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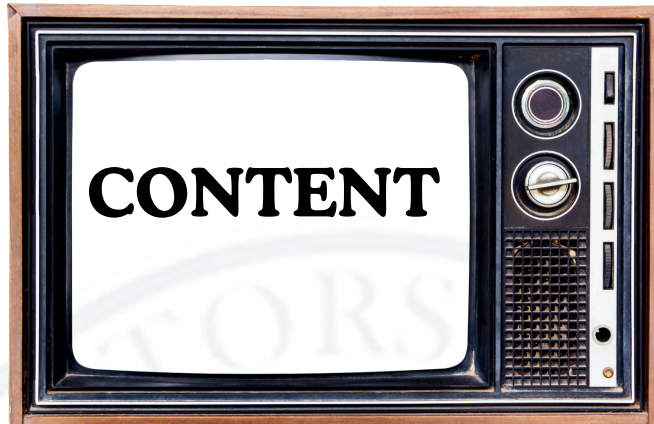
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----- Geography 1 – 31, January Month -----

January 2, 2025

Shivaji Statue at Pangong Lake:



- ✓ A statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was inaugurated on the banks of Pangong Tso at an altitude of 14,300 feet.
- ✓ It was unveiled shortly after India and China completed disengagement at Demchok and Depsang, ending a 4.5 year border standoff.



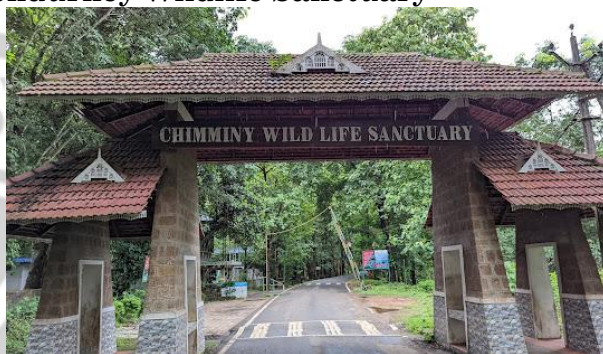
Pangong Lake Geographical Features:

- ✓ Pangong Tso (Tso = Lake in Tibetan) is a high-altitude, endorheic lake located in the Himalayas situated at a height of about 4,350 m (14,270 ft). Known for its breathtaking blue waters and high-altitude desert landscape.
- ✓ **Location:** Spans eastern Ladakh (India) and western Tibet (China). 60% of the lake lies in China, 40% in India.
- ✓ **Hydrology:** Endorheic lake with no outlet; highly saline water but partially freezes during winter.
- ✓ **Unique Colors:** Water changes shades of blue due to sunlight and mineral content.
- ✓ Lies along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China.

- ✓ The **Hemis National Park**, a habitat for snow leopards and other wildlife.

January 3, 2025

Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary



- ✓ **Location:** Situated in the Western Ghats in the Kollam district of Kerala, India.
- ✓ **Established:** 1984, named after the endemic "Chenkurinji" tree (*Gluta travancorica*).
- ✓ **Area:** Covers approximately 172 sq. km.
- ✓ **Ecological Significance:** Part of the Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ✓ **Flora:** Dense evergreen and semi-evergreen forests, home to rare plants like Chenkurinji and a variety of orchids.
- ✓ **Fauna:**
 - ✓ **Mammals:** Includes tigers, elephants, leopards, Indian giant squirrels, and lion-tailed macaques.
 - ✓ **Birds:** Rich birdlife, with over 200 species, including the Malabar hornbill and Nilgiri wood pigeon.
 - ✓ **Reptiles and Amphibians:** High diversity due to its unique forest ecosystem.
- ✓ **River:** Kallada River originates in the sanctuary.
- ✓ **Activities:** Known for eco-tourism, including trekking, boating, and guided forest tours.
- ✓ **Significant Attractions:** Palaruvi Waterfalls and the artificial lake formed by the Parappar Dam (Thenmala Dam).
- ✓ **Conservation:** Focus on preserving endemic species and biodiversity.
- ✓ **Recent in News :** A four-day faunal survey conducted at the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary has added significant findings to the sanctuary's biodiversity records.

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January 4, 2025

Project VISTAAR:



IIT Madras Collaborates on Project VISTAAR with Agriculture Ministry

- ✓ Project VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources) is a collaborative initiative between the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. Launched in January 2025, the project aims to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and reach of India's agricultural extension system through digitalization.
- ✓ **Digital Integration:** Project VISTAAR seeks to empower farmers and stakeholders in agriculture and allied sectors by integrating innovative technologies and solutions. This digitalization effort aims to provide farmers with improved access to market information, advisory services, and tools that enhance productivity, sustainability, and resilience.
- ✓ **Start-up Collaboration:** The project aims to bridge the gap between agricultural start-ups and farmers, facilitating the adoption of transformative technologies that make agriculture more sustainable and climate-resilient. By creating a seamless connection between start-ups and farmers, Project VISTAAR aims to reduce information gaps, improve decision-making, and enhance overall productivity.
- ✓ **Capacity Building:** The initiative focuses on training and capacity-building programs to equip farmers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively adopt innovative solutions. This ensures the long-term sustainability and scalability of digital agricultural extension services.

January 4, 2025

Banana Cultivation



- ✓ According to the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), India has achieved a tenfold increase in banana exports over the past decade and aims to reach \$1 billion in exports within the next five years.
- ✓ Banana is basically a tropical crop and the second most important fruit crop in India next to mango.
- ✓ It grows well in a temperature range of 15°C – 35°C with relative humidity of 75-85%.
- ✓ It prefers tropical humid lowlands and is grown from the sea level to an elevation of 2000m.

- ✓ Deep, rich loamy soil with pH between 6.5 -7.5 is most preferred for banana cultivation. Soil for banana should have good drainage, adequate fertility and moisture. Saline solid, calcareous soils are not suitable for banana cultivation.
- ✓ Major Producing States: Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, etc.

January 6, 2025

Polavaram Project



- ✓ The Telangana government has decided to rope in experts from the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H), to study the impact of the construction of the Polavaram project on the Godavari River.

Introduction:

- ✓ **Polavaram Project:** A multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River.
- ✓ **Location:** Andhra Pradesh, near Polavaram village in the Eluru district.
- ✓ It has been accorded national project status by the central government.

Key Objectives:

- ✓ **Irrigation:** Provide water to 4,36,825 hectares in Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ **Drinking Water:** Supply drinking water to ~611 villages.
- ✓ **Hydropower:** Generate 960 MW of electricity.
- ✓ **Flood Control:** Help mitigate floods in the region.
- ✓ **Interlinking Rivers:** Plays a vital role in the Godavari-Krishna river interlinking system.



Specifications:

- ✓ **Dam Type:** Earth-cum-rock-fill dam.
- ✓ **Height:** 45.72 meters (150 feet).
- ✓ **Reservoir Capacity:** 194 TMC (thousand million cubic feet).
- ✓ **Canals:** Left and right canals for water distribution.

Significance:

- ✓ **Agriculture:** Boosts agricultural productivity by providing assured irrigation.
- ✓ **Drinking Water:** Addresses water scarcity in drought-prone areas.
- ✓ **Hydropower Generation:** Contributes to renewable energy goals.
- ✓ **Regional Development:** Improves infrastructure and socio-economic conditions.
- ✓ Designed to withstand massive floods that could occur once in 1000 years, the Polavaram Spillway is

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set to have the highest discharge capacity in the world.

- ✓ At 50 lakh cusecs, it is set to surpass even the 3 Gorges Dam of China, one of the largest dams in the world.

January 7, 2025

Jammu Railway Division



- ✓ The new Jammu Division is the Indian Railways' 70th overall and the 6th under Northern Railways after Ambala, Delhi, Lucknow, Moradabad and Firozpur.

Introduction:

- ✓ Part of the **Northern Railway Zone** of Indian Railways.
- ✓ Covers the union territories of Jammu & Kashmir and parts of northern Punjab.
- ✓ Headquarters: **Firozpur**, Punjab.

Historical Background:

- ✓ The division was established to enhance rail connectivity in northern India.
- ✓ Key milestones include the opening of strategic routes to connect Jammu with the rest of the country.

Geographical Significance:

- ✓ **Strategic Location:** Connects northern plains with the mountainous regions of Jammu & Kashmir.
- ✓ **Challenging Terrain:** Railway construction involves tunnels, bridges, and viaducts through the Himalayan range.

Key Routes and Stations:

- ✓ **Jammu Tawi Railway Station:** Major station connecting Jammu to Delhi, Amritsar, and other parts of India.
- ✓ **Banihal to Baramulla Line:** Part of the **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL)** project.
- ✓ Important routes: Pathankot–Jammu and Udhampur–Srinagar lines.

Strategic and Economic Importance:

- ✓ **Military Connectivity:** Critical for troop and material movement to border areas.
- ✓ **Tourism Boost:** Facilitates pilgrimages to Vaishno Devi and Amarnath and enhances regional tourism.
- ✓ **Economic Growth:** Improves trade and commerce by connecting remote areas.

Engineering Challenges:

- ✓ **Difficult Terrain:** Includes constructing tunnels and bridges in seismic zones.
- ✓ **Weather Conditions:** Harsh winters and landslides often delay projects.

Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL):

- ✓ **Objective:** Provide all-weather rail connectivity to the Kashmir Valley.
- ✓ **Key Features:** Includes the **Chenab Bridge** (world's highest railway bridge) and numerous tunnels.

- ✓ A railway division is an administrative unit under Indian Railways, managing operations, maintenance, and infrastructure within its jurisdiction.

January 7, 2025

Banihal Bypass



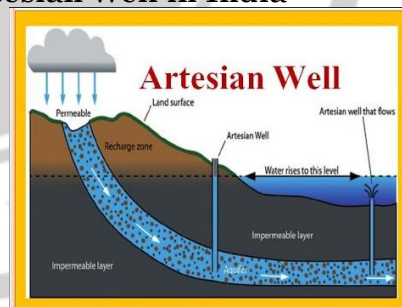
- ✓ Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways recently announced the completion of a 4-lane, 2.35 km Banihal Bypass on NH-44.

Significance:

- ✓ **Traffic Decongestion:** The bypass addresses chronic traffic bottlenecks in Banihal town caused by roadside markets and shops.
- ✓ **Enhanced Connectivity:** Improves travel efficiency on the critical NH-44 corridor, facilitating smoother movement between Jammu and Srinagar.
- ✓ NH44, also known as the Old NH 7, is the longest national highway in India.
- ✓ It ranks 22nd among the longest national highways globally.
- ✓ It stretches for a whopping 3,745 kilometers (2,327 miles), connecting Srinagar in the northern tip of Jammu and Kashmir to Kanyakumari at the southernmost point of India.

January 8, 2025

Artesian Well in India



Definition:

- ✓ An **artesian well** is a type of well where water naturally rises to the surface due to pressure in a confined aquifer.
- ✓ Requires a permeable layer (e.g., sandstone) trapped between two impermeable layers (e.g., clay or rock).

Formation Conditions:

- ✓ Occurs when groundwater in a confined aquifer is under greater pressure than atmospheric pressure.
- ✓ Water flows without pumping if the well is drilled deep enough to reach the aquifer.

Recent in News

- ✓ Large amounts of water began gushing out from underground in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan that is attributed to the Artesian Well in India.

- ✓ Experts rejected the idea of the water being linked to the ancient Saraswati river, suggesting water may be millions of years old, with origins from Tethys sea (pre-Vedic times).
- ✓ An artesian well is a type of well in which water rises naturally to the surface under pressure without the need for pumping. This occurs when water is trapped in a confined aquifer and is under significant pressure.
- ✓ It is also described as “confined” water because of hardy materials above and below it.

January 8, 2025

Vembanad Lake



- ✓ Vembanad Lake is the longest lake in India and the largest lake of Kerala.
- ✓ It is spread across an area of 2,033 sq.km., across Alappuzha, Kottayam, and Ernakulam districts.
- ✓ It is also known as Vembanad Kayal, Vembanad Kol, Punnamada Lake (in Kuttanad), and Kochi Lake (in Kochi).
- ✓ Formed from four rivers – the Meenachil, Achankovil, Pampa, and Manimala, it also has an outlet to the Arabian Sea in the west.
- ✓ The lake surrounds the islands of Pathiramanal, Perumbalam, and Pallippuram and is a popular backwater stretch in Kerala.
- ✓ Vallam Kali (i.e. Nehru Trophy Boat Race) is a Snake Boat Race held every year in the month of August in Vembanad Lake.
- ✓ The Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary is located on the east coast of the lake.
- ✓ It was declared as a Ramsar site of international importance in 2002.

Recent in News

- ✓ Climate change and pollution from slaughter houses and shrimp peeling sheds are choking the ecosystem of Vembanad Lake, which is rapidly shrinking in acreage.

January 8, 2025

Organic Fisheries Cluster:



- ✓ Union Minister inaugurated India's first Organic Fisheries Cluster in Soreng District, Sikkim.
- ✓ This initiative, under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) A fisheries cluster designed for sustainable and eco-friendly fish farming using organic practices.

January 9, 2025

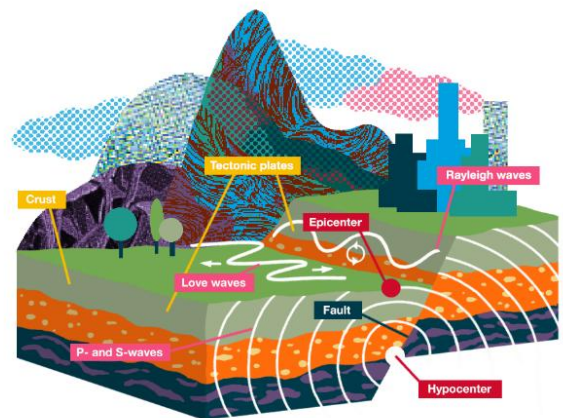
Tidal Tail



- ✓ Astronomers have discovered the longest tidal tail ever observed, spanning 1.27 million light-years from the galaxy NGC 3785 in the Leo constellation.
- ✓ A tidal tail is a long, thin stream of stars and interstellar gas formed due to gravitational interactions between galaxies.
- ✓ Gravitational forces during close encounters or mergers between galaxies strip material (stars, gas, and dust) from their outer regions, creating two tidal tails—one leading and one trailing.

January 13, 2025

Earthquake in Tibetan China and Nepal



- ✓ A magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck the Tibetan region of China and parts of Nepal, causing widespread devastation.
- ✓ The quake's epicenter was in Tingri County, within the Lhasa Terrane, near the Mt Everest region.
- ✓ This event aligns with findings from research identifying the Qixiang Co Fault, a newly discovered tectonic fault facilitating the eastward movement of the Tibetan Plateau, thereby increasing seismic activity in the region.

Important Terms Related to Earthquakes

Earthquake:

- ✓ A sudden release of energy in the Earth's crust or mantle due to tectonic movements, causing seismic waves.

Seismic Focus (Hypocenter):

- ✓ The point inside the Earth where the earthquake originates.
- ✓ Depth affects intensity; shallow-focus earthquakes cause more surface damage.

Epicenter:

- ✓ The point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus.
- ✓ Area where the maximum damage and intensity are usually observed.

Seismic Waves:

- ✓ **Primary Waves (P-Waves):** Fastest waves; travel through solids, liquids, and gases.
- ✓ **Secondary Waves (S-Waves):** Slower than P-waves; travel only through solids.
- ✓ **Surface Waves:** Travel along the Earth's surface, causing maximum destruction.

Magnitude and Intensity:

- ✓ **Magnitude:** Measures the energy released, often using the **Richter Scale** (logarithmic).
- ✓ **Intensity:** Measures the effects on the Earth's surface, structures, and humans, often using the **Modified Mercalli Scale**.

Richter Scale:

- ✓ Developed by Charles F. Richter.
- ✓ Measures the amplitude of seismic waves on a logarithmic scale (1-10).

Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI) Scale:

- ✓ Measures the impact of an earthquake based on observations, damage, and human perception (I to XII).

Tectonic Plates and Faults:

- ✓ **Tectonic Plates:** Large segments of the Earth's crust that move over the mantle.
- ✓ **Faults:** Fractures in the Earth's crust where movement occurs.
- ✓ **Normal Fault:** Vertical movement due to tension forces.
- ✓ **Reverse Fault:** Vertical movement due to compression forces.
- ✓ **Strike-Slip Fault:** Horizontal movement (e.g., San Andreas Fault).

Seismograph/Seismometer:

- ✓ Instrument used to record seismic waves and determine magnitude and location.

Tsunami:

- ✓ Large sea waves triggered by undersea earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or landslides.

Types of Earthquakes:

- ✓ **Tectonic Earthquakes:** Caused by plate movements (most common).
- ✓ **Volcanic Earthquakes:** Associated with volcanic activity.

- ✓ **Collapse Earthquakes:** Due to the collapse of underground mines or caves.

- ✓ **Induced Earthquakes:** Caused by human activities like mining, dam construction, or fracking.

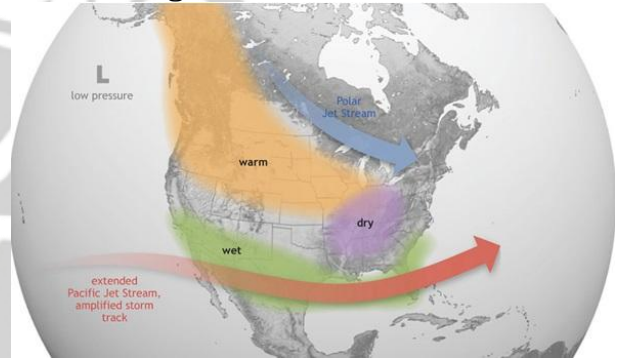
Earthquake Zones in India:

- ✓ Divided into four zones based on seismic activity (Zone II to Zone V).
- ✓ **Zone V:** Most prone to earthquakes (e.g., Himalayan belt, Northeast India).
- ✓ **Zone II:** Least prone areas.

Preparedness and Mitigation:

- ✓ **Structural Measures:** Earthquake-resistant buildings, retrofitting.
- ✓ **Non-Structural Measures:** Early warning systems, awareness campaigns.
- ✓ **Disaster Management:** NDRF, state-level disaster response units.

January 13, 2025 La Nina Emerged



- ✓ The long-anticipated La Niña has emerged, but the Pacific Ocean's cooling is mild and unlikely to cause as many weather problems as usual.
- ✓ Its delayed arrival may have been influenced by the world's oceans being much warmer than the last few years.
- ✓ La Niña conditions emerge in the tropical Pacific in December.

Definition:

- ✓ La Niña is a climate phenomenon characterized by **cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures** in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean near the equator.
- ✓ Opposite of **El Niño**, it is part of the **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** cycle.

Formation Process:

- ✓ **Strong Trade Winds:** Strengthened easterly trade winds push warm surface water westward, toward Asia.
- ✓ **Upwelling:** Cold, nutrient-rich water rises to the surface in the eastern Pacific.
- ✓ Results in a **cooling effect** in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Key Characteristics:

- ✓ Cooler-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean.
- ✓ Intensified normal weather patterns.
- ✓ Typically lasts 9-12 months but can persist longer.

Global Impacts:

Rainfall Patterns:

- ✓ Increased rainfall in Southeast Asia, India, and northern Australia.
- ✓ Droughts in South America and parts of the United States.

Hurricane Activity:

- ✓ More hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean.
- ✓ Fewer hurricanes in the Pacific Ocean.

Temperature Variations:

- ✓ Cooler winters in Canada and northern U.S.
- ✓ Warmer winters in the southeastern U.S.

Impact on India:

Monsoons:

- ✓ Typically associated with **above-average monsoon rainfall** in India.
- ✓ Favors agricultural productivity.

Cyclones:

- ✓ Increased frequency of cyclones in the Bay of Bengal.

Temperature:

- ✓ Cooler winters in northern India.

Economic Implications:

- ✓ **Positive for Agriculture:** Boosts crop yield due to good monsoon rains.
- ✓ **Negative in Other Regions:** Crop failures in drought-prone areas of South America and Africa.

Comparison with El Niño:

- ✓ **La Niña:** Cooler Pacific waters, stronger trade winds, wetter monsoon in India.
- ✓ **El Niño:** Warmer Pacific waters, weaker trade winds, and drier monsoon in India.

January 13, 2025

Mount Ibu Erupts in North Maluku, Indonesia



- ✓ Mount Ibu, situated in North Maluku, Indonesia, erupted on January 11, sending ash clouds up to 4,000 meters high and ejecting glowing lava up to two kilometers from its crater.
- ✓ This event has prompted authorities to issue warnings and implement safety measures for the public.
- ✓ Mount Ibu is a stratovolcano, also known as a composite volcano. Stratovolcanoes are characterized by their large, steep-sided cones built up by a combination of lava flows, volcanic ash, and other pyroclastic materials from alternating eruptions. They tend to be highly active and explosive, as is the case with Mount Ibu.

January 13, 2025

PM Modi Opens Z-Morh Tunnel in J&K:

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Z-Morh Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir, marking a significant milestone in improving all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and the strategic region of Ladakh.



- ✓ **Location:** Situated near Gagangir in the Ganderbal District of Jammu and Kashmir, the tunnel connects Gagangir to Sonamarg.
- ✓ **Dimensions:** The tunnel is 6.5 kilometers long, 10 meters wide, and includes a 7.5-meter-wide parallel escape tunnel. It is designed to accommodate up to 1,000 vehicles per hour at a maximum speed of 80 km/h.
- ✓ **Strategic Importance:** The tunnel enhances military logistics and boosts tourism by providing uninterrupted access to the region, especially during winter months when the area was previously cut off due to heavy snowfall.
- ✓ **Future Developments:** A second 14-kilometer tunnel is planned to bypass the challenging Zojila Pass and is expected to be completed in 2026.



January 13, 2025

Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project



- ✓ State-owned Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) recently said it has successfully commissioned the first two units of the 6×170 MW Punatsangchhu-II hydroelectric project (PHEP-II) in Bhutan.
- ✓ Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project (PHEP-II) is a 1 GW run-of-the-river hydroelectric power-generating facility under construction in the Wangdue Phodrang district of Bhutan.
- ✓ It is located on the right bank of the Punatsangchhu River.
- ✓ The project is being developed by the Punatsangchhu II Hydroelectric Project Authority, under an Inter-Government Agreement (IGA) between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of India.

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- ✓ It involves the construction of a 91m-high and 223.8m-long concrete gravity dam, along with an 877.46m-long and 12m-diameter diversion tunnel with a discharge capacity of 1118 cubic metres per second.
- ✓ The project also involves a 168.75m-long and 22m-high upper cofferdam and a 102.02m-long and 13.5m-tall downstream cofferdam.
- ✓ The Punatsangchhu II hydroelectric power plant will comprise an underground powerhouse which will be equipped with six Francis turbines of 170 MW capacity each.
- ✓ On commissioning of all six units, the expected annual power generation will be 4,357 million units of electricity.

January 13, 2025

Hatti Tribes



- ✓ The vibrant Boda Tyohar festival, the largest annual celebration for the Hatti tribes of the Trans-Giri region in Himachal Pradesh, kicked off recently with much enthusiasm and traditional fervour.
- ✓ They are a close-knit community who take their name from their traditional occupation of selling home-grown crops, vegetables, meat, and wool at small-town markets known as 'haats'.
- ✓ There are two main Hatti clans: one in the Trans-Giri area of the Sirmaur district in Himachal Pradesh and the other in Jaunsar Bawar of Uttarakhand.
- ✓ The two Hatti clans have similar traditions, and intermarriages are common.
- ✓ They are governed by a traditional council called 'khumbli' which decides community matters.
- ✓ The Hatti homeland straddles the Himachal-Uttarakhand border in the basin of the Giri and Tons rivers, both tributaries of the Yamuna.
- ✓ The Tons marks the border between the two states.
- ✓ Hatti men traditionally don a distinctive white headgear on ceremonial occasions. According to the 2011 census, members of the community numbered 2.5 lakh, but at present population of the Hattis is estimated at around 3 lakhs.
- ✓ In 2023, the Government of India granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the Hatti community in Himachal Pradesh.

January 14, 2025

Eighth Edition Of National Programme For Organic Production (NPOP):



- ✓ The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry released the eighth edition of National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP).

National Programme for Organic Production:

- ✓ Launched in 2001, it is a key government programme that laid the foundation of systematic development of organic agriculture sector in India, through promoting sustainable farming practices and opening new opportunities for farmers and exporters.
- ✓ By setting high standards for organic products, NPOP enhances India's competitiveness in the global organic market, while helping farmers adopt eco-friendly and economically viable practices.
- ✓ The programme involves the accreditation of Certification Bodies, standards for organic production, promotion of organic farming and marketing etc.
- ✓ The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce & Industries, is implementing this programme.

Highlights of the 8th Edition of NPOP:

- ✓ It introduced key amendments aimed at promoting ease of operations and enhancing transparency for stakeholders, including farmers.
- ✓ Certification requirements for organic grower groups have been simplified, and these groups are now granted legal status in place of the Internal Control System (ICS).

Many portals launched in this edition:

- ✓ **NPOP portal:** The dedicated portal for the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) will provide more visibility and ease of operations for Organic stakeholders.
- ✓ **Organic Promotion Portal:** Farmers, FPOs and exporters can showcase their certified organic products, generate Trade Leads and connect with global buyers. This will also include online Training and capacity building sessions for operators on Organic production and also information on Organic Trade events.
- ✓ **TraceNet 2.0:** The upgraded online Organic traceability system for seamless operations and enhanced tools for regulatory oversight.
- ✓ **APEDA portal:** Redesigned and revamped APEDA portal with enhanced user experience and information for the benefit of Agri and Processed food products' stakeholders.
- ✓ **AgriXchange portal:** Redesigned and revamped AgriXchange portal enables more user-friendly data analysis and generation of reports & data of Agricultural exports making it accessible for the general public.

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January 14, 2025

Indravati National Park



Recent in News :

- ✓ **Five Maoists**, including **two women**, were killed during an encounter with **security forces** inside **Indravati National Park**, located in **Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district**.

Indravati National Park

- ✓ **Location:** Situated in **Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh**.
- ✓ Named after the **Indravati River**, which flows along the **northern boundary** of the park, separating it from Maharashtra.
- ✓ Established in **1981**.
- ✓ Declared a **tiger reserve** in **1983** under **Project Tiger**.

Geography and Terrain:

- ✓ **Undulating hilly terrain** with altitudes ranging from **177 to 599 meters** above sea level.

Flora:

The park features three primary forest types:

- ✓ **Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest with Teak.**
- ✓ **Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest without Teak.**
- ✓ **Southern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest.**

Key Tree Species:

- ✓ **Teak, Achar, Karra, Kullu, Shisham, Semal, Haldu, Arjun, Bel, Jamun.**

Fauna:

Wildlife Highlights:

- ✓ Home to **rare wild buffalo**, one of the last populations in India.
- ✓ Other species include:
- ✓ **Nilgai, Black Buck, Sambar, Gaur, Tiger, Leopard, Chital, Sloth Bear**, and more.

Significance:

- ✓ A vital ecological zone with rich biodiversity.
- ✓ Holds conservation importance for its **rare species** and **tiger population**.
- ✓ The presence of Maoist activity adds a layer of complexity to its management and protection efforts.

January 14, 2025

Neduntheevu Island



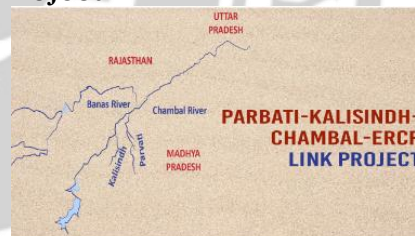
- ✓ The Neduntheevu, sometimes known as Neduntivu, is the largest island falling in the Palk Strait in the northern parts of Sri Lanka.
- ✓ This is known as Delft Island also, as it was so called by the Dutch colonials.
- ✓ The island's area is 50 sq.km. Its length is 8 km, and its maximum width is about 6 km.
- ✓ It happens to be the biggest of the seven inhabitable islands in the region.
- ✓ A unique feature of this island is that it is flat and oval-shaped, which is wind-swept at almost all times, which makes the place very soothing.
- ✓ There are no streams on the island. The major source of freshwater is surface water, which is collected in natural depressions and artificial ponds.
- ✓ On the island there are varied kinds of dry shrubs and semi-arid tropical plants. This island also has tall palm trees, which add to the overall beachy feel of the island.
- ✓ A Dutch fort made of dead coral chunks is also located on this island.
- ✓ It is home to a population of 4,800 Tamil people, living in compounds only in the northern half of the island.

Recent in News

- ✓ As many as 17 Indian fishermen were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy while fishing near the Neduntheevu island recently.

January 15, 2025

Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal (PKC) Link Project



- ✓ The **Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal (PKC) Link Project** is an inter-state river-linking initiative aimed at addressing water scarcity issues in the Chambal and Malwa regions of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Key Objectives:

- ✓ **Water Diversion:** The project seeks to divert surplus water from the Parbati, Newaj, and Kalisindh rivers to the Chambal River in Madhya Pradesh, and subsequently to the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP) in Rajasthan.
- ✓ **Irrigation and Drinking Water Supply:** By linking these rivers, the project aims to provide adequate water for irrigation and drinking purposes in both states.

Recent Developments:

- ✓ **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):** In December 2024, Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, along with the Central Government, signed an MoU for the implementation of the PKC Link Project. This agreement marks a significant step toward addressing water scarcity in the region.

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Environmental Considerations:

- ✓ **Impact on Wildlife:** The construction of the largest dam under the PKC-ERCP is projected to submerge approximately 37 square kilometers of the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan, potentially affecting the habitat of tigers and other wildlife.

Strategic Importance:

- ✓ **Flood and Drought Management:** By connecting the waters of the rivers, the project aims to mitigate issues related to both floods and droughts, ensuring a more stable water supply throughout the year.

January 16, 2025

Kumani Bank Mud Volcano – "Ghost Island" Formation



Key Highlights

- ✓ **Location:** 25 km off the eastern coast of Azerbaijan, in the Caspian Sea.
- ✓ **Eruption Year:** 2023.
- ✓ **Island Formation:** Created a short-lived landmass, termed a "Ghost Island".
- ✓ **Disappearance:** By late 2024, the island had eroded back into the sea.

What is a Ghost Island?

- ✓ A temporary landmass formed by mud volcano eruptions.
- ✓ Typically unstable, prone to erosion by waves and currents.
- ✓ Eventually disappears, as seen in Kumani Bank's case.

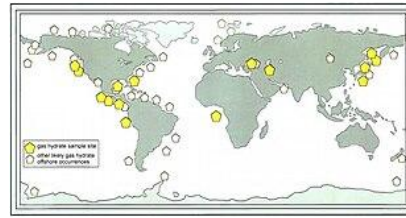
Significance

- ✓ Azerbaijan's Caspian region is home to many mud volcanoes.
- ✓ Highlights geological activity and subsurface gas emissions in the Caspian Basin.
- ✓ Important for scientific studies on volcanic activity, marine erosion, and land formation.
- ✓ Could have economic implications due to potential hydrocarbon deposits in the region.

What Are Mud Volcanoes?



- ✓ Geological formations where mud, water, and gases (mainly methane) erupt from the Earth's crust.
- ✓ Often associated with subsurface hydrocarbon (oil & gas) deposits.
- ✓ Found both on land and underwater, particularly in tectonically active regions.



Notable Mud Volcanoes Around the World

1. Lokbatan Mud Volcano (Azerbaijan)

- ✓ One of the most active mud volcanoes globally.
- ✓ Known for its violent eruptions of flames and mud due to high methane concentration.
- ✓ Located in Azerbaijan, which has nearly half of the world's mud volcanoes.

2. Lusi Mud Volcano (Indonesia)

- ✓ Began erupting in 2006, possibly triggered by drilling activity.
- ✓ Submerged entire villages in East Java, Indonesia.
- ✓ Continues to release hot mud, displacing thousands.

3. Baratang Mud Volcano (India)

- ✓ Located in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- ✓ Tectonically active region; its eruptions are linked to seismic activity.

- ✓ Attracts geological researchers and tourists.

4. Kumani Bank Mud Volcano (Azerbaijan, Caspian Sea)

- ✓ Erupted in 2023, creating a temporary "Ghost Island", which later eroded.
- ✓ Indicative of active geological and hydrocarbon processes beneath the Caspian Sea.

Mud Volcanoes & Oil & Gas Exploration

- ✓ **Presence of hydrocarbons:** Mud volcanoes indicate subsurface oil & gas reservoirs.
- ✓ **Methane emissions:** Many mud volcanoes release flammable gases, signifying potential fossil fuel reserves.
- ✓ **Geological surveys:** Oil companies study mud volcanoes to locate oil & gas-rich basins.
- ✓ **Drilling risks:** Some eruptions (e.g., Lusi, Indonesia) have been linked to human drilling activities, highlighting the need for caution.

Strategic Importance

- ✓ **Azerbaijan & the Caspian Sea:** Rich in oil & gas, with active mud volcanoes suggesting large untapped reserves.
- ✓ **India's Andaman Basin:** Potential for hydrocarbon exploration, but environmental concerns exist.
- ✓ **Indonesia & the Pacific Ring of Fire:** High geothermal activity makes mud volcanoes a valuable but risky exploration tool.

January 16, 2025

Pavana River



Key Details

- ✓ **River Location:** Pavana River, Maharashtra
- ✓ **Origin:** Western Ghats, 6 km south of Lonavala
- ✓ **Confluence:** Joins **Mula River** near Pune, which later merges with the **Mutha River**, ultimately draining into the **Bhima River**.
- ✓ **Key Areas:** Flows through **Pune city, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Dehu, Chinchwad, Pimpri, and Dapodi**.

Pavana Nagar Dam:

- ✓ **Type:** Earthfill gravity dam
- ✓ **Length:** 1,329 m
- ✓ **Height:** 42.37 m
- ✓ **Gross Storage Capacity:** 30,500.00 km³
- ✓ **Purpose:** Supplies **drinking water** to Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

Recent in News:

National Green Tribunal's Directive

- ✓ **Action Plan:** The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** has ordered the formation of an action plan to address pollution in the Pavana River.
- ✓ **Stakeholder Engagement:** The **state-appointed rejuvenation committee** must convene a meeting with **relevant stakeholders** to set a new **timeline** for the implementation of the action plan.

Challenges & Pollution Sources

- ✓ **Industrial Waste:** The river passes through urbanized areas like **Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad, and Chinchwad**, which are known for significant industrial activity.
- ✓ **Sewage & Domestic Waste:** Large populations in the suburbs contribute untreated **sewage** directly into the river.
- ✓ **Construction Runoff:** Ongoing development in areas like **Dapodi and Pimpri** leads to **construction debris** and runoff into the watercourse.
- ✓ **Solid Waste Disposal:** Improper waste management practices lead to **garbage** being dumped into the river.

Action Plan Measures

- ✓ **Pollution Control & Waste Management**
- ✓ Implement **sewage treatment plants (STPs)** along the river's course.
- ✓ Improve **solid waste management** and **clean-up drives** near riverbanks.
- ✓ Promote **zero-waste initiatives** for industries along the river.

Monitoring & Enforcement

- ✓ Install **continuous water quality monitoring stations** to track pollution levels.
- ✓ Set up **task forces** for regular inspections and penalties for violators of environmental norms.

Restoration & Rejuvenation Projects

- ✓ Launch projects for **riverbed cleaning** and **eco-restoration** of degraded stretches.
- ✓ Introduce **native vegetation** along the banks to reduce soil erosion and improve water filtration.

Community & Stakeholder Involvement

- ✓ Engage **local communities, industries, and NGOs** in river conservation efforts.

- ✓ Educate the public about sustainable water use and the importance of the river to local ecosystems and drinking water supplies.

Regulation & Infrastructure Upgrades

- ✓ Improve **wastewater treatment infrastructure** in industrial and residential zones.
- ✓ Upgrade the **Pavana Nagar Dam's filtration systems** to ensure clean water supply to Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

Strategic Importance of the River

- ✓ **Water Source:** The Pavana River is crucial for providing drinking water to **Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad**.
- ✓ **Ecological Role:** Supports local flora and fauna, particularly in the **Western Ghats**, a **biodiversity hotspot**.
- ✓ **Economic Importance:** As the river flows through industrial and urban zones, its rejuvenation will benefit the **local economy** by improving water quality and boosting tourism potential.

January 17, 2025

Nautor Land



Key Highlights

- ✓ **Proposal Under Review:** The **Union Home Ministry** is considering a proposal to **regularize Nautor land** in **Ladakh**.
- ✓ **Objective:** Allow locals to **claim ownership** over government-owned wastelands that they have been cultivating or tending to for years.

Nautor Land Definition:

- ✓ Refers to **barren or wasteland** owned by the **government**.
- ✓ Can be **allotted to individuals** for **cultivation** or other productive uses, after approval from relevant authorities.

Purpose of the Regularization

- ✓ **Legal Ownership:** This process would grant **legal ownership** to **locals** who have used these lands for agricultural or other purposes.
- ✓ **Empowerment:** It aims to **empower local communities** by securing their land rights, ensuring better living standards, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

Economic & Social Benefits:

- ✓ Provides **economic security** to farmers who have long tended to these lands.
- ✓ Supports **self-sufficiency** in agriculture for **Ladakh's rural communities**.
- ✓ Promotes **sustainable land management** practices in the region.

Strategic Importance

- ✓ **Economic Development:** By granting ownership, the move aims to enhance **livelihoods** and foster **local development** in the otherwise sparsely populated region of Ladakh.
- ✓ **Security:** It could also have **strategic benefits**, as strengthening local communities may enhance **socio-economic resilience** in the region.
- ✓ **Environmental Management:** Ensuring that these lands are managed sustainably can promote **agriculture and conservation** in an ecologically sensitive area like Ladakh.

January 17, 2025

Kokborok Language



Key Details

- ✓ **Language:** Kokborok
- ✓ **Region:** Primarily spoken in Tripura, India, by the Borok people (also known as Tripuris).
- ✓ **Official Status:** Recognized as one of the **official languages of Tripura**, notified on **January 19, 1979**.
- ✓ **Linguistic Family:** It is a **Sino-Tibetan** language.
- ✓ **Historical Roots:** The language can be traced back to the **1st century AD**, with records of **Tripuri kings** documented in the **Raj Ratnakar**.
- ✓ **First Known Use of the Term "Kokborok":** The term "Kokborok" first appeared as "**Kok-boro**" in 1897/98 in an early primer, Daulat Ahmed 'Kokboroma'.

Name Etymology:

- ✓ **Kok** means 'verbal'
- ✓ **Borok** means 'people' or 'human'.

Protest and Demand for Roman Script Adoption

- ✓ **Protest in Agartala:** The **Twipra Student Federation (TSF)**, part of the **North East Students Organisation (NESO)**, recently staged a protest in **Agartala**.
- ✓ **Core Demand:** The **adoption of the Roman script** for Kokborok, as opposed to the traditional **Bengali script**, which is currently used for writing the language.

Reason for Demand:

- ✓ **Ease of learning:** The Roman script is perceived as **easier to learn** and more **accessible**, especially in the age of digital communication.
- ✓ **Cultural Identity:** The demand is also tied to a desire for **greater recognition** of the language and culture of the Borok people.
- ✓ **Educational Advancement:** Adopting the Roman script could potentially improve literacy rates and educational outcomes among Kokborok-speaking communities.
- ✓ **British Colonial Influence:** Early British officers referred to the language as **Tipperh**, **Tipura**, or **Tipra**,

influenced by their interactions with local communities.

Strategic Importance

- ✓ **Linguistic Preservation:** Promoting Kokborok and ensuring its **official status** is crucial for preserving the culture, history, and traditions of the Borok people.
- ✓ **Regional Identity:** It is central to the **ethnic identity** of Tripura's indigenous population and is an important tool for fostering **community cohesion**.
- ✓ **Educational Growth:** The push for the **Roman script** aligns with modern educational practices and could contribute to **higher literacy rates** in Tripura.

January 18, 2025

Tungabhadra River



Geographical & Cultural Significance

- ✓ **Location:** The **Tungabhadra River** flows through **southern India**, primarily in the states of **Karnataka** and **Andhra Pradesh**.
- ✓ **Length:** Approximately **531 km**.
- ✓ **Source:** It originates from the confluence of two streams: **Tunga** (147 km long), **Bhadra** (178 km long). Both rise in the **eastern slopes of the Western Ghats**.
- ✓ **Confluence:** The river joins the **Krishna River** at **Sangamaleshwaram** in **Andhra Pradesh**.
- ✓ **Sacred River:** Revered in Hinduism, the river is mentioned in the **Ramayana** as **Pampa**, symbolizing its cultural and spiritual importance.
- ✓ **Catchment Area:** The total catchment area up to its confluence with the Krishna River is **69,552 sq. km**.
- ✓ **Monsoon Influence:** The river is primarily influenced by the **southwest monsoon**.

Major Tributaries:

Varada River
Hagari (Vedathy) River

Recent Pollution Incident

- ✓ **Green Water Incident:** The **Tungabhadra water** turned **green** around the villages of **Shiranahalli**, **Gangapur**, and **Korlahalli** in **Mundargi taluk, Gadag district, Karnataka**.
- ✓ **Cause of Concern:** This has led to panic among **local residents** due to the **unusual color change** in the river, indicating potential **pollution** or ecological imbalance.
- ✓ **Impact:** The greenish tint could be caused by **algal blooms**, which occur due to an excess of nutrients, often from **agricultural runoff, sewage discharge, or industrial waste**.
- ✓ **Immediate Action:** Authorities and environmental experts are likely investigating the cause and

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planning remediation measures to address the pollution and its effects on local communities.

Key Dams & Reservoirs on the Tungabhadra River

Tungabhadra Dam: A major reservoir that serves irrigation and water supply needs for **Karnataka** and **Andhra Pradesh**.

Tunga Anicut Dam

Bhadra Dam

Hemavathy Dam

- ✓ These dams help regulate the flow and usage of water for agriculture and drinking purposes in the region. However, pollution in the river can affect water quality and the function of these infrastructure projects.

Historical and Cultural Importance

- ✓ **Hampi:** The river flows through the historic city of **Hampi**, the capital of the **Vijayanagara Empire**. The ruins of Hampi are a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, showcasing the **historical significance** of the river in shaping regional development and culture.
- ✓ **Cultural Reverence:** Due to its mention in religious texts and significance in local rituals, the river holds immense **cultural and spiritual value** for the local communities.

What Could Be Done?

Pollution Control:

- ✓ Monitoring of **nutrient levels** and **water quality**.
- ✓ Establishing proper **wastewater treatment facilities** to prevent contamination from agricultural runoff and untreated sewage.

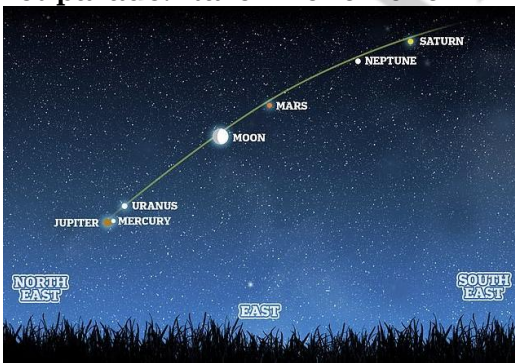
Awareness programs for local communities on sustainable agricultural practices and waste management.

Restoration Efforts:

- ✓ **Algal bloom control measures** (e.g., **aeration systems**, **reduction of nutrient load** in water).
- ✓ Regular **clean-up drives** and enforcement of **anti-pollution regulations**.

