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Olive Greens Institute

TILL 1 JULY 2026

PREFACE

This is our special edition of Current Affairs Magazine for various Central & State level Competitive Examinations, covering content from the month of June 2026.

The Magazine is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short

The first section is dedicated to Topic Wise Current Affairs with a short description to provide information about all major happenings this month.

Section 2: Practice Questions with Answers

The Second Section contains 150 Multiple Choice Questions based on daily current affairs.

Section 3: Detailed Analysis of important Event

The Third Section covers some major happenings in this month along with analysis. The content has been covered from various online & offline sources including reputed newspapers like The Hindu, Indian Express etc. All the news topics have been explained keeping in mind their underlying issues. Every issue has been covered comprehensively. Some of the information provided may not be directly relevant for the examination. As the content is very wide, we have only covered a limited set of issues. You can utilize it smartly along with Daily Study of News Papers as well as other sources.



INDEX

1. Important Days	Page 04
2. Agreements	Page 10
3. Appointments	Page 15
4. Awards	Page 18
5. Banking	Page 22
6. Books and Author	Page 25
7. Defence	Page 28
8. Economy	Page 32
9. International	Page 36
10. Miscellaneous	Page 43
11. National	Page 46
12. Obituaries	Page 52
13. Ranks & Reports	Page 54
14. Schemes & Committee	Page 58
15. Science & Technology	Page 63
16. Sports	Page 66
17. State	Page 72
18. Summits & Conferences	Page 76

Section 1

Topic Wise Current Affairs

Section 2

Question with Answers

• QUESTIONS - Page 83

• ANSWERS - Page 96

Section 3

Detailed Analysis of Events

1. Economics	Page 109
2. Environment & Diversity	Page 120
3. Governance	Page 133
4. History	Page 138
5. International Relations	Page 148
6. Polity	Page 157
7. Science, Tech, Art & Culture	Page 163
8. Security Issues	Page 175
9. Trivia	Page 182

SECTION 1

Topic Wise Current Affairs in Short



1: Important Days



World Milk Day : 01 June :-

World Milk Day is observed every year on 1 June to recognize the importance of milk as a global food and to highlight the contributions of the dairy sector to nutrition, livelihoods, and economic development. World Milk Day was established in 2001 by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The FAO selected 1 June as a common date for celebrating milk in many countries that already had national milk days. The theme for World Milk Day 2026 is "Celebrating Women Farmers".



World Bicycle Day : 03 June :-

World Bicycle Day is observed every year on 3 June to recognize the bicycle as a simple, affordable, reliable, clean, and environmentally sustainable means of transportation. The day highlights the role of cycling in promoting health, education, sustainable development, and social inclusion. The day was officially proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in April 2018. The resolution establishing World Bicycle Day was supported by numerous countries and inspired by the efforts of

Leszek Sibilski, who campaigned for global recognition of the bicycle's benefits. The official theme for World Bicycle Day 2026 is "Cycling for a Greener Future".



World Environment Day : 05 June :-

World Environment Day is observed every year on 5 June to encourage worldwide awareness and action for environmental protection. It was established by the United Nations Environment Programme following the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The 2026 host country is Azerbaijan, and the theme is "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future.", highlighting the importance of nature-based solutions in tackling climate change and ecosystem degradation. The day promotes environmental conservation, sustainable development, climate action, biodiversity protection, and public participation in safeguarding the planet for future generations.



World Food Safety Day : 07 June :-

World Food Safety Day is observed every year on 7 June to raise awareness about the importance of safe food and to encourage actions that prevent foodborne

diseases. The day was established by the United Nations in 2018, with the first global observance held in 2019. It is jointly facilitated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The theme for 2026 is "From burden to solutions – safe food everywhere," emphasizing the use of scientific data and evidence-based measures to reduce foodborne illnesses and strengthen food safety systems worldwide.



