated in the Carpathian Basin.
- **Bordering Countries:** It is bordered by 7 Nations: by Slovakia in the north; Ukraine in the northeast; Romania in the east; Serbia and Croatia in the south; Slovenia in the southwest and Austria in the west.
- **Capital City:** Budapest.



29. Lakes & Associated Countries

Context: Drying of the Aral Sea has released more than 200 teragrams of carbon from exposed lake-bed sediments, turning a once-stable carbon reservoir into an active source of greenhouse gases, according to a new study.

	Lakes	Countries
1.	Aral Sea	Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan
2.	Lake Khanka	Russia, China
3.	Lake Titicaca	Peru, Bolivia
4.	Lake Geneva	Switzerland, France

30. Guyana

Context: An ageing ferry carrying more than 100 people capsized off the coast of Guyana, with 67 saved and rescue teams searching for the rest, officials said on July 19.

Guyana:

- Guyana is a country located on the northern edge of South America. It is geographically positioned both in the Northern and Western hemispheres of the Earth.
- **Guyana is bordered by Suriname to the east; by Venezuela to the west; by Brazil to the south and southwest; and by the Atlantic Ocean to the north. Guyana shares its maritime borders with Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.**



31. Moldova

Context: India and Moldova discussed reforms of multilateral organisations, including the UN Security Council, as President Droupadi Murmu paid an official visit to the country.



About Moldova

- Moldova is a **landlocked country** bordering Ukraine and Romania – emerged as an independent republic following the **collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991**.
- Moldova lies to the east of the great arc of the **Carpathian Mountains**.

- Transnistria (officially the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic) sits primarily on a long, narrow strip of land between the **Dniester River** to its west and the border of **Ukraine** to its east.

32. Senegal

Context: Recently, Senegal's President, Bassirou Faye, has been elected as the new Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

About Senegal

- Location:** It is a West African country.
- Bordering Countries:** It is bordered by four countries; Mauritania, Mali, Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau to the north, east, southeast, and southwest, respectively.
- Maritime Border:** The country is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west.
- Capital City:** Dakar.



33. Kenya

Context: Tanzanian Opposition official David Djumbe fled to Kenya after a crackdown on dissidents in his country, but now lives in constant fear of a cross-border abduction.

Kenya:

- Kenya is a country in Eastern Africa. It is located in the Eastern Hemisphere. The Equator passes

through the country. Five countries border Kenya. These are Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, and Somalia to the north, northwest, west, south, and east respectively. Kenya has a coastline on the Indian Ocean to the southeast.

- The **Equator (0° latitude)** bisects Kenya almost directly through its center, passing near major places like Nanyuki and Kisumu.
- **Lake Turkana** (formerly Lake Rudolf) lies almost entirely in northern Kenya, with its northernmost tip crossing into **Ethiopia** (fed by the Omo River). It does **not** border or extend into South Sudan.



34. Black Sea

Context: A strike on a ship in the Black Sea carrying propane to the Ukrainian port of Reni wounded three seafarers and forced the crew's evacuation, Romania's President said on July 21.

Black Sea:

- The Black Sea lies between the continents of Asia and Europe. It is bound to the west by the Balkan Peninsula in Southeastern Europe, to the east by the Caucasus, north by East European Plains, and south by Anatolia of Western Asia. The black Sea

drainage basin drains several countries, including the six countries that share its coast.

- **The sea is bordered to the north by Russia and Ukraine, Turkey to the south, Bulgaria to the west, and Georgia to the east. Romania also has an opening to the Black Sea.** The Black Sea basin covers an area of approximately 2 million square kilometers and drains 25 countries.



35. Lithuania

Context: A wartime grave-site outside Lithuania's capital has become the stage for a political skirmish with Russia, as the Baltic country works to shed the last remnants of Soviet occupation.

Lithuania:

- Lithuania is a Baltic country situated in North Eastern Europe. It is geographically positioned both in the Northern and Eastern hemispheres of the Earth.
- Lithuania is located on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and on the southeast of Denmark and Sweden.
- Lithuania is bordered by 4 Nations: by **Latvia in the North; Belarus in the east and south; Poland in the south; and Kaliningrad oblast of Russia in the southwest.**



36. Romania

Context: President of India arrived in Romania, the final stop of her three-nation Europe tour, marking the first Indian Presidential state visit to the country in over 30 years.



Romania:
What It Is?

- Romania is a sovereign country located in Southeastern Europe. Historically shaped by Dacian and Roman roots, it transitioned from a communist satellite state in 1989 to a modern democratic republic. It is a full member of

both **NATO** (since 2004) and the **European Union** (since 2007).