January 20, 2025

Planet parade: Rare Phenomenon



Overview

- ✓ **Phenomenon:** A **Planet Parade** occurred when four planets—**Venus**, **Saturn**, **Jupiter**, and **Mars**—aligned to form an **arc** across the night sky, creating a spectacular view.
- ✓ **Conjunction:** This is also known as a **planetary conjunction**, where several planets are visible in the

night sky at the same time, appearing very close together, even seemingly touching.

- ✓ **Illusion of Perspective:** The appearance of the planets aligning is a **perspective illusion**. In reality, the planets are not perfectly lined up in space but seem so from Earth due to their relative positions.

How It Happens?

- ✓ **Planetary Motion:** Planets in our solar system move at different speeds and orbits around the Sun.
- ✓ They do not move in sync with one another.
- ✓ Due to these differences, **planetary alignments** are rare and require specific conditions for them to be visible in the sky.
- ✓ **Visibility:** Not all planets are visible every night. Occasionally, their paths align such that **multiple planets** can be seen together, either within the same night or in a small time window.

Rarity of the Event

- ✓ **Infrequent:** According to **NASA**, such events involving **four or more planets** are **rare** and do not occur annually.
- ✓ **Visual Spectacle:** These alignments offer a **breathtaking view**, where several planets appear close to each other in the sky, creating a memorable visual event for skywatchers.

Key Planets Involved in the Recent Parade

Venus: Known as the **evening star** or **morning star**, Venus is one of the brightest objects visible in the sky.

Saturn: Famous for its **rings**, Saturn is a gas giant located further out in the solar system.

Jupiter: The **largest planet** in our solar system, Jupiter is a gas giant with dozens of moons.

Mars: The **Red Planet**, known for its reddish hue, often captures the imagination of stargazers.

Why It Matters?

- ✓ **Educational Opportunity:** The **planet parade** is an excellent chance to learn about the motion of planets and the dynamics of our solar system.
- ✓ **Public Interest:** It sparks **curiosity** and **engagement** with astronomy and science. Many people take the opportunity to observe the night sky, deepening their connection with the cosmos.
- ✓ **Astronomical Significance:** Events like this are noteworthy as they provide a glimpse into the movement of planets and are often tied to deeper astronomical observations and studies.

What to Expect During a Planet Parade?

- ✓ **Observation:** The best way to enjoy a planet parade is by looking up at the night sky with the naked eye or using binoculars.
- ✓ **Time Window:** Such events typically occur at specific times, often after sunset or just before dawn, depending on the positions of the planets.

January 20, 2025

Dark Oxygen



Definition:

- ✓ Dark Oxygen refers to the oxygen produced thousands of feet below the ocean in the absence of light and photosynthesis.

Discovery:

- ✓ Scientists discovered oxygen is generated through electrochemical reactions in polymetallic nodules on the ocean floor, not by photosynthesis.

Polymetallic Nodules:

- ✓ Nodules are lumps of metals such as manganese, iron, cobalt, nickel, copper, and lithium.
- ✓ They split water molecules (H₂O) into hydrogen and oxygen through electrochemical activity.

Traditional Oxygen Production:

- ✓ Oxygen was previously understood to be produced only by photosynthesis, carried out by plankton, plants, algae, and some bacteria using sunlight.

Electrochemical Process:

- ✓ Polymetallic nodules create oxygen even without light by splitting water molecules via electrochemical activity.

Implications:

- ✓ This discovery challenges traditional views on oxygen production.
- ✓ It could lead to better understanding of deep-sea ecosystems and new methods of energy production or storage using electrochemical processes.

Research Plans:

- ✓ Scientists plan to further study the deepest parts of the ocean to understand the phenomenon and its ecological impact.

Potential Applications:

- ✓ The electrochemical processes behind Dark Oxygen might be applicable to biotechnology and energy storage fields.

January 20, 2025

Upper Karnali Hydro-electric Project



Recent in News:

- ✓ IREDA, SJVN Ltd., GMR Energy Ltd., and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) have signed a Joint

Venture Agreement to develop the **900 MW Upper Karnali Hydropower Project** in Nepal.

Key Facts:

Location & Type:

- ✓ **Run-of-the-river** hydropower project on the **Karnali River**, Nepal.
- ✓ Developed on a **BOOT (Build-Own-Operate-Transfer)** basis.

Developers & Ownership:

- ✓ Developed by **GMR Upper Karnali Hydro Power Ltd. (GUKHL)** (subsidiary of GMR Group, India).
- ✓ Ownership: **GUKHL – 73%, NEA – 27%**.

Power Supply & Capacity:

- ✓ **900 MW capacity** with **8 turbines (112.5 MW each)**.
- ✓ **Electricity beneficiaries:** Nepal, India, Bangladesh (contracted for **25 years**).
- ✓ Estimated annual generation: **3,466 million units**.
- ✓ Will offset **~2 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually**.

Infrastructure & Features:

- ✓ **Concrete gravity dam**, headrace tunnels, fish pass, feeder tunnels, surge & pressure shafts, silt flushing tunnels.

Timeline:

- ✓ Construction starts: **2027**
- ✓ Expected commercial operation: **2031**

January 21, 2025

Lake Naivasha



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Lake Naivasha, Kenya**, is facing an **environmental threat** due to the spread of **water hyacinth**.
- ✓ The invasive **water hyacinth**, native to **South America**, was introduced to **Kenya in the 1980s** and is now affecting large parts of the lake.

Key Facts

Location & Geography:

- ✓ A **shallow freshwater lake** in **southern Rift Valley, Kenya**.
- ✓ Considered **geologically recent** and surrounded by **extinct/dormant volcanoes**.
- ✓ **Fed by:** Malewa and Gilgil Rivers (originating from **Aberdare Mountains, Kenya**).

Ecological Importance:

- ✓ Supports **diverse waterbirds** and **large mammals**.
- ✓ Provides **freshwater**, crucial for **flower farming, fishing, and geothermal energy**.

Conservation & Challenges:

- ✓ **Threat:** Invasion of **water hyacinth**, disrupting local biodiversity & economy.

- ✓ **Designation:** Recognized as a **Ramsar Wetland Site** (internationally important wetland).

January 22, 2025

Mount Ibu

Recent in News:

- ✓ **Indonesia's Mount Ibu** erupted **1,079 times** in **January**.
- ✓ Ash columns rose between **0.3 km to 4 km**, affecting the surrounding region.

Key Facts:

Location:

- ✓ **Mount Ibu** is a **stratovolcano** on **Halmahera Island, North Maluku Province, Indonesia**.

Volcano Type:

- ✓ **Stratovolcano (Composite Volcano)** – Characterized by a **steep, conical shape** formed by alternating layers of **lava, ash, and volcanic debris**.

Significance:

- ✓ Indonesia is part of the **Pacific Ring of Fire**, making it highly prone to **volcanic eruptions and earthquakes**.
- ✓ Volcanic activity impacts **local communities, air travel, and climate patterns**.

January 24, 2025

Raman Rajamannan : In News



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Raman Rajamannan, the king of the Mannan community**, will participate in the **Republic Day Parade 2025** in Delhi.
- ✓ He is the **only tribal king in Kerala**.

Key Facts :

About the Mannan Tribe:

- ✓ **Scheduled Tribe (ST)** of Kerala.
- ✓ **Only surviving adivasi dynasty** with a kingship in **South India**.
- ✓ Primarily reside in **Idukki District, Kerala (97% population)**.

Historical & Cultural Aspects:

- ✓ Believed to have migrated from **Tamil Nadu** during the **Poonjar Rajavamsham (kings) period**.
- ✓ Speak a **Tamil-like dialect** with **no script**.
- ✓ Follow a **matrilineal system**, and the **Raja Mannan** is elected by community headmen from eligible hereditary candidates.

Geographical & Environmental Concerns:

- ✓ Originally lived in **remote forests** but were **relocated** to government-allotted land near **Periyar Tiger Reserve** after deforestation restrictions.

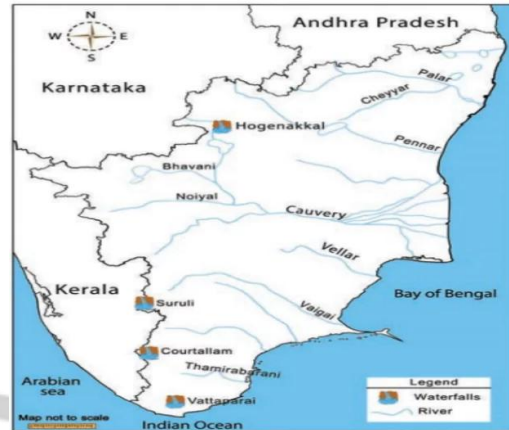
Economic Activities:

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- ✓ Primarily engaged in **agriculture**, including **coconut harvesting** and **herb cultivation**.

January 27, 2025

Cauvery-South Vellar Link Project



Rivers and waterfalls of Tamil Nadu

Recent in News:

- ✓ **Supreme Court** observed that the **Central Government has not granted in-principle approval** for Tamil Nadu's **Cauvery-South Vellar Link Project**, despite the state's request in **January 2021**.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About the Project:

- ✓ **State Initiative:** Tamil Nadu project to **divert surplus floodwater** from **Mettur Dam**.
- ✓ **Target Area:** Dry tanks in the **Sarabanga Basin, Salem district**.

Objectives & Benefits:

- ✓ **Efficient water use** for agriculture.
- ✓ **Replenishes water bodies** in **drought-prone regions**.
- ✓ **Enhances irrigation** and **mitigates water scarcity** in the region.

Current Issue:

- ✓ Tamil Nadu awaiting **Centre's approval** for project implementation.
- ✓ Part of **larger water management efforts** in **Cauvery basin**.

January 27, 2025

Shompens



Recent in News:

- ✓ The **Director of Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute (ANTRI)** recently emphasized findings on the **Shompens**, one of the **primary aboriginal tribes** of the **Great Nicobar Islands (GNI)**.

Key Facts for UPSC:

Who are the Shompens?

- ✓ One of the **most primitive and isolated tribes** on Earth.
- ✓ Classified as a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)**.
- ✓ Reside in **dense tropical rainforests** of the **Great Nicobar Island** (95% covered in rainforest).

Ethnic & Physical Characteristics:

- ✓ Unlike other **Negrito tribes** of Andaman & Nicobar, **Shompens are of Mongoloid origin**.
- ✓ Resemble people of **Myanmar & Indonesia** (light yellow-brown skin, straight hair, narrow eyes, stocky build).

Demography & Habitat:

- ✓ **Census 2011:** Estimated **229**, but actual population **unknown**.
- ✓ Mostly live in **forest interiors with little or no outside contact**.
- ✓ Habitat includes **Campbell Bay & Galathea National Parks** and **Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve** (biodiversity hotspot).

Lifestyle & Economy:

- ✓ **Hunter-gatherers & nomadic** – live in **forest camps**, shifting locations periodically.
- ✓ Depend on **rainforest plants & hunting**; staple food is **pandanus fruit (larop)**.
- ✓ Also cultivate **lemon, chillies, and betel** in small gardens.

Language & Society:

- ✓ Speak **multiple dialects**, with limited inter-group understanding.
- ✓ **Nuclear families**, controlled by the **eldest male**.
- ✓ **Monogamy is common**, but **polygamy is allowed**.

Religious Beliefs:

- ✓ Worship **moon goddess Houou**, believed to be the **creator of the universe**.

January 27, 2025

Deep Ocean Mission : First Human Underwater Submersible



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** announced the launch of **India's first human underwater**

submersible (Deep-Sea Manned Vehicle) under the **Deep Ocean Mission**.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About Deep Ocean Mission:

- ✓ A **mission-mode project** supporting **Blue Economy Initiatives** of India.
- ✓ Aims for **exploration & sustainable use of deep-sea resources** in the **Indian Ocean**.
- ✓ **Launched:** 2021 as a **Central Sector Scheme** with a budget of **₹4,077 crores (2021-2026)**.
- ✓ **Nodal Ministry:** **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**.

Mission Components (6 Key Areas):

- ✓ **Deep Sea Mining, Manned Submersible & Underwater Robotics.**
- ✓ **Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services.**
- ✓ **Technological innovations for deep-sea biodiversity conservation.**
- ✓ **Deep Ocean Survey & Exploration.**
- ✓ **Energy & freshwater from the ocean.**
- ✓ **Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology.**

India's First Human Underwater Submersible – Samudrayaan Project:

- ✓ Develops **Matsya 6000**, a manned submersible.
- ✓ **Capacity:** Carries **3 scientists** to a depth of **6000 meters** for ocean exploration & observation.

January 27, 2025

Pangsau Pass



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Pangsau Pass International Festival** was recently celebrated in **Nampong, Arunachal Pradesh**.
- ✓ The festival promotes **cross-border trade & cultural exchange with Myanmar**.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About Pangsau Pass:

- ✓ **Location:** On the **India-Myanmar border**, in the **Patkai Hills**.
- ✓ **Altitude:** **3,727 feet (1,136 m)**.

Strategic Importance:

- ✓ One of the **easiest routes into Myanmar** from the **Assam plains**.
- ✓ Named after **Pangsau village**, located **2 km inside Myanmar**.
- ✓ Played a crucial role in the **Ahom invasion of Assam (13th century)**.
- ✓ Became famous during **World War II** as a key obstacle in **General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell's** efforts to build a land route to China after Burma fell to Japan.

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- ✓ The **Lake of No Return** in Myanmar is visible from Pangsau Pass.
- ✓ Also called "**Hell Gate**" or "**Hell Pass**" due to its rugged terrain.

Pangsau Pass International Festival (PPIF):

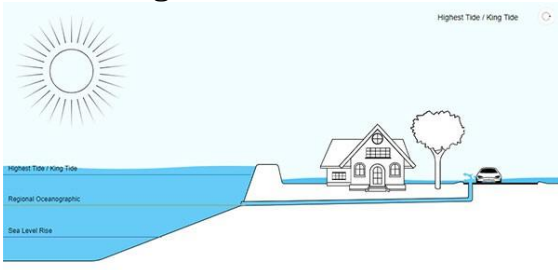
- ✓ **Held in: Nampong, Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh.**

Purpose:

- ✓ **Encourages cross-border trade & cultural exchange** with Myanmar.
- ✓ **Showcases cultural heritage, products, and traditions** of local communities.

January 28, 2025

Tidal Flooding



- ✓ Tidal flooding has become frequent in Ernakulam district lately. With the invading water staying on longer, more areas are getting affected.
- ✓ Tidal flooding refers to the temporary inundation of low-lying coastal areas during high tide events, such as full and new moons. It is often called sunny day flooding or king tide flooding when associated with extreme high tides.
- ✓ Tidal flooding occurs when the combination of high tide, offshore storms, winds, and full moon cycles leads to a temporary rise in local sea levels. Coastal drainage systems often fail to cope with this sudden increase, resulting in localized flooding.

January 29, 2025

Baltic Sea : In News



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Sweden recently seized a ship** suspected of damaging a **fibre-optic cable under the Baltic Sea**, connecting **Sweden to Latvia**.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About the Baltic Sea:

- ✓ **Location: Northern Europe**, part of the **Atlantic Ocean**.

- ✓ **Age: Youngest sea on Earth**, formed **10,000-15,000 years ago** after the last Ice Age.

Countries Bordering the Baltic Sea:

- ✓ **Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Russia.**

Geographical Features:

- ✓ **Connected to the Atlantic Ocean via: Danish Straits.**
- ✓ **Connected to other seas via:**
- ✓ **White Sea Canal (to White Sea).**
- ✓ **Kiel Canal (to North Sea's German Bight).**



Major Gulfs:

Gulf of Bothnia (North).

Gulf of Finland (East).

Gulf of Riga (South).

Largest Island: Gotland (Sweden).

Major River Draining into Baltic: Neva (largest among ~60 rivers).

Ecological & Environmental Concerns:

- ✓ **Brackish water body:** Salinity levels lower than world oceans due to **freshwater inflows & shallowness**.
- ✓ **Environmental Issue: Algal Harmful Blooms** (Eutrophication)

January 31, 2025

Darfur Region



- ✓ A drone attack on one of the last functioning hospitals in El-Fasher in Sudan's Darfur region killed 67 people and injured dozens recently.
- ✓ Darfur is a region in western Sudan.
- ✓ It lies between Kordofan to the east and Wadai to the west and extended southward to the Al-Ghazāl (Gazelle) River and northward to the Libyan Desert.
- ✓ It consists of an immense rolling plain that has an area of approximately 440,000 sq.km.

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- ✓ The volcanic highlands of the Marrah Mountains dominate the central part of this plain.
- ✓ It was an independent sultanate until annexed by Sudan in 1916.
- ✓ The name "Darfur" is derived from "dar fur," meaning "the land of the Fur" in Arabic.
- ✓ The Fur tribe once ruled the Islamic Sultanate of Darfur until the killing in 1916 of the last Sultan of Darfur.
- ✓ It is home to approximately 80 tribes and ethnic groups, encompassing both nomadic and sedentary communities.
- ✓ Arabs have long constituted the majority of the population in the northern part of Darfur, while Arabs and Fur have predominated in the southern portion.
- ✓ Other ethnic groups have included the Beja, Zaghawa, Nubian, and Daju peoples.

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Environment 1 – 31, January Month

January 3, 2025

Central Groundwater Board



- ✓ **Established:** 1970, under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
- ✓ Multi-disciplinary scientific organization under the Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
- ✓ **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- ✓ **Mandate:** Management, development, and regulation of groundwater resources in India.
- ✓ **Functions:**
 - ✓ **National Apex Agency** for scientific management, exploration, monitoring, assessment, augmentation, and regulation of groundwater resources.
 - ✓ Prepare hydrogeological maps and groundwater reports.
 - ✓ Assess national, state, and district-level groundwater resources.
 - ✓ Promote artificial recharge and rainwater harvesting.
 - ✓ Provide technical guidance on groundwater legislation and policies.
- ✓ **Key Programs:**
 - ✓ **National Aquifer Mapping Program (NAQUIM):** Mapping aquifers for sustainable groundwater use.
 - ✓ **Groundwater Management and Regulation Scheme (GWMRS):** Supporting states in groundwater regulation.
- ✓ **Structure:**
 - ✓ Headed by a Chairman with five members.

- ✓ Comprises experts such as Hydrogeologists, Geophysicists, Chemists, Hydrologists, Hydro meteorologists, and Engineers.

- ✓ **Recent in News:** There are 440 districts in India with excessive nitrates in their groundwater as of 2023, an increase from 359 such districts in 2017, according to a report by the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB).



January 03, 2025

Stellaria bengalensis



- ✓ Researchers from the Centre for Advanced Studies in Botany, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong discovered a new plant species and named it as *Stellaria bengalensis*.
- ✓ *S. bengalensis* is the annual herb plant of the genus *Stellaria* (family Caryophyllaceae).
- ✓ It was found growing on muddy soil slopes — at altitudes of 2,245-2,450 metres in the Sangser forest, Kalimpong.
- ✓ It is an annual herb growing to a height of 8 to 10.5 cm, characterized by white flowers, absence of bract, shorter petals (or included within the sepal), sharp and pointed seeds.
- ✓ Flowering and fruiting occur during May to September.
- ✓ India has around 22 *Stellaria* species mostly distributed in the Himalayan region.
- ✓ The researchers have for the time being assessed the new species as 'data deficient' under International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria.
- ✓ Other species *Stellaria mcclintockiae*, of the same genus, was found on Nelliampathy Hills of Kerala.

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January 04, 2025

Elephant Population Rise



- ✓ **Launched:** 1992 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India.
- ✓ **Objective:** To ensure the long-term survival of elephants in their natural habitats by protecting them, their habitats, and migration corridors.
- ✓ **Focus Areas:**
 - ✓ Protecting elephants, their habitats, and corridors.
 - ✓ Addressing human-elephant conflict.
 - ✓ Ensuring welfare and management of captive elephants.
- ✓ **Key Initiatives:**
 - ✓ Creation and maintenance of **Elephant Reserves** (e.g., Nilgiri, Mayurbhanj, and Periyar reserves).
 - ✓ Development of guidelines for preventing human-elephant conflicts.
 - ✓ Monitoring of elephant populations through censuses.
 - ✓ Establishing protected corridors for safe migration.
- ✓ **Significance:**
 - ✓ India is home to more than 60% of the global population of Asian Elephants.
 - ✓ Elephants play a crucial role in maintaining forest ecosystems.

Recent in News:

- ✓ Assam's latest Elephant Population Estimate 2024 reveals an estimated 5,828 elephants, marking a rise of 109 from the previous 2017 count.
- ✓ This synchronized estimation exercise highlights the stability of Assam's elephant population despite challenges such as habitat fragmentation and human-elephant conflicts.
- ✓ Total Elephant Population Estimated at 5,828, an increase of 109 from 5,719 in 2017.

January 04, 2025

Chhattisgarh's Green GDP Initiative

- ✓ Chhattisgarh has become the **first Indian state** to incorporate the ecological services of its forests into its economic framework by adopting the Green Gross Domestic Product (Green GDP) model.

- ✓ This initiative aims to link environmental contributions—such as clean air, water conservation, and biodiversity—to the state's economic growth, ensuring sustainable development while preserving natural resources for future generations.

January 04, 2025

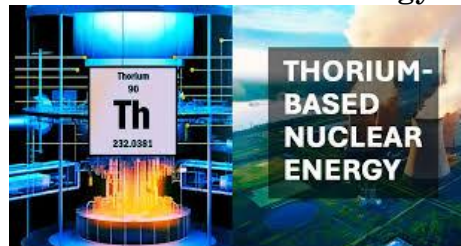
Pallas's Cat



- ✓ The first photographic proof of Pallas's cat in Himachal Pradesh, India, during a snow leopard survey recently, highlights urgent need for conservation of lesser-known species in the Indian Himalayas.
- ✓ The Pallas's cat, or manul (*Otocolobus manul*), is a small, long-haired cat (family Felidae).
- ✓ It was named Pallas's cat after Peter Simon Pallas, who first described it in 1776 based on specimens collected near Lake Baikal, Russia.
- ✓ It is primarily found in Central Asia, with the range extending to western Iran, Mongolia, China, Russia (on the border of Mongolia and China), Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.
- ✓ In these regions, it inhabits mountainous plains and semi-desert foothills.
- ✓ It is a soft-furred animal about the size of a house cat and is pale silvery gray or light brown in colour.
- ✓ Head and body length ranges from 45 to 60 centimetres (18 to 24 inches) with an additional 23–30 cm for the tail; weight ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 kilograms (5.5 to 7.7 pounds).
- ✓ It is distinguished by a broad head with high-set eyes and low-set ears.
- ✓ The end of its tail is ringed and tipped with black, and some individuals have vague, dark markings on the body.
- ✓ The fur of the underparts is about twice as long as that of the upperparts and possibly represents an adaptation to the cat's habitual lying and crouching on cold ground.

January 6, 2025

Thorium-based Nuclear Energy Production



- ✓ India's largest power generator, National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited has signed a

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strategic pact with US-based Clean Core Thorium Energy (CCTE) to explore development and deployment of advanced nuclear energy for enriched life (ANEEL), thorium-based fuel.

- ✓ Developed by CCTE, Aneel is a thorium-based fuel for pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs).
- ✓ The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) plans to utilize India's abundant thorium reserves in its three-stage nuclear power program as a long-term strategy.

January 07, 2025

Hanoi Declared World's Most Polluted City



- ✓ Hanoi, Vietnam's capital, has recently been identified as the world's most polluted city, with PM2.5 levels reaching 266 micrograms per cubic meter. This alarming air quality has raised significant health concerns among residents and prompted government action.
- ✓ On January 3, 2025, AirVisual reported that Hanoi's PM2.5 levels were the highest globally, indicating severe air pollution.

January 08, 2025

Common Noctule Bat



- ✓ A new study has uncovered the migration strategy of a mammal species called common noctule bat, which travels thousands of kilometres every spring across Europe uses warm storm fronts to aid their migration and conserve energy while flying.
- ✓ The Common noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) is an insectivorous bat.
- ✓ Its colors range from golden to dark brown above and usually pale brown below.
- ✓ Their wings are narrow and pointed, and they have a characteristic powerful, direct flight, with repeated steep dives when chasing flying insects.
- ✓ Noctules echolocate at low frequencies around 25kHz, just within the upper limit of human hearing, thus they can sometimes be heard, particularly by children.
- ✓ They generally reside in forests but may forage in open areas and dwell in or near human habitation.

- ✓ Roosting sites include hollow trees, buildings, and caves.
- ✓ During winter they hibernate in caves, rock crevices, bat boxes, or blocks of flats in Eastern Europe, where they are the most common hibernating bat species in the cities.
- ✓ They are found in common throughout Europe, most of temperate Asia to Japan and Burma, Oman, Viet Nam, Taiwan and Algeria.

January 08, 2025

Net-Zero Banking Alliance



- ✓ Wall Street's biggest banks have quit Net-Zero Banking Alliance which had been one of the most popular clubs inside global finance.
- ✓ Bank-led and UN-convened, it is a group of leading global banks committed to aligning their lending, investment, and capital markets activities with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- ✓ It is the climate accelerator for UNEP Financial Initiative's Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB).
- ✓ It is governed by a Steering Group and Chair.
- ✓ The Steering Group is selected by member banks, and represents a diversity of geographies and business models.
- ✓ It is supported and convened by the UNEP FI Secretariat, and the United Nations also holds a seat on the Steering Group.
- ✓ It operates in compliance with the NZBA governance document adopted in October 2021 and updated in August 2023 and March 2024.
- ✓ All NZBA member banks have signed the Commitment Statement and pledged to follow the target setting and reporting processes outlined there and in the accompanying Guidelines for Climate Target Setting for Banks.
- ✓ The Commitment Statement is a pre-requisite for joining the Net-Zero Banking Alliance, and is signed by a bank's CEO. All banks that have signed the commitment will:
- ✓ Transition the operational and attributable greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from their lending and investment portfolios to align with pathways to net-zero by 2050 or sooner.
- ✓ Within 18 months of joining, set targets for 2030 or sooner and a 2050 target, with intermediary targets to be set every 5 years from 2030 onwards.
- ✓ Banks' first 2030 targets will focus on priority sectors where the bank can have the most significant impact, ie. the most GHG-intensive sectors within their

portfolios, with further sector targets to be set within 36 months.

- ✓ Annually publish absolute emissions and emissions intensity in line with best practice and within a year of setting targets.
- ✓ Take a robust approach to the role of offsets in transition plans.
- ✓ No Indian Bank is a member of this alliance.

January 09, 2025

Tipeshwar Wildlife Sanctuary



Location: Yavatmal district, Maharashtra.

Significance:

- ✓ A male tiger born in the sanctuary traveled an unusual 500 km, reaching Solapur district.
- ✓ Known as the "Green Oasis of Southern Maharashtra" due to abundant water sources and lush greenery.

Rivers:

- ✓ Irrigated by Purna, Krishna, Bhima, and Tapti rivers, ensuring ample water availability.

Geology:

- ✓ Basaltic area formed by ancient volcanic lava blasts.

Terrain:

- ✓ Hilly and undulating with varied vegetation depending on altitude.

Flora:

- ✓ Rich in herbs, grasses, and bamboo forests.

Fauna:

- ✓ Hosts diverse wildlife, including hyenas, chitals, black bucks, sambars, jackals, wild boars, peacocks, monkeys, blue bulls, wild cats, and bears.
- ✓ Tipeshwar Wildlife Sanctuary is a crucial habitat for wildlife conservation and supports diverse ecosystems.

January 9, 2025

Umred-Pauni-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary



Location:

- ✓ Spread across Pauni tehsil (Bhandara district) and Umred, Kuhi, and Bhivapur Taluka (Nagpur district), Maharashtra.
- ✓ Northeast boundary: Wainganga River and Gose Khurd Dam.

- ✓ Southern boundary: State Highway 9 and Bhiwapur Town.

Establishment: 2013.

Area: 189 sq. km.

Connectivity:

- ✓ Linked to Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve via forests along the Wainganga River.
- ✓ Located 80 km from Pench Tiger Reserve and 50 km southwest of Nagzira Wildlife Sanctuary.

Flora:

- ✓ Forest comprises teak (60%), bamboo, tendu, mahua, and other indigenous species.

Fauna:

- ✓ Home to resident breeding tigers, herds of gaur, wild dogs.
- ✓ Rare species: flying squirrels, pangolins, and honey badgers.

Recent Incident:

- ✓ Bombay High Court criticized an incident where safari vehicles obstructed a tigress and her cubs on New Year's Eve.

January 10, 2025

Gaddi Dog



- ✓ The Gaddi dog, a loyal and resilient shepherd dog from the Himalayas, has been officially recognized as an indigenous breed by the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR).

- ✓ **Found in:** Pir Panjal range, Jammu & Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh.

- ✓ **Indigenous tag granted by:** National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

January 10, 2025

Neuroptera Species



- ✓ Discovery in Kerala



Rare Species Found:

- ✓ *Glenochrysa zeylanica*.
- ✓ *Indophanes barbara*.

Neuroptera Overview:

- ✓ Commonly called lacewings due to the intricate vein patterns in their wings, giving a lacy appearance.

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- ✓ Adults are terrestrial and found on plants, where they rest or hunt for prey.

Agricultural Importance:

- ✓ Predatory behavior makes Neuropteran insects valuable in agriculture.
- ✓ Larvae of families such as Chrysopidae, Hemerobiidae, and Coniopterygidae are highly effective biological control agents.
- ✓ Capable of voracious feeding and active prey-searching, targeting pests in agriculture and horticulture.
- ✓ The discovery highlights the ecological and agricultural importance of Neuroptera species in pest control and biodiversity conservation.

January 10, 2025

Garudakshi



- ✓ Garudakshi Online FIR System
- ✓ **Launched By:** Karnataka Forest Department.
- ✓ **Purpose:** To curb forest encroachments, illegal tree-felling, poaching, and unauthorized entry into forest areas.

Features:

- ✓ Modeled on the online FIR system specifically for wildlife and forest crimes.
- ✓ Handles cases under the Forest and Wildlife Protection Acts.
- ✓ Auto-generates formats for reports and complaints.

Includes modules for:

- ✓ Legacy Case Registration.
- ✓ Online Forest Offense Registration.
- ✓ Investigation.
- ✓ Reporting and Analytics.

Implementation:

- ✓ Pilot phase in Bengaluru Urban, Bhadravathi, Sirsi, and Male Mahadeshwara Wildlife Sanctuary divisions.
- ✓ Mandatory use for registering FIRs upon full implementation.

Public Access:

- ✓ Enables public complaints on forest offenses via mobile phones or email.
- ✓ **Collaboration:** Developed with the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI).
- ✓ This initiative aims to streamline forest crime management, enhance transparency, and involve public participation in wildlife and forest conservation.

January 10, 2025

Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet



- ✓ Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) and International Solar Alliance (ISA)

Partnership Highlights:

- ✓ GEAPP signed a Multi-Donor Trust Fund with ISA to mobilize \$100 million for high-impact solar energy projects.
- ✓ GEAPP's Project Management Unit provides governance oversight, facilitates fundraising, and leverages expertise in energy transition planning, financing, and project implementation.

Initiatives by GEAPP:

- ✓ **DUET (Digitalization of Utilities for Energy Transition):**
 - ✓ **Focus:** Digitalization of grid systems.
 - ✓ **Features:**
 - ✓ Technology suite to digitally capture grid assets with geo-coordinates and specifications.
 - ✓ Integration with live smart sensors for real-time data.
 - ✓ Real-time tracking of voltage, current, and phase data.
 - ✓ **Benefits:** Reduces transmission and distribution losses.

ENTICE 2.0 (Energy Transitions Innovation Challenge):

- ✓ **Objective:** Identify, nurture, and scale innovative solutions for energy transitions and sustainability goals.
- ✓ **Features:**
 - ✓ Provides access to funding, market linkages, and mentorship for startups.
 - ✓ Builds on ENTICE 1.0, expanding to support and scale investable opportunities.
- ✓ **Timeline:** ENTICE 2.0 to commence in January 2025.

Significance:

- ✓ Strengthens global efforts toward energy transition and climate sustainability.
- ✓ Supports innovative technologies and start ups in achieving renewable energy goals.
- ✓ Enhances grid efficiency and accelerates the adoption of solar energy projects.

January 13, 2025

2024 is the warmest year on record

- ✓ The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has confirmed that 2024 is the warmest year on record, based on six international datasets.
- ✓ World Meteorological Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN), responsible for

promoting international cooperation in the fields of meteorology, hydrology, climatology and geophysics.

January 13, 2025

Indo-Burmese pangolin



- ✓ Discovery of Indo-Burmese Pangolin (*Manis indoburmanica*)

Recent in News:

- ✓ Identified by Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) scientists in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Genetically distinct from Chinese pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) and Indian pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*).

Species Characteristics:

- ✓ Diverged from Chinese pangolin approximately 3.4 million years ago due to climatic and geological changes during the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs.
- ✓ Genetic analysis shows 8% difference from Chinese pangolin.
- ✓ Found at altitudes of 180–1830 meters above sea level.
- ✓ **Features:** Dark brown and olive-brown scales with a pinkish face.

Habitat Range:

- ✓ Likely inhabits parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and may extend into Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar.

General Pangolin Facts:

- ✓ Belong to the Manidae family, with eight species globally (four in Africa and four in Asia).
- ✓ Unique mammals with protective keratin scales, used as armor by curling into a ball when threatened.

Conservation Note:

- ✓ Pangolins are among the most trafficked mammals globally due to demand for their scales and meat, highlighting the need for conservation efforts.

January 13, 2025

Desert National Park (DNP) : Great Indian Bustards Spotted



- ✓ Desert National Park (DNP), Rajasthan
- ✓ **Location:** Situated in the Thar Desert, near Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.
- ✓ **Size:** One of India's largest national parks, covering over 3160 sq. km.
- ✓ **Climate:** Located in an extremely hot and arid region with very low rainfall (<100mm).
- ✓ **Terrain:** Vast, sandy, and undulating landscape.
- ✓ Features craggy rocks, compact Salt Lake bottoms, interstitial areas, and fixed sand dunes.
- ✓ 20% of the park consists of sand dunes.
- ✓ **Water Bodies:** Includes three main lakes: Rajbaugh Lake, Malik Talao Lake, and Padam Talao.
- ✓ **Fossils:** Home to fossils from the Jurassic Period, a significant paleontological feature.
- ✓ **Conservation Success:** Recent sighting of 12 Great Indian Bustards (GIBs) in a group at DNP, marking a significant boost to conservation efforts for this critically endangered species.
- ✓ Desert National Park plays a vital role in preserving unique desert ecosystems and endangered species like the Great Indian Bustard.

January 13, 2025

IUCN Lists Western Ghats As Key Freshwater Biodiversity Hotspot:

- ✓ The Western Ghats in India has been identified as a key global hotspot for threatened freshwater species by the first-ever multi-taxon global freshwater fauna assessment conducted by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List of Threatened Species.
- ✓ The study highlights that one-quarter of freshwater species worldwide face a high risk of extinction, with the Western Ghats being one of the most critical regions for freshwater biodiversity conservation.

January 13, 2025

INROAD Project (Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development)

- ✓ The INROAD (Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development) project, launched with a financial backing of ₹100 crore, aims to enhance the quality of natural rubber produced in India's North-East.
- ✓ This initiative focuses on skill development for rubber growers and the establishment of model infrastructure, with support from key players in the tyre industry, demonstrating a unique collaboration between agriculture and manufacturing.

January 13, 2025

DRDO's HIMKAVACH multi-layer cold weather clothing system:

- ✓ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has unveiled the HIMKAVACH multi-layer clothing system, engineered to enhance the

operational efficiency of military personnel in extreme cold conditions.

- ✓ This innovative apparel has successfully completed user trials, demonstrating its effectiveness in temperatures ranging from +20°C to -60°C.

January 13, 2025

India added a record 30 GW of renewable energy capacity in 2024:

- ✓ India achieved a record renewable energy capacity addition of 30 GW in 2024, according to data from the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- ✓ This marks a 113% increase from 13.75 GW in 2023, highlighting the country's accelerating shift toward clean energy.
- ✓ The milestone assumes great importance as India targets 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

January 13, 2025

Utricularia: Found In Rajasthan



- ✓ Utricularia (Bladderwort) in Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan

Recent in News:

- ✓ Large numbers of the Utricularia (bladderwort), a rare and unique carnivorous plant, were found in Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan.

Overview of Utricularia:

- ✓ **Genus:** *Utricularia* in the family Lentibulariaceae.
- ✓ **Species:** Over 220 species globally, occupying temperate and tropical habitats. It is the most diverse and widespread genus of carnivorous plants.

Characteristics:

- ✓ **Carnivorous:** Features small hollow sacs (bladders) that capture and digest tiny animals, such as insect larvae, aquatic worms, and water fleas.
- ✓ **Habitat:** Found in lakes, streams, and waterlogged soils worldwide. Some species are invasive.
- ✓ **No Roots:** Bladderwort plants lack roots and typically have horizontal floating stems with simple or divided leaves.

Bladder Mechanism:

- ✓ The small carnivorous bladders along the stem capture organisms.
- ✓ The trap door of the bladder is activated by hairs, opening in milliseconds to suck in prey when triggered. The door then closes in 2.5 milliseconds.
- ✓ **Flowers:** Bisexual and bilaterally symmetrical.

- ✓ Bladderworts are fascinating examples of nature's complex adaptations for survival, using a sophisticated trapping mechanism to feed in their aquatic environments.

Keoladeo National Park:

- ✓ The Keoladeo National Park, formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, is located in the eastern part of Rajasthan.

January 13, 2025

Blue Flag Certification



Recent in News:

- ✓ Kerala's famed Kappad beach in Kozhikode and Chal beach in Kannur have been bestowed with the coveted Blue Flag certification by Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

Blue Flag Certification

Overview:

- ✓ Eco-label granted by the Foundation for Environment Education (FEE) in Denmark.
- ✓ Started in France (1985), extended globally in 2001.
- ✓ Recognized as one of the world's most prestigious voluntary awards for beaches, marinas, and sustainable tourism boats.

Criteria for Certification:

- ✓ **Water Quality:** Ensures clean and safe water.
- ✓ **Environmental Management:** Proper waste management and conservation practices.
- ✓ **Environmental Education:** Promotes awareness about environmental issues.
- ✓ **Safety:** Ensures safety measures for beachgoers and visitors.



Mission:

- ✓ Promote sustainability in tourism by encouraging environmental education, protection, and sustainable development practices.

Blue Flag Beaches in India:

- ✓ Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha), Radhanagar (Andaman and Nicobar), Kovalam (Tamil Nadu), Eden (Puducherry), Minicoy Thundi (Lakshadweep), Kadmat (Lakshadweep).
- ✓ The Blue Flag Certification serves as a global symbol of excellence in beach and marina management, promoting responsible tourism and environmental stewardship.

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January 14, 2025

Hoollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary:

- ✓ The Centre's National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has approved exploratory drilling for oil and gas in the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of Assam's Hoollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ✓ Hoollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary Situated in Jorhat district, Assam, the sanctuary lies in a secluded region of evergreen forest.

January 14, 2025

Cryo-Born Baby Corals:



- ✓ The **world's first cryo-born baby corals** have been successfully introduced into the Great Barrier Reef, marking a groundbreaking achievement in coral restoration and conservation.
- ✓ Australian scientists used cutting-edge cryopreservation to fertilize coral eggs with cryopreserved sperm collected from the Great Barrier Reef.
- ✓ Scientists grew the corals in the National Sea Simulator before transferring them to specially designed 'coral cradles' on the Reef.
- ✓ It aims to introduce heat-tolerant corals to protect reefs from climate change and rising ocean temperatures.

January 15, 2025

Cyclone Dikeledi:



- ✓ Cyclone Dikeledi hit Mayotte, a French Indian Ocean territory, located in the Mozambique Channel (Indian Ocean).
- ✓ Mayotte consists of two islands of the Comoros archipelago, with the main island called Mayotte (or Grande Terre) and the smaller island Pamandzi (Petite Terre).
- ✓ It is the poorest territory in both France and the European Union.

January 15, 2025

Clouded Leopard : Study



- ✓ **Recent in News:** A new study addresses critical gaps in understanding the Clouded Leopard habitat suitability, fragmentation, and connectivity across its historical and current ranges, offering a conservation roadmap.
- ✓ Clouded Leopard is a wild cat inhabiting dense forests of the Himalayas through mainland Southeast Asia into South China.
- ✓ There are two species of clouded leopards: the clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*), found on the mainland of southeastern Asia, and the Sunda clouded leopard (*Neofelis diardi*), found on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo.
- ✓ They are one of the most ancient cat species. However, they are neither a true great cat nor a true small cat, because they cannot roar or purr.
- ✓ It is found in Nepal, Bangladesh, and India through Indochina to Sumatra and Borneo, and northeastward to southern China and formerly Taiwan.
- ✓ It prefers to live in lowland tropical rainforests. However, it can also be found in dry woodlands and secondary forests, and even in mangrove swamps (in Borneo).
- ✓ It has been found at relatively high altitudes in the Himalayas.
- ✓ It is the State animal of Meghalaya.
- ✓ Conservation status: Both the species are classified as 'Vulnerable' under the IUCN Red List.

January 16, 2025

Atomic Energy Commission Reconstituted



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ The **Government of India has reconstituted the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC).**

- ✓ **Ajit Kumar Mohanty** (Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy - DAE) is the Chairman.
- ✓ **National Security Adviser Ajit Doval** is among the key members.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC):

- ✓ **Established: August 1948** under the Department of Scientific Research.
- ✓ **Purpose:** Oversees and formulates policies for atomic energy research & development.
- ✓ **Nodal Department:** Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).

Functions of AEC:

- ✓ **Policy formulation** for nuclear energy development.
- ✓ **Supervision of nuclear research & technology** for peaceful applications.
- ✓ **Guidance to institutions** like BARC, NPCIL, and IGCAR.
- ✓ **Ensuring national security & strategic nuclear programs.**

January 16, 2025

Falcated duck



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ **Birders at Sultanpur National Park, Haryana,** recently spotted a **Falcated Duck**, a rare visitor to India.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About Falcated Duck:

- ✓ **Scientific Name:** Mareca falcata
- ✓ **Common Name:** Falcated Teal
- ✓ **Size:** Similar to Gadwall-sized dabbling ducks.

Habitat & Distribution:

- ✓ **Native to:** Eastern Siberia, Mongolia, Northern Japan.
- ✓ **Wintering Grounds:** Southeast Asia, Eastern India.
- ✓ **Occasional Sightings in:** America, Poland, Thailand.
- ✓ **Preferred Habitat:** Freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, and marshes with forest cover.

Breeding & Diet:

- ✓ **Breeding Season:** May to early July.
- ✓ **Nest Location:** Ground near water, hidden in tall grass/brush.
- ✓ **Diet:** Mostly herbivorous (seeds, aquatic plants, rice); sometimes small invertebrates, mollusks.

Conservation & Threats:

- ✓ **IUCN Status:** Near Threatened (NT).
- ✓ **Threats:** Hunting (for food & feathers).
- ✓ **Sightings in India:** Rare & Irregular.

January 16, 2025

Shikari Devi Wildlife Sanctuary



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ **Government of India** has designated areas around **Shikari Devi Wildlife Sanctuary** (Himachal Pradesh) as **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)** to limit urbanization & developmental impact.