World Oceans Day : 08 June :-

World Oceans Day is celebrated annually on 8 June to highlight the importance of oceans in sustaining life on Earth and to promote their conservation. The concept was first proposed by Canada at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In 2008, the United Nations officially recognized the day. Oceans cover about 70% of the Earth's surface, regulate climate, produce much of the world's oxygen, and support biodiversity and livelihoods. The 2026 World Oceans Day theme is "Reimagine: Beyond the world we know, a new relationship with our ocean".



World Brain Tumour Day : 08 June :-

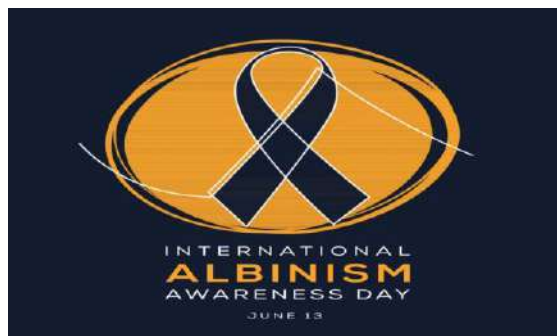
World Brain Tumour Day is observed every year on 8 June to raise awareness about brain tumours, their symptoms, treatment options, and the challenges faced

by patients and caregivers. The day was initiated in 2000 by the German Brain Tumor Association (Deutsche Hirntumorhilfe) to support people affected by brain tumours and promote research into neurological cancers. Brain tumours can be benign or malignant and may affect people of all ages.



World Day Against Child Labour :12 June :-

World Day Against Child Labour is observed every year on 12 June to raise global awareness about the harmful effects of child labour and to strengthen efforts for its elimination. The day was launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002 and brings together governments, employers, workers' organizations, civil society groups and citizens to promote children's rights to education, safety and a healthy childhood. The 2026 campaign theme is "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair play for children, decent work for adults," emphasizing the need for quality education, social protection, decent employment opportunities for adults and stronger enforcement of labour laws.



International Albinism Awareness Day : 13 June :-

International Albinism Awareness Day is observed every year on 13 June to promote awareness, inclusion, and the protection of the human rights of people living with albinism. Albinism is a rare inherited genetic condition

characterized by reduced or absent melanin pigment in the skin, hair, and eyes, often resulting in visual impairments and increased sensitivity to sunlight. The day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, and the first observance took place in 2015. The theme for International Albinism Awareness Day in 2026 is "Proudly in my skin — celebrating all skin tones."



World Blood Donor Day : 14 June :-

World Blood Donor Day is observed every year on 14 June to raise awareness about the importance of safe blood and blood products and to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving contributions. The date was chosen to commemorate the birth anniversary of Karl Landsteiner, who discovered the ABO blood group system and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1930. The day was established by the World Health Organization and its global partners to encourage regular blood donation and strengthen national blood transfusion services. For World Blood Donor Day 2026, the theme is "One Drop of Humanity. Give Blood. Save Lives."



World Wind Day : 15 June :-

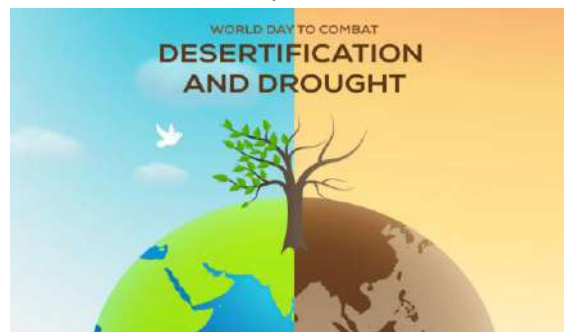
World Wind Day is observed every year on 15 June to raise awareness about the importance of wind energy as

a clean, renewable, and sustainable source of power. The day is organized globally by wind energy associations and environmental organizations to educate people about the role of wind power in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change. India will host the Global Wind Day 2026 Conference on 15 June 2026 in Goa, under the theme "Wind Energy: From Ambition to Acceleration."



International Day of Family Remittances : 16 June :-

The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) is observed every year on 16 June to recognize the vital contribution of more than 200 million migrant workers who send money to their families in their home countries. The day was proclaimed by the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2015, and the first observance took place on 16 June 2015. The date commemorates the efforts of migrant workers whose remittances support over 800 million family members worldwide.