Capital: Bucharest (also the largest economic and cultural hub).

Bordering Nations: Situated in Southeastern Europe around the Transylvanian Basin and the Danube River delta, Romania is bordered by **five nations** and **one major sea**: **Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, and The Black Sea.**

37. Liberia

Context: Tyre and large-scale rubber goods manufacturing does not exist in Liberia, where most people drive on used and worn-out tyres.

Liberia:

- Liberia is a country in West Africa. It is located in the Northern and Western Hemispheres.
- The three countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Ivory Coast bound Liberia to the northwest, north, and east respectively. The Atlantic Ocean borders Liberia to the south-southwest.



38. Tanzania

Context: Recently, India and Tanzania have reviewed bilateral ties across diverse sectors,

including trade and investment, development partnership, defence and security cooperation.

About Tanzania

- **Location:** It is an East African country situated just south of the Equator.
- **Bordering Countries:** It shares borders with eight countries: Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique to the south.
- **Maritime Border:** The eastern border of Tanzania meets the Indian Ocean.
- **Capital:** Dar es Salaam (administrative capital), Dodoma (legislative capital).



39. Panama

Context: Recently, India & Panama held bilateral talks to deepen maritime security, logistics, Skilling and digital transformation.

About Panama

- **Location:** It is a country of Central America located on the Isthmus of Panama.
- **Bordering Countries:** It is bordered by Costa Rica and Colombia.
- **Water Bodies:** It is bounded by the Caribbean Sea to the north and by the Pacific Ocean to the south.

- **Capital City:** Panama City.



40. Caspian Sea Countries

Context: Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on July 26 warned that his country would respond to a deadly attack by Ukraine on an Iranian ship in the Caspian Sea.



Caspian Sea Countries:

- Five countries in Asia and Europe share the Caspian Sea's coastline.
- It is bordered to the north and east by Kazakhstan and from north to the west by Russia. Azerbaijan borders the sea to the southwest, while Iran is in the south. Turkmenistan lies along the southern portion of the eastern coast.

- Besides the five countries bordering the sea, the Caspian Sea drains Armenia, the eastern part of Georgia, the western portion of Uzbekistan, and the northeastern part of Turkey.

41. South Africa

Context: Hundreds of Zimbabweans await transport home after fleeing anti-migrant violence in South Africa, at a camp in Beitbridge.



South Africa:

- Africa's southernmost country, South Africa, is located in the Southern and Eastern Hemispheres of the world. It is also the Eastern Hemisphere's southernmost mainland country. South Africa shares a border with six countries. It surrounds the enclaved country of Lesotho. Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana border it to the north. Mozambique and Eswatini border it to the east and northeast, respectively.
- The Limpopo River forms the natural international border between South Africa and Zimbabwe. However, the Tropic of Capricorn passes through northern South Africa (and southern Zimbabwe/Botswana), but it is a line of latitude, not a physical border marker, and does not define the boundary between the two countries.

- The Orange River (South Africa's longest river) rises in the Drakensberg mountains in Lesotho and flows westwards across the country. It empties into the Atlantic Ocean at Alexander Bay, not the Indian Ocean. (In contrast, the Limpopo River empties into the Indian Ocean).

42. Nicaragua

Context: Colombia's hard-right President-elect Abelardo de la Espriella vowed on July 26 to break off diplomatic relations with Cuba and Nicaragua when he takes office on August 7.

Nicaragua:

- Nicaragua is a large country located in Central America. It is positioned both in the Northern and Western hemispheres of the Earth.
- Nicaragua is bordered by Honduras to the northwest and by Costa Rica to the south.
- It is bounded by the Caribbean Sea to the east and by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest.



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ART AND CULTURE

1. Bullock cart race

Context: The Hindkesari Pedgaon 'Bailgada Sharyat' (bullock cart race) showcased Maharashtra's deep-rooted rural sporting tradition, attracting more than 1,000 entrants and thousands of spectators from across the region.

About

- The **bullock cart race** is an event involving bulls or bullocks to conduct a race with the animals tied to a cart by a wooden yoke, with or without a cartman.
- The rural sport is known as 'bailgada sharyat,' 'chhakadi' or 'shankarpath' in the state.
- It is **held annually** in Pedgaon, Khatav Taluk, Satara district, Maharashtra.