Key Facts for UPSC:

About Shikari Devi Wildlife Sanctuary:

- ✓ **Location:** Mandi district, Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ **Altitude Range:** 1,800 to 3,400 meters (Transition: Pine → Oak → Alpine Meadow).
- ✓ **Established:** 1962 (Covers 7,200 ha around the sacred Shikari Devi Temple).

Cultural & Religious Significance:

- ✓ Named after **Goddess Shikari Devi**, with a temple dedicated to her.
- ✓ Temple is located at **2,850 meters**, surrounded by **snow-capped peaks & dense pine forests.**

Flora & Fauna:

Animals:

- ✓ **Carnivores:** Leopard, Snow Leopard, Himalayan Black Bear, Marten, Indian Porcupine.
- ✓ **Herbivores:** Musk Deer, Barking Deer, Goral.
- ✓ **Others:** Himalayan Palm Civet, Kashmiri Flying Squirrel, Langur, Common Squirrel.
- ✓ **Birds:** Himalayan Monal (State Bird of HP), Pheasants, Other high-altitude birds.

Conservation Significance:

- ✓ **Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) Notification:** Ensures **buffer zones & limits construction/development.**
- ✓ **Part of the Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot.**

January 17, 2025

Entity List



Current Affairs Context:

The U.S. removed three Indian nuclear entities from its restrictive Entity List:

- ✓ **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)**
- ✓ **Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre (IGCAR)**

✓ Indian Rare Earths (IRE)

Key Facts for UPSC:

What is the Entity List?

- ✓ Published by the **U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)**.
- ✓ Includes **foreign entities** (businesses, institutions, or organizations) subject to **strict export licensing requirements**.

Entities are listed if they are suspected of:

- ✓ Engaging in activities **against U.S. national security**.
- ✓ Violating **U.S. foreign policy interests**.

Significance of India's Removal from the List:

- ✓ **Boosts Indo-U.S. strategic & nuclear cooperation**.
- ✓ Facilitates **technology transfers & collaborations** in the nuclear sector.
- ✓ Strengthens **India's credentials as a responsible nuclear power**.
- ✓ Reduces **restrictions on exports and re-exports** of controlled items.

January 17, 2025

Sydney Funnel-Web Spider:



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ **Australian scientists discovered a larger, more venomous species** of the Sydney funnel-web spider.
- ✓ **New species name:** *Atrax christenseni* (Nicknamed "Big Boy").
- ✓ **Size:** 9 cm (3.54 inches) long.
- ✓ **Discovered near Newcastle**, 170 km north of Sydney.

Key Facts for UPSC:

- ✓ **Sydney Funnel-Web Spider – Overview**
- ✓ **Appearance:** Shiny, dark brown to black spiders with **finger-like spinnerets** at the end of the abdomen.
- ✓ **Venom:** Contains **40 different toxic proteins**.
- ✓ **Male funnel-web spiders** have **stronger venom** and are responsible for human deaths.

Habitat & Distribution

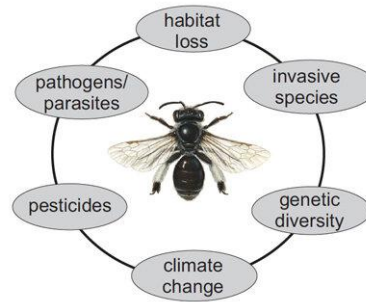
- ✓ Found in **bushy suburban areas, forests, woodlands, and shady gullies**.
- ✓ Prefer **south or east-facing slopes**.
- ✓ **Funnel-Web Spiders (Atracidae Family)**
- ✓ **One of the most dangerous arachnids** in the world.

There are **36 described species**, classified into **three genera**:

Hadronyche
Atrax
Illawarra

January 18, 2025

Threats to Wild Bees



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ A study published in the journal **Science** revealed that **over 70% of wild bee species** are at risk from **pesticide residues** in soil.
- ✓ Current **pesticide risk assessments** focus on **honey bees**, ignoring **wild bees** that nest in soil.

Key Facts for UPSC:

Wild Bees & Their Importance

- ✓ **Crucial pollinators** for **crops and wild plants**.
- ✓ **One-third of global food production** depends on pollinators (FAO).
- ✓ Essential for maintaining **biodiversity** and **ecosystem balance**.

Threats to Wild Bees

- ✓ **Pesticide Residues in Soil**
- ✓ **Cyantraniliprole** (a pesticide) **reduces survival & reproduction** in wild bees.
- ✓ **Long-term exposure** affects future bee populations.
- ✓ **Habitat Destruction**
- ✓ Urbanization, deforestation, and monoculture farming reduce nesting sites.
- ✓ **Climate Change**
- ✓ Alters flowering patterns, disrupting bee feeding cycles.
- ✓ **Diseases & Parasites**
- ✓ Wild bees are susceptible to pathogens spreading from managed honeybee colonies.

January 21, 2025

Bankapur Wolf Sanctuary



Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ The **Indian grey wolf** has given birth to **eight pups** in **Karnataka's first Wolf Sanctuary – Bankapur Wolf Sanctuary**.

Key Facts for UPSC

About Indian Grey Wolf

- ✓ **Subspecies of grey wolf** (*Canis lupus pallipes*).

- ✓ **Smaller packs** and **less vocal** than other wolf species.
- ✓ **Nocturnal hunter**, active from **dusk to dawn**.
- ✓ **Intermediate in size** between **Tibetan & Arabian wolves** but lacks a thick winter coat.

Habitat & Distribution

- ✓ Prefers **scrublands, grasslands & semi-arid pastoral agro-ecosystems**.
- ✓ Found across **the Indian subcontinent to Israel**.

Threats to Indian Grey Wolf

- ✓ **Habitat loss, prey depletion, and human-wildlife conflict**.

Bankapur Wolf Sanctuary – Karnataka

- ✓ **Location:** Karnataka
- ✓ **Significance:**
- ✓ **First wolf sanctuary in Karnataka.**
- ✓ **Second dedicated wolf sanctuary in India** after **Mahuadanr Wolf Sanctuary (Jharkhand, 1976)**.

January 21, 2025

Palamu Tiger Reserve : Bison Report



Indian Bison | Palamau Tiger Reserve

Current Affairs Context:

- ✓ **Jharkhand Forest Department** has launched a **study to revive the declining population of the Indian Bison (Gaur) at Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR)**.

Key Facts for UPSC

About Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR)

- ✓ **Location:** Latehar District, **Jharkhand** (Chhotanagpur Plateau).
- ✓ **Part of:** **Betla National Park**.
- ✓ **Established:** Among **India's first 9 Tiger Reserves** under Project Tiger.
- ✓ **Tiger Census:** First reserve in the world where a **tiger census was conducted using pugmark count (1932)**.
- ✓ **Total Area:** 1,014 sq. km.
- ✓ **Core Area:** 414 sq. km.
- ✓ **Buffer Area:** 600 sq. km.
- ✓ **Terrain:** **Undulating with valleys, hills, and plains.**

Rivers:

- ✓ **North Koyal, Auranga, and Burha** flow through the reserve.
- ✓ **Burha is the only perennial river** (drought-prone area).

Geology:

- ✓ Formed of **gneiss, granite, and limestone**.
- ✓ **Rich in minerals: Bauxite & Coal deposits**.
- ✓ **About Indian Bison (Gaur) – (Bos gaurus)**
- ✓ **Largest wild cattle species** in the world.
- ✓ **Habitat:** **Tropical forests & grasslands**.
- ✓ **Diet:** **Herbivore – feeds on grass, leaves, and fruits.**
- ✓ **Threats:** **Habitat destruction, poaching, & human-wildlife conflict.**

January 21, 2025

Great Barrier Reef : Climate Change Effect



Current Context:

- ✓ A recent study has highlighted **severe climate change effects on the Great Barrier Reef**, impacting marine biodiversity and coral ecosystems.

Key Facts for UPSC

About the Great Barrier Reef

- ✓ **Location:** Off the **northeastern coast of Australia** in the **Coral Sea** (Pacific Ocean).
- ✓ **Largest coral reef system in the world.**
- ✓ **Area:** **~350,000 sq. km** (10% of the world's coral reef ecosystems).

Consists of:

- ✓ **~3,000 individual reefs**
- ✓ **Types:** Platform reefs, wall reefs, and fringing reefs

Biodiversity:

- ✓ **400 types of coral**
- ✓ **1,500 fish species**
- ✓ **4,000 mollusk species**
- ✓ **Threatened species:** Dugong (Sea Cow) & Green Turtle

Significance of the Reef

- ✓ **Visible from space.**
- ✓ **UNESCO World Heritage Site (1981).**
- ✓ Managed by the **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (Australia)**.

Threats to the Great Barrier Reef

- ✓ **Climate Change**
- ✓ **Coral bleaching** due to **rising sea temperatures**.
- ✓ **Ocean acidification** affects coral growth.
- ✓ **Human Activities**
- ✓ **Overfishing & Pollution**
- ✓ **Coastal development** **destroying marine habitats.**
- ✓ **Natural Disasters**
- ✓ **Cyclones & Extreme weather events**

January 22, 2025

Midges : New Species Identified



Recent Discovery

- ✓ **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** has identified **23 species** of blood-sucking flies (Midges).

- ✓ **13 species recorded for the first time in India.**

About Midges

- ✓ **Tiny insects** resembling flies.
- ✓ **Belong to the genus Culicoides.**
- ✓ Locally called **“Bhusi files”**.
- ✓ Closely related to **mosquitoes in feeding habits** (blood-sucking).

Newly Recorded Species in India

- ✓ *C. barnetti*, *C. gouldi*, *C. flaviscutellaris*, *C. flavipunctatus*, *C. hui*, *C. histrio*, *C. guttifer*, *C. perornatus*, *C. okinawensis*, *C. quatei*, *C. obscurus*, *C. coronalis*, and *C. kusaiensis*.

January 23, 2025

Chinar Tree : Have Been Geo-Tagged



Recent Development

- ✓ Chinar trees in **Kashmir** have been **geo-tagged** and equipped with **QR codes** for **digital conservation**.
- ✓ **25 characteristics** recorded, including **location, health, age, and growth patterns**.
- ✓ Geo-tagging **confirmed some trees to be over 1000 years old**, rather than the earlier estimate of 700 years.

About Chinar Tree

- ✓ **Scientific Name:** *Platanus orientalis*
- ✓ **Common Names:** Oriental Plane Tree, Maple Tree, **Boueen** (locally, after Hindu goddess Bhavani).
- ✓ **State Tree of Jammu & Kashmir.**
- ✓ **Height:** Up to **30 meters**; **Girth:** 10-15 meters.
- ✓ Takes **30-50 years** to mature; **150 years** to reach full size.
- ✓ **Unique Seasonal Colors:** Deep green (summer) → **Red, Amber, Yellow** (autumn).
- ✓ **Only species of the Platanaceae family found in India**, growing across **Kashmir Valley**.

January 23, 2025

Diamond Imprest Authorisation Scheme



Objective:

- ✓ To **enhance the global competitiveness** of India's **diamond industry**.
- ✓ To facilitate **duty-free import** of **cut & polished natural diamonds** (less than $\frac{1}{4}$ Carat or 25 Cents) for **export purposes**.

Key Features:

- ✓ Implemented by the **Department of Commerce, Government of India**.
- ✓ **Effective from: April 1, 2025.**
- ✓ **Export obligation: 10% value addition** required.
- ✓ **Eligibility:**
- ✓ Exporters with **Two Star Export House** status or higher.
- ✓ **Minimum \$15 million annual exports.**
- ✓ **Support for MSMEs:** Enables **smaller exporters** to compete with larger players.

Global Context & Rationale:

- ✓ Inspired by **beneficiation policies** in **diamond-rich countries** (Botswana, Namibia, Angola).
- ✓ These countries mandate **local cutting & polishing units** for **value addition**.

Significance for India:

- ✓ Helps **retain India's position** as a **global leader** in the **diamond value chain**.
- ✓ Ensures **sustainable growth** of the **diamond export industry**.

January 23, 2025

National Mineral Development Corporation

एनएमडीसी



NMDC

Recent Development:

- ✓ NMDC is set to extract **6,500 carats of diamonds** worth **\$3.4 million** from a mine near **Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh**, in the **2023-24 fiscal year**.

About NMDC:

- ✓ **Founded in: 1958** as a **fully government-owned** enterprise.
- ✓ **Administrative Control:** Ministry of Steel, Government of India.
- ✓ **Navratna Status:** Awarded in 2008.
- ✓ **Headquarters:** Hyderabad, Telangana.

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Operations & Mineral Exploration:

- ✓ India's largest iron ore producer (~45 million tonnes annually).

Operates mechanized mines in:

- ✓ Bailadila Sector, Chhattisgarh.
- ✓ Donimalai, Karnataka.

Key minerals explored:

- ✓ Iron ore, Copper, Rock Phosphate, Limestone, Dolomite, Gypsum, Bentonite, Magnesite, Tin, Tungsten, Graphite, Beach Sands, and Diamonds.
- ✓ Operates India's only mechanized diamond mine at Panna, Madhya Pradesh.

Recognition & Market Role:

- ✓ Rated 5-Star by the Indian Bureau of Mines, Ministry of Mines.
- ✓ Among the world's lowest-cost iron ore producers.
- ✓ Supplies high-grade iron ore to domestic steel manufacturers through long-term contracts.

January 23, 2025

Asan Conservation Reserve



Recent Development:

- ✓ A bird counting campaign recorded 5,225 birds from 117 species at the Asan Wetland, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

About Asan Conservation Reserve (ACR):

- ✓ Location: Dehradun district, Uttarakhand.
- ✓ Area: 444 hectares along the Asan River leading to its confluence with the Yamuna River.
- ✓ Declared Conservation Reserve: 2005 (under Section 36A of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972).
- ✓ First Ramsar Site of Uttarakhand.
- ✓ Listed as an Important Bird Area (BNHS & BirdLife International).
- ✓ Part of the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) – a crucial stopover for migratory birds.

Biodiversity & Key Species:

- ✓ Avian Species: 330+ bird species
- ✓ Critically Endangered: White-rumped vulture, Baer's pochard.
- ✓ Endangered: Egyptian vulture, steppe eagle, black-bellied tern.
- ✓ Vulnerable: Marbled teal, common pochard, Indian spotted eagle.

Non-Avian Species:

- ✓ 49 fish species, including the endangered Putitor Mahseer.

January 24, 2025

Use of wind turbines along railway tracks



Overview:

- ✓ Objective: Indian Railways (IR) is exploring wind turbines along railway tracks to support its goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Pilot Project:

- ✓ Western Railway installed mini vertical-axis wind turbines that generate 1-10 kW of electricity by harnessing wind from passing trains.
- ✓ The pilot aims to test the feasibility of using wind energy in the railway sector.

Renewable Energy Targets:

- By November 2024, Indian Railways plans to commission:
 - ✓ 487 MW of solar power.
 - ✓ 103 MW of wind power.
 - ✓ 100 MW of Renewable Energy Round-the-Clock (RTC).

January 24, 2025

Boreal Forests



Key Findings:

- ✓ Climate Change Impact: A recent study shows that nearly half of the world's boreal forests are experiencing significant changes due to climate change.
- ✓ Warming Trend: Boreal forests are warming four times faster than the global average.
- ✓ Forest Transition: These forests are transitioning to an open state with sparser tree cover, which:
 - Reduces their carbon storage capacity.
 - Increases wildfire risks.
- ✓ Permafrost Thawing: As the permafrost thaws, there is a risk of significant soil carbon release, which may further complicate projections about the forest's ability to store carbon.

Boreal Forest Overview:

- ✓ The **boreal forest** (or "taiga") is the **world's largest land biome**, covering **30% of global forest area** and about **10% of Earth's land surface**.

Implications for Climate and Environment:

- ✓ **Carbon Sink Role:** Boreal forests play a critical role as **carbon sinks**, but this is at risk as they warm and lose tree density.
- ✓ **Wildfire Risks:** The decrease in tree density increases the likelihood of **wildfires**, which not only destroy forests but also release carbon stored in trees and soil.

January 27, 2025

Black Panther



- ✓ **Event:** An Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer recently shared a **video of a rare black panther** strolling through the lush greenery of **north Bengal**.

Black Panther Overview:

- ✓ A **black panther** is a **melanistic** variant of large felines in the **Panthera genus** (such as tigers, leopards, and jaguars).
- ✓ They are known for their **striking black fur**, caused by a genetic mutation that leads to an excess of black pigmentation.
- ✓ Despite their dark fur, black panthers retain the characteristic rosette patterns of leopards or jaguars, but these are often difficult to see due to the dark coloring.

Significance:

- ✓ The sighting of a black panther is considered rare due to their elusive nature and low population, especially in certain regions.
- ✓ North Bengal, with its rich **forests and diverse wildlife**, is an ideal habitat for such rare species.

January 27, 2025

Rakhigarhi



Recent Discovery:

- ✓ A reservoir unearthed at Rakhigarhi, Haryana, not only highlights the advanced Harappan engineering but also furthers research on the Saraswati River.

Rakhigarhi Overview:

- ✓ Located in Hisar district, Haryana, in the Ghaggar-Hakra river plain, Rakhigarhi is a major archaeological site associated with the Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan Civilization).
- ✓ It is the largest Harappan site discovered so far and one of the oldest urban centers in India's Bronze Age.

Key Facts about Rakhigarhi:

- ✓ **Discovery:** First identified by the Archaeological Survey of India in the 1960s.
- ✓ The site spans around 350 hectares, with seven archaeological mounds identified.
- ✓ It has yielded evidence primarily from the Early and Mature Harappan periods, and was completely abandoned during the Late Harappan period.

Noteworthy Findings:

- ✓ The site features a planned township with mud-brick and burnt-brick houses and a sophisticated drainage system, showcasing Harappan urban planning.

Artifacts Found:

- ✓ Ceramic industry represented by red ware (including jars, bowls, beakers, and goblets).
- ✓ Animal sacrificial pits and ritual fire alters reflect the Harappan ceremonial practices.
- ✓ A cylindrical seal featuring Harappan characters and an alligator symbol is an important artifact.
- ✓ Other finds include beads, terracotta bangles, animal figurines, toy cart frames, bone points, and inscribed steatite seals.

Significance of the Saraswati River:

- ✓ This discovery advances research into the Saraswati River, believed to be a major water source for Harappan settlements, as well as its potential role in shaping the civilization's urban and agricultural practices.

Timeline and Cultural Context:



- ✓ The site primarily dates back to the Mature Harappan period, with evidence suggesting a well-established civilization engaged in trade, crafts, and rituals.
- ✓ **Late Stage Burials:** Some burials found at the site appear to be from a later medieval period, adding an additional layer to the historical significance of the area.

January 27, 2025

Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary



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Recent Developments:

- ✓ The Forest Department has initiated plans to revise the boundaries of Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary to address existing legal complications related to its jurisdiction and conservation efforts.

Location and Overview:

- ✓ Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in the Aravalli hills, approximately 20 kilometers from Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- ✓ The sanctuary is named after the historic Nahargarh Fort, which was built in the 18th century by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, the founder of Jaipur.
- ✓ The sanctuary spans 720 hectares of land, offering a habitat for diverse flora and fauna.

Key Features:

- ✓ Nahargarh Biological Park, located within the sanctuary, is particularly famous for offering lion safaris, allowing visitors to view the majestic lions in their natural habitat.

Conservation Efforts:

- ✓ The proposed revision of the sanctuary's boundaries is part of ongoing efforts to ensure better management and protection of the sanctuary's biodiversity and to resolve any legal issues that may hinder conservation activities.

January 27, 2025

Bhitarkanika National Park : Annual Reptile Census



Key Findings of the Census:

- ✓ The annual reptile census at Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) has recorded a total of 1,826 saltwater crocodiles in 2025.
- ✓ Among these, 18 albino crocodiles (rare white crocodiles) have been identified, making this finding particularly noteworthy.
- ✓ The census is aimed at increasing the population of crocodiles to the point where 5 to 6 crocodiles are visible per kilometer of water, ensuring a stable and healthy crocodile population.

About Bhitarkanika National Park:

- ✓ Location: Bhitarkanika National Park is situated in the state of Odisha, India.
- ✓ Size and Ecosystem: It is India's second-largest mangrove ecosystem, following the Sunderbans in West Bengal.
- ✓ Wetland Recognition: The park is recognized as a Ramsar Site, meaning it is a wetland of international importance, highlighting its ecological significance.

Conservation Efforts:

- ✓ The annual census is a part of ongoing efforts to monitor and manage the saltwater crocodile population in BNP, helping to ensure the health and balance of the ecosystem.
- ✓ The census helps in assessing the conservation needs of other reptile species within the park as well, ensuring that habitat preservation and species protection are prioritized.

January 27, 2025

Dhanauri Wetland



Legal and Conservation Importance:

- ✓ The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Uttar Pradesh government to present the status of notifying Dhanauri Wetland as an official wetland within four weeks. This decision is crucial for the conservation and legal protection of the wetland.

Location and Ecological Significance:

- ✓ The Dhanauri Wetland is located in Greater Noida, within the Gautam Buddha Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh. It lies in close proximity to the Okhla Bird Sanctuary and Surajpur Wetland.
- ✓ The wetland is nestled within the floodplains of the Yamuna Basin, just 15 km from the Yamuna River, making it an important water body for migratory birds.

Biodiversity and Birdlife:

- ✓ Sarus Crane: The Dhanauri Wetland is a significant habitat for the vulnerable Sarus Crane (*Antigone antigone*), which is the world's tallest flying bird. The wetland provides an ideal breeding and feeding ground for these cranes.
- ✓ IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- ✓ Subspecies: Indian Sarus Crane, Eastern Sarus Crane, Australian Sarus Crane
- ✓ In addition to the Sarus Crane, the wetland is home to a variety of bird species, such as:
- ✓ Common teal, Mallard, Northern-Pintail, Greylag geese, Bar-headed geese
- ✓ Woolly-necked Stork, Black-necked Stork, Painted Stork
- ✓ Eurasian marsh harrier, and others.

Conservation Recognition:

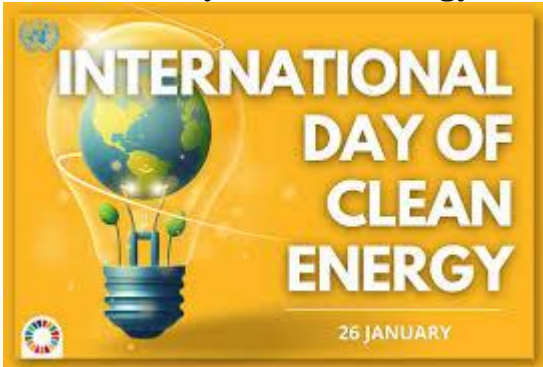
- ✓ Dhanauri Wetland has been recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International, highlighting its critical role in supporting avian biodiversity.

Habitat and Ecosystem:

- ✓ The wetland is primarily composed of marshes, which are crucial for maintaining the local hydrological balance, supporting diverse wildlife, and acting as natural water filters for the region.

January 28, 2025

International Day of Clean Energy 2025



- ✓ The **International Day of Clean Energy** celebrated on **26 January** serves as a significant call to raise awareness and mobilize global action for a **just and inclusive transition to clean energy**. It emphasizes the importance of clean energy in achieving **socio-economic equality** and addressing the environmental challenges posed by **climate change**.

Key Points:

Purpose:

- ✓ The day is meant to focus attention on the need for **clean energy** as a solution to the challenges of climate change, poverty, and social inequalities.

Dual Challenge:

- ✓ The world faces a **dual challenge**:
- ✓ **Ensuring no one is left behind**, meaning access to clean and affordable energy for all.
- ✓ **Protecting our planet**, addressing issues like environmental degradation and global warming.

Clean Energy's Role:

- ✓ Clean energy plays a crucial role in mitigating the **adverse effects of climate change** by reducing reliance on fossil fuels and lowering **carbon emissions**.
- ✓ It offers an opportunity to create **sustainable livelihoods**, reduce **poverty**, and **improve quality of life**, especially in underserved communities.

Inclusive Transition:

- ✓ A transition to clean energy must be **inclusive**, ensuring that all communities, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable, have access to the benefits of this transition. This can help reduce inequalities and provide energy security.

Global Mobilization:

- ✓ The day is a platform for governments, businesses, and citizens to discuss the pathways to achieving a **sustainable energy future** and to take collective action in reducing **carbon footprints** while improving energy efficiency.

January 28, 2025

White-Naped Tit:



- ✓ The **White-Naped Tit** (*Machlolophus nuchalis*), recently documented in **Kappatagudda hills of North Karnataka**, is an exciting bird sighting for bird enthusiasts. Here are some key details about this species:

Key Features:

- ✓ **Scientific Name:** *Machlolophus nuchalis*
- ✓ **Family:** Paridae (Tit family)
- ✓ **Endemic to India:** The White-Naped Tit has two main populations in India:
- ✓ **Northwest:** Gujarat, Haryana, and Rajasthan
- ✓ **South:** Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu

Physical Description:

- ✓ **Coloration:** This bird is the only **pied (black-and-white) tit** in India.
- ✓ **Upperparts:** Glossy black from the forehead to the tail, with a prominent white patch on the lower nape and upper mantle.
- ✓ **Underparts:** White, with a wide black central band running from the throat to the vent.
- ✓ **Wings:** Large white patches with black bars.
- ✓ **Behavior:**
- ✓ It is typically seen in **pairs** or **small family groups**.
- ✓ Its call is a key feature in identifying the species, which was how it was first documented in North Karnataka.

Conservation Status:

- ✓ **IUCN Red List:** **Vulnerable**, which highlights the bird's risk of extinction due to habitat loss and other environmental factors.
- ✓ **Significance:**
- ✓ The discovery of the **White-Naped Tit** in new locations adds important data to our understanding of the species' range and behavior.
- ✓ It is essential to monitor and protect this species, as it is **vulnerable** and endemic, making it an important part of India's biodiversity.

January 29, 2025

Wetland Accredited Cities



- ✓ **Indore** and **Udaipur** have become the first two Indian cities to be included in the prestigious list of **Wetland Accredited Cities (WCA)**. Here's a breakdown of what this means:

Wetland Accredited Cities (WCA):

- ✓ **Purpose:** The WCA is a **voluntary accreditation** scheme that recognizes cities for their commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of their natural or human-made wetlands.
- ✓ **Criteria:** Cities are evaluated based on **six international criteria** set out by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- ✓ **Duration:** The accreditation is granted for **six years**, after which it must be renewed if the city continues to meet the standards.

Key Points:

- ✓ **Recognition:** This is a significant achievement for **Indore** and **Udaipur** as they are among the **74 cities globally** recognized for their efforts to conserve wetlands and promote the sustainable use of these critical ecosystems.

Objective: The WCA aims to:

- ✓ Promote the **conservation** and **wise use** of urban and peri-urban wetlands.
- ✓ Foster **socio-economic benefits** for the local communities.
- ✓ Recognize the city's exceptional steps to safeguard wetlands, contributing to biodiversity and climate resilience.
- ✓ **History:** The scheme was approved during the **Ramsar Convention COP12** in 2015. Since then, **74 cities from 17 countries** have been officially recognized as "**Wetland Cities**".

Importance for India:

- ✓ These cities are setting an example for the **sustainable management of wetlands**.
- ✓ This recognition boosts global awareness of India's efforts in preserving wetland ecosystems and enhances the international profile of these cities.

January 30, 2025

Namdapha Tiger Reserve

Location:

- ✓ Situated in Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh, Namdapha Tiger Reserve is one of the most ecologically rich and diverse reserves in India.

History & Status:

- ✓ Wildlife Sanctuary: Declared in 1972.

- ✓ National Park: Established in 1983.
- ✓ Tiger Reserve: Also declared as a Tiger Reserve in 1983.

Recent Sightings & Significance:

- ✓ **First Elephant Sighting in 12 Years:** NTR has recently recorded the sighting of an adult male elephant, marking the first such sighting in over 12 years.
- ✓ **Historical Migration Routes:** Historically, elephants migrated between Namsai (Arunachal Pradesh) and Myanmar via the Namdapha Tiger Reserve. However, due to encroachments since 1996, traditional elephant migration corridors have been blocked, restricting the movement of elephants to the northern parts of the region.

Ecological Importance:

- ✓ **Biodiversity Hotspot:** The reserve is known for its rich biodiversity and is home to a variety of wildlife, including tigers, leopards, clouded leopards, and various species of primates.
- ✓ **Vegetation:** NTR contains diverse ecosystems, from sub-tropical rainforests to temperate forests, which support a wide range of plant and animal species.
- ✓ The recent sighting of the elephant in Namdapha Tiger Reserve marks a significant moment for wildlife conservation, highlighting the need for maintaining and restoring natural migration corridors to ensure the free movement of wildlife.

January 30, 2025

Mass Nesting of Olive Ridley Turtles



Overview of Olive Ridley Turtles:



- ✓ **Appearance:** Olive ridley turtles have a heart-shaped carapace (top shell) that is typically olive or grayish-green.
- ✓ **Size:** They are the smallest among sea turtles, with their size varying across regions. The largest individuals are found in West Africa.
- ✓ **Resemblance:** Olive ridley turtles closely resemble Kemp's ridley turtles, which are mainly found in the Gulf of Mexico.

Mass Nesting at Rushikulya River Mouth:

- ✓ Rushikulya River Mouth in Odisha is one of the most significant nesting sites for Olive Ridley turtles in India.
- ✓ The turtles are expected to return in large numbers to this region for their mass nesting, which is a crucial event for the conservation of the species.

Major Nesting Sites in India:

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Rushikulya (Odisha)
Gahirmatha (Odisha)
Devi River Mouth (Odisha)
Andaman Islands

Conservation Significance:

- ✓ Mass nesting is vital for the survival and conservation of Olive Ridley turtles, and efforts to protect their nesting sites are essential to ensure the species' continued existence.

January 30, 2025

Asian Waterbird Census-2025



Key Findings

- ✓ 39,725 birds from 106 species were recorded at the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary and its adjoining wetlands during the Asian Waterbird Census-2025.
- ✓ This marks a record number of birds sighted, highlighting the ecological importance of the sanctuary.

About the Asian Waterbird Census

- ✓ The Asian Waterbird Census is a citizen-science program aimed at supporting wetland and waterbird conservation across the globe.
- ✓ Annually conducted, it focuses on monitoring the population of waterbirds in Asia and is part of the larger International Waterbird Census (IWC).
- ✓ The census, which started in 1987, has significantly expanded to cover vast regions of Asia, including areas from Afghanistan to Japan, Southeast Asia, and Australasia.
- ✓ The East Asian-Australasian Flyway and large portions of the Central Asian Flyway are surveyed as part of the census.

In India

- ✓ The census is organized by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), usually in early January.
- ✓ This census plays a crucial role in providing data for effective wetland management and waterbird conservation, ensuring that necessary actions are taken to protect these vital ecosystems.

January 30, 2025

Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit:

- ✓ The Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit, held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania aiming to accelerate energy access across Africa.

- ✓ Africa Energy Summit hosted by the Government of Tanzania, African Union, African Development Bank, and the World Bank.
- ✓ The summit focuses on the Mission 300 initiative, which aims to provide electricity access to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. Over 600 million Africans lack reliable electricity access, with Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa home to 80% of the global population without electricity.

January 31, 2025

Kanha Tiger Reserve



Recent in News:

- ✓ A 2-year-old tigress was recently found dead in Kanha Tiger Reserve in Mandla district, Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ The exact cause of death is being investigated by authorities.

About Kanha Tiger Reserve:

- ✓ **Location:** Situated in Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ **Size:** Spanning an area of 940 sq.km, it is the largest national park in Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ **Topography:** The reserve lies within a series of plateaus in the Maikal Hills, to the east of the Satpura Range, featuring forested undulations, hills, plateaus, and valleys.

History and Significance:

- ✓ **Established:** Initially created as a national park on June 1, 1955, it was later designated as the Kanha Tiger Reserve in 1973.
- ✓ **Cultural Impact:** The reserve is believed to have inspired the jungle setting in Rudyard Kipling's famous novel, *The Jungle Book*.
- ✓ **Tribal Communities:** The region is home to ancient tribal communities like the Gond and Baiga.

Conservation and Wildlife:

- ✓ **Mascot:** Kanha is notable for being the first tiger reserve in India to introduce an official mascot, "Bhoorsingh the Barasingha".
- ✓ The area is also renowned for its rich biodiversity, including the Royal Bengal Tiger and Barasingha, an endangered species of swamp deer.
- ✓ This tragic incident highlights the ongoing need for vigilance and effective conservation measures in protecting wildlife within one of India's most celebrated tiger reserves.



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History, 1 – 31 January Month

January 4, 2025

Mubarak Manzil Palace



Historical Overview:

- ✓ Built in the 17th century by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.
- ✓ Constructed to commemorate his victory at the Battle of Samugarh (1658).

Location:

- ✓ Situated in Agra, near the Yamuna River.

Significance:

- ✓ A Mughal heritage site, reflecting the historical and architectural legacy of the Mughal era.
- ✓ Symbol of Aurangzeb's triumph and strategic dominance.

Recent in News:

- ✓ The palace has been largely demolished, reportedly by a builder with alleged official collusion.
- ✓ Despite being under state archaeological protection, preservation efforts were insufficient to prevent its destruction.

Key Concerns:

- ✓ Highlights issues of heritage conservation and the threat of urban development to historical sites.
- ✓ Raises questions about the enforcement of archaeological protection laws.

January 6, 2025

Rani Velu Nachiyar



Birth and Background:

- ✓ Born on January 3, 1730, in Ramanathapuram.
- ✓ Daughter of Raja Chellamuthu Vijayaragunatha Sethupathy and Rani Sakandhimuthal of the Ramnad kingdom.

- ✓ Married Prince Muthuvaduganathur Udaiyathevar of Sivaganga at age 16.

- ✓ Known by Tamils as Veeramangai (brave woman).

Skills and Training:

- ✓ Trained in martial arts like Valari and Silambam, horse riding, and archery.
- ✓ Skilled in warfare and proficient in English, French, and Urdu.

Achievements:

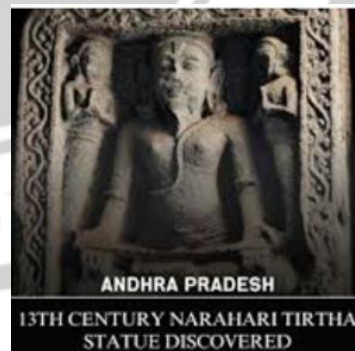
- ✓ Collaborated with Hyder Ali and Gopala Nayaker to fight the British.
- ✓ First Indian queen to fight against British colonial forces and achieve victory.
- ✓ Delegated administration to the Marudu brothers in 1780.

Recent in News:

- ✓ Remembered for her courage and leadership in India's freedom struggle.
- ✓ Honored by the Prime Minister of India on her birth anniversary for her contributions to the nation's heritage.

January 6, 2025

Saint Narahari Tirtha



Recent Discovery:



- ✓ A three-foot idol of Saint Narahari Tirtha (13th century) was recently discovered by a Team of Research on Culture and Heritage (TORCH).

Background:

- ✓ Dvaita Vedanta philosopher and disciple of Madhvacharya, founder of Dvaita philosophy.
- ✓ Played a significant role in spreading Dvaita doctrine in eastern India, particularly in the Kalinga region (modern Odisha and Andhra Pradesh).
- ✓ Believed to have hailed from Chikakolu (present-day Srikakulam).

Historical Contributions:

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- ✓ Assisted Eastern Ganga dynasty kings for three decades.
- ✓ Ensured adherence to Sanatana Dharma and streamlined temple administration.
- ✓ Contributions are recorded in inscriptions found at Simhachalam and Srikurmam temples.

Cultural and Religious Influence:

- ✓ Strengthened Vaishnavism in the region, building on the foundation laid by Saint Ramanuja.
- ✓ Introduced a non-interfering and secular approach to promote religious harmony.

Literary and Artistic Contributions:

- ✓ Authored 15 works, of which Gita Bhasya and Bhavaprakasika are extant.
- ✓ First to compose Devaranamas in Kannada.

Propagated two key art forms:

- ✓ Yakshagana Bayalata: Dance-drama form famous in coastal Karnataka.
- ✓ Kuchipudi: Classical dance form of Andhra Pradesh.

Legacy:

- ✓ Consecrated near the rock adjacent to Chakratirtha at Hampi on the banks of Tungabhadra after his passing.

January 7, 2025

Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti



Recent in News:

- ✓ Celebrates the **birth anniversary** of **Guru Gobind Singh Ji**, the **10th Guru of Sikhism**.
- ✓ In 2025, it will be observed on **Monday, January 6**, following the **Nanakshahi calendar** (Saptami Tithi, Shukla Paksha, Poh/Paush month).

Guru Gobind Singh Ji – Background:

- ✓ Born on **December 22, 1666**, in **Patna Sahib** (Bihar, India).
- ✓ Became Guru at the age of nine after the martyrdom of his father, **Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji**, who sacrificed his life for **religious freedom**.
- ✓ Known for his **leadership, spirituality, and dedication to justice and equality**.

Key Contributions and Teachings:

- ✓ **Founder of the Khalsa Panth (1699):**
- ✓ Established the **Khalsa Panth**, a community symbolizing **devotion, unity, and strength**.
- ✓ Advocated for **equality, justice, and selfless service**.

Advocate of Religious Freedom:

- ✓ Fought against oppression and defended the **rights of all religions**.
- ✓ Stood as a beacon of **justice and humanity**.

Saint and Scholar:

- ✓ Renowned as a **poet, philosopher, and thinker**.

- ✓ Authored parts of the **Dasam Granth**, emphasizing **courage, wisdom, and devotion to God**.

Significance of the Day:

- ✓ Reflects Guru Gobind Singh Ji's teachings of **courage, equality, and selflessness**.
- ✓ Reminds people of the relevance of his principles in **modern society**.

January 29, 2025

Lala Lajpat Rai's 160th Birth Anniversary



- ✓ India commemorates the **160th birth anniversary** of one of its most esteemed freedom fighters, **Lala Lajpat Rai**, also known as **'Punjab Kesari' (Lion of Punjab)**. A stalwart in India's struggle for independence, Rai played a crucial role as a **freedom fighter, social reformer, journalist, and political leader**.

Early Life & Education

- ✓ Born on **28 January 1865**, in **Dhudike, Punjab**, Lala Lajpat Rai was deeply influenced by **Arya Samaj** and its principles of social reform.
- ✓ He pursued law and practiced as a lawyer before fully devoting himself to the **freedom movement**.

Role in India's Freedom Struggle

- ✓ **Indian National Congress (INC):** Rai was an active member of the INC and **advocated self-rule (Swaraj)** for India.
- ✓ **Lal-Bal-Pal Trio:** Along with **Bal Gangadhar Tilak** and **Bipin Chandra Pal**, he formed the famous **triumvirate** that led the **extremist wing of the INC**, opposing the moderate approach.
- ✓ **Partition of Bengal (1905):** He led protests against **British policies**, particularly the partition of Bengal.
- ✓ **Simon Commission Protest (1928):** During a protest against the **Simon Commission**, he was **brutally lathi-charged by the British police**, leading to severe injuries that resulted in his death on **17 November 1928**. His famous words **"Every blow on my body will be a nail in the coffin of British rule"** remain a powerful symbol of resistance.

Contributions as a Social Reformer

- ✓ **Arya Samaj Leader:** Promoted **education, gender equality, and social reforms** through the Arya Samaj movement.

Founder of Educational Institutions:

- ✓ **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** – to support Indian industries and entrepreneurship.
- ✓ **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (DAV) Schools & Colleges** – to provide modern education rooted in Indian values.

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Journalism & Literary Contributions

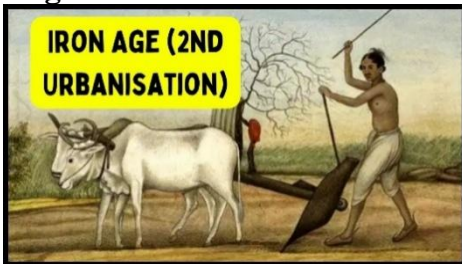
- ✓ Founded **The Tribune** and **Young India** to raise awareness about India's independence movement.
- ✓ Wrote books such as **'The Story of My Deportation'**, **'England's Debt to India'**, and **'Unhappy India'**, exposing British oppression.

Legacy

- ✓ His sacrifices **inspired revolutionaries** like **Bhagat Singh** and his associates, who later avenged his death by assassinating **British police officer J.P. Saunders**.
- ✓ His contributions to **education, nationalism, and social reform** continue to inspire generations.

January 29, 2025

Iron Age and Urbanization



- ✓ A recent report titled **'Antiquity of Iron: Recent Radiometric Dates from Tamil Nadu'** has provided groundbreaking evidence that the use of **iron in Tamil Nadu dates back to the first quarter of the 4th millennium BCE (3700–3400 BCE)**. This significantly pushes back the previously accepted timeline of **India's Iron Age**, suggesting that **ironworking in**

South India may have developed much earlier than in other parts of the subcontinent.

What is the Iron Age?


- ✓ The **Iron Age** is a **prehistoric period** that followed the **Bronze Age**, marked by the widespread use of **iron for tools, weapons, and other implements**. It was a transformative period that led to **urbanization, economic growth, and technological advancements**.

Iron Metallurgy in India

- ✓ **Multiple Stages:** The development of iron metallurgy involved **ore procurement, smelting, refining, and the production of tools**.
- ✓ **Timeline in India:** The **Iron Age in India** is generally believed to have emerged between **1500 BCE and 2000 BCE**, following the **Indus Valley Civilization (Bronze Age)**. However, the **new findings from Tamil Nadu suggest an even earlier timeline**.
- ✓ **Regional Variations:** The use of iron spread across different parts of India, influencing **agriculture, warfare, and trade**.

Urbanization and Iron Age

- ✓ The discovery of **early iron use in Tamil Nadu** highlights its role in **urbanization and societal development**. Iron tools led to:
- ✓ **Improved Agriculture:** More efficient plows and sickles increased food production, supporting population growth.
- ✓ **Construction & Infrastructure:** Stronger tools enabled advanced architecture and urban settlements.
- ✓ **Warfare & Expansion:** Iron weapons played a crucial role in territorial expansions and defense strategies.




NDA 1, 2025

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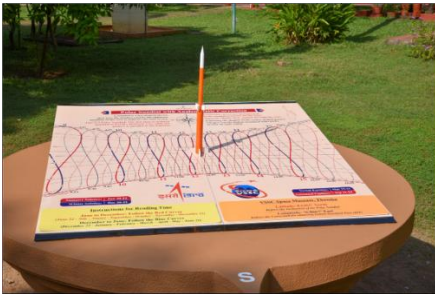
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----- **Art & Culture, 1 – 31 January Month** -----

January 4, 2025

Polar Sundial at VSSC



- ✓ A polar sundial designed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) has been showcased in the 'Rocket Garden' at the Space Museum in Thumba, Kerala.
- ✓ This sundial serves as an educational tool, demonstrating complex astronomical concepts in a visually engaging manner.
- ✓ The sundial features analemmatic correction, allowing it to accurately display Indian Standard Time (IST) and the date.

January 6, 2025

Grameen Bharat Mahotsav



Recent in News:

- ✓ Inaugurated by Prime Minister at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- ✓ Organized by the Department of Financial Services and NABARD.

Objectives:

Enhance Rural Infrastructure:

- ✓ Focus on improving connectivity, agricultural facilities, and basic amenities in rural areas.
- ✓ Promote Self-Reliance:
- ✓ Encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment through various rural development programs.

Foster Innovation:

- ✓ Support innovative practices in agriculture, education, and sustainable living within rural communities.