World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought : 17 June :-

The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed every year on 17 June to raise awareness about land degradation, desertification, and water scarcity. The day was established by the United Nations in 1994 after

the adoption of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The observance highlights the growing threat posed by the loss of fertile land, climate change, unsustainable farming practices, and recurring droughts. The theme for the 2026 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is "Rangelands: Recognize. Respect. Restore."



International Picnic Day : 18 June :-

International Picnic Day is celebrated every year on June 18 to encourage people to enjoy nature, spend quality time with family and friends, and take a break from busy daily life through outdoor meals and gatherings. The tradition of picnicking dates back to 17th-century France, where the French term pique-nique referred to a social meal in which everyone contributed food, and the custom became especially popular in Europe after the French Revolution when public parks became accessible to common people. The day highlights the importance of relaxation, social bonding, outdoor recreation, and appreciation of nature, while also promoting healthy community interaction and simple joyful living.



World Sickle Cell Awareness Day : 19 June :-

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed every year on June 19 to spread awareness about sickle cell disease

(SCD), a serious inherited blood disorder that affects millions globally. The day was officially recognised by the United Nations in 2008, and the first observance was held in 2009. The disease causes red blood cells to become crescent or "sickle" shaped, leading to blocked blood flow, severe pain, anaemia, infections and organ complications. The global theme for World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is "Closing the Survival Gap: Equity in Sickle Cell Disease".



World Refugee Day : 20 June :-

World Refugee Day is observed every year on June 20 to honor refugees who have been forced to flee their homes because of war, violence, persecution, or natural disasters. The day was established by the United Nations in 2001 to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. It recognizes the courage and resilience of millions of displaced people worldwide and encourages global support for refugee protection, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The theme for World Refugee Day 2026 is "Until Everyone Is Safe".



International Yoga Day : 21 June :-

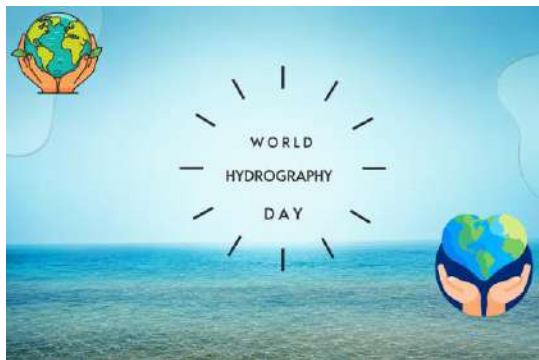
The International Day of Yoga is observed every year on 21 June to spread awareness about the physical, mental

and spiritual benefits of yoga. The day was officially recognized by the United Nations in 2014 after a proposal by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi received support from 175 countries. Since then, it has become one of the world's largest wellness movements. This year's theme, 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing,' emphasizes yoga's role in promoting physical health and well-being across age groups.



World Father's Day 2026 (3rd Sunday of June) : 21 June :-

Father's Day in 2026 will be celebrated on 21 June in many countries, including India, the United States and Canada. The occasion honours fathers and father figures for their contribution to families and society. The modern celebration began in the United States in the early 20th century after Sonora Smart Dodd campaigned for a special day to recognize fathers, inspired by the dedication of her own father who raised six children alone. Over time, Father's Day became a widely celebrated international event.



World Hydrography Day : 21 June :-

World Hydrography Day is observed every year on 21 June to recognize the importance of hydrography — the science of measuring and mapping oceans, seas, rivers

and coastal waters. The day was established by the International Hydrographic Organization in 2005 after receiving approval from the United Nations. Hydrographic surveys help ships travel safely by providing accurate nautical charts and information about underwater terrain, tides and coastlines. The theme for World Hydrography Day 2026 is "Transforming How Ocean Data is Shared".