	Animal Sports	States
1.	Chhakadi	Maharashtra
2.	Maramadi	Kerala
3.	Kodi Kattu	Andhra Pradesh
4.	Moh Juj	Assam

2. Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana

Context: Recently, the Union Minister for Culture informed the Lok Sabha about the Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY).

About Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana

- It is an umbrella scheme under the Ministry of Culture for the promotion of art and culture in the country.
- Under this financial assistance is provided to eligible cultural organizations/ individuals working in the field of performing arts.
- It was launched to promote, preserve, and develop India's rich art and cultural heritage.
- It has the following sub-schemes
 - Financial Assistance for Promotion of Guru-Shishya Parampara (Repertory Grant)
 - Scheme of Financial Assistance for Promotion of Art and Culture.

- Scheme of Scholarship and Fellowship for Promotion of Art and Culture.
- Financial Assistance for Construction of Tagore Cultural Complexes (TCC)
- Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists.
- Seva Bhoj Yojana
- National Gandhi Heritage Site Mission
- National Award Scheme.

3. Sebastia

Context: UNESCO has added Sebastia in the West Bank and five castles in Lebanon's Mount Amel region, including Beaufort Castle, to both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Sebastia

- Sebastia, located near **Nablus in the West Bank**, is identified with the ancient city of **Samaria**, the capital of the biblical Kingdom of Israel.
- Its archaeological remains span the **Iron Age, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods**, reflecting its long historical significance.

Mount Amel Castles

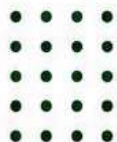
- The inscription covers **five historic castles** in Lebanon's **Mount Amel (Jabal Amel)** region, including **Beaufort Castle**.
- These fortifications showcase a blend of **Crusader, Ayyubid, Mamluk and local architectural traditions**, illustrating nearly nine centuries of military and cultural history.



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MISCELLANEOUS

1. APAAR (Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry) ID

Context: The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) is a revolutionary digital platform by the Ministry of Education and is regulated by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

About

- **APAAR (Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry) ID** is a unique 12-digit student identification number linked to the ABC system.
 - It was introduced as part of the “**One Nation, One Student ID**” initiative, and creates a **single academic identity for every learner**.
- It aimed to create a flexible, learner-friendly education system in which learning achievements can be recognised, stored, and used throughout a person’s life.
- It supports the vision of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and the **National Credit Framework (NCrF)** by enabling credit transfer, multiple entry and exit options, and recognition of learning across different institutions and disciplines.
- It is accessible through **DigiLocker**, it brings together a **student’s educational records from school, higher education, skill development, and other learning programmes onto one platform**.

2. MY Bharat

Context: Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted the role of MY Bharat in nurturing youth potential and directing it towards nation-building.

About MY Bharat

- **MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat)** was launched in **October 2023** under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports as an autonomous body.

- It serves as a **digital platform** that connects the Government, educational institutions, non-profit organisations and industry to create meaningful youth engagement.
- It aims to **place youth at the centre of nation-building by providing opportunities for volunteering, skill development, leadership, and civic participation**.
- The initiative, aligned with the National Youth Policy, primarily engages individuals in the **15-29 year age group** while also nurturing adolescents between **10-19 years** to cultivate early participation and civic awareness.

3. Durand Cup

Context: The President of India, unveiled and flagged off the Trophies of the Durand Cup Tournament 2026.

About Durand Cup

- Established in 1888, the Durand Cup stands as Asia’s oldest and the world’s third-oldest football tournament.
- It is organized by the Indian Army on behalf of the three Services.
- The inaugural edition was held in Simla in 1888, before the tournament moved to New Delhi in 1940.
- The tournament champions **receive three trophies:** the Durand Cup and the Simla Trophy, both rolling honours, and the President’s Cup, crafted afresh each year and awarded for permanent keepsake.

4. India’s major HADR operations

Context: Operation Amistad has concluded successfully with the return of the Indian contingent to New Delhi.

- **India's major HADR operations include**
 - **Operation Maitri** (Nepal, 2015) for rapid rescue, relief, and \$2 billion commitment for reconstruction after the earthquake;
 - **Operation Devi Shakti** (Afghanistan, 2021) for the evacuation of 669 people and humanitarian aid;
 - **Mission SAGAR** (2020 onwards) where the Indian Navy provided food, medical oxygen and relief materials to 15 Indian Ocean countries during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
 - **Operation Samudra Setu** (2020) to repatriate 3,992 Indians by sea.
 - **Operation Ganga** (Ukraine, 2022) to evacuate more than 18,000 Indian citizens during the conflict,
 - **Operation Dost** (Türkiye and Syria, 2023) to send medical teams, field hospitals, rescue teams and more than 135 tonnes of relief material after the deadly earthquakes,
 - **Operation Kaveri** (Sudan, 2023) to ensure the safe evacuation of Indian nationals during civil conflict
 - **Operation Brahma** (Myanmar, 2025) to provide approximately 750 tonnes of humanitarian assistance, field hospital for earthquake-hit Myanmar.