Significance:

- ✓ Aligns with the government's mission of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).
- ✓ Strengthens the role of rural India in economic and social progress.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of inclusive growth for sustainable development.

January 6, 2025

Jallikattu



Recent in NEWS:

- ✓ The first Jallikattu event of 2025 was held on January 4 in Thatchankurichi village, Gandarvakottai taluk, Pudukkottai district, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Featured participation from over 600 bulls and 350 bull-tamers.

Significance:

- ✓ Marks the start of Pongal celebrations and the Jallikattu season in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ An iconic representation of Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage.

Cultural Importance:

- ✓ Jallikattu is a traditional bull-taming sport integral to Tamil Nadu's agrarian society.
- ✓ Reflects the bond between humans and cattle, especially in rural communities.
- ✓ Associated with the worship of bulls as a symbol of strength and prosperity during Pongal, the harvest festival.

Contemporary Issues:

- ✓ Debates around animal rights versus cultural preservation.
- ✓ Supreme Court rulings and amendments to protect the practice under cultural heritage laws.

January 6, 2025

Thanthai Periyar Memorial



Recent in News:

- ✓ Renovated Thanthai Periyar Memorial inaugurated by the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu at Vaikom.

About Thanthai Periyar (E.V. Ramasami Naicker):

- ✓ A prominent Tamil reformist and social activist.
- ✓ Advocated for social justice, rationalism, and the eradication of caste discrimination.
- ✓ Played a pivotal role in the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924), India's first organized movement for the rights of 'untouchable' communities.

Vaikom Satyagraha (1924):

- ✓ A nonviolent movement to allow Dalits access to public roads near the Vaikom Mahadeva Temple in Kerala.
- ✓ Marked a watershed moment in the fight against untouchability and caste-based oppression.
- ✓ Supported by prominent leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi.

Significance of the Memorial:

- ✓ Recognizes Thanthai Periyar's contributions to social reform and equality.
- ✓ Highlights the Tamil-Kerala collaboration in addressing caste-based injustices.
- ✓ Serves as a reminder of India's progressive movements and their impact on modern society.

January 7, 2025

Winter Char Dham



WINTER CHARDHAM YATRA



- ✓ Uttarakhand has launched the Winter Char Dham circuit to promote year-round tourism and attract visitors to the state during the off-season winter months.
- ✓ Char Dham shrines (4 revered shrines) are four holy sites i.e., Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath and are located in the Garhwal Himalayas. They are traditionally visited between May and November.

- ✓ The Char Dham Project aims to enhance connectivity to the Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri by improving conditions of highways

January 7, 2025

PanchPran



Recent in News:

- ✓ Highlighted by the Vice-President during the NCC Republic Day Camp 2025 as a foundation for India's national transformation.

Meaning:

- ✓ Refers to five core principles guiding India's progress through a balanced and holistic approach to development.

Five Core Principles:

Social Harmony:

- ✓ Promotes unity in diversity, transforming India's pluralism into a source of national strength.

Family Enlightenment:

- ✓ Strengthens patriotic and moral values at the grassroots by fostering awareness and education within families.

Environmental Consciousness:

- ✓ Advocates sustainable development by emphasizing conservation and protection of nature.

Swadeshi:

- ✓ Encourages self-reliance and prioritization of indigenous products, aligning with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Civic Duties:

- ✓ Instills a sense of responsibility among citizens to actively contribute to national progress.

Significance:



- ✓ Serves as a moral and developmental framework for India's transformation.
- ✓ Aligns with key national missions like Atmanirbhar Bharat, Swachh Bharat, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ✓ Promotes inclusive growth by balancing individual and collective responsibilities.

January 7, 2025

Vriksh Pathshala Library



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Location and Background:

- ✓ Situated in Patwa Toli, Gaya district, Bihar.
- ✓ Patwa Toli, once called the "Manchester of Bihar" for its weaving industry, is now renowned as a "factory of IITians," producing over 300 IITians since the 1990s.

About the Library:

- ✓ 24x7 operational facility providing a quiet and resource-rich environment for competitive exam preparation, especially IIT-JEE.

Offers:

- ✓ Free study materials and coaching (online/offline).
- ✓ Food and lodging for economically weaker students.

Management and Funding:

- ✓ Managed by locals and alumni, including former IITians.
- ✓ Funded through donations from ex-students, banks, and organizations.

Impact:

- ✓ Over 100 IITians and 1,000 engineers have emerged from Patwa Toli.
- ✓ Attracts students from other districts for its reputation and facilities.

Significance:

- ✓ Showcases the power of community-driven initiatives in fostering education and addressing economic disparities.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of accessible resources for rural students in achieving excellence.

January 9, 2025

Modhweth Festival



Introduction:

- ✓ The Toda tribe, one of the oldest ethnic groups, resides in the Nilgiris Hills of Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Celebrated their traditional 'Modhweth' festival (also known as the Buffalo Festival) to mark the New Year.

Community Structure:

- ✓ Divided into five clans: Paiki, Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna, and Todi.
- ✓ Live in closed communities or hamlets called munds.
- ✓ Patrilineal descent group, with community divided into two endogamous groups: Tharthazoll and Theveioll.

Traditional Governance:

- ✓ Governed by a traditional council called Noim, headed by a tribal leader called Monegar.
- ✓ The Monegar has judicial powers and ensures social harmony within the community.

Livelihood and Skills:

- ✓ Buffalo herding is a primary livelihood source.
- ✓ Known for their red-and-black embroidery on white fabrics, which holds a GI (Geographical Indication) tag.

Language and Culture:

- ✓ Speak their own language (without a script).
- ✓ The Modhweth Festival is celebrated annually on the last Sunday of December or the first Sunday of January, emphasizing the importance of buffaloes in their life and culture.

Significance:

- ✓ Reflects their strong connection with nature and livestock.
- ✓ Preserves their unique cultural identity in a fast-changing world.

January 14, 2025

Terrace Tourism



- ✓ With the Uttarayan (Makar Sankranti) festival approaching, Old Ahmedabad has become a hub of terrace tourism, where residents rent out their terraces for kite flying and festive celebrations.
- ✓ Renting of residential terraces in Old Ahmedabad during festivals like Uttarayan, offering exclusive vantage points for kite flying and other activities.

January 14, 2025

Harvest Festivals

Recent in News:

- ✓ The President of India extended greetings on the eve of Lohri, Makar Sankranti, Pongal, and Magh Bihu.
- ✓ Celebrated as harvest festivals across India, they symbolize the end of the harvesting season.



Key Features:

- ✓ Mark the transition of the Sun into the Capricorn zodiac sign (Makara) and the beginning of its northward journey (Uttarayan).
- ✓ Represent the shift from winter to warmer months, symbolizing renewal and productivity.
- ✓ Based on the solar cycle, ensuring a fixed date of 14th January each year, unlike lunar-based festivals.

Regional Variations:

- ✓ **Makar Sankranti:** Celebrated across India with regional variations; includes kite flying, holy dips, and donation rituals.
- ✓ **Pongal (Tamil Nadu):** A four-day festival dedicated to thanking the Sun, rain, and cattle for a bountiful harvest.

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- ✓ **Magh Bihu (Assam):** Celebrated with feasts, bonfires, and traditional games.
- ✓ **Lohri (Punjab):** Marks the harvest of sugarcane with bonfires, folk songs, and dances.

Significance:

- ✓ Reflects India's agrarian culture and seasonal traditions.
- ✓ Promotes social unity, as communities come together to celebrate.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of nature and gratitude for its blessings.

January 15, 2025

Makaravilakku Festival



Recent in News:

- ✓ The Makaravilakku festival is celebrated at the Sabarimala Temple in Kerala.
- ✓ Known for heightened security, with 5,000 police officers deployed to ensure smooth operations during the festival.

Significance:

- ✓ Occurs on the day of Makara Sankranti, marking the end of the annual pilgrimage season to Sabarimala.
- ✓ Celebrates the arrival of the sacred Thiruvabharanam, the royal ornaments of Lord Ayyappa, which are brought to the temple from the Pandalam Palace.

Key Feature:

- ✓ The highlight of the festival is the sighting of the Makarajyothi (also known as Makaravilakku), a celestial light believed to be a divine manifestation of Lord Ayyappa.
- ✓ This light appears on the horizon of Ponnambalamedu hill, located near the Sabarimala temple.

Festival Duration:

- ✓ Though it coincides with Makara Sankranti, the festival extends over seven days, with the final day concluding with a ritual called Guruthi.
- ✓ The Guruthi is an offering made to propitiate the gods and goddesses of wilderness.
- ✓ No one remains within the temple premises after the Guruthi ritual.

Cultural and Spiritual Importance:

- ✓ Reflects the devotional fervor of the pilgrims, who undertake a rigorous pilgrimage to the temple, symbolizing spiritual devotion and austerity.

- ✓ Makaravilakku is considered a moment of divine grace, offering a spiritual connection for millions of devotees.

January 16, 2025

Boda Tyohar



- ✓ The **Boda Tyohar**, also known as **Magho ko Tyohar**, is the **largest annual festival** celebrated by the **Hatti tribes of the Trans-Giri region** in Himachal Pradesh. This month-long festival holds **deep cultural and religious significance**, marking the end of the **Magha month** and fostering a sense of **community unity** among the **three lakh members of the Hatti community**.

Key Features of Boda Tyohar

- ✓ **Community Celebration:** The festival is a **grand social gathering**, strengthening the communal bonds among the Hatti people.
- ✓ **Traditional Rituals:** Sacred **rituals, prayers, and offerings** are performed to seek **prosperity and well-being**.
- ✓ **Cultural Practices:** The Hatti people engage in **folk music, dance, and storytelling**, preserving their **rich heritage**.
- ✓ **Feasting & Festivities:** Traditional **Hatti cuisine** is prepared, and community feasts are organized, emphasizing **hospitality and togetherness**.

Hatti Tribe: A Brief Overview

- ✓ The **Hatti tribe** is an **ethnic community** residing in the **Trans-Giri region of Himachal Pradesh**.
- ✓ Their name is derived from **'Haat' (markets)**, as they were historically known for trading agricultural and forest products.
- ✓ The tribe has a **distinct socio-cultural identity** and follows a **clan-based system** with unique traditions.

Significance of Boda Tyohar

- ✓ The **Boda Tyohar festival** is more than just a celebration; it is a **symbol of cultural preservation, social harmony, and spiritual devotion** among the **Hatti community**.

January 16, 2025

Pongal Celebration



- ✓ **Thalai Pongal** marks the **first day of the Tamil month "Thai"**, making it an **integral part of the Pongal festival**, a major **harvest festival** celebrated in Tamil Nadu. It is a special occasion for **newly married couples**, as it signifies their **first Pongal after marriage**, often celebrated in the husband's home with traditional customs and blessings.

Key Aspects of Thalai Pongal

- ✓ **Date:** Celebrated on **January 14, 2025** (coinciding with **Thai Pongal**).
- ✓ **Traditional Celebration:** Families gather to **cook and share Pongal**, a dish made of **rice, milk, and jaggery**, symbolizing **prosperity and gratitude**.
- ✓ **Special for Newlyweds:** The bride receives **blessings, gifts, and traditional jewelry** as part of the **customary first Pongal celebrations** in her new home.
- ✓ **Cultural Unity:** The festival fosters **intercultural exchanges**, as seen in Supriya, a **physician from Tripura**, celebrating **Thalai Pongal** with her husband, **Thileepan from Tamil Nadu**.
- ✓ **Regional Variations:** In Tripura, Pongal is celebrated as "**Hangrai**", showing the **diverse ways harvest festivals are observed across India**.

January 16, 2025

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar launched Dr. K.S. Chauhan's book:

- ✓ **Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar** launched Dr. K.S. Chauhan's book "**Parliament: Powers, Functions & Privileges; A Comparative Constitutional Perspective**", praising the author's dedication in analyzing the role of Parliament in a democracy.

January 17, 2025

Gangasagar Mela: Being Organized



- ✓ **Gangasagar Mela**, one of **India's largest religious gatherings**, is held annually on **Sagar Island, West Bengal**, where the **Ganga River meets the Bay of**

Bengal. It is considered the **second-largest congregation of pilgrims after the Kumbh Mela**.

Key Highlights of Gangasagar Mela 2025

- ✓ **Date:** Coincides with **Makar Sankranti** in January.
- ✓ **Location:** **Sagar Island, West Bengal**.
- ✓ **Spiritual Significance:** Devotees take a **holy dip in the Ganga**, offer "**Arghya**" to the **Sun God**, and perform "**Deepdan**" (**lighting lamps**) for spiritual purification and liberation.

Government Initiatives to Enhance the Experience

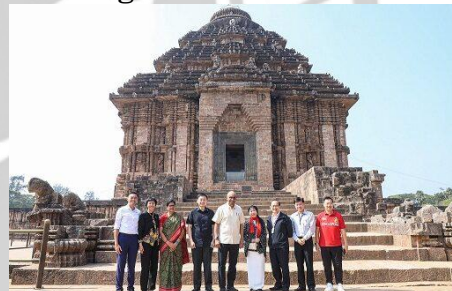
- ✓ **Bandhan Initiative** – Pilgrims receive a **certificate of participation** in three languages.
- ✓ **e-Anushandhan** – A digital system for accessing **mela facilities** efficiently.
- ✓ **e-Parichay** – **QR code-enabled identity bands** to prevent missing persons.

Demand for National Recognition

- ✓ The **West Bengal government** has been advocating for **Gangasagar Mela to be given "National Mela" status**, highlighting its **cultural, spiritual, and economic significance**.
- ✓ Gangasagar Mela continues to be a **symbol of faith, devotion, and tradition**, attracting **millions of pilgrims from across India** each year.

January 21, 2025

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited the Sun Temple



- ✓ Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited the Sun Temple, highlighting its global prominence and Odisha's rich craftsmanship.
- ✓ **Konark Sun Temple** Situated in Konark, Odisha, near the Bay of Bengal. Constructed in the 13th century (1238–1264 CE) by King Narasimha Deva I of the Ganga dynasty Represents the strength and stability of the Ganga Empire.



January 23, 2025

Ratnagiri Buddhist Site



- ✓ The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has discovered **significant Buddhist remains** at the

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historic **Ratnagiri site** in **Jajpur district, Odisha**. These findings add to the site's **1,200-year-old** legacy, shedding new light on its importance in **Buddhist history**.

Key Highlights of Ratnagiri Buddhist Site

- ✓ **Location:** Situated **100 km northeast of Bhubaneswar, Odisha**, on a **hill between the Birupa and Brahmani rivers**.

Significance:

- ✓ **Odisha's most famous Buddhist site**, extensively excavated.
- ✓ Part of the "**Diamond Triangle of Odisha**", along with **Udayagiri and Lalitgiri**.

Historical Timeline:

- ✓ Dates back to **5th-13th Century AD**.
- ✓ The **peak construction period** is between **7th-10th Century AD**.

Buddhist Influence:

- ✓ A major center for **Mahayana and Tantrayana (Vajrayana) Buddhism**.
- ✓ Some sources suggest that **Chinese Buddhist traveler Hiuen Tsang** visited Ratnagiri in **638-639 AD**.

Recent Discoveries by ASI

A colossal Buddha head

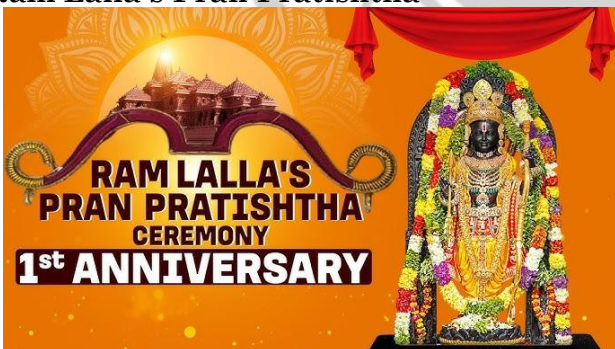
A massive palm

An ancient wall

- ✓ **Inscribed Buddhist relics**, all estimated to be from the **8th-9th Century AD**.
- ✓ Ratnagiri continues to be an important site for understanding the **Buddhist architectural and cultural heritage**, reaffirming its place as a major Buddhist center in ancient India.

January 24, 2025

Ayodhya Celebrates First Anniversary of Ram Lalla's Pran Pratishtha



- ✓ The **sacred city of Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh**, is immersed in **devotion and festivity** as it marks the **first anniversary** of the 'Pran Pratishtha' of Ram Lalla at the **Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir** on **January 22, 2025**.

Significance of the Event

- ✓ The **grand Pran Pratishtha ceremony** of Ram Lalla took place on **January 22, 2024**, under the auspices of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- ✓ This event marked a **historic milestone** in the completion of the **Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir**,

fulfilling a **centuries-old devotion and struggle** of millions of devotees.

Celebrations in Ayodhya

- ✓ Devotees from across the country have gathered to commemorate this **spiritual milestone**.
- ✓ Special **prayers, bhajans, and cultural programs** are being organized in the temple town.
- ✓ The anniversary highlights **Ayodhya's spiritual and cultural legacy**, reinforcing its status as a **global center of faith and devotion**.
- ✓ The **Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir** stands as a **symbol of faith, perseverance, and unity**, continuing to inspire millions worldwide.

January 29, 2025

Sambhar Festival 2025



- ✓ The **Sambhar Festival**, a **5-day celebration** of culture, adventure, and heritage, was **inaugurated on January 24, 2025**, at **Sambhar Lake, Rajasthan**, organized by the **Rajasthan Tourism Department and District Administration**, aiming to attract tourists and showcase **Rajasthani culture, traditions, cuisine, folk arts, and natural beauty**.



January 29, 2025

Kathmandu Hosts Inaugural Pashmina Festival



- ✓ The **first-ever International Pashmina Festival cum Exhibition**, organized by the **Nepal Pashmina Industries Association** and the **Confederation of Nepalese Industries**, showcased Nepal's expertise in **traditional weaving** and highlighted the **delicate, lightweight, and warm Pashmina fibre** obtained from the **Chyangra goat**, attracting significant consumer attention.

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January 29, 2025

Etikoppaka Toys : Praised In Republic Day parade



- ✓ Andhra Pradesh's **eco-friendly wooden Etikoppaka Toys** received accolades during the **Republic Day parade** for their **exquisite craftsmanship and cultural significance**.

About Etikoppaka Toys

- ✓ **Origin:** Etikoppaka village, Andhra Pradesh
- ✓ **Legacy:** A **400-year-old** tradition of **wooden toy-making**
- ✓ **Material:** Made from 'ankudu' (*Wrightia tinctoria*) wood, which is **soft and easy to carve**
- ✓ **Colors:** Natural dyes derived from **seeds, lacquer, bark, roots, and leaves**

Design:

- ✓ **Smooth, rounded edges** (safe for children)
- ✓ **Vibrant and eco-friendly**
- ✓ **Geographical Indication (GI) Tag**
- ✓ **Awarded in 2017**, recognizing the **toys' authenticity and cultural heritage**.

About GI Tag:

- ✓ A **certification** for products linked to a **specific geographic origin**.
- ✓ **Administered by:** Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- ✓ **India's first GI-tagged product:** Darjeeling Tea (2004-05).
- ✓ Etikoppaka Toys symbolize **India's rich artistic legacy and commitment to sustainability**, making them a **cherished part of the nation's cultural heritage**.

January 29, 2025

Nagoba Jatara : Holy Pilgrimage



- ✓ The **Nagoba Jatara**, an **eight-day** tribal pilgrimage and **second-largest tribal festival in India**, is set to commence in **Keslapur village, Indervelli mandal, Adilabad district, Telangana**.

Key Highlights of Nagoba Jatara

- ✓ **Community:** Celebrated by the **Mesram clan of Adivasi Gonds**.
- ✓ **Time & Place:** Held in **January/February** at **Keslapur village, Telangana**.

- ✓ **Scale:** Second only to **Sammakka Saralamma Jatara** in Telangana.
- ✓ **Participants:** Tribal devotees from **Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Karnataka, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh**.

Rituals and Traditions

- ✓ **Main Deity:** **Nagoba (Sri Shek – Cobra)**.
- ✓ **Holy Water Ritual:**
- ✓ Elders **walk barefoot** to the **River Godavari**.
- ✓ Bring back **holy water** and keep it near a **Banyan Tree** in front of the **Nagoba Temple**.

Bheting Ceremony:

- ✓ **Newly married brides** (dressed in white saris) are **introduced into the clan**.
- ✓ Led by elder women to **worship Nagoba**, marking their **formal acceptance** into the community.
- ✓ **Cultural Highlight:** **Gusadi Dance** performed by the **Gond tribe**, a major attraction.
- ✓ Nagoba Jatara is a **symbol of tribal unity, cultural preservation, and devotion**, making it a **vibrant part of India's indigenous heritage**.

January 30, 2025

Lezim Dance



- ✓ The upcoming Bollywood film '**Chhava**', based on **Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj**, has sparked controversy in **Maharashtra** over a **Lezim dance sequence** featured in the movie.

What is Lezim Dance?

- ✓ **Origin:** A **traditional folk dance of Maharashtra**.
- ✓ **Name Origin:** Derived from **Lezim**, a **wooden stick with jingling cymbals** attached, used by dancers.
- ✓ **Accompaniment:** Performed with the beats of a **dhol** or **dhalgi** (small dhol).



Performance:

- ✓ Involves **rigorous physical movements**.
- ✓ **Formations:** Groups of **twos, fours, or circles**.
- ✓ **No wind or string instruments;** sometimes **no vocal accompaniment**, though songs can be sung occasionally.

Current Use:

- ✓ Historically part of **various folk dances**.
- ✓ Now **primarily associated with Ganesh Chaturthi processions**.
- ✓ **The Controversy**
- ✓ The depiction of **Lezim** in '**Chhava**' has drawn criticism as some believe it may **misrepresent history** or **distort cultural traditions**. **Historical authenticity** in movies based on **Maratha heritage** remains a sensitive issue in Maharashtra.

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Polity, 1 – 31 January Month

January 07, 2025

Third-Party Audits for Smart Cities Mission



Recommendation:

- ✓ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs recommends third-party assessments for projects under the Smart Cities Mission (SCM).
- ✓ Focus on improving implementation, especially in smaller cities.

Purpose of Third-Party Audits:

- ✓ Provide unbiased analysis of project progress and overall impact.
- ✓ Identify implementation gaps and suggest areas for improvement.

Benefits:

- ✓ Enhances transparency and fosters trust among stakeholders, including:
 - ✓ Citizens
 - ✓ Government bodies
 - ✓ Investors
- ✓ Strengthens accountability and ensures proper use of resources.

Significance:

- ✓ Critical for improving the execution of SCM projects in smaller urban areas, ensuring they achieve their objectives of creating smarter, sustainable, and citizen-centric cities.

January 07, 2025

Special Category Visas



New Visa Types:

- ✓ 'e-student visa': For international students pursuing higher education in India.

- ✓ 'e-student-x visa': For dependents of e-student visa holders.

Eligibility:

- ✓ International students registered on the Study in India (SII) portal.
- ✓ Foreign nationals admitted to full-time undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD, or other formal programs at recognised Indian educational institutions.

Key Features:

- ✓ Valid for up to five years, depending on the course duration.
- ✓ Extendable based on program requirements.
- ✓ Holders can enter India via any immigration check post.

Significance:

- ✓ Enhances ease of access for international students.
- ✓ Strengthens India's appeal as a global higher education destination.
- ✓ Facilitates a streamlined process for both students and their dependents.

January 07, 2025

Panchayat Se Parliament 2.0



Event Details:

- ✓ Inaugurated by: Lok Sabha Speaker at the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan.
- ✓ Organisers: National Commission for Women (NCW).
- ✓ In collaboration with the Lok Sabha Secretariat and Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Commemoration:

- ✓ Organised in honor of the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, a tribal leader and freedom fighter.

Participants:

- ✓ 502 elected women representatives from Scheduled Tribes across 22 states and Union Territories.

Objectives:

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- ✓ Empower women representatives from Panchayati Raj institutions.
- ✓ Enhance understanding of:
 - ✓ Constitutional provisions.
 - ✓ Parliamentary procedures.
 - ✓ Governance.
- ✓ Recognise their contributions in education and rural development.

Activities:

- ✓ Workshops and sessions for capacity building.
- ✓ Guided tours of key locations, including:
 - ✓ New Parliament House.
 - ✓ Samvidhan Sadan.
 - ✓ Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya.
 - ✓ Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- ✓ Reading of the Preamble to the Constitution of India, led by the Lok Sabha Speaker.

Background:

- ✓ Builds on the success of Panchayat Se Parliament 2024, which engaged 500 women sarpanch from across India.

Significance:

- ✓ Promotes inclusive governance and celebrates the contributions of tribal women leaders.
- ✓ Strengthens the democratic process by bridging the gap between grassroots and parliamentary governance.

January 09, 2025

Rashtriya Smriti Sthal



- ✓ The Central Government has decided to set up a memorial for former President Pranab Mukherjee at the Rashtriya Smriti Sthal, part of the Rajghat precinct in Delhi. Mukherjee, who passed away on August 31, 2020, was a veteran Congress leader and the 13th President of India.

January 09, 2025

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) 2023



Context:

- ✓ Issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to all states and Union Territories (UTs) for implementation.

Objective:

- ✓ Provide relief to undertrial prisoners (UTPs) by facilitating their release on bail or bond under specific conditions.

Key Provisions (Section 479):

Subsection (1):

✓ **Eligibility for Bail:**

- ✓ UTPs who have served half the maximum sentence prescribed for the offense are eligible for bail.
- ✓ **Exemptions:** Offenses punishable by death or life imprisonment.
- ✓ **First-time offenders:** UTPs serving one-third of the maximum sentence are eligible for release on bond.

Subsection (3):

- ✓ Mandates prison superintendents to file applications in the concerned court for the release of eligible prisoners.

Responsibilities of Jail Superintendents:

- ✓ Ensure timely applications for bail or bond for prisoners meeting eligibility criteria.

Significance:

- ✓ Reduces overcrowding in prisons.
- ✓ Provides relief to prisoners who are held for prolonged durations as under trials.
- ✓ Streamlines the legal process and ensures timely justice for eligible inmates.

January 13, 2025

India's Jaishankar to Join Trump's Swearing-In Ceremony

- ✓ Dr. S. Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister (EAM), will represent India at the swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Donald Trump on January 20, 2025. The inauguration is a significant event as Trump will begin his second term as the 47th President of the United States

January 15, 2025

Petition on Same-Sex Marriage

- ✓ The 5-bench Supreme Court of India (SC), in a recent judgment rejected review petitions against its October 2023 ruling that had refused to legalize same-sex marriage.
- ✓ In the October 2023 ruling, the Bench headed by Chief Justice of India delivered a 3:2 majority verdict against granting constitutional validity to same-sex marriages.
- ✓ Same-sex marriages refer to marriages between two individuals of the same gender, i.e. marriage between two men or between two women.

January 16, 2025

India to Host 28th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in 2026

- ✓ India is set to host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC) in January 2026.

- ✓ Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla announced this during the CSPOC Standing Committee Meeting in Guernsey.
- ✓ The conference will focus on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and social media into parliamentary processes, reflecting India's commitment to technological advancement and modern governance.

January 16, 2025

India's new law for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner

- ✓ The **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023**, has revised the appointment process for the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) in India. This law aims to bring more transparency and accountability to the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Key Changes Introduced by the Act:

New Selection Committee:

- ✓ A **three-member selection panel** will recommend candidates for the CEC and ECs.

Composition of the Panel:

- ✓ **Prime Minister (Chairperson)**
- ✓ **A Union Cabinet Minister (nominated by the PM)**
- ✓ **Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha** (or the leader of the largest opposition party in case there is no LoP)

Approval by the President:

- ✓ The **President of India** will appoint the CEC and ECs based on the **recommendations of the selection committee**.

Term & Conditions of Service:

- ✓ The CEC and ECs will serve for a **fixed term of six years** or until they reach **65 years of age**, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ The **salary and perks** of the CEC and ECs will be **equivalent to that of a Supreme Court judge**.

Removal Procedure:

- ✓ **CEC:** Can only be **removed like a Supreme Court judge**, i.e., through **impeachment by Parliament**.
- ✓ **ECs:** Can be **removed by the President** on the recommendation of the CEC.

Comparison with Previous System:

Aspect	Old System	New System (2023 Act)
Selection Authority	The President , based on the government's recommendation	A three-member panel (PM, Union Minister, LoP) recommends names
Role of Judiciary	No involvement	Removed judicial representation (previously, CJI was part of the selection process as per the Supreme Court ruling in 2023)

Aspect	Old System	New System (2023 Act)
Transparency	Lacked transparency as names were directly recommended by the government	Structured committee-based selection process

Controversy & Concerns:

- ✓ **Exclusion of Chief Justice of India (CJI):** Earlier, the **Supreme Court (2023)** had directed that a **panel with CJI** should oversee the selection to ensure independence. However, this law **removes the judiciary's role**, raising concerns about **executive dominance**.
- ✓ **Potential for Bias:** Since the **Prime Minister and a nominated Union Minister** hold a majority in the **selection panel**, critics argue that this could lead to the appointment of **pro-government officials**.
- ✓ **Judicial Challenge Possible:** The law may face legal scrutiny in the **Supreme Court** over concerns regarding the **independence of the Election Commission**.

Conclusion

- ✓ The **2023 Act** has introduced a **structured process** for appointing the CEC and ECs, aiming for greater **transparency**. However, the **exclusion of the judiciary** and the **dominance of the executive** in the selection panel have raised **concerns over the independence of the Election Commission**. The law is likely to be debated further and could be **challenged in court**.

January 18, 2025

Tripura unveiled its first official state emblem



- ✓ **Tripura unveiled its first official state emblem** after approval from the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** under **Rule 4(2) of the State Emblem of India (Regulation of Use) Rules, 2007**.

January 21, 2025

Smriti Irani, Shekhar Kapur Join PM Museum Council

- ✓ **Smriti Irani and Shekhar Kapur** have joined the **Prime Ministers' Museum & Library (PMML) Council**, which has undergone a **significant reconstitution**, with **Nripendra Mishra** reappointed as **chairperson for another five-year term**.

January 21, 2025

Uttarakhand Clears Uniform Civil Code Rules

- ✓ Uttarakhand is set to make history as the **first state in India** to implement the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**. The **state government, led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami**, has approved the **UCC rules manual**, marking a **major legal and social reform**.

Key Highlights of Uttarakhand's UCC Implementation:

Cabinet Approval:

- ✓ The **state Cabinet** has cleared the **UCC manual**, finalizing key rules and provisions.

Major Provisions Introduced:

- ✓ **Registration Services:** Streamlined **marriage and divorce registration** procedures.
- ✓ **Live-in Relationship Facilitation:** Legal recognition and mandatory **registration of live-in relationships**.
- ✓ **Tatkal Services:** Introduction of **fast-track registration and documentation services**.

Digital Transformation for Accessibility:

- ✓ Advanced **digital platforms** to facilitate **online registration and legal documentation**.
- ✓ Ensuring **efficient and widespread access** to UCC-related services.

Significance of UCC in Uttarakhand

- ✓ **Uniformity in Civil Laws:** Aims to **standardize personal laws** related to **marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption** across all communities.
- ✓ **Gender Equality & Social Justice:** Promotes **equal rights** for men and women, eliminating discrimination based on religious personal laws.
- ✓ **Legal Clarity & Simplification:** Ensures **consistency** in civil laws, reducing **legal complexities** and conflicts.

Implications & Future Prospects

- ✓ **First Step Towards Nationwide UCC:** Uttarakhand's initiative could **set a precedent** for other Indian states.
- ✓ **Legal & Social Debate:** The move is expected to spark **widespread discussions** on implementing UCC across **other regions** of India.
- ✓ **Political & Judicial Scrutiny:** Likely to be examined for **constitutional validity and implementation challenges**.

January 21, 2025

Demand For Frontier Nagaland Territory:

- ✓ The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has approved the **Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO)**'s demand for autonomy in the proposed **Frontier Nagaland Territory (FNT)**, an administrative region aimed at addressing **developmental imbalances** in **six eastern districts** of Nagaland—**Kiphire, Longleng, Mon, Noklak, Shamator, and Tuensang**.

January 21, 2025

National Panchayat Awards 2024

- ✓ The **National Panchayat Awards 2024** honored **45 Panchayats across India**, recognizing their

exceptional contributions to inclusive growth and sustainable development, while highlighting the role of **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)** in **rural governance, environmental sustainability, and advancing the SDGs through LSDGs**.

January 22, 2025

Secretary General of Indian Ocean Rim Association

- ✓ The **Ministry of External Affairs** announced the appointment of **Shri Sanjiv Ranjan** as the next **Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**. A seasoned diplomat from the 1993 batch of the **Indian Foreign Service**, **Shri Ranjan** is set to assume his new role shortly. IORA is a regional organization comprising **23 member states**, including **India, Australia, Indonesia, and South Africa**. The association aims to promote **economic cooperation, sustainable development, and regional security** among **Indian Ocean bordering countries**.

January 22, 2025

Donald Trump Sworn in as 47th President of the United States

- ✓ **Donald Trump** was sworn in as the **47th President of the United States** on **January 20, 2025**, marking his return to the **White House** after four tumultuous years. The inauguration, held indoors at the **Capitol Rotunda** due to extreme cold, symbolizes one of the most extraordinary political comebacks in American history.

January 22, 2025

Draft Regulations for the Selection and Appointment of Vice Chancellors





ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

- ✓ The **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has recently released draft regulations for the selection and appointment of **Vice Chancellors (VCs)** at universities, which has sparked considerable debate. These regulations aim to **standardize and streamline** the process across **central, state, and private universities**.

Key Provisions of the UGC Draft Regulation:

- ✓ **Search-cum-Selection Committee Formation:**

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- ✓ The **Chancellor/Visitor** will form a **three-member Search-cum-Selection Committee**.

The committee will consist of:

- ✓ **Nominee from the Chancellor/Visitor**
- ✓ **Nominee from the UGC Chairman**
- ✓ **Representative from the university's apex body** (e.g., Senate, Syndicate, Executive Council)

Eligibility Criteria:

- ✓ The draft regulations now allow **professionals from public policy, public administration, or industry with over 10 years of experience** to be eligible for the role of VC. This broadens the pool of candidates, ensuring more diverse expertise in leadership positions at universities.

Uniform Selection Criteria:

- ✓ The regulations aim to introduce **uniform selection criteria** for Vice Chancellors across all types of universities (central, state, and private). This is intended to ensure fairness, consistency, and quality in the selection process.

Inclusion of UGC Nominee in State University Committees:

- ✓ A notable proposal is the **mandatory inclusion of a UGC nominee** in the Search-cum-Selection Committee for **state universities**. This move is expected to bring an additional layer of transparency and oversight to the appointment process.

Reforms in Line with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:

- ✓ The draft regulations are aligned with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which emphasizes **quality, transparency, and inclusivity** in the higher education system. These reforms are expected to improve the governance of universities and enhance academic standards.

Controversy and Discussion:

- ✓ While the regulations aim to bring in a transparent, structured, and uniform process for selecting VCs, the proposal has generated controversy. Some critics argue that expanding the eligibility criteria to include professionals from outside academia could dilute the focus on academic leadership in universities. Others have expressed concerns over the potential for political influence in the selection process, given the involvement of the Chancellor/Visitor's nominees.

January 28, 2025

What is a Party Whip?



- ✓ A **party whip** is an important mechanism used in parliamentary systems, particularly in India, to ensure party discipline, coordination, and control over the voting behavior of elected representatives. Here's an overview of its key aspects:

Definition of a Party Whip:

- ✓ A **whip** is an official directive issued by a **political party** to its members in the legislature, directing them on how to vote on specific **bills, motions, or resolutions**.
- ✓ **Party Whips** are also designated members responsible for ensuring **attendance** and adherence to these voting instructions. They help maintain **party unity** and ensure that the party's position is consistently represented in parliamentary decisions.

Role and Purpose:

- ✓ **Maintain Discipline:** The whip ensures **party discipline** by preventing members from voting against the party's line.
- ✓ **Prevent Defections:** The whip's role includes preventing **defections** or dissent within the party ranks, ensuring unity during crucial votes.
- ✓ **Uniform Decision-Making:** The whip facilitates **uniformity** in voting, making sure the party presents a united front during legislative proceedings.

Origin of the Term "Whip":

- ✓ The term "whip" comes from **England's hunting fields**, where a **whipper-in** was responsible for keeping stray hounds within the pack. Similarly, a party whip ensures that party members stay within the party's direction.

Whip in Parliamentary Conventions:

- ✓ The **whip is not mentioned** in the **Indian Constitution, Rules of the House**, or any statutory law. Instead, it is based on **parliamentary conventions**.

Types of Whips:

One-Line Whip:

- ✓ **Purpose:** Informs members about an **important vote**.
- ✓ **Flexibility:** Members are allowed to **abstain** without facing penalties.

Two-Line Whip:

- ✓ **Purpose:** Mandates the **presence** of members during the vote but does not strictly **require them to vote** in a particular manner.

Three-Line Whip:

- ✓ **Purpose:** The **strictest form** of the whip.
- ✓ **Requirement:** Members are required to **attend the vote** and **vote in alignment** with the party's directive.

Recent in News:

- ✓ The **Vice President of India** has raised concerns regarding the **use of party whips**, questioning whether they **limit the independent judgment** of elected representatives, potentially undermining their ability to make decisions based on personal conscience or the interests of their constituency.

- ✓ A **party whip** is a powerful tool in parliamentary systems, ensuring **discipline** and **unity** within political parties. However, its use raises important questions about **individual autonomy** and the **independence** of elected representatives in the democratic process.

January 28, 2025

The 2025 Republic Day Tableaux



Tri-Services Tableau:

- ✓ **First Time Feature:** A **Tri-Services Tableau** was featured for the first time, showcasing the collaboration and synergy between India's **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- ✓ **Theme:** The tableau was themed '**Shashakt aur Surakshit Bharat**' (Strong and Secure India), which was illustrated through **integrated operations** across land, water, and air.

Key Displays:

- Arjun Main Battle Tank** (Army)
- Tejas MKII Fighter Aircraft** (Air Force)
- Advanced Light Helicopter** (Air Force)
- INS Visakhapatnam Destroyer** (Navy)
- ✓ The tableau symbolized the combined strength of India's defense forces and its growing defense capabilities.

DRDO Tableau:

- ✓ **Theme:** '**Raksha Kavach–Multi-layer Protection against Multi-domain Threats**' was the theme of the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** tableau.
- ✓ The DRDO tableau showcased India's focus on **indigenous defense innovations** aimed at ensuring **national security**.

Key Technologies Displayed:

- Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile**
- Medium Power Radar – Arudhra**
- Drone Detection System**
- Advanced Lightweight Torpedo**
- Dharashakti Electronic Warfare System**
- Indigenous Unmanned Aerial Systems**
- ✓ These displays highlighted India's emphasis on self-reliance and indigenous defense solutions to tackle multi-domain security threats.
- ✓ The 2025 Republic Day tableaux provided a remarkable representation of India's **military might, technological innovations, and defense capabilities**,

focusing on **indigenization** and **collaboration** across the armed forces.

January 29, 2025

Essential Religious Practice

- ✓ The Bombay High Court ruled that using loudspeakers is not an essential religious practice protected under Article 25 or Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.
- ✓ ERP refers to practices integral to a religion's doctrine, protected under Article 25. The judiciary determines ERP based on religious tenets.

January 29, 2025

Tripura Pioneers Multi-Lingual Governance with Bhashini MoU

- ✓ **Tripura** has become the **first northeastern state** to sign an **MoU with the Digital India Bhashini Division**, aiming to enhance **multilingual governance** by utilizing **AI and NLP for real-time translation services**, making government platforms more accessible in **regional languages**.

January 29, 2025

National Critical Mineral Mission

- ✓ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the **National Critical Mineral Mission (CMM)** with an outlay of **Rs 16,300 crore**, aiming to address the critical need for minerals essential for **key technologies and defense manufacturing**, boost domestic production, reduce import dependence, and enhance **India's resource security** through **onshore and offshore mining activities**.

January 30, 2025

Beating Retreat Ceremony

- ✓ The **Beating Retreat Ceremony** is one of the most significant events marking the conclusion of India's **Republic Day celebrations**, held annually on **January 29** at **Vijay Chowk, New Delhi**. It is a majestic reflection of India's **military traditions, musical brilliance, and patriotic spirit**. Here's a summary of the key aspects of the ceremony:

Key Highlights:

Musical Excellence:

- ✓ The ceremony showcases **mass bands** from the **Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, Delhi Police, and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)**.
- ✓ The bands perform a variety of **soulful tunes**, including **patriotic songs**, marches, and traditional military compositions, creating an atmosphere of **nostalgia and national pride**.

Symbolism:

- ✓ The **Beating Retreat** marks the end of the Republic Day celebrations, symbolizing the conclusion of the ceremonial guarding of the nation's security and sovereignty.
- ✓ The playing of '**Abide with Me**' (a hymn that has become synonymous with the ceremony) is one of

the emotional highlights, followed by the **National Anthem** as a tribute to the nation.

Ceremonial Importance:

- ✓ The Beating Retreat Ceremony follows centuries-old **British traditions** adopted by the Indian military post-independence.
- ✓ It is an occasion to showcase the discipline, synchronization, and patriotism that characterize India's armed forces.

Patriotic Fervor:

- ✓ The event is a reflection of **unity, patriotism, and respect** for the nation's history, heritage, and military prowess.
- ✓ The **Beating Retreat Ceremony** stands as a fitting end to the **Republic Day celebrations**, leaving the audience filled with a sense of pride, respect for the armed forces, and a deep connection to the country's legacy.

New Appointments

S.No.	Name	Chairman / Chairperson / President
1.	Justice Alok Aradhe	Appointed as Chief Justice of Bombay High Court
2.	Amrit Mohan Prasad	Director General (DG) of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).
3.	Vineet Joshi	Secretary of Higher Education
4.	Alok Kumar Agarwal	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Zurich Kotak General Insurance
5.	Neeraj Parakh	Appointed as CEO and Executive Director of Reliance Power
6.	Rakesh Sharma	MD & CEO of IDBI Bank
7.	M. Mohan	Appointed as Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre
8.	Justice V Rama Subramanian (Retd.)	National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
9.	Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar	23rd Governor of Kerala
10.	Arif Mohammad Khan	42nd Governor of Bihar
11.	Faiz Ahmed Kidwai	Director-General (DG) of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)
12.	Justice Ashish Naithani	Appointed as a judge of the Uttarakhand High Court
13.	Rajat Verma	Appointed CEO of DBS Bank India
14.	Dr. V. Narayanan	Chairman and Secretary of the Department of Space (DoS) of ISRO

New Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) by RBI

1.	M. K. Jain	Chairperson
2.	Revathy Iyer	Member
3.	Parvathy V. Sundaram	Member
4.	Hemant G. Contractor	Member
5.	N. S. Kannan	Member

NDA 1, 2025
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Economics, 1 – 31 January Month

January 2, 2025

RBI Introduces Name Lookup for NEFT and RTGS:

Announcement:

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced a name lookup facility for the Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) systems.

Objective:

- ✓ Reduce fraud and errors in fund transfers.
- ✓ Allow remitters to verify the beneficiary's name before initiating transactions.

Features:

- ✓ Similar to the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Immediate Payment Service (IMPS).
- ✓ Enables remitters to cross-check the account holder's name for enhanced security and accuracy.

Implementation:

- ✓ Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- ✓ Deadline for banks: April 1, 2025.