World Rainforest Day : 22 June :-

World Rainforest Day is observed every year on June 22 to raise awareness about the importance of rainforests and the urgent need to protect them from deforestation, climate change, mining, and wildfires. The day was first launched in 2017 by the environmental organization Rainforest Partnership to encourage global action for conserving tropical forests, which are often called the "lungs of the Earth" because of their critical role in absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. The World Rainforest Day 2026 theme is "The Forest Within You".



International Olympic Day : 23 June :-

Every year, International Olympic Day is observed on 23 June to celebrate the founding of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894 and to promote the values of sportsmanship, fitness, friendship, and peace

through sports. The day encourages people of all age groups to participate in physical activities such as running, cycling, yoga, and community sports events. The Olympic movement highlights the ideals of excellence, respect, and unity among nations. The theme of this year's Olympic Day is 'You can do this. Let's Move.'



International Day of Women in Diplomacy : 24 June :-

The International Day of Women in Diplomacy is observed every year on 24 June by the United Nations to recognize the contribution of women in global diplomacy, peacebuilding, negotiations, and international relations. The day was officially adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2022 to promote equal participation of women in diplomatic leadership and foreign policy institutions. Historically, diplomacy was dominated by men, but women diplomats today are playing major roles in conflict resolution, climate negotiations, human rights advocacy, and multilateral cooperation.



International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking : 26 June :-

The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, also known as World Drug Day, is observed every year on 26 June by the United Nations and the

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The day was established by the UN General Assembly in 1987 to strengthen global action and cooperation against drug abuse, illegal drug trade, and organized trafficking networks. Its main aim is to spread awareness about the harmful effects of narcotic drugs on individuals, families, and society.



World MSME Day : 27 June :-

World MSME Day, officially known as the United Nations Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, is observed every year on 27 June to recognize the contribution of small businesses to economic growth, employment, innovation, and sustainable development. The United Nations General Assembly declared this observance in April 2017 through Resolution A/RES/71/279. MSMEs are considered the backbone of most economies because they generate jobs, support entrepreneurship, encourage local manufacturing, and help reduce poverty. The global theme for World MSME Day 2026 is "Empowering MSMEs through innovation and sustainable industrial development".



National Statistics Day (India) : 29 June :-

National Statistics Day is observed every year in India on 29 June to honor the birth anniversary of renowned

statistician Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, who is widely regarded as the father of modern statistics in India. The Government of India officially started observing this day in 2007 to recognize his contribution to economic planning and statistical science. Mahalanobis founded the Indian Statistical Institute and developed the famous "Mahalanobis Distance" statistical measure used globally in data analysis and research. The theme for National Statistics Day (India) 2026 is "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data".



International Day of the Tropics : 29 June :-

The International Day of the Tropics is observed globally every year on 29 June. The day was established by the United Nations in 2016 to raise awareness about the challenges and opportunities faced by tropical regions around the world. The date commemorates the launch of the landmark "State of the Tropics" report, which

studied environmental, social, and economic conditions across tropical nations. The tropics lie between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn and include parts of Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and island nations.



World Asteroid Day : 30 June :-

World Asteroid Day is observed every year on 30 June to spread awareness about asteroids, near-Earth objects, and the possible dangers they can pose to Earth. The day was officially declared by the United Nations in 2016. It marks the anniversary of the famous Tunguska event of 30 June 1908, when a massive explosion caused by an asteroid or comet flattened nearly 2,000 square kilometres of forest in Siberia, Russia, making it the largest asteroid impact event recorded in human history. The main aim of the observance is to educate people about asteroid impact hazards and encourage international cooperation for planetary defence.

2: Agreements



India-Oman CEPA Offers Duty-Free Access to Indian Exports :-

The India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has taken effect, granting Indian exporters immediate duty-free access to Oman. This agreement enhances opportunities in textiles, pharmaceuticals, and other sectors, positioning Oman as a gateway to the Gulf, Asia, and Africa. The CEPA is part of India's broader trade expansion strategy, aiming to boost bilateral trade and economic ties with Oman.