5. Global Liveability Index

Context: Recently, Global Liveability Index 2026 was released and Delhi at 120 among 173 cities.

About Global Liveability Index

- It is published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- Its purpose is to evaluate how suitable cities are for living by measuring everyday living conditions rather than economic size or tourist popularity.
- Coverage: It assesses 173 cities across the world across 30 indicators.
- Parameters: It is grouped into five categories namely

- Stability (25%)
- Healthcare (20%)
- Culture & Environment (25%)
- Education (10%)
- Infrastructure (20%)
- Score: It uses a 1–100 scale.

6. Mission Vatsalya Scheme

Context: Recently, the Minister of State for Women and Child Development informed about the Mission Vatsalya Scheme.

About Mission Vatsalya Scheme

- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- It is implemented by the States and Union Territories (UTs) to support Children in Need of care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL).
- Objective: The objective of the Scheme is ensuring care, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of children in difficult circumstances, including missing and vulnerable children.
- It promotes family- and community-based care, institutional support services, counselling, and emergency outreach for children in need.
- The Scheme provides institutional and non-institutional care and support services for children in difficult circumstances under the statutory framework of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- Section 55 of the JJ Act, 2015 provides for the evaluation of the functioning of relevant service delivery structures.
- Under this provision, the Central Government, State Government, or District Magistrate may independently evaluate the functioning of the Juvenile Justice Board, Child Welfare Committee, Special Juvenile Police Units, registered institutions, and recognised fit facilities or persons, at such intervals and through such agencies as prescribed.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Women and Child Development.

7. Rome Declaration for an Unarmed and Disarming Peace

Context: A group of Nobel laureates, AI scientists, religious leaders, and global experts signed the Rome Declaration for an Unarmed and Disarming Peace.

What is the Rome Declaration for an Unarmed and Disarming Peace?

- It is a **global ethical declaration** calling for human control over nuclear weapons in the age of Artificial Intelligence.
- It warns against delegating life-and-death decisions, especially nuclear launch decisions, to autonomous AI systems.
- The Declaration was inspired by **Pope Leo XIV's encyclical Magnifica Humanitas**, which emphasizes protecting human dignity from technological overreach.
- Although non-binding, it seeks to build global consensus for an international treaty governing AI in military applications.
- **Principles of the Declaration:**
 - Disarming the next arms race
 - Responsible development
 - Responsible use of AI
 - Responsible governance
 - Responsible leadership, and
 - Nuclear disarmament.

8. Tripura Sarinda

Context: A bamboo and cane artisan from Tripura is showcasing the state's traditional bamboo musical instruments, including the recently GI-tagged sarinda, at the national-level handicrafts and handloom exhibition 'Indi Haat 2026' in New Delhi.

About Tripura Sarinda

- It is a bowed string musical instrument which is crafted from a single block of wood with a hollow resonator.

- It is closely associated with Tripura's indigenous communities, used during folk performances and other indigenous musical expressions.
- It is also known as Sarinda Uakhrap.

	List I (String Instruments)	List II (States/UTs)
A.	Ravanhatha	Rajasthan
B.	Pena	Manipur
C.	Tumbi	Punjab
D.	Tokari	Assam

9. International Film Festival of India

Context: The National Film Development Corporation has officially opened entries for the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) scheduled to take place in Goa from November 20 to 28, 2026.

Key Facts about International Film Festival of India (IFFI)

- The IFFI, founded in 1952, is Asia's oldest international film festival. (The Tokyo International Film Festival is a film festival established in 1985.)
- Its goal is to provide a single platform for ambitious filmmakers, cineastes, and industry professionals to have access to excellent cinema from across the world.
- The first edition of the event was held in Mumbai, which in the subsequent years moved to Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, and Trivandrum.
- Since its third edition, the event has become competitive.
- Since 2004, IFFI has moved to its permanent venue in Goa.
- It is jointly organized each year by the NFDC, in collaboration with the State Government of Goa and the Indian Film Industry.
- It is the only film festival in South Asia that is accredited by the International Federation of Film Producers and Associations (FIAPF) as a competitive feature film festival.



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