Significance:

- ✓ Enhances trust and security in digital payment systems.
- ✓ Minimizes transaction errors and protects users from fraudulent activities.

January 3, 2025

Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) 2024 Report:

- ✓ The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) recorded a 4.3% growth in November 2024 compared to November 2023.
- ✓ The ICI measures the combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries viz. Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity.
- ✓ The eight core industries comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

January 3, 2025

United District Information System for Education (UDISE+) Report 2023-24



Key Findings

Student Enrolment:

- ✓ **2023-24:** Total enrolment dropped to **8 crore**.
- ✓ **2022-23:** Enrolment was **25.18 crore**.
- ✓ Significant decline of **over 1 crore students**, marking the first drop since the pandemic.

Enrolment Trends Over the Years:

- ✓ **2021-22:** 26.52 crore
- ✓ **2020-21:** 26.44 crore
- ✓ **Average enrolment (2018-2022):** 26.36 crore.

Demographic Breakdown:

- ✓ **Gender:**
Boys: **51.9%**
Girls: **48.1%**

Minority Representation:

Total: **20% of enrolment.**

Breakdown:

- Muslims:** 79.6%
- Christians:** 10%
- Sikhs:** 6.9%
- Buddhists:** 2.2%
- Jains:** 1.3%
- Parsis:** 0.1%

Infrastructure:

Basic Amenities:

- ✓ Over **90%** of schools have:
Electricity
Gender-specific toilets.
- ✓ **Advanced Facilities:**
Functional computers: 57.2% of schools.
Internet access: 53.9% of schools.
Ramps with handrails: 52.3% of schools.

Significance and Challenges:

Significant Decline:

- ✓ Alarming reduction in student enrolment, indicating socio-economic or systemic challenges.

Infrastructure Gaps:

- ✓ Although basic amenities are present, digital readiness and accessibility for differently-abled students remain insufficient.
- Need for Focus:**
- ✓ Addressing factors causing enrolment drops.
- ✓ Bridging the gap in technological infrastructure and accessibility.
- ✓ Ensuring equitable and inclusive education for all segments of the population.

January 4, 2025

Ramesh Chand Panel



Purpose:

- ✓ Formed to **revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from 2011-12 to 2022-23.**
- ✓ Develop a road map to **transition to the Producer Price Index (PPI).**

Objectives:

- ✓ Propose a **revised commodity basket** for both WPI and PPI, reflecting structural changes in the economy.
- ✓ **Review the current price collection system** and suggest improvements.
- ✓ Determine the **computational methodology** for WPI and PPI.
- ✓ Submit the final report to the **Office of the Economic Adviser** (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade - DPIIT) **within 18 months.**

Composition of the Panel:

- ✓ Headed by **Ramesh Chand**, NITI Aayog member.
- ✓ Includes **economists**, representatives from **government, RBI, rating agencies, banks, and asset management companies.**

WPI vs. PPI:

Aspect	Wholesale Price Index (WPI)	Producer Price Index (PPI)
Definition	Measures prices of goods at the wholesale stage.	Measures prices from the producers' perspective (goods/services).
Scope	Covers only goods, excluding services.	Includes both goods and services.
Base for Weights	Weights are based on net traded value.	Weights derived from Supply Use Tables (SUT).

Aspect	Wholesale Price Index (WPI)	Producer Price Index (PPI)
Excludes	Does not cover exports, imports, and services.	Excludes indirect taxes; measures pre-tax producer prices.
Focus	Tracks price changes for bulk trade between organizations.	Tracks price changes before goods reach final consumers.
International Use	Still used in India but criticized for double counting.	Adopted globally; aligns with the System of National Accounts (SNA).

Significance:

WPI Limitations:

- ✓ Doesn't account for **consumer-level inflation.**
- ✓ Excludes the **service sector** (55% of GDP).
- ✓ Involves **double counting** of certain products.

PPI Advantages:

- ✓ Provides a more **comprehensive measure** of price changes.
- ✓ Includes **services** and tracks prices across different stages of production.
- ✓ Globally recognized and **conceptually aligned** with international standards.

Expected Outcomes:

- ✓ A **modernized price index system** better aligned with the economy's structure.
- ✓ Accurate measurement of **inflation** from the **producers' perspective.**
- ✓ Improved policymaking and **data reliability.**

January 6, 2025

AICTE's 2025 'Year of AI'

- ✓ The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has designated 2025 as the "Year of Artificial Intelligence" to position India as a global leader in AI.
- ✓ AICTE aims to promote AI in education through updated curricula, workshops for faculty, and collaborations with AI-driven companies for real-world exposure.
- ✓ Core elements of this initiative includes AI affirmation Pledge, Comprehensive AI integration, AI awareness campaign, Faculty development and industry partnerships, Recognition of excellence.

January 6, 2025

Extension of Crop Insurance Schemes

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved critical measures to support Indian farmers, including the extension of a special subsidy for Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertilizers and the continuation of crop insurance schemes until 2025-26.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured

Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) till 2025-26.

- ✓ It approved extending the one-time special package on DAP beyond the Nutrient Based Subsidy from 1st January, 2025 till further orders.

January 6, 2025

Centralized Pension Payments System

- ✓ The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation recently it has fully rolled out the Centralized Pension Payments System (CPPS) under Employees' Pension Scheme 1995, enhancing the ease of living for millions of pensioners in the country.
- ✓ It is implemented by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) which allows pensioners to access their pension from any bank or branch nationwide.
- ✓ It aims to streamline the payment process, eliminate the need for physical verifications, and ensure seamless pension disbursement for over 7.85 million pensioners.

January 6, 2025

State Bank of India's (SBI's) Two New Deposit Schemes



Har Ghar Lakhpati Scheme

- ✓ It is a pre-calculated recurring deposit scheme designed to help customers to accumulate Rs 1 lakh or multiples thereof.
- ✓ The new scheme simplifies the process of achieving financial goals, allowing customers to plan and save effectively.
- ✓ This product is also available to minors, encouraging early financial planning and savings habits.
- ✓ The minimum tenure of recurring deposits is 12 months (one year), and the maximum is 120 months (10 years).

SBI Patrons Scheme

- ✓ This is a specialized fixed deposit scheme tailored for senior citizens aged 80 years and above.
- ✓ It offers enhanced interest rates, recognizing the long-standing relationship many senior customers have with the bank.
- ✓ SBI Patrons is available to existing and new term deposit customers.
- ✓ SBI Patron's depositors would earn an additional 10 basis points higher interest rate than what is offered to senior citizens.

January 8, 2025

SBI Reports Decline in Poverty in India

Recent on News

Rural Poverty:

- ✓ Declined to **4.86% in FY24** from **25.7% in 2011-12**.

Urban Poverty:

- ✓ Reduced to **4.09% in FY24** from **13.7% in 2011-12**.

Factors Contributing to Decline:

Targeted Government Interventions:

- ✓ Policies focused on alleviating poverty.
- ✓ Subsidy programs and welfare schemes.

Enhanced Rural Infrastructure:

- ✓ Improved connectivity, electrification, and sanitation.
- ✓ Access to healthcare and education.

Improved Consumption Patterns:

- ✓ Increased spending capacity among lower-income groups.
- ✓ Shift towards better living standards.

Significance:

- ✓ Reflects **positive socio-economic progress**.
- ✓ Highlights the effectiveness of **rural development programs** and **poverty alleviation measures**.
- ✓ Indicates narrowing of the rural-urban poverty gap.

Challenges Ahead:

- ✓ Sustaining the progress in poverty reduction.
- ✓ Addressing **regional disparities** and focusing on vulnerable populations.
- ✓ Enhancing skill development and employment opportunities.

January 8, 2025

World Gold Council



Recent Updates:

Gold Reserves Addition (November 2024):

- ✓ **Global Addition:** 53 tonnes of gold by central banks.
- ✓ **India's Contribution:** Reserve Bank of India added **8 tonnes** to its reserves.

About WGC:

- ✓ **Full Form:** World Gold Council.
- ✓ **Type:** Non-profit association of the world's leading **gold producers**.
- ✓ **Founded:** **1987** by forward-thinking mining companies to promote gold use.
- ✓ **Headquarters:** **London, UK**.

Objectives:

Promote Gold Use:

- ✓ Increase demand for gold through marketing, research, and lobbying.

Set Gold Standards:

- ✓ Develop and maintain global gold standards.

Policy Advocacy:

- ✓ Propose fair and sustainable gold mining policies.

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Market Development:

- ✓ Expand the gold market for **individuals, industries, and institutions.**

Support Innovation:

- ✓ Co-sponsor research for new uses of gold and gold-containing products.

Role in the Industry:

Global Authority on Gold:

- ✓ Provides comprehensive analyses of the industry.
- ✓ Publishes **quarterly reports** on gold markets and demand trends by **sector and geography.**
- ✓ Covers markets responsible for **three-quarters** of global annual gold consumption.
- ✓ Created the **first gold exchange-traded fund (ETF).**

Significance:

Economic Insight:

- ✓ Tracks global and regional gold trends.

Sustainability:

- ✓ Ensures fair practices in mining and gold consumption.

Innovation Leader:

- ✓ Promotes development and diverse applications of gold.

January 16, 2025

Telecom Technology Development Fund:

- ✓ **C-DOT** has signed an agreement with **IIT Delhi** for the development of “**Building Blocks for THz Communication Front Ends**” for **6G** under the **Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)**, which is set up under the **Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF)**, now called **Digital Bharat Nidhi**, by the **Department of Telecom (DOT)**, **Government of India.**

January 16, 2025

National Turmeric Board:



- ✓ The **Union Minister for Commerce and Industry** recently inaugurated the **National Turmeric Board** in **New Delhi**, aimed at providing leadership and fostering growth in the **turmeric sector**. This initiative will ensure greater coordination with the **Spices Board** and other government agencies to support the development of the turmeric industry in India.

Key Aspects of the National Turmeric Board:

Purpose:

- ✓ The Board is tasked with **augmenting efforts** for the development of the turmeric sector, facilitating greater **coordination** between relevant authorities and agencies.

- ✓ Focus areas include **research and development, value addition**, promoting **medicinal and essential properties** of turmeric, and ensuring **quality and safety standards** for turmeric production and exports.

Composition of the Board:

- ✓ **Chairperson:** Appointed by the **Central Government.**
- ✓ **Secretary:** Appointed by the **Department of Commerce.**
- ✓ **Members:** Representatives from:
 - ✓ The Ministry of **AYUSH.**
 - ✓ Departments of **Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Commerce & Industry.**
 - ✓ **Top turmeric-producing states** like **Maharashtra, Telangana, and Meghalaya** (states represented on a rotational basis).
 - ✓ **Research institutions, and turmeric farmers and exporters.**

Focus Areas:

- ✓ **Research & Development:** Advancing the science of turmeric cultivation, processing, and value addition.
- ✓ **Quality Control:** Setting and ensuring quality standards for production and exports.
- ✓ **Supply Chain & Logistics:** Enhancing the efficiency of turmeric logistics and supply chains.
- ✓ **International Markets:** Exploring new global markets for turmeric, which is highly valued for its medicinal properties.

Headquarters:

- ✓ The National Turmeric Board will be headquartered in **Nizamabad, Telangana**, a region renowned for its turmeric cultivation.

Significance of the National Turmeric Board:

- ✓ The establishment of this Board underscores India's recognition of **turmeric** as a valuable agricultural product and **spice** with both **cultural and medicinal significance**. With its comprehensive focus on quality, research, and market expansion, the National Turmeric Board is poised to play a key role in boosting India's turmeric industry and ensuring its global competitiveness.

January 17, 2025

Odisha Government Announces ₹20,000 Pension for Emergency Detainees

- ✓ **Odisha state government** has announced a welfare measure for individuals jailed during the **Emergency period (1975-1977)**, offering **₹20,000 monthly pension, medical coverage**, and other benefits to **all surviving detainees** from Odisha as of **January 1, 2025**, to honor those imprisoned under the **Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA)** during the Emergency declared by **Indira Gandhi.**

January 18, 2025

RBI Allows Overseas Banks to Open INR Accounts:

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has authorized overseas branches of authorized banks to open Indian Rupee (INR) accounts for non-residents. This initiative aims to bolster the global use of the Indian Rupee in cross-border transactions and investments.

January 18, 2025

8th Pay Commission:



- ✓ Expenditure increased by ₹1 lakh crore for FY 2016-17.

Timeline for 8th Pay Commission:

- ✓ The **8th Pay Commission** is expected to be implemented by **January 1, 2026**, with recommendations for **revised pay scales** and **pension structures**.

Expected Changes:

- ✓ The new pay commission will likely recommend salary revisions and changes to various allowances to ensure better alignment with economic shifts, while addressing the concerns of inflation and providing adequate financial support to government employees and pensioners.

Significance:

- ✓ The formation of the **8th Pay Commission** reflects the government's commitment to maintaining the welfare of its employees and pensioners, offering a systematic and fair compensation structure that adapts to the nation's evolving economic realities.

- ✓ The **Union Cabinet**, under the leadership of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has approved the establishment of the **8th Pay Commission**. This significant move will revise the salaries and allowances of nearly **50 lakh central government employees** and the pensions for **65 lakh pensioners**.

Key Highlights:

Establishment & Objective:

- ✓ The **8th Pay Commission** has been set up by the **Department of Expenditure**, under the **Ministry of Finance**, Government of India.
- ✓ Its main goal is to ensure **fair compensation** for central government employees, and to recommend **formulas for revising Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR)** to counter inflation impacts.

Impact:

- ✓ The Commission will have a **direct impact** on the pay structures, allowances, and pension benefits for **central government employees and pensioners** across the nation.
- ✓ It aims to establish a fair, balanced pay structure that is in line with economic conditions and inflation trends.

Past Pay Commissions:

1st Pay Commission (1946):

- ✓ Headed by **Srinivasa Varadachariar**.
- ✓ This commission laid the foundation for salary structures and allowances in the central government.

7th Pay Commission (2014):

- ✓ Established in **2014**, it was **implemented on January 1, 2016**.

Key Revisions:

- ✓ The **fitment factor** was set at **57**, which raised the **minimum basic pay** from ₹7,000 to ₹18,000.
- ✓ The **maximum salary** was revised to ₹2,50,000.

January 20, 2025

PRABHAAV Factbook:

- ✓ Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, marked the 9th Foundation Day of Startup India by launching the PRABHAAV Factbook and the Bharat Startup Challenge.
- ✓ The PRABHAAV Factbook is a comprehensive guide detailing the growth and achievements of India's startup ecosystem from 2016 to 2024. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

January 20, 2025

Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber (iSNR) Platform



- ✓ The **Rubber Board** has launched two pivotal initiatives to streamline and enhance the sustainability of India's rubber industry, particularly focusing on meeting the evolving demands of global markets.

1. iSNR (Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber) Platform:

- ✓ The **iSNR Platform** is designed to strengthen India's position in the global natural rubber market, particularly with regard to meeting the European Union's regulatory standards.

Objective:

- ✓ The platform aims to **streamline compliance** for the rubber supply chain in India, making it easier for stakeholders to meet the **European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)** requirements.
- ✓ By adhering to these standards, it ensures that Indian natural rubber is **deforestation-free** and sustainable, a crucial factor for accessing EU markets.

Traceability Certificate:

- ✓ The platform issues a **traceability certificate** to verify the **origin** of rubber products and confirm compliance with the **EUDR**.
- ✓ This certification assures global customers of the sustainability of the rubber supply chain, further bolstering India's credibility in international markets.

Global Competitiveness:

- ✓ By ensuring compliance with global sustainability standards, the platform aims to position **Indian natural rubber** as a competitive and **responsible choice** on the international stage.
- ✓ This initiative is expected to set new benchmarks for **sustainable production** in the industry, promoting long-term growth and environmental responsibility.

2. INR Konnect:

- ✓ **INR Konnect** is a **web-based platform** designed to enhance the productivity and sustainability of rubber plantations in India, by connecting rubber growers with adopters for better management practices.

Purpose:

- ✓ The platform's primary goal is to connect **untapped rubber holdings** with interested adopters to **maximize plantation productivity**.

Certification and Training:

- ✓ The Rubber Board will **certify the credibility** of all participating growers and adopters.
- ✓ The platform also offers **training** for plantation management, focusing on sustainable practices and productivity improvement.

Comprehensive Database:

- ✓ It provides a **database of certified tappers**, helping in the management and enhancement of the rubber tapping process.

Impact on the Industry:

- ✓ **Environmental Impact:** By meeting EU sustainability regulations, the platform ensures that the rubber production process is more **eco-friendly**, contributing to the reduction of deforestation and environmental degradation.
- ✓ **Economic Growth:** The initiatives aim to **increase productivity** within the rubber sector, especially by tapping into **unused plantation areas** and offering better management practices. This is expected to **boost production** and profitability for Indian rubber farmers and stakeholders.
- ✓ **International Trade:** As the global demand for sustainably sourced products increases, these initiatives will likely **expand India's market share** in rubber exports, particularly to regions that prioritize

sustainable and traceable supply chains, such as the European Union.

- ✓ Through **iSNR** and **INR Konnect**, the Rubber Board is fostering a more **efficient, sustainable, and globally competitive** rubber industry in India.

January 20, 2025

Internet Governance Internship and Capacity Building Scheme



- ✓ The **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)** has launched an **Internet Governance Internship and Capacity Building Scheme** aimed at enhancing awareness and developing expertise in internet governance among Indian citizens.

Key Features of the Scheme:

Objective:

- ✓ The program aims to **equip participants** with the necessary knowledge to actively engage in global **internet governance processes**.
- ✓ It will prepare interns to collaborate with global Internet Governance bodies like **ICANN, IETF, ISOC**, and more, focusing on developing skills and expertise to resolve emerging issues in internet governance.

Internship Details:

- ✓ The internship offers **bi-annual sessions** with two parallel tracks:
 - Six-month program**
 - Three-month program**
- ✓ Interns will receive **mentorship** from **subject matter experts** from international organizations like **ICANN, APNIC, APTLD**, and **IETF**. They will also be guided by **retired government officials** and **faculty advisors** from recognized academic institutions.

Stipend and Support:

- ✓ **Interns will receive a stipend** of ₹20,000 per month.
- ✓ **Support for outreach programs** will also be provided, helping interns conduct activities to raise awareness of internet governance issues.

Participants' Role:

- ✓ The internship is designed to create a **talent pool** of individuals who can engage with **emerging internet governance issues** and contribute to their resolution at the global level.

About NIXI:

- ✓ **NIXI** is a **not-for-profit company** established in 2003 under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
- ✓ NIXI's main aim is to **increase internet penetration** and **adoption** across India by facilitating key infrastructure for the internet ecosystem and ensuring its effective management for public use.

Benefits:

- ✓ This initiative will nurture **Indian talent** in the crucial area of **internet governance** and provide opportunities to contribute to global policy discussions.
- ✓ Participants will gain hands-on experience in international frameworks and institutions that shape the future of the internet.
- ✓ The scheme will help enhance **India's presence** and **representation** in global internet governance discussions and decisions, aligning with the country's growing role in the global digital economy.
- ✓ This initiative is a step towards creating a **globally competitive** workforce skilled in managing **internet governance issues**, thus ensuring that India remains an active participant in shaping the future of the internet.

January 22, 2025

Forbes Billionaires List 2025

- ✓ Global business leaders have amassed extraordinary wealth, driven by innovation and strategic decisions. According to **Forbes' latest rankings** in 2025, the top 10 richest individuals have seen significant shifts in their positions due to changing business landscapes and expanding fortunes.

Top 3 Richest People in 2025:

Elon Musk

- ✓ **Net Worth:** \$433.9 billion
- ✓ Musk remains at the top of the list, continuing to benefit from his leadership of **Tesla**, **SpaceX**, and other ventures. His wealth is bolstered by advancements in electric vehicles, space exploration, and sustainable energy solutions.

Bernard Arnault

- ✓ **Net Worth:** \$395.8 billion
- ✓ The chairman and CEO of **LVMH** (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) continues to hold the second position, benefiting from his leadership in the luxury goods market. Arnault's empire includes numerous high-end brands in fashion, cosmetics, and spirits.

Mark Zuckerberg

- ✓ **Net Worth:** \$344.5 billion
- ✓ Zuckerberg's net worth has surged, surpassing **Larry Ellison** of Oracle, making him the third-wealthiest person globally. As the founder and CEO of **Meta** (formerly Facebook), his investments in social media platforms, virtual reality, and the metaverse have contributed to his wealth.

Key Shifts in the Rankings:

- ✓ **Mark Zuckerberg** has surpassed **Larry Ellison** to take the third spot, reflecting the growing influence and

financial returns from **Meta's innovations** and ventures into virtual reality and the metaverse.

- ✓ **Larry Ellison's** wealth, while still massive, has been eclipsed by the rise of newer tech giants and market expansions.

Global Trends Impacting Wealth:

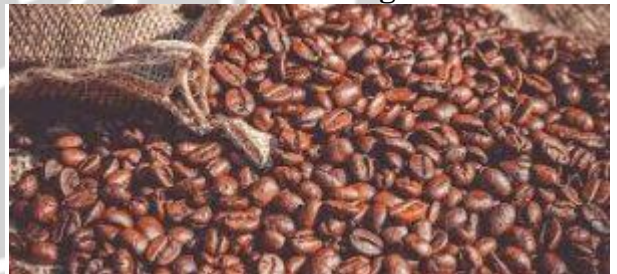
- ✓ **Technological Innovation:** Companies led by Musk, Zuckerberg, and others have capitalized on emerging technologies such as **artificial intelligence**, **space exploration**, and **blockchain**.
- ✓ **Luxury Goods Growth:** The continued global demand for luxury goods, as seen with Bernard Arnault's LVMH, has played a pivotal role in sustaining high wealth.
- ✓ **Metaverse and Virtual Reality:** Zuckerberg's investments in **Meta's** vision of the metaverse and virtual worlds have created substantial returns.

Notable Mentions:

- ✓ The list also features other business leaders whose wealth has grown dramatically in the last few years, thanks to successful ventures and strategic investments across diverse sectors, from technology and real estate to entertainment and finance.
- ✓ In conclusion, the world's wealthiest individuals in 2025 exemplify how **technology**, **luxury industries**, and **forward-thinking investments** have propelled these entrepreneurs to the forefront of global financial rankings.

January 22, 2025

Coffee : India Is Now 7th Largest Producer





- ✓ India has emerged as the **seventh-largest coffee producer** in the world, marking a significant milestone in its coffee industry. Exports of Indian coffee reached **\$1.29 billion** in FY 2023-24, nearly doubling from **\$719.42 million** in FY 2020-21, highlighting the country's growing presence in the global coffee market.

Climatic Conditions for Coffee Cultivation:

- ✓ India's ideal conditions for coffee cultivation are shaped by specific climatic factors:
- ✓ **Temperature:** Coffee grows best in temperatures between **15°C to 28°C**.
- ✓ **Rainfall:** Requires **150-250 cm** of annual rainfall for optimal growth.
- ✓ **Soil:** Thrives in well-drained, loamy soil rich in **humus**, **iron**, and **calcium**.
- ✓ **Climate:** Coffee plants flourish in a **hot, humid climate** with shaded plantations.

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- ✓ **Elevation:** Coffee is typically grown at altitudes ranging from **600 to 1,600 meters** above sea level, with higher elevations generally producing superior quality beans.

India's Role in Global Coffee Production:

- ✓ India ranks as the **seventh-largest coffee producer** globally, with a significant share of its production exported to international markets. The country's growing production and export capacity reflect its increasing significance in the global coffee trade.
- ✓ **Exports:** More than **70% of India's coffee production** is exported. Key export destinations include **Italy, Belgium, and Russia**, all of which are major coffee-consuming countries.

State-wise Coffee Production in India:

- ✓ India's coffee production is primarily concentrated in the southern states, with **Karnataka** leading the charge:
- ✓ **Karnataka:** The largest producer of coffee in India, contributing over **70%** of the country's total coffee output.
- ✓ **Kerala:** The second-largest producer, with a significant contribution to both the national and global coffee market.
- ✓ **Tamil Nadu:** The third-largest coffee producer, complementing the coffee production in Karnataka and Kerala.

January 28, 2025

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become the first Indian bank to launch Clari5's National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) Integration Solution:

- ✓ Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become the first Indian bank to implement Clari5's National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) Integration Solution, marking a significant advancement in fraud prevention and complaint management. This state-of-the-art system, developed in collaboration with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), enables automated, real-time processing of cybercrime complaints across all retail banking channels, including Internet and Mobile Banking, ATMs, UPI, and NEFT/RTGS.

January 28, 2025

Unified Pension Scheme : In News



- ✓ The **Union Finance Ministry** has recently notified the operationalization of the **Unified Pension Scheme**

(UPS) under the **National Pension System (NPS)**, which provides a new option for Central Government employees. This initiative is designed to enhance pension benefits for employees and align them with contemporary retirement benefit models. Below are the key details:

Key Features of the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS):

Eligibility and Implementation:

- ✓ The **UPS** applies to **current and future** Central Government employees who are covered under the National Pension System (NPS).
- ✓ These employees can choose to switch to the UPS or continue with their existing NPS plan.
- ✓ The decision to switch is **final and binding**, once made by the employee.
- ✓ The **effective date** for operationalization is set for **April 1, 2025**.

Pension Benefits:

- ✓ The UPS guarantees a pension payout to employees upon superannuation, offering **50% of the average basic pay** during the **last 12 months** of service, provided the employee has completed **25 years of service**.
- ✓ For employees with **less than 25 years** of service but **more than 10 years**, a **proportionate pension** will be provided.
- ✓ Employees with at least **10 years of qualifying service** are assured a **minimum payout of ₹10,000** per month.
- ✓ **Voluntary Retirement:** Employees who voluntarily retire after **25 years of service** will receive their pension payout starting from the date of superannuation.
- ✓ **Family Pension:** In case of the employee's death after retirement, the spouse will receive a **family payout** amounting to **60% of the employee's payout**.

Additional Benefits:

- ✓ **Dearness Relief:** Both the **assured payout** and **family payout** will be subject to **dearness relief**, which will be calculated in the same manner as the **Dearness Allowance (DA)** for serving employees.
- ✓ **Exclusions:** The UPS payout will **not** be available in cases where the employee is **removed, dismissed, or resigns** from service.



Contributions:

- ✓ **Employee Contribution:** Employees under the UPS will contribute **10% of their basic salary and dearness allowance**.
- ✓ **Employer Contribution:** The **Central Government** will contribute **18.5%** of the employee's basic salary and dearness allowance.

Objective of the UPS:

- ✓ The UPS aims to provide a **guaranteed, sustainable, and predictable pension** to employees while maintaining a **contributory structure** similar to modern pension schemes. This is an important step towards ensuring **financial security** for employees

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after retirement and enhancing the **quality of life** for their families.

- ✓ The introduction of the UPS also streamlines the pension process and brings greater **transparency and fairness** to the pension system, with **clear guidelines** and well-defined pension amounts based on service years. This scheme aligns with government efforts to reform and modernize the pension structure for government employees.

January 29, 2025

Enhanced Certificates of Origin 2.0 System:



- ✓ The **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** has launched the upgraded **Certificate of Origin (eCoO) 2.0 System**, aimed at simplifying the certification process for exporters and enhancing the overall efficiency of trade. Here are the key features and highlights of the system:

Key Features of eCoO 2.0:

Simplified Certification Process:

- ✓ The eCoO 2.0 system has been designed to streamline and simplify the process of obtaining Certificates of Origin, which are crucial for exporting goods under various trade agreements.

Multi-User Access:

- ✓ Exporters can now authorize multiple users under a single **Importer Exporter Code (IEC)**, allowing different members of the export team to access and use the system seamlessly.

Aadhaar-based e-Signing:

- ✓ The system provides flexibility by supporting **Aadhaar-based e-signing** in addition to the existing **digital signature tokens**, making the process faster and more accessible.

Integrated Dashboard:

- ✓ The platform features a **centralized dashboard** that offers exporters easy access to key services such as:
- ✓ Enhanced Certificate of Origin (eCoO)
- ✓ **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** information
- ✓ Trade events and other resources relevant to the exporters.

In-lieu Certificate of Origin:

- ✓ Exporters can request corrections to previously issued certificates through the platform's **In-lieu Certificate of Origin** feature, making it easier to manage errors or changes in certificates.

High Volume Processing:

- ✓ The platform processes over **7,000 eCoOs** daily, covering both **preferential and non-preferential certificates**. It is connected to **125 issuing agencies**, including **110 national and regional chambers of commerce & industry**.

Single Access Point for All Exporters:

- ✓ The platform acts as a **single access point** for all exporters, offering access to all **FTAs, Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs)**, and relevant issuing agencies.

Mandatory Electronic Filing:

- ✓ The **electronic filing of Non-Preferential Certificates of Origin** has become mandatory through the **eCoO 2.0** platform. Exporters can access the platform and submit their certificates online via Trade.gov.in under the **"Get Certificate of Origin"** section.

Objective of the eCoO 2.0 System:

- ✓ The **eCoO 2.0 System** is part of the **DGFT's** ongoing efforts to enhance trade efficiency and simplify processes for exporters. By offering a **user-friendly, digital platform**, the system significantly reduces manual intervention, accelerates processing times, and ensures greater transparency. The inclusion of Aadhaar-based e-signing and the **In-lieu Certificate of Origin** feature further add to the system's flexibility, enabling exporters to manage their certificates with ease.

Development and Oversight:

- ✓ The system has been developed by **DGFT** and the **Regional & Multilateral Trade Relations (RMTR) Division**, under the **Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, Government of India.

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WEEKLY

--- Science and Technology, 1 – 31 January Month ---

January 2, 2025

Presence of Poliovirus

What is polio

- Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease, mainly affecting children
- According to WHO, the virus is transmitted from person-to-person, mainly through the faecal-oral route

STRAINS

- There are three types of polio virus strains – P1, P2 and P3
- P2 was eradicated globally in 1999
- India attained a polio free status in 2014 after successfully eliminating the wild P1 and P3 strains



VACCINATION SCHEDULE

- OPV: At 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 14 weeks
- IPV: At 6 weeks and 14 weeks
- OPV booster: Between 16 and 24 months

Global Presence:

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has reported the presence of **poliovirus** in multiple regions, including: **Pakistan, Cameroon, European countries** like Spain (Barcelona), Poland (Warsaw), and Germany (Cologne).

Transmission Pathway:

- ✓ Recent research suggests: Poliovirus may be transmitted **primarily via the respiratory route**, challenging the traditional belief of a **faecal-oral route**.

Resurgence Evidence:

- ✓ **Wild Poliovirus (WPV1):** Pakistan: Reported **62 cases** of **wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1)** in 2024.
- ✓ **Environmental Surveillance:** Detection of poliovirus in wastewater samples in various cities.
- ✓ **Vaccine-Derived Poliovirus:** Evidence of **vaccine-derived poliovirus** in countries with low immunization coverage.

Public Health Concern:

- ✓ **Environmental Samples:** Presence of poliovirus in urban areas like **Barcelona, Warsaw, and Cologne** highlights potential risks for **undetected infections** or **unvaccinated populations**.
- ✓ **Vaccination Gaps:** Countries with low immunization coverage face a higher risk of outbreaks.

Way Forward:

- ✓ **Strengthening Vaccination:** Focus on improving **global immunization coverage** to prevent the spread of polio.
- ✓ **Enhanced Surveillance:** Conduct robust **environmental monitoring** and community health

initiatives to detect and respond to poliovirus presence.

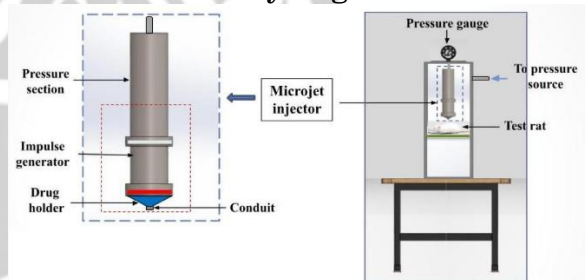
- ✓ **Global Cooperation:** Collaborative efforts between **WHO**, governments, and healthcare organizations to eliminate polio resurgence risks.

Conclusion:

- ✓ The resurgence of **wild and vaccine-derived poliovirus** emphasizes the urgent need for **enhanced vaccination programs** and **surveillance measures** to prevent outbreaks and move closer to global **polio eradication goals**.

January 2, 2025

Needle-Free Shock Syringe



Key Highlights:

- ✓ **Developed by:** Researchers at **IIT Bombay**.
- ✓ **Purpose:** Ensures **painless drug delivery**, reduces **skin damage**, and minimizes the **risk of infection**.

Technology Features:

- ✓ **Shockwave Mechanism:** Utilizes **high-energy shockwaves** to deliver drugs through the skin.
- ✓ A **shockwave** is a pressure wave moving faster than sound, caused by rapid pressure changes.
- ✓ **Design and Functionality:** Consists of **three sections: driver, driven, and drug holder**.
- ✓ Uses a **micro shock tube** and **pressurized nitrogen gas** to create a **liquid drug microjet** that penetrates the skin at supersonic speeds.
- ✓ **Performance:** Demonstrated effective drug delivery in rats with **deeper tissue penetration** and **minimal skin damage** compared to needles.

Advantages:

- ✓ **Painless:** Eliminates the discomfort of traditional needles.
- ✓ **Reduces Risks:** Prevents **needle-stick injuries** and associated **bloodborne diseases**.
- ✓ **Cost-Effective:** Designed for **1000+ uses**, requiring only **nozzle replacements**.

Applications:

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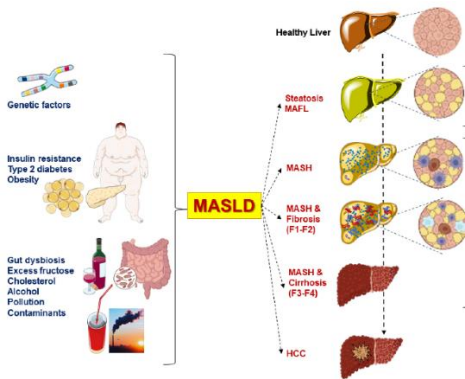
- ✓ **Immunization Drives:** Potential to **accelerate campaigns** like **Mission Indradhanush**.
- ✓ **Safe Drug Delivery:** Especially useful for mass immunizations and reducing infection risks.

Conclusion:

- ✓ The **shockwave-based syringe** is a **revolutionary innovation** offering a **painless, safe, and cost-effective** alternative to traditional needles, with promising applications in healthcare and immunization programs.

January 2, 2025

Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease



Key Highlights:

- ✓ **New Terminology:** The term **Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)** has been replaced by **MASLD** to reflect **metabolic dysfunction** as the primary cause, moving away from the focus on the absence of alcohol use.
- ✓ **Purpose of Change:** Reduces stigma tied to alcohol use. Highlights underlying issues like **metabolic dysfunction** and **abnormal cholesterol**.

Understanding NAFLD:

- ✓ **NAFLD:** Fat accumulation in the liver without alcohol involvement.

Two Types:

- ✓ **NAFL:** Minimal/no inflammation or damage, can cause liver enlargement and discomfort but rarely leads to severe complications.
- ✓ **NASH:** Includes fat buildup and liver inflammation, leading to liver damage, fibrosis, cirrhosis, and increased liver cancer risk.

What is MASLD?

- ✓ Recognizes **metabolic dysfunction** (e.g., obesity, type 2 diabetes) as the **primary cause** of steatotic liver disease.
- ✓ **Affects: 25% globally**, with **50-70% prevalence** in those with obesity or type 2 diabetes.

Diagnosis of MASLD:

- ✓ **Non-Invasive Methods:** **FibroScan, MRI, Ultrasound, Blood Tests**

Conclusion:

- ✓ The shift from **NAFLD to MASLD** signifies an evolving understanding of liver diseases, focusing on metabolic health rather than alcohol avoidance,

promoting **targeted interventions** and **stigma-free care**.

January 2, 2025

Pegasus Spyware & Surveillance



Pegasus Spyware:

- ✓ Developed by **NSO Group**, an Israeli cybersecurity firm founded in **2010**.
- ✓ Capable of hacking **iOS** and **Android** devices.
- ✓ Functions include **data extraction, conversation recording, photo capturing, and app data access**.

Spyware:

- ✓ **Definition:** Malicious software that **monitors** and **collects information** from devices without user consent.

Global Controversy:

- ✓ Used for **surveillance** in multiple countries, raising serious concerns over **privacy** and **fundamental rights violations**.
- ✓ **India Connection:** Allegations of misuse for surveillance of journalists, activists, and politicians.

Legal Developments:

US Court Ruling:

- ✓ Declared Pegasus spyware violated the **Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, 1986**.
- ✓ Involved **surveillance of 1,400 WhatsApp users**, including **300 from India**.

Concerns and Implications:

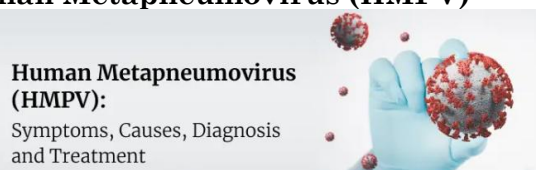
- ✓ Violates individual **privacy** and **digital rights**.
- ✓ Sparks debate on **cybersecurity ethics, government accountability**, and the need for **regulatory frameworks**.

Conclusion:

- ✓ The **Pegasus spyware controversy** highlights critical issues around **cyber surveillance**, emphasizing the need for stringent laws to protect **privacy** and ensure **responsible use** of technology.

January 3, 2025

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)



Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV):

Symptoms, Causes, Diagnosis and Treatment

Key Highlights:

What is HMPV?

- ✓ A **respiratory virus** that causes infections in the **upper and lower respiratory tract**.

- ✓ Primarily affects **children, older adults**, and individuals with **weakened immune systems**.

Symptoms:

- ✓ Similar to other respiratory illnesses, including: Cough, Runny nose, Fever, Shortness of breath, Wheezing

Global Outbreak Details:

Recent Spread:

- ✓ Outbreaks reported in various countries, including **increased cases during winter and spring months**.
- ✓ Often **misdiagnosed** as flu or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) due to similar symptoms.

Vulnerability:

- ✓ Children under 5 years, older adults over 65, and individuals with **chronic respiratory diseases** are at higher risk.

Transmission:

- ✓ Spreads through:
 - ✓ **Respiratory droplets** from coughs/sneezes.
 - ✓ Contact with **contaminated surfaces** or objects.

Treatment and Prevention:

- ✓ **No Specific Vaccine or Antiviral** for HMPV.
- ✓ Symptom management includes **hydration, rest**, and medications for fever or wheezing.

Prevention Measures:

- ✓ Frequent **handwashing**.
- ✓ Avoiding close contact with infected individuals.
- ✓ Disinfecting commonly touched surfaces.

Significance:

- ✓ Rising HMPV cases emphasize the need for **better diagnostics** and **public awareness** about this often-overlooked virus.
- ✓ Highlights gaps in respiratory virus surveillance beyond **COVID-19** and flu.

Conclusion:

- ✓ The HMPV outbreak underscores the importance of **hygiene practices, early detection**, and **research** into vaccine development to combat future outbreaks effectively.

January 3, 2025

Belly Landing



- ✓ **Recent in News:** As many as 179 people were killed when Jeju Air flight 7C2216 made a belly-landing in South Korea.

What is Belly Landing?

- ✓ **Definition:** A controlled emergency landing where an aircraft lands **without extending its landing gear**, causing it to touch down on its fuselage (belly).
- ✓ It is a rare but planned maneuver, often executed during **gear malfunctions** or emergencies.

Key Causes of Belly Landing:

- ✓ **Landing Gear Failure:** Inability to deploy landing gear due to mechanical issues or hydraulic failure.
- ✓ **Hydraulic System Malfunction:** Hydraulic systems controlling the landing gear become inoperative.
- ✓ **Pilot Error:** Accidental failure to extend the landing gear before landing.
- ✓ **Structural Damage:** Landing gear is damaged due to prior incidents, such as a hard landing.

Execution and Safety Measures:

- ✓ **Pilot Preparation:** Crew informs **air traffic control (ATC)** and plans the safest possible landing scenario.
- ✓ The aircraft is flown in a controlled manner to minimize speed during touchdown.
- ✓ **Emergency Procedures:** Passengers are briefed on emergency evacuation.
- ✓ Fire and rescue teams are alerted and prepared on the ground.
- ✓ **Landing Surface:** Preferably done on a **smooth runway** or **open field** to minimize aircraft damage.

Implications of Belly Landing:

- ✓ **Aircraft Damage:** Significant structural damage to the fuselage and underside.
- ✓ **Passenger Safety:** Modern aircraft are designed to ensure passenger survival during belly landings, with safety protocols in place.
- ✓ **Operational Delays:** Investigations and repairs can take weeks or months.

Notable Belly Landings:

- ✓ **US Airways Flight 1549 (2009):** Successful belly landing on the Hudson River after both engines failed.
- ✓ Numerous instances worldwide, often attributed to technical failures or mechanical issues, showcasing the skill and training of pilots.

Prevention:

- ✓ **Regular Maintenance:** Ensuring the landing gear and hydraulic systems are functioning properly.
- ✓ **Pilot Training:** Rigorous simulator training for handling landing gear failures.
- ✓ **Aircraft Design Improvements:** Enhanced backup systems for gear deployment.

Conclusion:

- ✓ Belly landings, though rare, highlight the importance of **pilot skill, advanced safety protocols**, and **regular aircraft maintenance** in ensuring passenger safety and minimizing risks.

January 3, 2025

Tinnitus



- ✓ IIT Bombay's Affordable Tinnitus Management Device

Key Highlights

- ✓ **Development:** Researchers at IIT Bombay have designed an **affordable device** for diagnosing and managing tinnitus.
- ✓ **Significance:** Provides a **comprehensive, personalized solution** for patients dealing with tinnitus.

Understanding Tinnitus

- ✓ **Definition:** The perception of sound without an external source.
- ✓ **Symptoms:**
- ✓ Buzzing, roaring, clicking, or phantom noises in the ears.
- ✓ Mental health impacts like anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances.
- ✓ **Causes:**
- ✓ Age-related hearing loss.
- ✓ Ear injuries or circulatory system issues.

Features of the Device

- ✓ **Tinnitus Matching:** Identifies the exact nature and frequency of the sound experienced by the patient.
- ✓ **Multimodal Treatment:** Provides a **customizable approach** tailored to individual needs.
- ✓ **Integration:** Paired with **supporting application software** for effective diagnosis and management.

Potential Benefits

- ✓ Affordable and **accessible solution** for patients.
- ✓ Improves **quality of life** by addressing symptoms like sleep issues and mental health challenges.
- ✓ Offers a **tailored treatment** experience, enhancing patient outcomes.

Impact

- ✓ Could revolutionize the management of tinnitus, making treatment more accessible and precise, especially in resource-constrained settings.

January 4, 2025

Injectable Hydrogel

- ✓ Researchers from IIT-Guwahati and Bose Institute, Kolkata, have developed an advanced injectable hydrogel for localized cancer treatment.
- ✓ A water-based polymer network designed to release anti-cancer drugs precisely at the tumour site, sparing healthy cells.
- ✓ Developed by: Researchers from IIT-Guwahati and Bose Institute, Kolkata.

January 4, 2025

In Flight Internet

- ✓ Air India, part of the Tata Group, has become the first Indian airline to offer in-flight Internet on domestic flights.
- ✓ In-flight Wi-Fi provides passengers with Internet connectivity during flights, enabling access to online services like browsing, streaming, and messaging. Two primary systems are Air-to-Ground (ATG) and Satellite-Based Connectivity.
- ✓ ATG: Uses antennae under the aircraft to connect with ground cellular towers. Suitable for regions with dense tower networks.
- ✓ Satellite-Based: Uses antennae on top of the aircraft to communicate with satellites, ensuring wider coverage, especially over oceans and remote areas.