India and Nepal Collaborate on AI-Powered Multilingual Language Platform :-

India's Digital India BHASHINI Division and Nepal's Kathmandu University signed an MoU to develop AI-powered multilingual language technologies. This partnership aims to enhance digital inclusion and preserve linguistic heritage by creating high-quality Nepali language datasets and machine translation tools. The initiative seeks to expand digital public services in local languages, fostering regional cooperation in technology and innovation.



Prada Partners with NASA for Moon Mission :-

Italian luxury brand Prada has unveiled a garment designed for NASA astronauts heading to the moon, marking its entry into the space industry. The garment, developed with Axiom Space, features innovative ventilation technology. Prada's involvement in space exploration reflects a strategic move to align with avant-garde innovation and target affluent consumers interested in space travel. This partnership underscores the growing intersection between luxury fashion and space industries, as brands seek new frontiers for visibility and relevance.



Coromandel International, Samunnati Agri Value Chain ink MoU to aid FPOs :-

Coromandel International and Samunnati have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) across India. The partnership seeks to improve access to quality agricultural inputs, advisory services, market linkages, and value-chain support for FPOs. By combining Coromandel's expertise in crop nutrition and crop protection with Samunnati's extensive network in agricultural value-chain financing and market access, the collaboration aims to enhance productivity, profitability, and sustainability for smallholder farmers organized through FPOs.



China's Xi and North Korea's Kim Strengthen Ties :-

Chinese President Xi Jinping and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have agreed to deepen bilateral ties and safeguard regional peace during Xi's visit to Pyongyang. The leaders discussed expanding cooperation in various sectors, marking a new phase in China-North Korea relations. This visit underscores China's strategic interest

in North Korea and its role in regional stability, reflecting broader geopolitical dynamics in East Asia. Both nations aim to enhance collaboration in political, economic, and cultural domains.



Assam-Nagaland Sign MoU for Joint Oil Gas Exploration

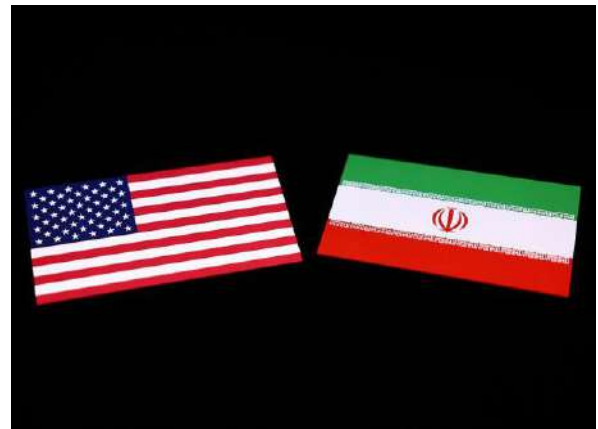
A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India, Assam, and Nagaland for joint exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas in six disputed fields along their border. The agreement, witnessed by Amit Shah, Hardeep Singh Puri, and others, includes a 50:50 revenue sharing model. This significant move aims to resolve longstanding territorial disputes and boost production, with projections of generating over Rs 15,000 crore from one field alone. The collaboration is expected to enhance regional economic development and energy security.



India-France Partnership Unlocks Innovation Opportunities :-

Union Minister Piyush Goyal highlights the India-France partnership's role in fostering innovation as India aims

for 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. The India-France Innovation Roadmap 2030 was adopted, focusing on co-innovation in disruptive technologies. This collaboration aligns with India's strategic goals and France's 2030 vision, emphasizing innovation as a driver of economic resilience and technological sovereignty. The partnership strengthens cooperation in critical technologies, academic exchanges, and economic growth, contributing to global solutions through a shared focus on innovation.



US and Iran Reach Preliminary Peace Agreement :-

The US and Iran have agreed on a framework to end hostilities, including reopening the Strait of Hormuz. The preliminary agreement aims to reduce geopolitical tensions and stabilize global energy markets. The deal marks a significant step towards resolving ongoing conflicts, with further negotiations planned to address Iran's nuclear program. The agreement is expected to ease global economic pressures, particularly related to energy prices, and reflects diplomatic efforts to achieve stability in a volatile region.



India and France Announce 13 Key Cooperation Outcomes :-

India and France announced 13 key outcomes during PM Modi's visit, enhancing cooperation in technology, trade, and defence. The Innovation Roadmap 2030, Joint AI Working Group, and digital payments expansion highlight strategic collaboration. Agreements include skilling in aeronautics, trade doubling, and space exploration. These outcomes reflect a deepened partnership, focusing on economic resilience, technology, and cultural exchanges. The visit underscores the growing strategic importance of India-France relations, advancing long-term frameworks for bilateral cooperation.

**India and Slovakia Elevate Ties to Comprehensive Partnership :-**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico have elevated India-Slovakia bilateral relations to a Comprehensive Partnership. This historic milestone was announced during PM Modi's state visit to Slovakia, the first by an Indian Prime Minister. The elevation signifies a shared commitment to deepen cooperation in trade, defense, technology, and other key sectors. Discussions also emphasized the importance of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in boosting economic ties. The partnership aims to enhance collaborative efforts in artificial intelligence, space exploration, and nuclear energy, fostering innovation and development.

**India, Kiribati Strengthen Ties in Healthcare and Trade**

In a major diplomatic engagement, the High Commissioner of India to Fiji met with Kiribati's Minister for Health to bolster healthcare cooperation. Discussions included providing affordable drugs and dialysis machines, enhancing capacity building, and advancing shared development priorities. The meeting also covered trade and sustainable economic development, with a focus on the coconut and copra industries. This engagement signifies a commitment to building stronger health systems and economic ties, crucial for India's strategic interests in the Pacific.

**India and Japan Adopt Joint Crediting Mechanism Rules**

India and Japan have formalized the Rules of Implementation for the Joint Crediting Mechanism under the Paris Agreement. This collaboration aims to support projects reducing greenhouse gas emissions while fostering sustainable development. The mechanism will promote investment in low-carbon technologies, enhancing both nations' climate goals. Through technology transfer and capacity building, this initiative

represents a significant step in international climate cooperation, aligning with India's commitment to global climate action.



IITM and ARIES Partner for Climate Monitoring in Himalayas :-

The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) have joined hands to strengthen climate and atmospheric monitoring in the Himalayan region, an area considered highly vulnerable to climate change. The collaboration focuses on improving scientific observation systems, studying changing weather patterns, and understanding the environmental impact of rising temperatures in the Himalayas. Under the partnership, the two institutions will work on advanced climate modeling, aerosol monitoring, cloud physics studies, and high-altitude atmospheric observations.



India and US Near Interim Trade Agreement :-

United States Trade Representative Jamieson Greer is in New Delhi for crucial discussions with Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, signaling progress towards an interim bilateral trade agreement. This visit

follows high-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump at the G7 Summit. Key issues include tariff measures under Section 301 proceedings and a broader Bilateral Trade Agreement framework. Both nations aim to finalize the interim pact soon, marking a significant step in strengthening economic ties.



NHAI and NCAER Launch Centre for Transportation Research :-

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has partnered with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to establish a research centre focused on transportation, mobility, and logistics. This initiative aims to generate insights for policy formulation and investment decisions in the road and transport sector. The centre will serve as a knowledge hub, disseminating research findings through various publications. An Advisory Committee comprising experts will guide the centre's activities, enhancing India's transportation infrastructure and planning.



Centre and BharatBenz Ink MoU for Vehicle Replacement Scheme :-

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has signed an MoU with Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, owner of BharatBenz, to promote the replacement of old vehicles in Delhi-NCR. Under this scheme, BharatBenz will offer discounts on eligible vehicle purchases, with government support in the form of interest subvention and fuel vouchers. This initiative, involving major manufacturers like Tata Motors and Ashok Leyland, aims to modernize the vehicle fleet, reduce pollution, and enhance transport efficiency in the region.