January 6, 2025

India Welcomes Its First Generation Beta Baby

- ✓ As the year 2025 brought upon the world the 'Generation Beta', India got its first baby of this gen on New Year's day, January 1, in Mizoram's Aizawl.
- ✓ The baby, named Frankie Remruatdika Zadeng, is recognized as India's first child from the so-called Generation Beta.

January 6, 2025

Mission ShakthiSAT



- ✓ ISRO has brought together about 12,000 talented girls from 108 countries for an all-girls flight to the lunar orbit, Mission ShakthiSAT.

- ✓ An all-girls lunar mission involving the design, build, and launch of a satellite to the lunar orbit, showcasing global talent in space exploration.
- ✓ Expected Launch: Scheduled for September 2026, to be launched by ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

January 6, 2025

Blue Baby Syndrome



- ✓ High nitrate levels have been found in the groundwater of 440 districts across India, which can cause health issues like blue baby syndrome in infants and are unsafe for drinking.
- ✓ Blue baby syndrome, also called cyanosis, is a condition in babies in which their skin appears blue or purple tinged. The baby takes on a bluish hue because of poorly oxygenated blood.
- ✓ Normally, blood is pumped from the heart to the lungs, where it receives oxygen.
- ✓ The blood is circulated back through the heart and then throughout the body.
- ✓ When there's a problem with the heart, lungs, or blood, blood may not be oxygenated properly.

January 6, 2025

Open Data Kit (ODK)



OPEN DATA KIT

- ✓ **Purpose:** A digital tool adopted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to **enhance transparency and accountability** in public spending and government schemes.

Features and Capabilities

- ✓ **Data Collection and Management:**
- ✓ Allows secure data design, collection, and management.
- ✓ Integrated with CAG's operating system, **OIOS** (Online Integrated Operating System).
- ✓ **End-to-End Encryption:** Ensures secure handling of data.
- ✓ **Multilingual Surveys:** Enables surveys in **multiple languages** simultaneously.

- ✓ **Problem Identification:** Assists in identifying issues requiring **additional review**.

Applications

Beneficiary Surveys:

- ✓ A key source for audit planning and collecting audit evidence.
- ✓ Helps assess public satisfaction with services or schemes.

Healthcare Audits:

- ✓ Used to measure **patient satisfaction** during audits of AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) facilities at **Mangalagiri** and **Bibinagar**.

Impact

- ✓ **Improved Audit Processes:** Facilitates efficient and detailed evidence collection.
- ✓ **Enhanced Accountability:** Supports better oversight of **public spending** and performance of government initiatives.
- ✓ **Digital Transformation:** Aligns CAG operations with modern, tech-enabled solutions.

January 6, 2025

Cowpea : Germinated During ISRO Mission



Key Highlights

- ✓ **ISRO Experiment:** Cowpea seeds sent aboard PSLV-C60 POEM-4 germinated in **microgravity** within 4 days.
- ✓ **Scientific Achievement:** Demonstrates the viability of crop germination in space, paving the way for space-based agriculture.

About Cowpea

- ✓ **Scientific Name:** *Vigna unguiculata*.
- ✓ **Common Names:** Black-eyed pea, southern pea.
- ✓ **Family:** Fabaceae (pea family).
- ✓ **Origin:** Domesticated in **Southern Africa**, spread to **Asia** and **East & West Africa**.

Agricultural Features

- ✓ **Nutritional Value:**
- ✓ Contains **25% protein**, vitamins, and minerals.
- ✓ **Adaptability:**
- ✓ **Drought-tolerant.**
- ✓ Thrives in a wide range of soils.
- ✓ Improves soil fertility as a **legume** by replenishing nitrogen.
- ✓ **Soil Preferences:**
- ✓ Best suited for **well-drained loam** or **slightly heavy soils**.
- ✓ In colder regions, sandy soils are preferred for quicker maturation.

Global Context

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- ✓ **Largest Producer and Consumer:** West Africa (87% of global production).

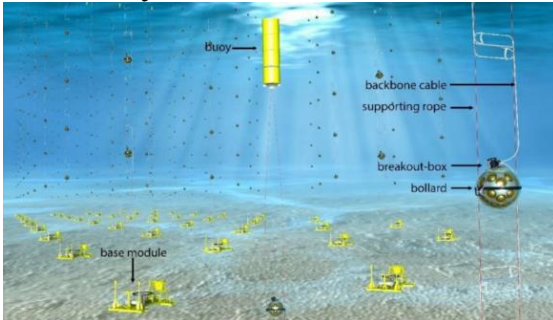
- ✓ **Nigeria:** Accounts for 46% of worldwide production.

Indian Context

- ✓ **Cultivation Regions:**
- ✓ Arid and semi-arid regions, including **Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and West Uttar Pradesh.**
- ✓ Significant areas in **Rajasthan, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.**
- ✓ **Significance:** Primarily grown by small-scale farmers in India for food and soil conservation.

January 7, 2025

KM3NeT Project



Overview

- ✓ **Objective:** Detect high-energy neutrinos (ghost particles) under the **Mediterranean Sea.**
- ✓ **Scale:** Research infrastructure with a telescope volume of **one cubic kilometre.**
- ✓ **Technology:** Utilizes **Cherenkov radiation** to study neutrinos through their interaction with water molecules.

Key Components

- ✓ **ARCA (Astroparticle Research with Cosmics in the Abyss):**
- ✓ **Purpose:** Detect neutrinos from distant astrophysical sources (e.g., supernovae, gamma-ray bursts, colliding stars).
- ✓ **Location:** Offshore Sicily, **Italy.**
- ✓ **ORCA (Oscillation Research with Cosmics in the Abyss):**
- ✓ **Purpose:** Study **neutrino oscillations** and properties using neutrinos from the Earth's atmosphere.
- ✓ **Location:** Offshore **France.**

Unique Features

- ✓ Arrays of **optical sensors** detect faint light from charged particles caused by neutrino collisions.
- ✓ Similar to the **IceCube Neutrino Observatory** in Antarctica but operates in deep-sea water instead of frozen ice.

Significance

- ✓ Studies high-energy neutrinos to understand astrophysical phenomena and neutrino properties.
- ✓ Aims to provide insights into **supernovae, gamma-ray bursts,** and other cosmic events.
- ✓ Collaborative **European research initiative** fostering global advancements in particle astrophysics.

January 7, 2025

Abdali Missile



- ✓ **Type:** Short-Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM).
- ✓ **Range:** 180-200 km.
- ✓ **Warhead:** 250-450 kg, likely high explosive or submunition payload.
- ✓ **Guidance System:** Inertial guidance with a **Circular Error Probable (CEP)** of 150 meters.

Development & Origin

- ✓ **Developed by:** Pakistan's Space Research Commission (SUPARCO).
- ✓ **Purpose:** Designed for quick-reaction battlefield scenarios.

Operational Details

- ✓ **Propellant:** Solid propellant, single-stage engine.
- ✓ **Launch Vehicle:** Road-mobile Transporter-Erector-Launcher (TEL).
- ✓ **Destructive Capability:** Limited due to small warhead, but capable of targeting military bases, airfields, and critical infrastructure (e.g., power plants, industrial facilities).

Recent in News:

- ✓ **Potential Buyer:** Amid rising tensions in India-Bangladesh relations, Dhaka is reportedly mulling to purchase the Abdali Short Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs) aka the Hatf 2 missiles, from Pakistan.

January 8, 2025

CloudSEK's Threat Landscape Report 2024

- ✓ India became the second most targeted nation globally for cyberattacks, with 95 entities falling victim to data theft, according to CloudSEK's Threat Landscape Report 2024. The United States topped the list with 140 attacks, while Israel ranked third with 57 attacks.
- ✓ The finance and banking sectors were the most affected, with 20 victims. Other impacted sectors included government (13 victims), telecommunications (12), healthcare and pharma (10), and education (9).

January 8, 2025

Nadi Tarangini – India's First Ayurvedic Diagnostic Device Approved by CDSCO

- ✓ Nadi Tarangini, an AI-powered pulse diagnostic device developed by Atreya Innovations, received approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), making it India's first ayurvedic medical device to be officially recognized.

- ✓ The device, which combines modern technology with ancient Ayurvedic practices, was created after over six years of research, and aims to revolutionize traditional Ayurvedic diagnostic methods by offering precise health insights through pulse examination.

January 8, 2025

Department of Scientific and Industrial Research:

- ✓ The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) celebrated its 40th Foundation Day on 4th January 2025, marking four decades of contributions to India's scientific and industrial development.
- ✓ DSIR was established on 4th January 1985, under the Ministry of Science and Technology through a Presidential Notification under the 164th Amendment of the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961.

January 8, 2025

BHARATPOL Portal



- ✓ **Launched by:** Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation.

Purpose & Functions

- ✓ **International Assistance:** Streamlines requests for international assistance through INTERPOL.
- ✓ **Red Notices:** Facilitates the issuance of Red Notices and other INTERPOL notices.
- ✓ **Police Efficiency:** Enhances the efficiency of field-level police officers in handling crimes and security challenges.
- ✓ **Faster Access:** Facilitates quicker access to international police assistance and real-time information sharing.

Development

- ✓ **Developed by:** Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Strategic Impact

- ✓ **Combating Transnational Crimes:** Strengthens India's efforts to combat cross-border crimes and improve law enforcement operations.

January 8, 2025

Dozer Push Mining Method



Development & Innovation

- ✓ **Developed by:** CSIR-Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research (CSIR-CIMFR).
- ✓ **First Trial:** Successfully conducted the first trial blast using digital technologies for the Dozer Push Mining method in India.

Key Features

- ✓ **Unmanned & Automated:** Utilizes unmanned, automated machinery to optimize the mining process.
- ✓ **Safety & Control:** Ensures vibration and flyrock are controlled within safe limits.
- ✓ **Digital Integration:** Incorporates advanced digital technologies to enhance efficiency and safety.

Advantages

- ✓ **Improved Efficiency:** Faster coal recovery, reduced delays due to adverse weather (e.g., monsoons).
- ✓ **Cost-Effective:** Estimated 7-10% reduction in operational costs compared to conventional methods.
- ✓ **Enhanced Productivity:** Better utilization of dragline machines and reduction in unit costs.

Safety Benefits

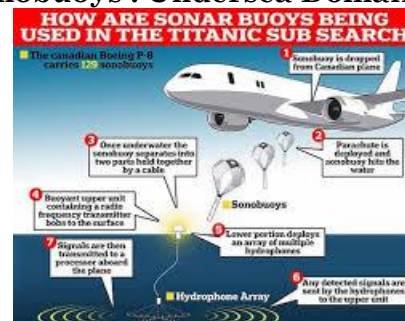
- ✓ **Worker Safety:** The unmanned operation minimizes risks associated with manual labor and traditional mining techniques.

Alternatives to Conventional Methods

- ✓ **Replaces:** Traditional truck-shovel mining, shovel-dumper, and dragline methods.

January 9, 2025

Sonobuoys : Undersea Domain Awareness



- ✓ Cooperation Between India and the U.S.
- ✓ **Objective:** Co-production of U.S. sonobuoys for Undersea Domain Awareness (UDA) for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ **Purpose:** To track submarines in deep seas and oceans using advanced technology.

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What Are Sonobuoys?

- ✓ **Description:** Expendable, electro-mechanical acoustic sensors that detect underwater sounds emitted by ships and submarines.
- ✓ **Purpose:** Help in the detection, classification, and tracking of adversarial ships and submarines.

Deployment Process

- ✓ **Deployment Method:** Dropped from naval helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft in a pattern.
- ✓ **Canister Design:** Sonobuoys are dropped in canisters, deploying automatically upon impact with water.
- ✓ **Inflatable System:** Once deployed, an inflatable system with a radio transmitter stays on the surface, while sensors descend below the water surface to a predetermined depth.
- ✓ **Data Relay:** The sensors relay acoustic data back to the monitoring platform (ship or aircraft).

Types of Sonobuoys

- ✓ **Active Sonobuoys:** Emit sound energy and listen for the echo, transmitting information back to the aircraft.
- ✓ **Passive Sonobuoys:** Only listen for sounds from ships or submarines and transmit the data to the aircraft.
- ✓ **Special Purpose Sonobuoys:** Provide environmental data like water temperature and ambient noise levels.

Components of a Typical Sonobuoy

- ✓ **Housing:** Cylindrical or spherical, buoyant structure.
- ✓ **Sensors:** For detecting acoustic signals.
- ✓ **Power Source:** Battery or other power supply.
- ✓ **Communication System:** A radio transmitter to relay data.

Uses

- ✓ **Anti-Submarine Warfare:** Main application in tracking submarines.
- ✓ **Scientific Research:** Used to study marine life, including whale behavior and other environmental aspects.

January 10, 2025

Gravitational Lensing Found 44 New Stars



What is Gravitational Lensing?

- ✓ **Definition:** A phenomenon where light from a distant object is bent by the gravitational field of a massive object (such as a galaxy cluster), causing the light to curve and magnify.
- ✓ **Effect:** The massive object acts as a "gravitational lens," distorting the image of the background object.
- ✓ **First Predicted:** By Albert Einstein in 1915, as part of his General Theory of Relativity.

- ✓ **Spacetime Curvature:** According to Einstein, gravity is the curvature of spacetime, and massive objects bend the path of light traveling through this curved spacetime.

Observations and Discoveries

- ✓ **Recent Discovery:** Physicists using gravitational lensing have found 44 new stars in a distant galaxy.
- ✓ **Observation Impact:** The light from these stars was bent and magnified due to the gravitational lensing effect, allowing astronomers to detect stars that were previously invisible or hidden.

Einstein's General Theory of Relativity

- ✓ **Spacetime:** Time and space are combined in a single framework called spacetime.
- ✓ **Gravity and Light:** The curvature of spacetime caused by mass bends light's path, an observable phenomenon.

Effects of Gravitational Lensing

- ✓ **Apparent Position Shift:** Objects behind a gravitational lens can appear shifted in the sky or even form multiple images of the same object.
- ✓ **Spectacular Formations:** This can lead to ring-like or cross-like patterns in the sky, created by the same object seen from different perspectives due to the bending of light.

January 13, 2025

Copernicus Climate Change Service



Key Points:

- ✓ **2024 Climate Record:** Scientists at C3S reported 2024 as the hottest year since global temperature tracking began in 1850.
- ✓ **C3S Overview:** A part of the Copernicus Earth Observation Programme, C3S provides valuable climate data and services.
- ✓ **Managed by:** European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) on behalf of the European Commission.
- ✓ **Role:** Supports society with authoritative climate data for Europe and the rest of the world.

Climate Data Store (CDS):

- ✓ **Purpose:** Provides free and open access to high-quality, up-to-date climate data and tools for analyzing it.
- ✓ **Data Types:** Includes historical, present, and future climate data based on observations, reanalyzes, seasonal forecasts, and climate models.

- ✓ **User Access:** Open to everyone via the internet, with tools for transforming complex datasets into visual products (e.g., maps, charts).
- ✓ **Continuous Updates:** Regularly updated with the latest scientific findings and climate projections.

Key Features:

- ✓ **Free Access:** Climate data and analysis tools are available for anyone to use, including scientists, consultants, policymakers, media, and the general public.
- ✓ **Support Services:** Provides training, user support, and expert guidance for utilizing climate data.
- ✓ **Global Reach:** Serves users worldwide, with specific resources for local needs.
- ✓ **Integration with Global Systems:** C3S relies on climate research from the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and responds to user needs defined by the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS).
- ✓ **Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS):** C3S contributes significantly to this global initiative.

Applications:

- ✓ **Users:** Includes researchers, government planners, environmental consultants, media outlets, and the public who need reliable climate data and analysis.

January 13, 2025

National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO):

- ✓ Central government employees who donate organs are eligible for 42 days of leave, as per the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO).
- ✓ NOTTO is a national-level organization established under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- ✓ Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ✓ Headquarters: Located on the Institute of Pathology (ICMR) Building, Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi.

January 13, 2025

Trichophyton indotinea



Key Points:

- ✓ **Fungus Overview:**
- ✓ **Trichophyton indotinea** is a fungal pathogen causing difficult-to-treat skin infections, widely reported in India.
- ✓ It was named after India in 2020 due to its initial identification in India and Nepal.

- ✓ Affects skin, hair, and nails, especially in areas like the groin, gluteal region, trunk, and face.

Recent Proposal:

- ✓ Over **30 dermatologists** have suggested renaming the fungus, claiming it has been reported in over **40 countries**, not just India, and India should not be considered its primary origin.
- ✓ The fungus was named based on the academic tradition of naming pathogens after the location of their first identification, but it is now found globally.

Characteristics of Trichophyton indotinea:

- ✓ **Infection:** Causes **inflammatory and itchy dermatophytosis**, which affects people of all ages and genders.
- ✓ **Transmission:** Spreads through **direct skin contact** and contaminated items such as towels and clothing.
- ✓ **Resistance:** It is **resistant to first-line antifungal treatments**, making it harder to treat.

Public Health Implications:

- ✓ The widespread nature and resistance of this fungus highlight the need for international awareness and better treatment options.

January 13, 2025

Indigenous Surgical Robotic System:



Key Points:

- ✓ **Milestone in Healthcare:** India successfully completed **robotic cardiac surgeries** through **telesurgery** using the **SSI Mantra 3 Surgical Robotic System**.

System Overview:

- ✓ **SSI Mantra 3** is an **indigenous surgical robotic system** designed for advanced surgeries, including **telesurgery**.
- ✓ Developed by **SS Innovations**, this system marks a major achievement in **healthcare technology** in India.

Key Features:

- ✓ **Ultra-Low Latency:** Latency of **35-40 milliseconds**, ensuring **real-time, seamless** remote surgical procedures.
- ✓ **High Precision:**
- ✓ Capable of performing complex surgeries like **Totally Endoscopic Coronary Artery Bypass (TECAB)**.
- ✓ **Regulatory Approval:**
- ✓ It is the **first robotic system globally** to receive **regulatory approval for telesurgery** from the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)**.

Significance:

- ✓ The successful completion of telesurgery opens the door for **remote surgeries** and **tele-proctoring**, allowing expert surgeons to operate from distant locations, thereby improving access to healthcare in underserved regions.

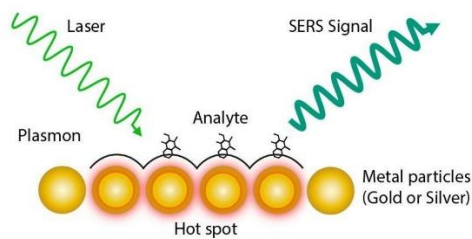
January 14, 2025

ISRO's SpaDeX Mission Achieves Satellite Docking Milestone

- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) made a significant leap in space docking technology with its SpaDeX (Space Docking Experiment) mission.
- ✓ The mission involves two satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target), designed to test and demonstrate spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking technologies.
- ✓ On January 12, 2025, ISRO successfully moved the satellites within three metres of each other and then moved them back to a safe distance for further analysis.

January 14, 2025

Surface-Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy



Key Points:

- ✓ **Development of Nano Catalyst:**
- ✓ Researchers have developed an **efficient nano catalyst** for use in **environmental remediation**, **nanoscale electronics**, and **Surface-Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS)**.

What is SERS?

- ✓ **Surface-Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy (SERS)** is a **surface-sensitive technique** that enhances **Raman scattering** of molecules adsorbed on rough **metal surfaces**.
- ✓ It enhances the Raman scattering signals of molecules close to nanostructured metallic surfaces, typically **gold** or **silver**.

How It Works:

- ✓ **Enhanced Signal:**
- ✓ SERS **enhances the Raman signal**, providing a **stronger and clearer signal** compared to normal Raman spectroscopy, allowing for more detailed molecular analysis.

Applications:

- ✓ **Chemical, Material, and Life Sciences:**
- ✓ SERS has become a powerful tool in **chemical**, **material**, and **life sciences**, owing to its ability to provide highly sensitive and precise information at the molecular level.

Raman Spectroscopy Basics:

- ✓ Raman spectroscopy is used to study **vibrational**, **rotational**, and **low-frequency modes** in a system, often with the use of monochromatic light (usually from a **laser** in visible, near-infrared, or near-ultraviolet light spectra).

Advantages:

- ✓ The technique offers improved sensitivity and provides detailed molecular information that is essential for various fields such as **environmental monitoring**, **biological analysis**, and **nanotechnology**.

January 15, 2025

Purulia Observatory

- ✓ The S N Bose Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBCBS), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology, inaugurated a new observatory at top Panchet Hill in Purulia district, West Bengal.
- ✓ S N Bose Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBCBS) under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), India.
- ✓ it is An advanced astronomical observatory equipped with a 14-inch telescope for scientific observations and training.

January 15, 2025

Amrit Bharat Trains 2.0:



Key Features:

- ✓ **12 significant improvements** have been announced for the Amrit Bharat Version 2.0 trains by the Railway Minister.

Target Audience:

- ✓ The trains are designed to cater to **low and middle-income families**, offering a **comfortable travel experience**.

Production Details:

- ✓ **50 upgraded trains** will be manufactured at the **Integral Coach Factory (ICF)** over the next **2 years**.

Train Design:

- ✓ The Amrit Bharat train is a **Push-Pull Train** featuring **LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch)** coaches.
- ✓ It has **locos at both ends** for **better acceleration** and efficiency.

Enhancements:

- ✓ **Seats:** Attractive, well-designed seats for improved comfort.
- ✓ **Luggage Rack:** More efficient and better luggage storage.

- ✓ **Mobile Charging Points:** Equipped with **charging points** and suitable **mobile holders**.
- ✓ **LED Lights:** Improved lighting for better **ambiance**.
- ✓ **CCTV:** Enhanced security with **CCTV cameras**.
- ✓ **Public Information System:** Updated and informative display systems for passengers.

Launch:

- ✓ The first version of **Amrit Bharat Trains** was launched in **2024**.

January 15, 2025

Mission Mausam



Overview:

- ✓ **Launch Event:** The **Prime Minister** will launch **Mission Mausam** during the **150th foundation day** celebration of the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**.

Mission Objectives:

- ✓ **Primary Goal:** To **boost India's weather- and climate-related science, research, and services**, making India a **'Weather-ready and Climate-smart'** nation.

Funding and Implementation:

- ✓ The program will have an **outlay of Rs 2,000 crore** over **two years**.
- ✓ **Key agencies:** The mission will primarily be implemented by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology**, and the **National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting**.

Technological Advancements:

- ✓ The mission will leverage **cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies** such as:
- ✓ High-resolution atmospheric observations.
- ✓ Next-generation **radars** and **satellites**.
- ✓ **High-performance computers**.

Goals and Outcomes:

- ✓ **Enhanced Forecasting:** Improve **forecasting accuracy** and provide **near real-time local weather forecasts**.
- ✓ **Climate Adaptation:** Address the challenges posed by **climate change** and enhance the **spatial and temporal accuracy** of weather forecasting.
- ✓ **Research and Development:** Focus on the development of **weather management technologies** and **air quality data** for long-term weather intervention strategies.

- ✓ **Better Preparedness:** Equip **stakeholders**, including **citizens** and **last-mile users**, to tackle **extreme weather events** and **climate change impacts**.

India Meteorological Department (IMD):

- ✓ **Established:** 1875, IMD is the **National Meteorological Service** of India and the principal agency in matters related to **meteorology** and allied subjects.

January 15, 2025

Small Language Models:



Overview:

- ✓ **Big Tech Shift:** Many **Big Tech** firms that have launched **large language models (LLMs)**, like **GPT-3**, also released **Small Language Models (SLMs)** to address specific applications with more efficiency.

Characteristics of Small Language Models:

- ✓ **Specialized AI Models:** SLMs are designed to process and generate human language, but with a focus on specific tasks or subsets of language tasks.

Smaller in Size:

- ✓ SLMs have a **relatively small number of parameters** compared to LLMs. This makes them **more lightweight** and **efficient**.

- ✓ **Compact Architecture:** Their smaller size allows them to function effectively with **less computational power**, making them a good choice for applications with limited resources, such as mobile apps or devices with lower processing capabilities.

Efficient and Specific:

- ✓ Unlike large models that aim to handle a broad range of tasks, SLMs are optimized for **particular language tasks**, allowing them to deliver better performance and efficiency for those specific functions.

- ✓ **Tailored Data:** SLMs are typically built using **curated, selective data** sources, allowing them to excel in their specialized tasks.

Benefits:

- ✓ **Less Computational Demand:** SLMs are more convenient for systems that don't have access to significant computing power or memory.
- ✓ **Task-Specific Performance:** They can outperform larger models in tasks that are more narrowly defined, offering **more accurate** and **optimized** solutions for specific needs.

January 16, 2025

First Private Satellite Constellation



- ✓ India's space industry has achieved a groundbreaking milestone with the launch of its first private satellite constellation by **Pixxel**, a Bengaluru-based space-tech startup backed by Google. This marks a significant step forward in the privatization and commercialization of space technology in India. Here's a detailed overview of this historic achievement:

Key Highlights of the Launch

Satellite Constellation:

- ✓ Pixxel launched a constellation of **six hyperspectral imaging satellites**.
- ✓ These satellites are designed to capture detailed and high-resolution images of the Earth's surface.

Collaboration:

- ✓ **Developed by:** Pixxel, a Bengaluru-based startup.
- ✓ **Launch facilitated by:** SpaceX, the aerospace company founded by Elon Musk.

Launch Location:

- ✓ The satellites were launched from the **Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, USA**.

Technology:

- ✓ The satellites use **hyperspectral imaging technology**, which captures data across a wide spectrum of light, far beyond what the human eye or traditional cameras can see.
- ✓ This allows for highly detailed and precise analysis of the Earth's surface.

Objectives and Applications

- ✓ The primary aim of this satellite constellation is to provide **high-resolution hyperspectral imaging** for a variety of applications, including:

Agriculture:

- ✓ Monitoring crop health, soil conditions, and water usage.
- ✓ Enabling precision farming to improve yields and reduce resource wastage.

Mining:

- ✓ Identifying mineral deposits and monitoring mining activities.
- ✓ Reducing environmental impact through better resource management.

Environmental Monitoring:

- ✓ Tracking deforestation, pollution, and climate change impacts.
- ✓ Assisting in disaster management and mitigation efforts.

Defense:

- ✓ Enhancing surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.
- ✓ Providing critical data for national security and strategic planning.

Resource Management:

- ✓ Optimizing the use of natural resources like water, forests, and land.
- ✓ Supporting sustainable development initiatives.

Significance of the Launch

Historic Milestone:

- ✓ This is India's **first private satellite constellation**, marking a new era in the country's space industry.
- ✓ It highlights the growing role of private players in space technology and innovation.

Global Collaboration:

- ✓ The collaboration with SpaceX underscores the global nature of space exploration and technology development.
- ✓ It positions India as a key player in the international space ecosystem.

Boost to India's Space Economy:

- ✓ The launch demonstrates the potential of private companies to contribute to India's space ambitions.
- ✓ It paves the way for increased investment and innovation in the sector.

Technological Advancement:

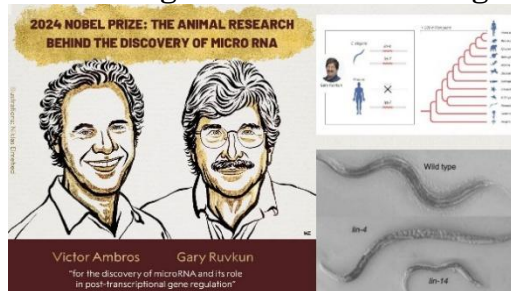
- ✓ Hyperspectral imaging is a cutting-edge technology with wide-ranging applications.
- ✓ Pixxel's success showcases India's capability to develop and deploy advanced space technologies.

Future Prospects

- ✓ Pixxel plans to expand its satellite constellation to provide **global coverage** and **real-time data**.
- ✓ The success of this mission is expected to inspire other Indian startups and private companies to enter the space sector.
- ✓ It aligns with the Indian government's vision of promoting **space commercialization** and fostering a robust **space economy**.

January 16, 2025

Nobel Winning Research on C. Elegans



- ✓ The roundworm *Caenorhabditis elegans* has played a pivotal role in numerous Nobel Prize-winning

discoveries, shedding light on fundamental biological processes.

- ✓ Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun (2024 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine): Discovered microRNAs and their crucial role in gene expression control.
- ✓ Osamu Shimomura, Martin Chalfie, and Roger Tsien (2008 Nobel Prize in Chemistry): Developed green fluorescent protein (GFP), enabling live-cell imaging and revolutionizing biological research.

January 16, 2025

India's Genomic Data Set



- ✓ India achieved a historic milestone at the Genome India Data Conclave in New Delhi with the launch of the Indian Genomic Data (IGD) Set under the GenomIndia Project (GIP) and frameworks like the Framework for Exchange of Data Protocols (FeED) and the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC) Portals.
- ✓ These initiatives position India as a leader in genomics, providing global researchers access to genome samples and achieving self-reliance in genomic data.

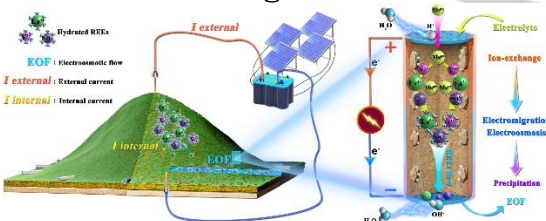
January 17, 2025

India-Spain Declare 2026 as 'Dual Year' for Culture, Tourism, and AI

- ✓ External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced that India and Spain will commemorate 2026 as a 'dual year' focusing on culture, tourism, and advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), aiming to strengthen bilateral ties and promote mutual understanding between the two nations.

January 17, 2025

Electrokinetic Mining



- ✓ **Electrokinetic Mining (EKM):** A novel, eco-friendly method developed by researchers for extracting rare earth elements (REEs), particularly heavy rare earth elements (HREEs), by applying electric fields to accelerate the migration of metals, water, and particles. This technique reduces leaching agent usage by **80%**, energy consumption by **60%**, and achieves a recovery rate exceeding **95%**, offering a sustainable alternative to conventional ammonium-salt-based leaching methods that cause significant

environmental damage. EKM is a breakthrough for improving recovery rates and minimizing ecological impacts in mining.

January 17, 2025

Neuralink : Brain-Computer Interface Company



Recent in News:

- ✓ Elon Musk shared that a third person has received an implant from Neuralink, the brain-computer interface (BCI) company founded by him.
- ✓ The company plans to expand its trials in 2025, aiming to implant experimental devices in 20 to 30 more individuals.

About Brain-Computer Interface (BCI):

- ✓ **What is BCI?** A Brain-Computer Interface is a technology that establishes direct communication between the brain and external devices (like computers or prosthetics), bypassing the body's traditional neuromuscular pathways such as nerves and muscles.
- ✓ **Functionality:** BCIs detect brain activity using sensors and translate this into commands, enabling individuals to control devices or interact with their environment using thoughts alone.

Potential Applications of BCIs:

- ✓ **Medical Conditions:** BCIs could be used to address conditions like epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, and neurodegenerative diseases by allowing direct control over medical devices or enhancing communication.
- ✓ **Control of Prosthetics and Wheelchairs:** BCIs could enable people to control prosthetic limbs or wheelchairs through thought.
- ✓ **Restoring Communication:** For individuals who are paralyzed, BCIs could potentially restore the ability to communicate.
- ✓ **Enhancing Virtual and Augmented Reality:** BCI technology can also enhance virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) experiences by enabling users to interact using their thoughts.

Difference from Brainware:

- ✓ While BCIs focus on brain-to-device communication, brainware integrates living brain tissue (brain organoids) and microelectrodes to create an organoid neural network (ONN), a system that merges biological tissue with computing.

January 18, 2025

New Glenn rocket



- ✓ Blue Origin, founded by Jeff Bezos, successfully launched its **New Glenn rocket** on its maiden test flight, carrying a prototype satellite into orbit. Named after John Glenn, the first American to orbit Earth, this launch marks a significant milestone for the company as it advances into competitive space exploration alongside SpaceX, NASA, and other aerospace leaders.

January 18, 2025

4G and 5G Service at Siachen Glacier



- ✓ In a groundbreaking development, a **private telecom firm** in India has provided **4G and 5G connectivity** to the **Siachen Glacier**, bringing modern communication technologies to one of the harshest environments on Earth.

Key Details about the Siachen Glacier:

- ✓ **Location:** Siachen Glacier is located in the **Karakoram Range**, in the northern part of India, specifically in the **Himalayan region** known as the “**Third Pole**”. This region is rich in glaciated landscapes and contains **more fresh water** in its glaciers than anywhere else on Earth except the polar ice caps.

Strategic Importance:

- ✓ Siachen lies between the **Saltoro Ridge** (west) and the **main Karakoram Range** (east), both of which are geographically significant.
- ✓ It dominates the **Shaksgam Valley**, which Pakistan ceded to China in 1963, and controls key routes to **Leh** from the **Gilgit Baltistan** region in the west.
- ✓ Additionally, it controls access to the **ancient Karakoram Pass** in the east.

Size and Importance:

- ✓ Siachen is the **second-longest nonpolar glacier** in the world, after the **Fedchenko Glacier** in **Tajikistan**.
- ✓ It originates at the **Indira Col West**, a low point on the **Indira Ridge**, and is a major source of the **80 km**

long Nubra River, which is a key tributary of the **Shyok River**.

Strategic and Military Importance:

- ✓ The glacier has been dubbed the **world's highest battleground** due to the long-standing military presence and conflicts over its strategic location.
- ✓ India took control of the Siachen Glacier in **1984** under **Operation Meghdoot**, solidifying its control over this critical area.
- ✓ With **4G and 5G services now operational**, the connectivity infrastructure in this remote and harsh region will significantly improve communication, providing vital support for **military operations, research and rescue missions**, and the broader efforts of **geopolitical monitoring**.

January 18, 2025

ISRO's Third Launch Pad : Approved



- ✓ The **Union Cabinet** has given the green light for the establishment of the **Third Launch Pad (TLP)** at the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre** in **Sriharikota**, Andhra Pradesh, which will significantly enhance India's space launch capabilities.

Key Features of the Third Launch Pad Project:

- ✓ **Objective:** The Third Launch Pad is designed to support **ISRO's Next Generation Launch Vehicles (NGLVs)** and will serve as a backup to the **Second Launch Pad (SLP)** at **Sriharikota**. It aims to increase **launch capacity** for future **Indian human spaceflight missions** and expand India's space exploration capabilities.
- ✓ **Universal Design:** The TLP will be designed with a **flexible and adaptable configuration** to support multiple types of launch vehicles:
 - ✓ **Next Generation Launch Vehicles (NGLVs).**
 - ✓ **LVM3 vehicles with Semi-Cryogenic stage.**
 - ✓ Scaled-up configurations of the NGLV.
- ✓ **Industry Participation:** The project will involve significant **industry participation**, leveraging ISRO's experience in establishing earlier launch pads, and will share existing **launch complex facilities** to ensure cost efficiency and optimal resource utilization.
- ✓ **Timeline:** The TLP is targeted to be completed within **48 months** (approximately 4 years), which will enable ISRO to accommodate more launches in the near future.
- ✓ **Fund Allocation:** The total cost for the establishment of the Third Launch Pad, including the associated

infrastructure and facilities, is estimated at ₹3984.86 crore.

Importance for India's Space Ecosystem:

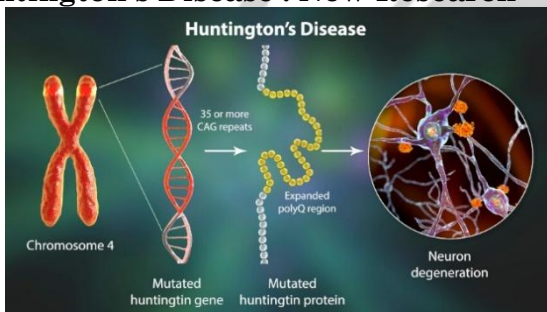
- ✓ **Enhanced Launch Frequencies:** The TLP will provide the necessary infrastructure to increase India's **space launch frequencies**, supporting the growing demand for satellite launches.
- ✓ **Human Spaceflight & Space Exploration:** With the establishment of this launch pad, ISRO is better equipped to handle ambitious **human spaceflight missions** and further **space exploration projects**.

Current Reliance on Two Launch Pads: Currently, India relies on just two launch pads:

- ✓ **First Launch Pad (FLP):** Operational for over 30 years, primarily used for **PSLV** and **SSLV**.
- ✓ **Second Launch Pad (SLP):** Supporting additional missions, but with limited capacity for high-frequency launches.
- ✓ The new **Third Launch Pad** will provide much-needed infrastructure to ensure **India's growing space ambitions** are met with increased capacity, greater flexibility, and improved efficiency.

January 18, 2025

Huntington's Disease : New Research



- ✓ Recent research has revealed important insights into the **delayed effects** of the genetic mutation responsible for **Huntington's Disease (HD)**, shedding light on how the condition develops and affects individuals over time.

Understanding Huntington's Disease (HD):

- ✓ **Genetic Cause:** HD is caused by a **genetic mutation** in the **HTT gene**, which leads to the production of an abnormal protein called **huntingtin**. This protein, when misfolded, disrupts the function of nerve cells (neurons) in the brain.
- ✓ **Effect on the Brain:** The abnormal huntingtin protein primarily damages neurons in the **basal ganglia**, which is responsible for controlling voluntary movements. It also affects the **brain cortex**, impairing cognitive functions such as **thinking, memory, and decision-making**.
- ✓ **Prevalence:** HD affects an estimated **3 to 7 out of every 100,000 people**, with higher incidence rates among people of **European ancestry**.

Symptoms of Huntington's Disease:

- ✓ **Motor Symptoms:** The hallmark symptom of HD is **chorea**, or uncontrollable, dance-like movements. These movements are often accompanied by abnormal body postures.

- ✓ **Cognitive and Emotional Symptoms:** The disease also causes significant **cognitive decline**, resulting in problems with thinking, decision-making, and memory. Individuals may also experience mood swings, behavioral changes, and personality alterations.
- ✓ **Early Signs:** **Tremors** (unintentional muscle movements) and **unusual eye movements** can appear early in the disease, often before other symptoms become noticeable.
- ✓ **Progression of Symptoms:** Over time, the symptoms of HD worsen, leading to more severe motor dysfunction and cognitive decline.

Delayed Effects of Genetic Mutation:

- ✓ Recent studies have highlighted the **delayed onset** of symptoms caused by the **HTT gene mutation**. While the mutation is present from birth, the effects of the gene's misfolding typically begin to manifest in adulthood. This research offers critical information that could lead to earlier detection and better management of the disease.

Treatment and Management:

- ✓ While there is currently no cure for Huntington's Disease, there are medications that can help manage symptoms:
- ✓ **Haloperidol, tetrabenazine, and amantadine** are commonly prescribed to control the **chorea** (uncontrolled movements) and other motor symptoms of HD.

January 20, 2025

SCOT Mission



- ✓ The **Prime Minister of India** recently praised the **Indian space startup Digantara** for the successful launch of its **Mission SCOT**. This marks a significant milestone in India's commercial space industry.

Mission SCOT - A Breakthrough in Space Situational Awareness (SSA)

- ✓ **SCOT (Space Camera for Object Tracking)** is **Digantara's inaugural mission** focused on **space surveillance**. It is one of the world's **first commercial Space Situational Awareness (SSA)** satellites, designed to track and monitor objects in space.
- ✓ **Launch:** SCOT was launched aboard **SpaceX's Transporter-12 mission**, further establishing the growing relationship between private space companies and space agencies across the globe.

Key Features of SCOT:

- ✓ **Tracking Resident Space Objects (RSOs):** SCOT is designed to **track Resident Space Objects (RSOs)** in

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Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with high precision. This is crucial for the safety and management of space operations.

- ✓ **Sun-Synchronous Orbit:** SCOT will be deployed in a **sun-synchronous orbit**, which offers an advantage over traditional sensors by allowing for **more efficient tracking** of objects in LEO. Unlike existing systems that face challenges such as limited **fields of view (FoV)**, **weather conditions**, and **geographic restrictions**, SCOT overcomes these barriers to provide better space surveillance.
- ✓ **High Precision Tracking:** SCOT's sensors will be capable of detecting objects as small as **5 cm** in space, which enhances the ability to monitor debris and objects that pose potential threats to satellites and spacecraft.

National Security and Space Operations:

- ✓ SCOT is a critical development for ensuring **safer space operations**, with the potential to support **national security** by providing real-time surveillance and tracking of objects in space.
- ✓ The mission is backed by **Aditya Birla Ventures** and **SIDBI**, indicating strong support from both private and public sectors for this ambitious initiative.

Future of Space Situational Awareness:

- ✓ Mission SCOT's success highlights India's growing capabilities in the commercial space sector and marks a significant step toward a future where **space situational awareness** plays a pivotal role in ensuring the sustainability and safety of space operations globally.

January 23, 2025

Airport Economic Regulatory Authority



Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Directive:

PAC directed AERA to provide a detailed written reply on:

- ✓ Criteria for calculating User Development Fee (UDF).
- ✓ Total revenue earned from UDF and its utilization.

About AERA:

- ✓ **Statutory Body:** Constituted under the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India Act, 2008.
- ✓ **Establishment:** Based on recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee to balance the interests of service providers and consumers in the civil aviation sector.
- ✓ **Role:** Independent regulator for economic oversight of major airports in India.
- ✓ **Headquarters:** New Delhi.

Functions of AERA:

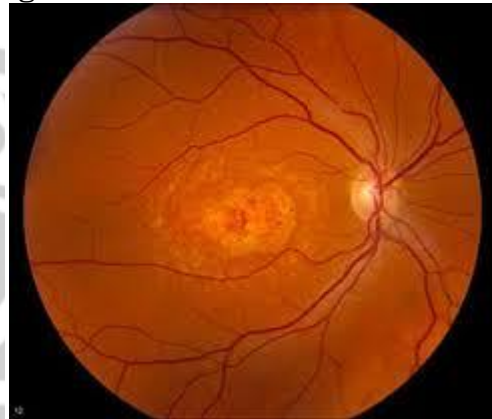
- ✓ Regulates tariffs and charges (e.g., development fee, passenger service fee) for aeronautical services like:
 - ✓ **Air traffic management.**
 - ✓ Landing and parking of aircraft.
 - ✓ Ground handling services.
- ✓ For non-major airports, tariffs are determined by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

Objectives:

- ✓ Create a level playing field and foster healthy competition among major airports.
- ✓ Promote investment in airport facilities.
- ✓ Ensure fair regulation of tariffs for aeronautical services.

January 24, 2025

Stargardt Disease



Definition:

- ✓ Also known as Stargardt macular degeneration, it is an inherited disease causing progressive vision loss in children and young adults, typically affecting both eyes (bilateral).

Cause:

- ✓ Commonly caused by mutations in the ABCA4 gene, which affects Vitamin A metabolism in the body.

Key Mechanism:

- ✓ Excessive buildup of lipofuscin (a yellowish-brown pigment) in the macula (central part of the retina), leading to damage and loss of central vision.

Symptoms:

- ✓ Slow loss of central vision in both eyes (varies in speed).
- ✓ Gray, black, or hazy spots in central vision.
- ✓ Light sensitivity and color blindness.