Tripura and NDDDB Sign MoU to Boost Dairy Cooperative Sector :-

Tripura has signed a tripartite MoU with the National Dairy Development Board and the Gomati Co-operative Milk Producers' Union to enhance the state's dairy sector. This partnership aims to modernize the cooperative sector, improve milk production, and boost farmers' livelihoods. The agreement, signed in the

presence of Tripura's Chief Minister, reflects a commitment to self-reliance and rural economic growth. By strengthening the dairy value chain, the initiative is expected to transform Tripura's rural economy and support sustainable development.



MoSPI Partners with GRAAM for Policy Research Fellowship Initiative :-

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation signed an agreement with Grassroots Research and Advocacy Movement to engage fellows under the Embark India Development Fellowship. The initiative aims to strengthen policy research and governance innovation within the Ministry. Selected fellows will work on developmental projects, supporting policy innovation and governance reforms. The partnership seeks to combine academic expertise with government execution, enhancing MoSPI's capacity in public administration and policy development.

3: Appointments



Bangladesh Foreign Minister Elected President of 81st UN General Assembly :-

Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Dr. Khalilur Rahman has been elected as the President of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, following a closely contested vote against Cypriot diplomat Andreas Kakouris. Rahman's presidency, set to begin in September 2026, will focus on multilateral cooperation and addressing global challenges such as conflicts and sustainable development. His election underscores

Bangladesh's growing role in international diplomacy and the importance of collective efforts to address pressing global issues.



Austria, Portugal, and Others Elected to UN Security Council :-

Austria, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zimbabwe have been elected to the UN Security Council for two-year terms starting January 2027. These nations will join the council, which plays a crucial role in international peace and security. The election reflects the strategic diplomatic engagements of these countries within the UN framework, contributing to global decision-making processes on sanctions, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution.



ACC clears Neelkanth Mishra's appointment as Executive Director, World Bank :-

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Neelkanth Mishra as Executive Director representing India at the World Bank. He succeeds Parameswaran Iyer, whose term has concluded. Neelkanth Mishra is a noted economist and currently serves as Chief Economist at Axis Bank. As Executive Director, he will represent India, along with several other countries in the constituency, on the World

Bank's Board, which oversees the institution's operations, lending policies, development programs, and governance matters.



Liverpool appoint Andoni Iraola as their new head coach :-

Premier League club Liverpool FC have appointed Andoni Iraola as their new head coach ahead of the 2026–27 season. The 43-year-old Spaniard succeeds Arne Slot and has signed a two-year contract. Iraola earned widespread recognition for guiding AFC Bournemouth to their highest-ever Premier League finish and a historic qualification for European competition. Known for his high-intensity pressing style influenced by Marcelo Bielsa, Iraola is expected to bring an aggressive and attacking philosophy to Liverpool.



RBL Bank set to appoint HDFC Bank veteran as CFO, sources say :-

According to media reports, RBL Bank is likely to appoint Bhavin Lakhpatwala, a long-serving executive from HDFC Bank, as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He is expected to succeed interim CFO Deepak Ruiya, subject to approval from the bank's board and the RBI. Lakhpatwala has been associated with HDFC Bank since 2011 and has held several important positions in the

institution. The proposed appointment comes at a significant time for RBL Bank following major management changes and the recent acquisition of a controlling stake by Emirates NBD.

**Sanjay Lohiya Appointed to RBI Central Board :-**

Sanjay Lohiya, Secretary of the Department of Financial Services, was nominated as a director on the RBI Central Board by the Central Government, replacing Nagaraju Maddirala. The RBI Central Board, established under the RBI Act, 1934, is the apex governing body of the Reserve Bank of India. Lohiya's appointment is significant as it strengthens government representation in the central bank's decision-making process, particularly in overseeing banking, insurance, and pension sectors, thus influencing India's financial policy landscape.

**India Appoints Al Hind Tours for Consular Services in UAE :-**

From July 1, Al Hind Tours and Travels will manage Indian passport and consular services in the UAE. The transition follows a tendering process and aims to enhance service efficiency across the region. The Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi advises applicants to rely on official channels for accurate information during this transition. This change

is part of ongoing efforts to improve overseas consular services for Indian citizens.