Recent Development:

- ✓ Researchers from Switzerland have developed a gene editing technique that could potentially treat Stargardt disease by targeting the ABCA4 gene.

Significance:

- ✓ Offers hope for addressing the root cause of the disease and preventing vision loss in affected individuals.

January 27, 2025

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

- ✓ A UK-based study published in the British Journal of Psychiatry highlights a stark disparity in life expectancy among adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- ✓ It is a neurodevelopmental disorder affecting focus, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.
- ✓ Commonly diagnosed in childhood but often persists into adulthood. Impacts 3-4% of adults worldwide.

January 27, 2025

NVS-02 Satellite



Launch Vehicle:

- ✓ GSLV-F15 rocket carrying the NVS-02 satellite, part of India's NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) system.

Purpose:

- ✓ Second of five second-generation satellites to replace aging satellites in the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).
- ✓ Will replace the older IRNSS-1E satellite and be positioned at 111.75°E in orbit.

Key Features:

Payload:

- ✓ Navigation payload in L1, L5, and S bands.
- ✓ Ranging payload in C-band (similar to NVS-01).
- ✓ Atomic Clock: Equipped with Rubidium Atomic Frequency Standard (RAFS) for precise timekeeping.
- ✓ Lifespan: 12 years (longer than previous satellites).
- ✓ Indigenous Development: Designed and integrated at the U R Satellite Centre (URSC).

Significance:

- ✓ L1 Band Signals: Enhances compatibility with global navigation systems like GPS, ensuring wider adoption and improved service.
- ✓ Indigenous Atomic Clocks: More accurate and reliable, marking a technological advancement.

Previous Launch:

- ✓ NVS-01 was launched in 2023 aboard GSLV-F12, featuring India's first indigenous atomic clock.

Impact:

- ✓ Strengthens India's self-reliance in satellite navigation and improves NavIC's accuracy and global interoperability.

January 27, 2025

KaWaCHaM : Weather Alert System



- ✓ KaWaCHaM stands for Kerala Warnings Crisis and Hazards Management System.
- ✓ "Kavacham" in Malayalam means shield, symbolizing protection.

Launch & Objective:

- ✓ Kerala Government launched KaWaCHaM, one of the world's fastest weather alert systems.
- ✓ Aimed at disaster preparedness, public safety, and early warning during extreme weather events.

Development & Funding:

- ✓ Developed under National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project.
- ✓ Funded by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) & World Bank.

Key Features:

- ✓ Integrates global weather models, alerts, and sirens.
- ✓ 126 sirens with strobe lights installed on tall towers, govt. buildings & schools.
- ✓ Siren colors: Red, Yellow, Orange for threat level warnings.
- ✓ Each siren has 8 loudspeakers covering 1,200 meters range.

Functionality & Coverage:

- ✓ Issues warnings for:
- ✓ Sea attacks, heavy rainfall, strong winds, extreme heat.

Uses data from:

- ✓ IMD, INCOIS, CWC, public & private agencies, social media.
- ✓ Pre-recorded voice messages & audio alerts for emergency camps & safety precautions.

Operational Mechanism:

- ✓ Headed by State Emergency Operation Centre.
- ✓ Operates at taluk (sub-district) level.
- ✓ Covers all vulnerable areas for disaster response and crisis management.

January 27, 2025

Rhodamine B



Recent Ban & Regulatory Action:

- ✓ FDA has reinforced a ban on Rhodamine B in food applications due to carcinogenic risks.
- ✓ Banned in India by FSSAI, but illegally used in street food (e.g., chili powder, chili oil).

What is Rhodamine B?

- ✓ A synthetic, water-soluble fluorescent dye with a bright pink color.
- ✓ Appears green in powder form but turns fluorescent pink in water.

Uses:

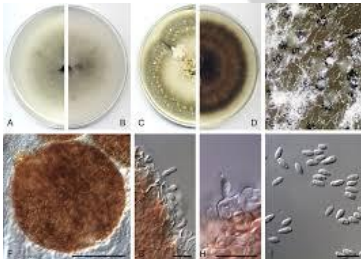
- ✓ **Industries:** Food (illegally), textiles, paper, leather.
- ✓ **Scientific Research:** Used for fluorescence-based studies.

Health Hazards:

- ✓ Causes oxidative stress, DNA damage, and mutations.
- ✓ **Carcinogenic:** Animal studies link it to liver and bladder tumors.
- ✓ Can cause allergic reactions (itching, redness, skin thickening).
- ✓ **Long-term exposure:** Leads to chronic allergies & permanent skin pigmentation changes.

January 28, 2025

Epicoccum indicum : New Species Of Fungi



Discovery & Significance:

- ✓ New species of fungi identified by BHU researchers.
- ✓ Found in *Chrysopogon zizanioides* (vetiver), causing leaf spot disease.
- ✓ Named *Epicoccum indicum*, referencing India as the discovery location.

What is *Epicoccum indicum*?

- ✓ Phytopathogenic fungi (causes plant diseases).
- ✓ Belongs to Ascomycota, Didymellaceae family.

Impact of Phytopathogenic Fungi:

- ✓ 70-80% of plant diseases are caused by such fungi.
- ✓ Affect roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits.
- ✓ Cause significant economic losses in agriculture & horticulture.

Scientific Classification:

- ✓ Most phytopathogenic fungi belong to Ascomycetes & Basidiomycetes.

January 29, 2025

Anuja' Nominated for Oscar

- ✓ The Indian short film Anuja has been nominated for Best Live Action Short Film at the 97th Academy Awards, marking a significant achievement for Indian cinema on the global stage.
- ✓ This nomination highlights the film's compelling storytelling and the impactful contributions of its producers, including Priyanka Chopra and Guneet Monga.

January 29, 2025

India's First AI-Powered Credit Card Expert

- ✓ CheQ, a leading Indian fintech company founded by former Flipkart executive Aditya Soni, has introduced Wisor, India's first AI-driven credit card expert.
- ✓ This innovative tool aims to transform credit card management by providing personalized insights, seamless management, and maximizing rewards for users.

January 29, 2025

WASP-127b : Recent Study



Discovery of Supersonic Winds:

- ✓ Scientists detected winds traveling at 33,000 km/h on WASP-127b.
- ✓ These are the fastest jet stream winds recorded on any known planet.

Basic Information on WASP-127b:

- ✓ Large gaseous exoplanet in the Milky Way galaxy.
- ✓ Located 520 light-years from Earth.
- ✓ Orbits its star in just 4 days at 5% of Earth-Sun distance.
- ✓ **Tidally locked:** One side faces the star (day side), the other is in darkness (night side).
- ✓ **Atmospheric temperature:** Around 1,127°C.
- ✓ **Diameter:** 30% larger than Jupiter, but mass is only 16% of Jupiter.

Composition & Structure:

- ✓ Gas giant like Jupiter with no solid surface.
- ✓ Mainly composed of hydrogen & helium, with traces of carbon monoxide & water.

Unique Features:

- ✓ One of the puffiest planets ever observed.
- ✓ The supersonic equatorial winds set it apart from other exoplanets.

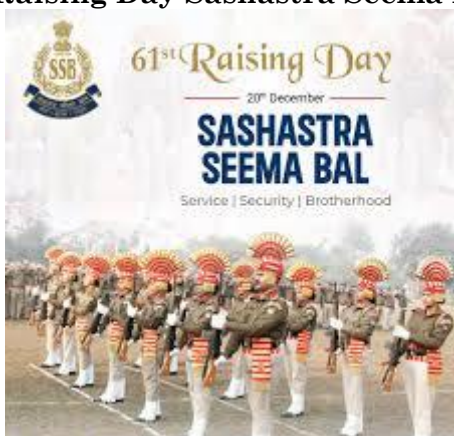
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-----Defence 1 – 31, January Month-----

January 2, 2025

61 Raising Day Sashastra Seema Bal



- ✓ The Union Home Minister attended the 61st Raising Day function of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) at Siliguri in West Bengal.
- ✓ He lauded the role of SSB in protecting the Siliguri Corridor, gateway to Northeast and Sikkim and surrounded by three International borders.
- ✓ Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) is a part of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).
- ✓ It is one of the **seven** paramilitary forces in India. Others 6 are:
 - Assam Rifles
 - Border Security Force
 - Central Industrial Security Force
 - Central Reserve Police Force
 - Indo Tibetan Border Police
 - National Security Guard
- ✓ **Establishment:** Founded in 1963 after the Indo-China war; initially named "Special Service Bureau."
- ✓ **Primary Role:** Guarding India's borders with Nepal (1751 km) and Bhutan (699 km); ensuring security and countering cross-border crimes.
- ✓ **Functions:**
 - Counter-insurgency operations.
 - Anti-human trafficking activities.
 - Promoting a sense of security among the border population.
- ✓ It comes under the aegis of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ✓ SSB is the first central paramilitary force that included women in its ranks.
- ✓ In March 2004, SSB was awarded the President's Colours for its key role in national security.

- ✓ The President's Colours is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon any military unit.

January 3, 2025

DRDO's Foundation Day



- ✓ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) celebrated its 67th Foundation Day on January 1, 2025.
- ✓ **Establishment:** Founded on January 1, 1958, DRDO has grown from a small entity with 10 laboratories to a vast network of around 52 laboratories and 5 DRDO Young Scientist Laboratories (DYSLs) across India.
- ✓ **Objective:** Research and development for India's defense systems.
- ✓ **Contributions:**
 - **Missiles:** Agni, Prithvi, BrahMos (in collaboration with Russia).
 - **Aircrafts:** Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).
 - **Technologies:** Radars, electronic warfare systems, and combat vehicles.
- ✓ **Achievements in 2023-2024:**
 - Development of advanced weapon systems like hypersonic missiles and AI-driven defense tools.
 - Enhanced collaboration with private sectors under "Aatmanirbhar Bharat."
- ✓ **Vision for the Future:**
 - Strengthening indigenous manufacturing in defense.
 - Advancing in space technology for strategic purposes.

January 3, 2025
2025 as the 'Year of Reforms'



✓ The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has declared 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms' to transform India's Armed Forces into a technologically advanced, combat-ready force.

✓ Key Focus Areas

Technological Advancements:

- Emphasis on the integration of AI, machine learning, and robotics.
- Development and deployment of advanced weapon systems like hypersonic missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and precision-guided munitions.

Indigenization and Self-Reliance:

- Strengthening the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" initiative in the defense sector.
- Promoting domestic manufacturing of defense equipment through collaboration with private industries and startups.
- Expanding the role of the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

Operational Readiness:

- Modernizing infrastructure along border areas with China and Pakistan.
- Enhancing maritime security through naval fleet expansion and coastal surveillance systems.
- Strengthening cybersecurity measures to protect critical military data.

Structural and Administrative Reforms:

- Implementation of theater commands to integrate the three services (Army, Navy, and Air Force).
- Streamlining procurement processes to reduce delays in acquiring critical equipment.
- Revisiting the Agnipath Scheme for improved personnel management.

Training and Human Resource Development:

- Focus on training military personnel in emerging technologies and cyber warfare.
- Promoting joint training exercises with international forces to enhance interoperability.
- Increasing the inclusion of women in combat and leadership roles.

Enhanced Collaboration:

- Strengthening partnerships with global defense organizations for technology transfer and joint ventures.
- Expanding defense exports to boost India's global defense market presence.

Significance

- Aligns with the vision of making India a global power with modernized and self-reliant armed forces.
- Prepares the military to tackle multi-dimensional security threats in the 21st century.
- Enhances India's standing in regional and global security architecture.

January 8, 2025

Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT)



- ✓ The Supreme Court recently suggested constituting Benches of the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) in Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh to deal with the growing pendency in defence-related cases from these two areas.
- ✓ AFT is a military tribunal in India established under the Armed Forces Tribunal Act, 2007.
- ✓ It is functioning under the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- ✓ It is responsible for resolving military-related disputes, including service matters and appeals from court-martial decisions.

Functions:

- To provide for the adjudication or trial of disputes and complaints with respect to commission, appointments, enrolment, and conditions of service in respect of persons subject to the Army Act, 1950; the Navy Act, 1957; and the Air Force Act, 1950.
- To provide for appeals arising out of orders, findings, or sentences of courts-martial held under the said Acts and for matters connected there with or incidental there to.
- ✓ The tribunal can also dismiss the appeal if the court martial findings are found to be justified.
- ✓ Thus, the tribunal has original jurisdiction in service matters and appellate jurisdiction in court martial matters.
- ✓ Any appeal by a person against a decision given by the tribunal can only be taken up in the Supreme Court.
- ✓ Besides the principal bench in New Delhi, AFT has regional benches at Chandigarh, Lucknow, Kolkata, Guwahati, Chennai, Kochi, Mumbai, Jabalpur, Srinagar, and Jaipur.

- ✓ Each Bench comprises of a Judicial Member and an Administrative Member.
- ✓ The Judicial Members are retired High Court Judges, and Administrative Members are retired Members of the Armed Forces who have held the rank of Major General/equivalent or above for a period of three years or more.
- ✓ Judge Advocate General (JAG), who has held the appointment for at least one year, are also entitled to be appointed as the Administrative Member.
- ✓ The Tribunal shall transact their proceedings as per the Armed Forces Tribunal (Procedure) rules, 2008.
- ✓ All proceedings in the Tribunal will be in English.
- ✓ The Tribunal will normally follow the procedure as is practiced in the High Courts of India.

January 13, 2025

India-US Initiatives in Defence and Nuclear Cooperation



Recent in News:

- ✓ **US National Security Advisor's Visit:**
The US National Security Advisor recently visited India to strengthen bilateral ties and signed new initiatives focusing on **technology** and **defence cooperation**.

Key Highlights:

Defence Cooperation:

- ✓ Strengthened collaboration in advanced defence technologies.
- ✓ Enhanced joint research and co-production in cutting-edge defence systems.

Nuclear Cooperation:

Civil Nuclear Agreement: Steps taken to implement the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement further signed in 2008.

Relaxation of Restrictions:

- ✓ The US has removed certain **export restrictions** on Indian nuclear entities like the **Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC)**.
- ✓ This move will facilitate the supply of **US nuclear reactors** and technology to India, boosting its nuclear energy program.

Implications:

- ✓ **Energy Security:** Access to advanced nuclear reactors will enhance India's ability to meet its growing energy demands sustainably.
- ✓ **Defence Innovation:** Increased cooperation will drive innovation in defence technology, making India a key partner in global defence supply chains.

- ✓ **Geopolitical Synergy:** Strengthening India-US relations aligns with shared strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific and global security.

January 13, 2025

Project 'Veer Gatha 4.0



Overview:

- ✓ The **fourth edition of Project Veer Gatha 4.0** has received overwhelming participation nationwide as part of the **Republic Day 2025 celebrations**.
- ✓ Originally launched in **2021**, the project is part of **'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'**, commemorating **India's 75th Independence anniversary**.

Objectives:

- ✓ To **raise awareness** about the gallantry and bravery of India's **Gallantry Awardees**.
- ✓ To **instill patriotism** and **civic values** in school students by inspiring them with the life stories of national heroes.

Journey and Impact:

- ✓ Since its launch, **Project Veer Gatha** has grown significantly, reaching schools and students across India, expanding its influence through four editions.
- ✓ Key Features of Veer Gatha 4.0:

Joint Initiative:

- ✓ Conducted collaboratively by the **Ministry of Defence** and **Ministry of Education**.
- ✓ **Student Participation:**
- ✓ Students engaged in **essay and paragraph writing competitions**.
- ✓ Topics revolved around **Gallantry Awardees**, **freedom fighters**, and key events in India's **freedom struggle**.

Inspiring Themes:

- ✓ Essays included themes on role models, **Rani Laxmibai**, the **1857 First War of Independence**, and the **tribal uprisings** in India's freedom movement.

Significance:

- ✓ **Promotes Patriotism:** Encourages the younger generation to honor the sacrifices of national heroes.
- ✓ **Educational and Cultural Awareness:** Integrates historical and contemporary stories of bravery into education.
- ✓ **Nationwide Engagement:** Fosters unity and pride through wide student participation from diverse backgrounds.

January 14, 2025

Neptune Missile



Recent in News:

- ✓ **Neptune Missile** was used during a joint operation by the **Security Service of Ukraine (SBU)** and the **Ukrainian Navy**, targeting an ammunition depot in **Rostov, Russia**.

Key Features:

Design and Development:

- ✓ The R-360 Neptune is a **Ukrainian-developed subsonic cruise missile**.
- ✓ Originally designed as an **anti-ship missile**, it was later modified for **land-attack capabilities**.
- ✓ Based on the **Russian Kh-35 cruise missile**, also known by its NATO designation: **AS-20 Kayak**.

Service Entry:

- ✓ The missile system entered service with the **Ukrainian Navy in March 2021**.

Specifications:

Weight: 870 kg.

Length: 5.05 meters.

Speed: Up to **900 km/h**.

Range: Maximum of **400 km**.

Combat Weight: 350 kg (150 kg in the anti-ship version).

Flight Altitudes:

- ✓ **Cruising:** 10–300 meters.
- ✓ **Final Approach:** Drops to just **3 meters** to evade air defenses.

Guidance System:

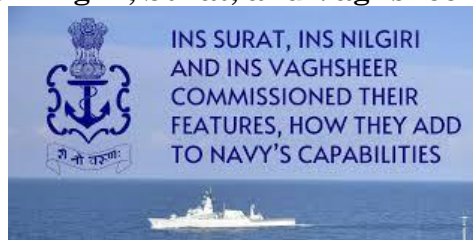
- ✓ **Satellite Positioning System:** Guides the missile during the cruising phase.
- ✓ **Infrared Homing System:** Ensures precision in the final approach phase.

Significance:

- ✓ **Versatility:** Adaptable for both **anti-ship** and **land-attack missions**.
- ✓ **Stealth Capability:** Low-altitude approach makes it difficult for enemy defenses to detect and intercept.
- ✓ **Strategic Importance:** Demonstrates Ukraine's ability to conduct precision strikes at long distances, even on heavily defended targets.

January 15, 2025

Indian Navy announced the commissioning of Nilgiri, Surat, and Vaghsheer



Overview:

- ✓ On **15th January 2025**, the **Indian Navy** announced the commissioning of three major warships—**Nilgiri**, **Surat**, and **Vaghsheer**, at **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai**.

Details of the Warships

1. Nilgiri

Class: Lead ship of **Project 17A**.

Key Features:

- ✓ Represents an upgrade over the **Shivalik-class frigates**.
- ✓ Equipped with **advanced stealth technology** for reduced radar and infrared signatures.
- ✓ Includes **state-of-the-art weapon systems**, sensors, and enhanced survivability to bolster naval defense.

2. Surat

Class: Fourth and final destroyer of **Project 15B**.

Key Features:

- ✓ An improved version of the **Kolkata-class destroyers**.
- ✓ Equipped with **long-range missiles** and **indigenous weapons systems**, making it a formidable asset in naval warfare.

3. Vaghsheer

- ✓ Vaghsheer is the sixth and final **Scorpene-class submarine** constructed under **Project-75** by **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)** in collaboration with the French company **Naval Group**.

- ✓ The submarine was commissioned on **15th January 2025**, further strengthening the **Indian Navy's** underwater fleet.

Key Features:

Design and Technology:



- ✓ Built using the French **Scorpene-class diesel-electric attack submarine design**.
- ✓ Incorporates advanced **stealth technology** to reduce noise, making it harder to detect.
- ✓ Equipped with **air-independent propulsion (AIP)**, which enhances underwater endurance and operational capability.

Weapon Systems:

- ✓ Armed with **torpedoes** and **exocet anti-ship missiles**, capable of targeting both surface vessels and underwater threats.
- ✓ Designed for **multi-role operations**, including anti-submarine warfare (ASW), intelligence gathering, and surveillance.

Speed and Endurance:

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- ✓ Maximum submerged speed: Around **20 knots (37 km/h)**.
 - ✓ Endurance: Capable of staying underwater for several weeks, depending on operational requirements.
- Crew and Automation:**
- ✓ Operated by a crew of **35 personnel**, including 8 officers.
 - ✓ Equipped with **modern automation systems** to ease operational requirements and improve efficiency.

Significance:

- ✓ These ships mark a milestone in India's **Atmanirbhar Bharat** (self-reliant India) initiative, emphasizing **indigenous defense manufacturing**.
- ✓ Their commissioning reflects India's growing maritime strength and commitment to safeguarding its territorial waters and broader strategic interests.

Project-75 Recap:

- ✓ The **Scorpene-class submarines** in India under Project-75 are:
INS Kalvari
INS Khanderi
INS Karanj
INS Vela
INS Vagir
INS Vaghsheer

January 15, 2025
Nag Mk 2 Missile



Overview:

- ✓ **Nag Mk 2** is a **third-generation Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)** developed indigenously by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- ✓ It is equipped with **fire-and-forget technology**, enabling it to lock onto targets before launch, requiring no further guidance.

Key Features:

- Technology:**
- ✓ **Third-generation Fire-and-Forget Capability:** Ensures precision targeting without operator intervention post-launch.
 - ✓ **Advanced Imaging Infrared (IIR) Seeker:** Enhances target acquisition and engagement, even in adverse weather conditions.
- Performance:**
- ✓ Designed to **neutralize modern armoured vehicles** equipped with **Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA)**.

- ✓ Demonstrates a **maximum range of 4 km (day)** and **2.5 km (night)**.

Platform Compatibility:

- ✓ Integrated with **NAMICA (Nag Missile Carrier)**, a tracked, amphibious vehicle, providing enhanced battlefield mobility and deployment flexibility.
- ✓ The system enables both static and mobile launch capabilities.

Field Evaluation:

- ✓ Recent trials at the **Pokhran Field Range** validated its maximum and minimum range performance.
- ✓ Successfully destroyed all designated targets during the tests.

Significance:

- ✓ **Strengthens Indian Army's Anti-Tank Capability:** The Nag Mk 2, with its precision and advanced technology, will bolster the army's ability to neutralize enemy tanks and armored vehicles effectively.
- ✓ **Atmanirbhar Bharat Initiative:** The missile reflects India's focus on developing indigenous advanced defense systems.
- ✓ **Ready for Induction:** Following the successful trials, the weapon system, along with NAMICA, is ready for induction into the Indian Army.

Nag Family:

- ✓ **Nag Mk 1:** Initial version with limited capabilities.
- ✓ **Helina (Helicopter-Launched Nag):** Air-launched version integrated with the Dhruv helicopter.
- ✓ **Nag Mk 2:** Enhanced ground-launched version for improved range and ERA penetration.
- ✓ The Nag Mk 2 positions India among nations with advanced anti-tank guided missile technology, significantly enhancing its defense preparedness.

January 16, 2025

77th India Army Day



15 JANUARY
**77th INDIAN
 ARMY DAY**

साहस, बलिदान और समर्पण - यही है भारतीय सेना की पहचान।

- ✓ Celebrated annually on **15th January** to honor a pivotal moment in India's military history.

Significance:

- ✓ Marks the appointment of **General (later Field Marshal) K. M. Cariappa** as the **first Indian Commander-in-Chief** of the Indian Army in **1949**, succeeding British General Sir F. R. R. Bucher.

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- ✓ Symbolizes the transition of India's military leadership to Indian hands post-independence.

2025 Theme:

- ✓ "Samarth Bharat, Saksham Sena" (Capable India, Empowered Army).
- ✓ Reflects the vision of a self-reliant, strong, and empowered military contributing to a robust and secure nation.

Celebrations:

- ✓ Events include **parades, military demonstrations,** and honoring the **bravery and service of soldiers.**
- ✓ Tributes paid to the sacrifices and contributions of the Indian Army in defending the nation.

January 16, 2025

Bhargavastra : Successfully Tested

Bhargavastra tested Successfully भार्गवस्त्र का सफल परीक्षण



Overview:

- ✓ India has achieved a significant milestone in counter-drone technology with the successful testing of **Bhargavastra**, the nation's **first indigenous micro-missile system** designed to neutralize the growing threat of **swarm drones**.

Key Features:

Indigenous Development:

- ✓ Developed by **Economic Explosives Ltd.**, Bhargavastra underscores India's commitment to self-reliance in defense technology.

Advanced Counter-Swarm Drone Capabilities:

- ✓ Detects **small incoming flying machines** at a range of over **6 km**.
- ✓ Engages targets using **micro munitions** guided precisely towards threats.

Rapid Deployment and Firepower:

- ✓ Can be quickly deployed on **mobile platforms**, offering high operational flexibility.
- ✓ Simultaneously fires more than **64 micro-missiles**, ensuring a robust response to multiple threats.

Effective Range and Operational Terrain:

- ✓ Hits targets over a range of **2.5 km**.
- ✓ Designed for **all terrains**, including **high-altitude areas**, to support diverse mission profiles.

Significance:

Army Air Defence:

- ✓ Specifically designed to meet the requirements of the Indian **Army Air Defence**.
- ✓ Marks the **first counter-drone system** leveraging **micro-missiles**.

Strategic Advancement:

- ✓ Reinforces India's preparedness against modern warfare challenges posed by **swarm drones**, commonly used in asymmetrical warfare.
- ✓ Strengthens India's indigenous defense capabilities.

January 17, 2025

Exercise Devil Strike



Overview:

- ✓ The Indian Armed Forces are conducting a **major military exercise, Exercise Devil Strike**, from **January 16 to 19, 2025**, under the leadership of the **Indian Army**.

Key Objectives:

Enhancing Combat Readiness:

- ✓ The exercise focuses on simulating **high-intensity combat operations**, preparing the armed forces for real-world conflict scenarios.

Strengthening National Security:

- ✓ Aims to ensure robust defense against **external threats** through effective coordination and execution of advanced combat strategies.

Testing Advanced Techniques:

- ✓ Features **innovative combat techniques** and **modern warfare strategies** to improve operational effectiveness.

Significance:

- ✓ **Joint Operations:** Promotes **interoperability** among the various branches of the Indian Armed Forces, fostering seamless coordination during missions.
- ✓ **Operational Excellence:** Focuses on employing state-of-the-art tactics and equipment to strengthen the forces' ability to respond to **dynamic security challenges**.
- ✓ Exercise Devil Strike underscores India's commitment to maintaining **combat superiority** and ensuring the **nation's security** in a rapidly evolving global defense landscape.

January 18, 2025

Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan



- ✓ **Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan** is a new initiative launched by the **Defence Minister** during the **Army Day celebrations**. The app was developed by the

Ministry of Defence in collaboration with the **Ministry of Tourism**, aiming to provide citizens with the opportunity to explore India's wartime history and iconic battlefields.



Key Features :

- ✓ **Purpose:** The app opens up iconic battlefields and border areas to the public, allowing virtual tours, historical narratives, and interactive content. It aims to promote tourism, enhance connectivity, and contribute to socio-economic development in border regions.
- ✓ **Target Locations:** The app covers a variety of historical military sites, including prominent areas such as **Galwan (Ladakh)**, **Doklam (Tri-junction between India, Bhutan, and China)**, and the **Longewala** site (from the 1971 India-Pakistan war).
- ✓ **Tourism Collaboration:** These battlefields will be part of the **Incredible India** campaign, making them accessible for **battlefield tourism**, with relevant travel arrangements and permit details included in the app.
- ✓ **Impact:** The initiative will highlight military history and give visitors a chance to experience first-hand the terrain and strategic importance of these locations. Many of these sites were previously restricted due to their significance in national security.
- ✓ Overall, **Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan** represents a unique effort to blend **military heritage** with **tourism**, offering citizens deeper insights into India's defense history while encouraging economic development in border areas.

Ocean Region. While specific details for 2025 may not yet be fully outlined, the previous editions have set the stage for an increasingly complex and multi-domain approach to maritime cooperation.

Key Details:

- ✓ **Participants:** The exercise includes a wide array of international naval forces, such as the **Indian Navy**, **French Navy**, **Royal Australian Navy**, **Royal Navy**, **United States Navy**, **Indonesian Navy**, **Royal Malaysian Navy**, **Republic of Singapore Navy**, and the **Royal Canadian Navy**.
- ✓ **Objective:** The exercise is designed to improve **Maritime Situational Awareness**, cooperation in **maritime surveillance**, **interdiction operations**, and **air operations**. It also emphasizes **progressive training** and **information sharing** between the participating navies.
- ✓ **Key Exercises:** Participants will engage in complex training involving:
 - Surface warfare**
 - Anti-air warfare**
 - Air defense**
 - Cross-deck landings**
 - Tactical maneuvers**
 - VBSS operations (Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure)**
- ✓ **Indian Navy's Role:** India is participating with the **INS Mumbai**, an indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer. The participation highlights India's **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)** vision, emphasizing the importance of maritime cooperation and a **rules-based international order** in the Indo-Pacific.
- ✓ **Significance:** This exercise strengthens the **synergy**, **coordination**, and **interoperability** among like-minded navies, ensuring a more secure and safer Indo-Pacific region through enhanced collaboration.
- ✓ This exercise is a reflection of India's commitment to promoting **maritime security** and fostering international partnerships in the region.

January 20, 2025 Trajan Gun



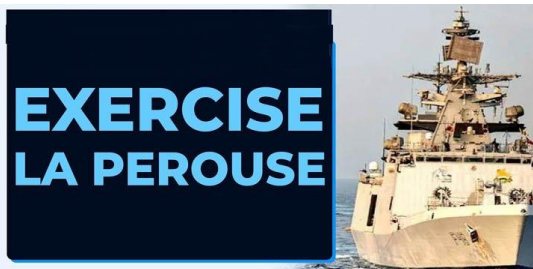
- ✓ **Trajan Gun** is a **155 mm towed artillery system**, developed as a collaboration between **India** (Larsen & Toubro) and **France** (KNDS). It has recently secured an export order from **Armenia**, marking a significant milestone in India's defense export capabilities.

Key Features:

- ✓ **Range and Capability:** The Trajan gun has a range of over **40 kilometers**, depending on the type of

January 20, 2025

Exercise LA PEROUSE



- ✓ **Exercise LA PEROUSE 2025** is expected to be the **fifth edition** of the biennial **multilateral maritime exercise** conducted by the **French Navy** in the **Indian**

ammunition used. This makes it highly effective in modern combat situations.

- ✓ **Design and Mobility:**
- ✓ The system is designed with a **modular design**, which makes it easy to transport and deploy in a variety of operational environments.
- ✓ It is capable of operating in **diverse terrains**, including marshy lowlands and high-altitude cold deserts.
- ✓ **Firing and Loading System:**
- ✓ The Trajan Gun features an **automated loading system** that allows for rapid firing rates, making it highly efficient on the battlefield.
- ✓ **Advanced Targeting Systems:** It integrates **advanced targeting and fire-control systems**, allowing it to seamlessly connect with modern military networks for precise targeting.
- ✓ **Indigenous Components:** Several critical components of the system are indigenously developed, such as:
 - Auxiliary power unit**
 - Control panel**
 - Rolling gear assembly**
- ✓ This **joint India-France development** enhances India's capabilities in the artillery sector and strengthens its position as a competitive player in the global defense market.

January 23, 2025

Scramjet Engine : DRDO



- ✓ The **Scramjet Engine** developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** represents a major step forward in hypersonic technology. Here's an overview based on the recent successful test:

Key Highlights:

- ✓ **Ground Test Success:** DRDO conducted a groundbreaking test with its **Active Cooled Scramjet Combustor**, achieving a 120-second test duration—this marks a critical milestone in India's pursuit of hypersonic weaponry.
- ✓ **Scramjet Technology:** Scramjets (Supersonic Combustion Ramjets) are air-breathing engines that operate efficiently at **hypersonic speeds** (above **Mach 5**, or **5,400 km/hr**). Unlike traditional jet engines, scramjets don't have moving parts, making them highly efficient for long-range travel at incredible speeds.

Functionality:

- ✓ The engine works by compressing the incoming supersonic air, mixing it with fuel, and combusting the mixture to generate thrust.
- ✓ At hypersonic speeds, scramjets outperform conventional engines and can sustain combustion even at speeds exceeding Mach 5.

Strategic Advantage:

- ✓ Hypersonic missiles powered by scramjets can bypass current **air defense systems** due to their extreme speed and maneuverability, providing a significant edge in modern warfare.
- ✓ These advanced weapon systems can strike targets with high precision and rapid response times, making them a game-changer in defense technology.

Global Race for Hypersonic Technology:

- ✓ Nations like **the USA, Russia, China, and India** are at the forefront of **hypersonic missile development**, as these technologies hold great promise for strategic military applications.
- ✓ **Applications:** Hypersonic missiles powered by scramjet technology could be deployed for **defensive and offensive operations**, dramatically enhancing a nation's military capabilities in terms of rapid response and penetrating enemy defense.
- ✓ This test is a key step toward developing **hypersonic weapons** that could revolutionize modern warfare, pushing the limits of speed, stealth, and precision.

January 23, 2025

Pralay Missile



- ✓ The **Pralay Missile** is an important addition to India's missile capabilities, and its debut at the **Republic Day Parade** is a significant milestone. Here's an overview of the missile based on the details provided:

Key Features and Capabilities:

Indigenous Development:

- ✓ The **Pralay Missile** has been developed by **DRDO** (Defence Research and Development Organisation) and is based on the **Prithvi Defence Vehicle** from India's **Ballistic Missile Programme**.

Type:

- ✓ It is a **short-range, quasi-ballistic surface-to-surface missile** designed to be highly effective in tactical military scenarios.

Deployment:

- ✓ The missile is primarily intended for deployment along sensitive borders, including the **Line of Actual**

Control (LAC) and **Line of Control (LoC)**, where rapid and precise response capabilities are essential.

Specifications:

- ✓ **Range:** It has a range between **150-500 km**, allowing it to cover substantial distances for strategic strikes.
- ✓ **Payload:** The missile can carry a **payload of 500-1,000 kg**, which allows for flexibility in choosing the type of warhead depending on the mission.
- ✓ **Guidance Systems:** Equipped with advanced **guidance systems**, the missile achieves a **Circular Error Probable (CEP)** of less than **10 meters**, ensuring high accuracy for targeting.

Performance:

- ✓ It reaches **terminal speeds** of **Mach 6.1**, which means it travels at **6.1 times the speed of sound**, making it difficult to intercept and highly effective for rapid strikes.
- ✓ The missile can engage **strategic targets** like **radar installations, command centers, and airstrips**, providing a tactical advantage in conflict zones.

Mobility and Flexibility:

- ✓ The **mobile launcher** capability allows for flexible deployment and makes the missile harder to target.
- ✓ One of the unique features of the Pralay missile is its ability to **change its path mid-air**, increasing its unpredictability and making it harder to defend against.

Warhead:

- ✓ The missile is capable of carrying **conventional warheads**, which makes it suitable for a range of military operations without the need for nuclear payloads in typical scenarios.
- ✓ **Strategic Importance:**
- ✓ **Enhanced Tactical Response:** The **Pralay Missile** gives India an advanced, mobile, and highly accurate system for addressing targets at varying distances, enhancing the tactical options for India's military.
- ✓ **Regional Security:** Given its deployment along the **LAC and LoC**, this missile enhances India's ability to swiftly address threats in border areas, contributing to **regional stability**.

Showcase at Republic Day

- ✓ The missile's display at the **Republic Day Parade** highlights India's growing technological and defense capabilities, symbolizing self-reliance in critical defense systems and the success of indigenous missile development.
- ✓ This missile represents a significant leap in India's ability to execute precise, long-range strikes, particularly in high-stakes, border regions.

January 27, 2025

Mauritius Hydrographic Survey – Indian Navy



Key Points:

Vessel: INS Sarvekshak (Indian Navy)

Area Covered: 25,000 square nautical miles

Objective: Mapping the ocean floor and sub-surface features

Benefits:

- ✓ Enhances Mauritius' **maritime infrastructure**
- ✓ Aids **resource management** and **coastal planning**
- ✓ Strengthens **India-Mauritius maritime cooperation**

Significance: Supports India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) initiative and deepens strategic ties in the Indian Ocean region

SAGAR Initiative (Security and Growth for All in the Region)

- ✓ **Launched:** 2015 by PM Narendra Modi
- ✓ **Objective:** Strengthen maritime security, economic cooperation, and capacity-building with Indian Ocean Region (IOR) countries.

Key Focus Areas:

- ✓ Safeguarding territorial waters
- ✓ Promoting sustainable development
- ✓ Disaster risk reduction
- ✓ Strengthening trade and maritime connectivity
- ✓ Enhancing defense and security cooperation
- ✓ India's Hydrographic Missions
- ✓ **Purpose:** Hydrographic surveys help in mapping seabed features, ensuring safe navigation, maritime trade, and resource management.

Role of the Indian Navy:

- ✓ Conduct hydrographic surveys for India and friendly nations.
- ✓ Provides nautical charts for safe maritime navigation.
- ✓ Supports regional partners in capacity-building.



Major Hydrographic Surveys in the Indian Ocean

- ✓ **Mauritius (2025)** – INS Sarvekshak mapped 25,000 sq. nautical miles.
- ✓ **Maldives (2023)** – Hydrographic assistance for navigation safety.
- ✓ **Sri Lanka (2021)** – Surveys for port and coastal development.
- ✓ **Seychelles (2018)** – Provided updated nautical charts.

Strategic Significance

- ✓ **Strengthens diplomatic and naval ties** with IOR nations.

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- ✓ Enhances India's role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean.
- ✓ Supports "Blue Economy" initiatives through sustainable ocean resource management.
- ✓ Counters Chinese influence in the region by deepening India's maritime partnerships.

January 27, 2025

Typhon Missile System – U.S. Military Deployment in the Philippines



Key Highlights

- ✓ **Date:** January 2025
- ✓ **Location:** Relocated within the Philippines to enhance mobility and survivability amid tensions with China and Russia.
- ✓ **Developer:** Lockheed Martin (USA)
- ✓ **Purpose:** Provides the U.S. Army with long-range, mobile, ground-launched strike capabilities.
- ✓ System Overview
- ✓ **Also Known As:** Mid-Range Capability (MRC)
- ✓ **Type:** Surface-to-surface missile system
- ✓ **Mobility:** High, with modular design for rapid deployment
- ✓ **Components:**
 - 4 launchers per battery
 - Command post
 - Reload and support vehicles

Missile Capabilities

- ✓ **Standard Missile 6 (SM-6)**
 - Range:** 500 km
 - Type:** Surface-to-air, also capable of striking surface targets
- ✓ **Tomahawk Cruise Missile**
 - Range:** 2,500 km
 - Type:** Land-attack and anti-ship strike missile

Strategic Significance

- ✓ Strengthens U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific.
- ✓ Enhances deterrence against China in the South China Sea.
- ✓ Supports defense cooperation with the Philippines under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).
- ✓ Counters China's A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) strategy in the region.

January 27, 2025

SANJAY – The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)



Key Highlights

- ✓ **Launched by:** Minister of Defence, India
- ✓ **Developer:** Indian Army & Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)
- ✓ **Purpose:** Automated battlefield surveillance system integrating multiple sensor inputs for real-time battlefield awareness.

Features & Capabilities

- ✓ **Integration of multiple sensors** (ground & aerial) for a Common Surveillance Picture.
- ✓ Prevents duplication of intelligence and ensures accuracy.
- ✓ Uses secured Army Data Network & Satellite Communication for real-time monitoring.
- ✓ **Advanced sensors & analytics** to detect intrusions and assess battlefield conditions.
- ✓ **Supports Network Centric Warfare** – enables commanders to operate in both conventional & sub-conventional warfare.
- ✓ **Induction in three phases** across all operational Brigades, Divisions & Corps of the Indian Army.
- ✓ **Centralized Web Application** for seamless intelligence sharing between Command, Army HQ, and decision-makers.

Strategic Significance

- ✓ Enhances battlefield transparency & surveillance.
- ✓ Improves Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.
- ✓ Strengthens border security and operational readiness.
- ✓ Boosts India's indigenous defense technology under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- ✓ Enables faster and more effective decision-making in complex warfare scenarios.

January 27, 2025

Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System:



Recent in News:

- ✓ Indigenous towed artillery gun developed by DRDO.

- ✓ Showcased during the **76th Republic Day parade (2024)**.
- ✓ Developed in collaboration with **Bharat Forge** and **Tata Advanced Systems**.

Key Features

- ✓ **155mm, 52-calibre howitzer** with a range of **48 km** (one of the longest globally).
- ✓ **Highly mobile**, towed by a **6×6 vehicle** for all-terrain movement.
- ✓ **Burst firing mode** for rapid engagement of targets.
- ✓ **Shoot-and-scoot capability**, enhancing survivability in battle.
- ✓ First gun capable of achieving **shortest minimum range at a high angle**.
- ✓ **All-electric drive** ensures maintenance-free and reliable operation.
- ✓ Designed to operate in **extreme temperatures**.

Strategic Importance

- ✓ Enhances **precision and deep-strike** capability with **Long Range Guided Munitions (LRGM)**.
- ✓ Strengthens **India's self-reliance** in defense under **Make in India**.
- ✓ Reduces **dependence on foreign artillery systems**.
- ✓ Boosts **private sector participation** in defense manufacturing.
- ✓ Potential for **exports**, contributing to India's defense industry.
- ✓ ATAGS represents a **significant advancement in indigenous artillery**.
- ✓ Expected to play a **crucial role in modernizing India's defense capabilities**.

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-----IMPORTANT AWARDS January Month-----

January 3, 2025

Odia Poet Prativa Satpathy to Receive Gangadhar National Award:

- ✓ The Gangadhar National Award for Poetry 2023 will be conferred upon the renowned Odia poet Prativa Satpathy by Sambalpur University on its 58th foundation day on January 5. The award, instituted in 1989, recognizes excellence in the field of poetry and is named after the eminent Odia poet Gangadhar Meher. Over the years, many distinguished poets have received the award, and Prativa Satpathy is the latest recipient.

January 3, 2025

Sai Paranjpye to Receive Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award:

- ✓ Sai Paranjpye, a legendary director and writer in Indian cinema, is set to be honored with the Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award at the upcoming Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF) 2025. Known for her impactful slice-of-life films such as Sparsh, Chashme Buddoor, Katha, and Saaz, Paranjpye is regarded as a pillar of India's parallel cinema movement, which gained prominence in the 1970s and 1980s. The award recognizes her extensive contributions to both Indian cinema and Marathi literature.

January 3, 2025

National e-Governance Awards Scheme:



- ✓ The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions issued the scheme guidelines for the 28th National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025.

- ✓ National e-Governance Awards Scheme is recognized amongst the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country.
- ✓ The objective of the Scheme is to recognize and promote excellence in implementation of e-Governance initiatives.
- ✓ The NAeG Awards, 2025 will consist of Trophy, Certificate and an incentive of Rs 10 lakh for Gold Awardees and Rs 5 Lakhs for Silver Awardees to be awarded to the district/organization for being utilized for implementation of project/programme or bridging resources gaps in any area of public welfare.
- ✓ This year 16 Awards are being conferred under the NAeG 2025. Of these 10 will be Gold Awards and 6 will be silver Awards.
- ✓ For the year 2025, there are six categories under which the National Awards for e-Governance 2026 will be conferred:
 - ✓ Government Process Re-engineering by use of technology for Digital Transformation
 - ✓ Innovation by Use of AI and other new age technologies for providing Citizen-Centric Services,
 - ✓ Best e-Governance Practices/Innovation in Cyber Security
 - ✓ Grassroot Level Initiatives for Deepening/ Widening of Service Delivery with focus on initiatives by Districts/ULBs/Gram Panchayats
 - ✓ Replication and Scaling up of Successful National Awarded Projects like NAeG, Prime Minister Awards in Excellence,
 - ✓ Awards conferred by other Central Ministries by State/UT/ District The NAeG 2024
 - ✓ Digital transformation by use of data analytics in digital platforms by Central Ministries/States/UTs
 - ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions

January 7, 2025

82nd Annual Golden Globe Awards:

- ✓ The 82nd Annual Golden Globe Awards, held on January 5, 2025, at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, celebrated the achievements of the film and television industries over the past year. From performances to direction, scriptwriting, and musical achievements, the event highlighted exceptional talent and groundbreaking works in both the motion picture and television sectors. Winners

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included Adrien Brody for Best Actor in a Motion Picture — Drama for The Brutalist, and Zoe Saldaña for Best Actress in a Supporting Role for Emilia Pérez.

January 24, 2025

Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2025:

- ✓ The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) in Hyderabad has been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2025 in the Institutional Category, recognizing its exceptional contributions to disaster management. Established by the Government of India, the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar honors individuals and organizations for their outstanding work in disaster management. The award is announced annually on January 23, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, and includes a cash prize and certificate.

January 29, 2025

The Apple Man of India Honored with Padma Shri:

- ✓ Shri Hariman Sharma, a visionary farmer from Himachal Pradesh, has been awarded the prestigious Padma Shri for revolutionizing Indian agriculture. His development of the HRMN-99 apple variety has transformed apple cultivation, enabling it to thrive in tropical and subtropical regions. This innovative, self-pollinating, low-chilling apple variety has expanded apple farming beyond traditional temperate zones, benefiting farmers and consumers alike.

January 30, 2025

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Honored with Maharaja Hari Singh Award:

- ✓ Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was conferred with the prestigious Maharaja Hari Singh Award at a grand ceremony held at Satyam Resort, Jammu. The event, organized by the Gulistan News Network, was part of the 'Maharaja Hari Singh Peace and Harmony Award 2024-25' celebrations. The award recognized LG Sinha's contributions to reforms and planning in Jammu and Kashmir.

-----IMPORTANT DATES January Month-----

January 3, 2025

Savitribai Phule Jayanti 2025:

- ✓ Savitribai Phule Jayanti is celebrated every year on January 3rd to honor the birth anniversary of Savitribai Phule. She was a remarkable educator, social reformer, and poet who played a significant role in promoting education and fighting for social justice in India.

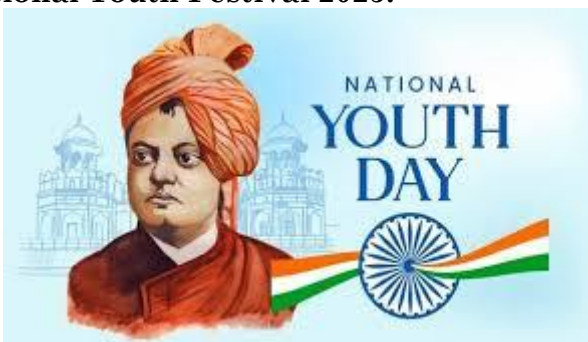
January 9, 2025

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) marked its 78th Foundation Day:

- ✓ The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) commemorated its 78th Foundation Day, underscoring its dedication to quality and innovation. Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and New & Renewable Energy, Shri Pralhad Joshi, emphasized that quality is not merely a measure but a way of life that drives trust, progress, and innovation.



January 13, 2025

National Youth Festival 2025:



- ✓ This year, the annual National Youth Festival (NYF) on January 10-12 at Bharat Mandapam, will undergo a transformative reimagining as the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue.
- ✓ Under the component 'Promotion of National Integration' of the National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development (NPYAD), the NYF is organised from 12th to 16th January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12 January), which is celebrated as National Youth Day.
- ✓ Every year since 1985, the Government of India observes January 12 as National Youth Day and the week commencing from that day, as National Youth Week.
- ✓ It is organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports in partnership with one of the States/UTs which hosts the NYF.
- ✓ The expenditure is shared between the Centre and the host State.
- ✓ During the festival, various cultural programmes (both competitive and non-competitive), Youth convention, Suvichar, Exhibition, Adventure programmes, etc., are organized, and about 7500 youth delegates from different states/UTs take part in the festival.
- ✓ Thematic displays are also organized.
- ✓ The Theme of NYF 2025 is Innovation in Science and Technology.
- ✓ NYF 2025 main event will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

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January 15, 2025

World Hindi Day 2025:

- ✓ Vishwa Hindi Divas or World Hindi Day is celebrated annually on 10th January to expand Hindi's presence on the international stage. This date commemorates the historic moment in 1949, when Hindi was first spoken at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The theme for World Hindi Day 2025 is "A Global Voice of Unity and Cultural Pride," focusing on promoting linguistic exchange and fostering cultural pride through Hindi.

January 17, 2025

Lokpal Foundation Day:



- ✓ On 16th January 2025, social activist Anna Hazare, Justice (retd) N. Santosh Hegde, and Attorney-General R. Venkataramani will be felicitated on the occasion of Lokpal Foundation Day.
- ✓ The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, which empowers the anti-corruption body to investigate allegations of corruption, came into effect on 16th January 2014.
- ✓ Lokpal is an independent statutory body established under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, to combat corruption in public offices and ensure accountability among public functionaries.
- ✓ They perform the function of an "ombudsman" and inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for related matters.
- ✓ The Act also provided for the establishment of Lokayukta for States.
- ✓ The concept of the Lokpal/Lokayukta originates from the Ombudsman system in Scandinavian countries.

January 24, 2025

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti:

- ✓ India celebrates Parakram Diwas annually on January 23rd to honor the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, a visionary leader and a key figure in the Indian freedom movement. Introduced in 2021 by the Government of India to commemorate the legacy of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Aim is To instill patriotism and courage in citizens, particularly youth, and inspire them to face challenges with determination.

January 24, 2025

National Voters' Day 2025 : Theme



- ✓ The 15th National Voters' Day (NVD) will be celebrated across the country on 25th January.
- ✓ It has been observed annually on January 25 since 2011 to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, i.e. on January 25, 1950
- ✓ It aims to underline the centrality of the voter and raise electoral awareness among citizens and inspire their active participation in the democratic process.
- ✓ It also promotes the enrolment of new voters, particularly young individuals who have recently become eligible. Across the country, new voters are honored and presented with their Elector Photo Identity Card (EPIC) during NVD ceremonies.
- ✓ This Year's Theme "Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure" is a continuation of last year's theme emphasizing the importance of participation in the electoral process and encouraging voters to take pride in exercising their franchise.

January 27, 2025

15th National Voters' Day 2025:

- ✓ The 15th National Voters' Day (NVD) on 25th January 2025, marks 75 years of the Election Commission of India (ECI) and follows the successful 2024 Lok Sabha Elections, the world's largest democratic exercise. Celebrated annually on 25th January since 2011 to commemorate the establishment of the ECI on 25th January 1950, a day before India became a Republic. Aims to promote voter awareness, inspire participation, and honor new voters. Theme for 2025: "Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure" to emphasize the importance of voting and pride in electoral participation.

January 27, 2025

National Girl Child Day 2025:

- ✓ National Girl Child Day is observed annually on 24th January aimed at promoting the rights, empowerment, and potential of girls across India. Theme: "Empowering Girls for a Bright Future" emphasizes equal opportunities for girls in education, healthcare, and personal growth. It was started in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to combat critical issues such as child marriage and female foeticide. The 2025 National Girl Child Day celebrations, marking the 10th anniversary of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, will run from 22nd January to 8th March 2025, concluding on International Women's Day.

---IMPORTANT ORGANISATION January Month---

January 3, 2025

Tobacco Board of India:



- ✓ The Tobacco Board has undertaken several strategic activities to ensure the sustainability and growth of the tobacco industry.
 - ✓ It is a statutory body established on 1st January 1976 by an Act of Parliament "Tobacco Board Act, 1975 (Act 4 of 1975)".
 - ✓ The Board is headed by a chairperson and is responsible for the development of the tobacco industry.
 - ✓ The primary function of the Board is export promotion of all varieties of tobacco and its allied products, its functions extend to production, distribution (for domestic consumption and exports) and regulation of Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco.
 - ✓ It ensures the smooth functioning of the farming system and to ensure fair and remunerative prices for tobacco farmers and the promotion of exports.
 - ✓ Financial assistance is extended to farmers through banks, along with the necessary inputs for the production of quality tobacco.
 - ✓ The Board also engages in extension and developmental activities to promote sustainable tobacco cultivation practices.
 - ✓ The Board supports farmers by providing handholding assistance to produce tobacco of requisite quality to meet the standards of importing countries.
 - ✓ Headquarters: Guntur, Andhra Pradesh
 - ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- ✓ Export Inspection Council was set up by the Government of India under Section 3 of the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act, 1963.
 - ✓ It ensures sound development of export trade of India through quality control and inspection and matters connected therewith.
 - ✓ It is the official export–certification body of India, which ensures quality and safety of products exported from India.
 - ✓ It is headed by a Chairperson.
 - ✓ The Executive Head of the Council is the Director of Inspection & Quality Control who is responsible for day to day functioning of the Council.
 - ✓ The role of EIC is to ensure that products notified under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act 1963 are meeting the requirements of the importing countries in respect of their quality and safety.
 - ✓ EIC provides mandatory certification for various Food items namely fish & fishery products, dairy product, honey, egg products, meat and meat products, poultry meat products, animal casing, Gelatine, Ossein and crushed bones and feed additive and pre-mixtures while other food and non-food products are certified on voluntary basis.
 - ✓ The Export Inspection Agencies (EIAs) located at Mumbai, Kolkata, Kochi, Delhi and Chennai with a network of 30 sub offices backed by the state of art, NABL accredited laboratories at various places.
 - ✓ Headquarter: Delhi
 - ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

January 6, 2025

Export Inspection Council:



- ✓ The Export Inspection Council (EIC) has initiated a detailed gap assessment study on food testing infrastructure for exports.

January 9, 2025

Indonesia has joined BRICS as a full member:



- ✓ Indonesia has officially become a full member (11th) of the BRICS group of emerging economies. Brazil, holding the presidency of BRICS for 2025, announced this development, noting that Indonesia's candidacy was endorsed by BRICS leaders at the Johannesburg summit in 2023. Indonesia's membership aligns with the ongoing efforts to reform global governance institutions and deepen cooperation within the Global South, key priorities for Brazil's BRICS presidency.

January 20, 2025

International Year of Glaciers' Preservation : United Nations

- ✓ The United Nations will observe 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, with 21st March marked annually as World Day for Glaciers starting in 2025. Glaciers are large, slow-moving masses of ice formed from compacted snow over centuries. They form on land and move due to gravity, slowly moving downward.

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January 28, 2025

Inland Waterways Authority of India : New Regional Office



- ✓ The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) sets up new Regional Office at Varanasi.
- ✓ It is a statutory body established under the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act (IWAI), 1985.
- ✓ The Authority primarily undertakes projects for development and maintenance of IWT infrastructure on national waterways through grant received from Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- ✓ It presently has five regional offices in Guwahati (Assam), Patna (Bihar), Kochi (Kerala), Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Kolkata (West Bengal).
- ✓ Varanasi will be its sixth office.
- ✓ Headquarter: Noida, Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

.....IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES January Month.....

January 7, 2025

Dr. R. Chidambaram Passes Away at 88:

- ✓ Dr. Rajagopala Chidambaram, a towering figure in the field of atomic energy, passed away at the age of 88 at Jaslok Hospital in Mumbai on January 4, 2025. His contributions to India's nuclear program and scientific advancements have left an indelible mark on the country's technological and strategic development. Dr. Chidambaram was integral to India's nuclear journey, from the first peaceful nuclear test in 1974 to leading Operation Shakti in 1998, which solidified India's position as a nuclear power.

January 8, 2025

Shigemi Fukahori, Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivor Dies:

- ✓ Shigemi Fukahori, a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Nagasaki, passed away at the age of 93 on January 3, 2025. Fukahori dedicated his life to advocating for peace and nuclear disarmament, often sharing his painful experiences with students and people around the world. His life's mission was to prevent the horrors he witnessed from ever happening again, and he played a significant role in spreading anti-nuclear messages globally.

January 15, 2025

59th death anniversary of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri:



- ✓ 11th January marked the 59th death anniversary of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, the second Prime Minister of India.
- ✓ Lal Bahadur Shastri was born on 2nd October 1904, in Mughalsarai, near Varanasi.
- ✓ A key figure in India's freedom struggle, Shastri was deeply influenced by Mahatma Gandhi.
- ✓ He was known for his integrity, humility, and dedication to public service, rising through the ranks of the Indian National Congress.
- ✓ As Prime Minister (1964-1966), Shastri displayed decisive leadership during the 1965 Indo-Pak war, authorizing military action to defend Kashmir.
- ✓ Shastri's legacy includes the famous slogan "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan", emphasizing the importance of soldiers and farmers in India's progress.
- ✓ Shastri died suddenly in Tashkent on 11th January 1966, shortly after signing the Tashkent Declaration; his death remains a subject of mystery.

.....IMPORTANT SCHEME January Month.....



January 4, 2025

One Nation One Subscription:

- ✓ One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) initiative marks a significant advancement in India's research and education landscape. This scheme aims to provide comprehensive access to

international scholarly journals and articles for students, faculty, researchers, and scientists across the nation's government higher education institutions (HEIs) and central government research and development (R&D) centres.

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January 4, 2025

Open Data Kit Platform:

- ✓ The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has introduced a revolutionary toolkit using the Open Data Kit (ODK) platform to ensure transparency in public spending and evaluate the effectiveness of government schemes. A digital platform based on Open Data Kit (ODK) technology for designing, collecting, and managing audit-related data. Launched by: Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

January 4, 2025

Rural Community Immigration Class (RCIC) Scheme:



- ✓ Canada announced that the Post-Graduate Work Permits (PGWPs) of nearly 7.66 lakh international students are set to expire by the end of next year and the Rural Community Immigration Class (RCIC) scheme provides a pathway for foreign nationals and students.
- ✓ It is a new programme launched by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in December 2024.
- ✓ It aims to address labour shortages and promote development in smaller rural communities by attracting individuals willing to settle long-term in these areas.
- ✓ Eligibility:
- ✓ Education Level: Applicants can include those with 10+2, graduation, or secondary school qualifications.
- ✓ Studies: Students who have completed at least 18 months of study in one of the designated communities are eligible to apply for PR directly. Those who studied outside these communities can also apply but must meet additional conditions.
- ✓ Job Offer: Applicants need a job offer letter from a registered or designated employer in the community. This job offer can be in any category, including non-skilled roles. The offer must be submitted to the community, which will then issue a certificate supporting the PR application.
- ✓ Work Experience: Relevant work experience is typically required, though this condition may be waived for international graduates who meet certain criteria.

- ✓ Language Proficiency: Applicants must meet the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) requirements based on the job's NOC TEER (National Occupational Classification Training, Education, Experience, and Responsibilities) level: TEER 0-1: CLB 6, TEER 2-3: CLB 5 and TEER 4-5: CLB 4
- ✓ Financial Proof: Applicants must demonstrate they have at least half of the low-income threshold for rural areas (as determined by Statistics Canada) to sustain themselves for one year.
- ✓ Intent to Reside: Candidates must provide genuine proof of their intention to live in the designated rural community.

January 7, 2025

Faral Sakhi' Initiative:

- ✓ The Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation (MBMC), in collaboration with NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP), has launched the 'Faral Sakhi' initiative to empower women entrepreneurs in traditional snack production. 'Faral Sakhi' provides comprehensive training and support to women engaged in producing traditional festive snacks, known as 'Faral'. A central kitchen established by MBMC enables women from self-help groups (SHGs) to prepare these snacks professionally.

January 8, 2025

Production Linked Incentive Scheme 1.1:



- ✓ The union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries launched the second round of PLI scheme for Specialty Steel, termed as PLI Scheme 1.1.
- ✓ It will be implemented during the production period of FY 2025-26 to FY 2029-30.
- ✓ It covers five (5) product categories in line with the existing PLI Scheme, namely Coated / Plated Steel Products, High Strength / Wear resistant Steel, Specialty Rails, Alloy Steel Products & Steel wires and Electrical Steel.
- ✓ These products have a wide range of application, from white goods to transformers to Automobiles and other niche sectors.
- ✓ Reduction in threshold investment & capacity for the Cold-Rolled Grain-Oriented (CRGO) product sub-categories, allowing carry forward of excess production to the immediately following year for

the purpose of claiming incentive and reduction in threshold investment under capacity augmentation mode.

- ✓ Not all companies would need to install new mills.
- ✓ Recognising the importance of producing quality steel, energy efficiency and other process improvements, companies investing in augmentation of existing capacities will be allowed to participate in the scheme.
- ✓ The Centre had earlier introduced the PLI scheme to encourage domestic production of specialty steel and lower imports by drawing in capital investments.
- ✓ It was initially launched for three sectors to address the need to boost domestic manufacturing during COVID-19 lockdown, the PLI scheme was later extended to include steel in November 2020.

January 9, 2025

Shahid Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Scheme:

- ✓ Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the Shahid Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Scheme at the Adivasi Mela in Bhubaneswar. This initiative aims to reduce dropout rates among Scheduled Tribe (ST) students by providing a one-time financial assistance of ₹5,000 to those enrolling in Class IX and Class XI. The scheme targets students from families with an annual income not exceeding ₹2,50,000.

January 9, 2025

e-Shram Portal Expands to 22 Scheduled Languages:

- ✓ The e-Shram portal, designed to provide unorganised workers with seamless access to various government schemes, has been upgraded to support all 22 scheduled languages. This enhancement, launched by Union Minister of Labour and Employment Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, aims to make the portal more accessible to workers across India.

January 9, 2025

UJALA Scheme : Completed a Decade



- ✓ The Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme, launched in 2015, has completed a decade with the distribution of 36.87 crore LED bulbs, resulting in ₹19,153 crore in annual electricity savings, according to official data released by the Ministry of Power.
- ✓ In 2015, the Indian government introduced the UJALA scheme, which is also known as the LED-based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP), to promote energy efficiency in all households.
- ✓ The UJALA scheme is the world's largest zero-subsidy LED lamp distribution scheme.
- ✓ It is implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) under the Ministry of Power.
- ✓ Through the UJALA scheme, the government aims to save 85 lakh kWh of electricity and 15,000 tonnes of CO2 by replacing 77 crore traditional bulbs & CFLs and 3.5 crore streetlights with LEDs.
- ✓ Every domestic household having a metered connection from their respective Electricity Distribution Company is eligible to get the LED bulbs under the UJALA Scheme.
- ✓ The consumer can purchase the LED on EMI payment (monthly/bimonthly instalments in the electricity bill) or on upfront payment by paying the full amount.
- ✓ As part of its inclusive growth strategy to enable growth in lower-income communities, EESL has also enrolled Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for the distribution of LED bulbs under the UJALA programme.
- ✓ The annual energy savings from the scheme stand at 47,883 million kWh, with a reduction in peak demand by 9,586 MW and an annual reduction of 3.87 crore tonnes in carbon dioxide emissions.
- ✓ These savings were achieved through e-procurement and bulk purchasing, which allowed LED bulbs to be made affordable for millions of households.
- ✓ UJALA succeeded in bringing down the retail price of LED bulbs from INR 300-350 per bulb to INR 70-80 per bulb.

January 10, 2025

Goa's 'Bima Sakhi Yojana':

- ✓ Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant launched the 'Bima Sakhi Yojana' under the state's Swayampurna Goa 2.0 initiative. This program aims to empower women by providing them with training and opportunities to become Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) agents, thereby promoting financial literacy and expanding life insurance coverage at the grassroots level.

January 10, 2025

Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana:

- ✓ The Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana is a financial assistance scheme launched by the Jharkhand government to empower women across the state. Initially launched in August 2024 by Chief Minister Hemant Soren, the scheme aims to enhance the financial security of women by providing direct cash transfers. This initiative addresses socio-economic challenges, particularly in rural areas, and contributes to the state's development by improving household income and promoting financial inclusion.

January 10, 2025

EmpowHER Biz Initiative:



- ✓ The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) of NITI Aayog, launched EmpowHER Biz – Sapno Ki Udaan in partnership with New Shop, India's convenience retail chain under its Award to Reward (ATR) program.
- ✓ EmpowHER Biz Initiative is a part of Women Entrepreneurship Platform of NITI Aayog, aiming to create a robust retail ecosystem that empowers women entrepreneurs and drives sustainable growth in the sector.
- ✓ It will offer mentorship and comprehensive training, covering retail management, digital tools, financial literacy and business development to aspiring women entrepreneurs.
- ✓ Under the initiative, 50 participants aged 18–35, will be selected through an online application process based on specific criteria.
- ✓ Top 20 of these participants will receive a 100% waiver on New Shop franchise fees, empowering them to own and operate their retail businesses with significantly reduced barriers to entry.
- ✓ The program is being launched for women from Delhi NCR, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat.

January 14, 2025

Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) Scheme : Urge To Extend

- ✓ Amid global economic uncertainties, the industry has urged the government to extend key export-boosting scheme Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) for export-oriented

units (EOUs) and special economic zones (SEZs) till September-end.

January 15, 2025

Odisha Joins Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY Scheme:

- ✓ Odisha becomes the 27th state to adopt Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), with 26 states and all 18 union territories already on board (Delhi and West Bengal have not joined AB PM-JAY). AB PM-JAY is a centrally sponsored scheme with a cost ratio of 60:40 for the Centre and states and 90:10 for the north-eastern states, Himalayan states and Union Territories. States have the option to opt out of the scheme.

January 15, 2025

Watershed Development Component 2.0 of PMKSY:

- ✓ The Ministry of Rural Development sanctioned 56 new Watershed Development Projects under the Watershed Development Component 2.0 of Prime Minister Krishi Sinchayee Yojna (PMKSY-WDC 2.0), in 10 best performing States. 10 States include Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Nagaland, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim covering around 2.8 lakh hectares of degraded land.

January 17, 2025

Nine Years of Start Up India:

- ✓ On January 16, 2025, India marks nine years of Startup India, a transformative journey that began in 2016. Designated as National Startup Day, this occasion celebrates the nation's strides in fostering a robust and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Startup India is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, launched on January 16, 2016, to promote a robust entrepreneurial culture. Its aim is to simplify processes, provide funding support, and foster innovation to help startups grow and create employment opportunities.



January 21, 2025

Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:



- ✓ The Union Minister for Commerce and Industry recently emphasized that much of the success of the Startup India mission can be attributed to key

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funding mechanisms, particularly the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS).

- ✓ It was approved and established in 2016 with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore, with contribution spread over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycle based on progress of implementation.
- ✓ Objective is to provide much-needed boost to the Indian startup ecosystem and enable access to domestic capital.
- ✓ The scheme does not directly invest in startups; instead, it provides capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), known as daughter funds, who in turn invest money in growing Indian startups through equity and equity-linked instruments.
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund through the selection of suitable daughter funds and overseeing the disbursement of committed capital.
- ✓ AIFs supported under FFS are required to invest at least 2 times the amount committed under FFS in startups.
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) was established under an Act of the Parliament in 1990.
- ✓ It is the Principal Financial Institution engaged in promotion, financing & development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector and coordination of the functions of the various institutions engaged in similar activities.

January 22, 2025

Mission SCOT:

- ✓ The Prime Minister of India lauded Indian space startup Digantara for the success of Mission SCOT (Space Camera for Object Tracking). Mission SCOT is the world's first commercial Space Situational Awareness (SSA) satellite, launched aboard SpaceX's Transporter-12 mission. SSA is the tracking and characterization of space objects and their orbits. Mission SCOT tracks Resident Space Objects (RSOs) as small as 5 cm in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). It is backed by Aditya Birla Ventures and the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

January 23, 2025

Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel has launched a scheme providing Rs 10,000 annual aid to 7.5 lakh landless agricultural labourers:

- ✓ Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Dev Sai has launched a scheme to provide Rs 10,000 annually to landless labourers in the state, continuing his commitment to support vulnerable sections. This initiative is part of a larger series of welfare measures promised during the pre-poll campaign.

The scheme aims to benefit approximately 7.5 lakh landless agricultural labourers in Chhattisgarh, reflecting the government's focus on improving their financial stability. The CM's announcement builds on past promises made during elections and further strengthens the state's social welfare framework

January 23, 2025

Mizoram has become the first Northeast state to distribute property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme:

- ✓ Mizoram has become the first state in Northeast India to distribute property cards under the Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) scheme. On January 18, 2025, Governor Gen (Dr) VK Singh virtually participated in the distribution event from Raj Bhavan, Aizawl. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also attended, distributing over 65 lakh property cards to beneficiaries across 10 states and two Union Territories. Among these, 1,754 property cardholders from 18 villages in Mizoram received their cards.



January 24, 2025

Sukanya Samridhi Yojana : 10 Years Completed



- ✓ This year marks the 10 years of Sukanya Samridhi Yojana encouraging families to invest in the bright futures of their daughters, fostering a culture of inclusion and progress.
- ✓ It is a savings scheme launched back in 2015 as part of the Government initiative, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign.
- ✓ This scheme enables guardians to open a savings account for their girl child with an authorized commercial bank or India-Post branch.
- ✓ The applicant must be a citizen of India.
- ✓ The account can be opened by a parent or legal guardian of the girl's child.
- ✓ The girl child must be below the age of 10 years.
- ✓ Only one account is allowed for a girl child.
- ✓ A family can open only 2 SSY scheme accounts.
- ✓ NRIs are not eligible to open these accounts.
- ✓ Investment of minimum Rs. 250 and maximum Rs. 1.5 lakh in a financial year. Subsequent deposits in multiples of Rs. 100.
- ✓ No limit on the number of deposits either in a month or in a Financial Year.

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- ✓ Tenure: The maturity period of SSY is 21 years from the account opening. However, contributions have to be made for the first 15 years only.
- ✓ Thereafter, the SSY account will continue to earn interest until maturity.
- ✓ The SSY account will be mandatorily operated by the girl child after she attains the age of 18 years.

January 27, 2025

Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic)

Policy:

- ✓ The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution announced key revisions to the Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) (OMSS(D)) policy for 2024-25. These changes aim to improve food security and support ethanol production in India. The OMSS involves the periodic sale of surplus food grains (wheat and rice) from the central pool managed by the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The grains are sold to dealers, bulk consumers, and retail chains through e-auctions at prices set by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution. The scheme helps curb inflation and stabilize food grain prices meeting the needs of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Other Welfare Schemes.

January 28, 2025

Samman Sanjeevani App:

- ✓ On National Girl Child Day 2025, Haryana Cabinet Minister Shruti Choudhry launched the 'Samman Sanjeevani' app, aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the 'Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana'. The initiative is designed to provide essential services to BPL (Below Poverty Line) women and girls between the ages of 10 and 45, particularly sanitary napkins. This app is a part of the Haryana Government's ongoing commitment to ensuring timely and efficient delivery of welfare benefits to its citizens.

January 29, 2025

PM YASASVI Scheme:

- ✓ The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment addressed student beneficiaries of the PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASASVI) scheme on Republic Day 2025. Launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, it provides financial aid for quality education to marginalized students. It is open to OBC, Economically Backward Classes (EBC), and DNT students with family income up to Rs 2.5 lakh per annum.

January 29, 2025

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana : Extend



- ✓ The Union government has decided to expand the ambit of the PM Fasal Bima Yojana to include crop damage by animals as a ground for payouts, a long-standing demand by farmers, an official said recently.
- ✓ Launched on 18th February 2016, PMFBY is a crop insurance scheme by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation, and Farmers' Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture.
- ✓ It aims to provide financial protection to farmers against crop loss due to natural disasters (hail, drought, famine), pests, and diseases.
- ✓ It provides crop insurance at a cost-effective premium to all Indian farmers.
- ✓ It is implemented through a network of insurance companies and banks.
- ✓ Objectives:
 - ✓ To provide financial assistance and support to farmers suffering from crop damage or loss arising out of unforeseen events
 - ✓ To stabilise the income of farmers and ensure continuance in farming
 - ✓ To encourage the farmers to adopt modern and innovative agricultural practices
 - ✓ To ensure crop diversification, and creditworthiness of the farmers, enhance growth, and competitiveness of the agriculture sector and protect the farmers from production risks
- ✓ All farmers, including sharecroppers and tenant farmers, growing the notified crops in the notified areas are eligible for coverage.
- ✓ All farmers availing Seasonal Agricultural Operations (SAO) loans from Financial Institutions (i.e. loanee farmers) for the notified crops would be covered compulsorily.
- ✓ Voluntary Component: The Scheme would be optional for the non-loanee farmers.
- ✓ Farmers must have an insurable interest in the insured crops.
Farmers must possess a valid and authenticated

land ownership certificate or a valid land tenure agreement.

- ✓ Farmers must not have received compensation for the same crop loss from any other medium or source.
- ✓ Special efforts shall be made to ensure maximum coverage of SC/ST/Women farmers under the scheme.
- ✓ Budget allocation and utilization under this scheme should be in proportion to land holdings of SC/ ST/ General along with women in the respective State cluster.

January 30, 2025

Telangana CM Launched Welfare Schemes on Republic Day:



- ✓ Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy unveiled four significant welfare initiatives aimed at supporting farmers, landless agricultural laborers, and marginalized communities.
- ✓ These schemes were part of the Congress Party's promises during the 2023 Telangana Legislative Assembly elections, where they secured a decisive victory.
- ✓ Rythu Bharosa: This program offers financial assistance of ₹12,000 per acre of arable land to eligible farmers. The funds are directly credited to the farmers' bank accounts, providing timely support for agricultural activities.
- ✓ Indiramma Aathmeeya Bharosa: Under this scheme, landless agricultural labor families receive an annual financial support of ₹12,000. This initiative aims to enhance the livelihoods of those dependent on agriculture without owning land.
- ✓ Indiramma Indlu: Targeting homeless Dalits, Tribals, and backward classes, this housing scheme provides financial assistance of ₹5 lakh for constructing homes. The government has set an ambitious target to build 4,50,000 houses in the fiscal year 2024-2025, with a budget allocation of ₹22,500 crore.

-----SPORTS January Month-----

January 2, 2025

Kerala Wins Senior National Men's Handball Championship:

- ✓ Kerala achieved a historic milestone by winning their first-ever Senior National Men's Handball Championship title. They triumphed over Chandigarh with a 34-31 victory in a thrilling final. Kerala, who had reached the final for the first time, delivered an impressive performance throughout the match. The team's success was built on a strong collective effort, with standout performances from key players.

January 2, 2025

Hemanth Muddappa Secures 3 National Titles, Extends Record to 15:

Hemanth Muddappa, known as the "Drag King" in Indian motorsport, achieved an extraordinary feat by winning a triple crown in the final round of the MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Drag Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit (MIC). With this victory, Muddappa took his total number of National titles to an impressive 15, solidifying his position as the most decorated motorsport athlete in India.



January 4, 2025

National Sports Awards : Announced



- ✓ The Union Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2024.
- ✓ National Sports Awards are given every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports.
- ✓ 'Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award' is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over the period of the previous four years.
- ✓ Arjuna Award is given for outstanding performance in Sports and Games' is given for good performance over a period of the previous four years and for showing qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline.
- ✓ Arjuna Award (Lifetime) is given to honour and motivate those sportspersons who have contributed to sports by their performance and continue to

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contribute to promotion of sports even after their retirement from active sporting career.

- ✓ 'Dronacharya Award is given for outstanding coaches in Sports and Games' is given to coaches for doing outstanding and meritorious work on a consistent basis and for enabling sportspersons to excel in International events.
- ✓ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy is awarded for the overall top performing university in Khelo India University Games.
- ✓ This year's awards were decided by the Selection Committee headed by Justice (Retd.) V. Ramasubramanian, Supreme Court of India and consisting members from eminent sportspersons, persons having experience in sports journalism and sports administrators.

January 6, 2025

West Bengal Wins 33rd Santosh Trophy Title:

- ✓ The Santosh Trophy, India's premier football competition for state teams, continues to showcase the nation's football talent and historical rivalries. In the 2024 edition, West Bengal reaffirmed its dominance by securing a record-extending 33rd title with a narrow 1-0 victory over Kerala in the final. Held at Gachibowli Stadium, the match saw Robi Hansda score the winning goal in added time, cementing his position as the tournament's top scorer.

January 6, 2025

BCCI Will Have New Secretary and Treasurer:

- ✓ Devajit Saikia, a former Assam cricketer, is set to become the new secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), while Prabhtej Singh Bhatia from Chhattisgarh State Cricket Sangh (CSCS) will take over as the new treasurer. Both candidates filed their nominations as the lone applicants for their respective posts and are set to be elected unopposed at the BCCI's Special General Meeting (SGM) on January 12, 2025, in Mumbai.

January 7, 2025

38th National Games Torch Tejaswini:

- ✓ The 38th National Games will be hosted by Uttarakhand for the first time, marking a significant event in the state's sports history. The torch, named 'Tejaswini,' has begun its journey across the state, spreading excitement and awareness about the games. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami flagged off the torch rally from Haldwani, and it is expected to cover 3,823 km, visiting 99 locations in 13 districts before reaching the capital, Dehradun.

January 8, 2025

Lionel Messi Honoured with the US Presidential Medal of Freedom:

- ✓ Lionel Messi, captain of the Argentina men's football team and one of the greatest footballers of all time,

was honoured with the United States Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian award. This recognition marks a significant milestone in his illustrious career, making him the first male footballer to receive this prestigious honour. Messi, however, could not attend the ceremony held at the White House due to prior commitments.

January 9, 2025

Bahadur Singh Sagoo Elected as AFI President:

- ✓ Asian Games gold medalist and Padma Shri awardee Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been elected unanimously as the new president of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). His election took place during the two-day Annual General Meeting in Chandigarh. Sagoo, who won gold in shot put at the 2002 Asian Games, takes over from outgoing president Adille Sumariwalla, who stepped down after serving three consecutive terms.

January 10, 2025

Martin Guptill Announces Retirement from International Cricket:

New Zealand's prolific opener, Martin Guptill, has officially retired from international cricket, concluding a distinguished 14-year career that began in 2009. Throughout his tenure, Guptill represented the Black Caps in 198 One Day Internationals (ODIs), 122 Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is), and 47 Test matches, amassing a total of 14,877 runs across all formats.

January 13, 2025

Shreyas Iyer Appointed Punjab Kings Captain:

- ✓ Shreyas Iyer has been appointed as the captain of Punjab Kings for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 season. The announcement was made during a special segment on the reality television show 'Bigg Boss', where Iyer appeared alongside teammates Yuzvendra Chahal and Shashank Singh.
- ✓ Devajit Saikia and Prabhtej Singh Bhatia were unanimously elected as the Secretary and Treasurer of the BCCI

January 13, 2025

Devajit Saikia and Prabhtej Singh Bhatia were unanimously elected as the Secretary and Treasurer of the BCCI:

- ✓ The uncontested election of Devajit Saikia as the Secretary and Prabhtej Singh Bhatia as the Treasurer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) was formalized during the BCCI's Special General Meeting (SGM) on January 12, 2025.

January 15, 2025

Anju Bobby George Named Chairperson of AFI's Athletes Commission:

- ✓ Anju Bobby George, the legendary long-jumper and a 2003 World Championships bronze medalist, was named the Chairperson of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) Athletes Commission. The new commission comprises a mix of prominent retired athletes, with Neeraj Chopra, the two-time Olympic medalist, being the most notable male member. The commission marks step towards gender parity in the AFI setup, with six women out of nine members.

January 15, 2025

The first-ever Kho Kho World Cup began:

- ✓ The inaugural edition of the Kho Kho World Cup kicked off with great enthusiasm on January 13, 2025, at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. The ceremony began with a sand art projection paying homage to Mother Earth, followed by a ceremonial parade and cultural performances. The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) unveiled the World Cup trophy for both men's and women's tournaments, which was met with loud cheers. The Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar, and Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse, lit the torch to officially open the tournament. The opening match was between India and Nepal.

January 17, 2025

Smriti Mandhana, the Indian opener, set multiple records during the 3rd ODI against Ireland:

- ✓ Indian opener Smriti Mandhana broke multiple records in the 3rd ODI against Ireland Women at the Niranjan Shah Stadium, Rajkot. Leading the team in the absence of Harmanpreet Kaur, Mandhana scored the fastest century by an Indian in women's ODIs, showcasing her

January 18, 2025

Justice Arun Mishra: New Ombudsman of BCCI

- ✓ Justice Arun Mishra, a former Supreme Court judge, has been appointed as the Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The announcement was made and marking another significant milestone in his illustrious career. Justice Mishra's extensive legal expertise and leadership experience make him well-suited for the dual responsibilities of ensuring ethical practices and addressing disputes within the BCCI.

January 20, 2025

Djokovic Breaks Federer's Record for Grand Slam Match Count:

- ✓ Novak Djokovic, one of tennis' greatest players, added another milestone to his illustrious career on

January 17, 2025, by breaking a tie with Roger Federer for the most Grand Slam matches played in tennis history. The Serbian tennis star achieved his 430th Grand Slam match during the second round of the Australian Open, where he won a challenging match against Portuguese qualifier Jaime Faria.

January 20, 2025

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna 2024:

- ✓ The Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, India's highest sporting accolade, was conferred on remarkable achievers who brought laurels to the nation at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Started in: 1991-1992 (as Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award). Renamed in: 2021, to honor legendary hockey player Major Dhyan Chand. Aim is to recognize outstanding performances in sports at the international level, motivate athletes, and inspire future generations.

January 21, 2025

Karnataka Clinch Vijay Hazare Trophy For Record 5th Time:

- ✓ In the Vijay Hazare Trophy (VHT) 2024-25 final, Karnataka emerged victorious by 36 runs against Vidarbha on January 19, 2025, at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara. This win marks Karnataka's fifth Vijay Hazare Trophy title. The thrilling encounter saw Karnataka posting a commanding total and defending it successfully, despite a spirited fight from Vidarbha's batters.

January 21, 2025

Kho Kho World Cup 2025 : India emerged as the inaugural champions



- ✓ India emerged as the inaugural champions in both the men's and women's events at the Kho Kho World Cup 2025. The tournament took place at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi, India. This is the first Kho Kho World cup. Organised by: Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) in collaboration with the International Kho Kho Federation (IKKF).
Mascots: Tejas (Men's Team): A blue gazelle symbolizing brilliance and energy, Tara (Women's Team): An orange gazelle representing guidance and aspiration.

January 22, 2025

38th National Games and Kalaripayattu:

- ✓ The Indian Kalaripayattu Federation has accused the Indian Olympics Association (IOA) of downgrading the Kalaripayattu to the demonstration section of the event, not the competitive section. Demonstration events showcase sports for promotion and are excluded from the official medal tally. Kalaripayattu is one of the oldest and most scientific martial arts globally, originating in Kerala. The warrior sage Parasurama is credited with establishing Kalaripayattu, which Bodhidharma (a Buddhist monk from South India) later introduced to China at the Shaolin Temple in the 5th century AD.

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January 23, 2025

India to Host FIDE Chess World Cup 2025:

- ✓ India is set to host the prestigious FIDE Chess World Cup 2025, marking a significant milestone for the country as it takes on the role of the host for its first major international chess tournament since the 2022 Chennai Chess Olympiad. This announcement is poised to further elevate India's stature in the global chess arena, especially considering the country's growing influence in the sport.

January 24, 2025

New president of the Athletics Federation of India:

- ✓ Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been elected as the new president of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). Bahadur Singh Sagoo is a one-time Asian medallist and two-time national champion, won a gold medal in the shot put at the 2002 Busan Asian Games. He also competed in the 2000 and 2004 Olympics. Athletics Federation of India (AFI) was established in 1946 as a non-governmental, non-profit, autonomous apex body for athletics in India.

January 28, 2025

ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024:

- ✓ Smriti Mandhana Named ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024. She had a remarkable year in One Day International (ODI) cricket in 2024, firmly establishing herself as a key player in the women's game. Renowned for her graceful left-handed batting and knack for delivering under pressure.

January 28, 2025

ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year:

- ✓ Bumrah Crowned ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year. Jasprit Bumrah had an extraordinary year in 2024, establishing himself as the most dominant bowler in Test cricket. Making a stellar comeback after recovering from a back injury in late 2023, Bumrah's incredible performances propelled India's success in both home and away series. His consistency, wicket-taking ability, and record-breaking achievements solidified his status as one of the all-time greats.

January 28, 2025

Australian Open title:

- ✓ Jannik Sinner successfully retained his Australian Open title with a commanding victory over Alexander Zverev in a straightforward final, solidifying his position as one of tennis's brightest talents. The 23-year-old Italian delivered a stellar performance, defeating the German 6-3, 7-6(4), 6-3. Sinner has now etched his name into tennis history as the youngest man since Jim Courier (1992-1993) to claim back-to-back titles at Melbourne Park.

January 28, 2025

9th Johor International Open Chess Tournament:

- ✓ Indian Grandmaster Iniyan Panneerselvam delivered a stellar performance to claim victory at the 9th Johor International Open Chess Tournament in Malaysia. The 22-year-old from Erode, Tamil Nadu, showcased his dominance by finishing 1.5 points ahead of his nearest competitor. His victory adds to his earlier triumph at the Chennai Open in January, solidifying his reputation as a rising star in chess.

January 28, 2025

ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year:

- ✓ Azmatullah Omarzai, Afghanistan's dynamic all-rounder, had an exceptional year in 2024, cementing his place as one of the top performers in One Day International (ODI) cricket. With impressive right-arm pace bowling and versatile batting, Omarzai played a pivotal role in Afghanistan's successful ODI campaigns. His performances in ODIs helped elevate Afghanistan's cricketing stature, with the team achieving four ODI series wins.

January 30, 2025

Odisha Warriors Win First Women's Hockey India League Title:

- ✓ The Odisha Warriors, led by Janneke Schopman, clinched the inaugural Women's Hockey India League (HIL) title, emerging victorious in a thrilling final against Soorma Hockey Club with a 2-1 scoreline. This match, held at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Stadium in Ranchi, marked a redemption moment for Schopman, who had previously faced defeat with India against Japan.

January 30, 2025

National Table Tennis Champions 2025:



- ✓ The 2025 Senior National Table Tennis Championships concluded on January 26 at the Pandit Dindayal Upadhyay Indoor Stadium in Surat, witnessing thrilling performances. Manush Shah and Diya Chitale claimed the men's and women's singles titles, respectively, showcasing remarkable skill and resilience. Both champions represented the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and delivered exceptional performances in their respective finals.

January 30, 2025

ICC Women's Championship Trophy:

- ✓ Australia has once again asserted its dominance in women's cricket by winning the ICC Women's Championship for the third consecutive time. The team was presented with the prestigious ICC Women's Championship Trophy in Melbourne after emerging victorious in the 10-team competition that serves as a pathway to the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025. Captain Alyssa Healy received the trophy from Cricket Australia Chair and ICC Director Mike Baird.

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January 30, 2025

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 38th National Games in Dehradun:

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 38th National Games in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, marking an important milestone for the state as it celebrates its 25th anniversary. The event highlighted India's growing sports culture and provided a platform for youth across the country to showcase their talent. The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of sports in shaping the future, promoting fitness, and boosting the local economy. The Games are being held under the theme of 'Green Games,' showcasing the nation's commitment to environmental sustainability.

January 30, 2025

Ladakh Tops Khelo India Winter Games 2025:

- ✓ The first phase of the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) 2025 concluded with Ladakh emerging as the top performer. Hosted in Leh, the capital of Ladakh, the games featured exciting competitions, including a thrilling men's ice hockey final where the Indian Army successfully defended its title. The games also showcased impressive performances in skating and ice hockey, with notable achievements from Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra.



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