**N.Hari appointed Rubber Board chairman :-**

N. Hari has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Rubber Board, the statutory organization responsible for the development and promotion of India's natural rubber industry. The Board works under the Government of India and plays an important role in supporting rubber cultivation, research, production, marketing, and farmer welfare. As Chairman, N. Hari will oversee policies and programmes aimed at increasing rubber productivity, improving growers' incomes, encouraging technological innovation, and strengthening the competitiveness of the sector. His appointment is significant because natural rubber is an important agricultural commodity used in tyre manufacturing and several industries.

**Amit Nanda appointed CEO of bigbasket :-**

Amit Nanda has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of bigbasket, one of India's leading online grocery and quick-commerce companies. Before joining bigbasket as CEO, Amit Nanda held leadership positions in the retail and consumer business sectors and is recognized for experience in digital transformation, supply-chain operations, and business scaling. Under the

ownership of Tata Digital, bigbasket has been expanding its presence through express delivery services, offline integration, and partnerships within the Tata ecosystem.



India's Bimal Patel Elected Judge of International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea :-

India's Bimal Patel has been elected as a judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea for the 2026-2035 term. His election ensures India's continued representation on this prestigious international judicial body, which adjudicates disputes related to the Law of the Sea. Patel's expertise in international law and maritime law will contribute to shaping global maritime governance.



Rajya Sabha Chairman Administers Oath to MP Neeraj Dangi :-

Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office to re-elected Rajya Sabha member Neeraj Dangi. Dangi, representing Rajasthan, took the oath in Hindi at Parliament House in New Delhi. The ceremony was attended by prominent political figures, reflecting the significance of parliamentary proceedings and the continuous representation of the states in the national legislative framework. Dangi's re-election underscores the democratic processes that uphold India's legislative governance.

4: Awards



Lionel Messi wins prestigious Princess of Asturias award

Argentine football legend Lionel Messi has been awarded the prestigious Princess of Asturias Award in the Sports category. The award, one of Spain's highest international honors, recognizes individuals and organizations for exceptional achievements in fields such as sports, science, arts, literature, and international cooperation.

Messi was chosen for his extraordinary football career, leadership, sportsmanship, and positive influence beyond the sport. Widely regarded as one of the greatest footballers of all time, Messi has won numerous domestic and international titles, including the FIFA World Cup with Argentina in 2022. The recognition further cements his global legacy as a sporting icon.



Dalai Lama presented Grammy Award at Dharamsala residence :-

The Dalai Lama was presented with a Grammy Award at his residence in Dharamsala. The award was received for the audiobook recording "Meditations", which featured the Dalai Lama's teachings, messages of compassion, peace, and human values. The Grammy Award, presented by the Recording Academy, recognizes excellence in the music and audio recording industry. The honor reflects the global impact of the Dalai Lama's message and his efforts to promote peace, non-violence, interfaith harmony, and universal responsibility. Dharamsala, often referred to as the home of the Tibetan spiritual leader in exile, has long served as a center for Tibetan culture and Buddhist learning.

**Biodiversity park in Ayyappancovil wins Vanamithra Award for conservation efforts :-**

A biodiversity park located in Ayyappancovil has been selected for the prestigious Vanamithra Award, recognizing its outstanding contribution to biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. The award acknowledges successful efforts in preserving native flora and fauna, promoting ecological awareness, and encouraging community participation in conservation activities. The achievement highlights Kerala's commitment to sustainable environmental management and serves as a model for biodiversity conservation initiatives across the country.

**Indian Woman Combat Helicopter Pilot Honored with UN Peacekeeping Award :-**

Major Abhilasha Barak, India's first woman combat helicopter pilot, received the UN 2005 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for promoting women's roles in peacekeeping. Deployed in Lebanon, Barak has engaged communities and developed early-warning networks. Her recognition underscores the impact of female leadership in peace missions and India's contribution to global peacekeeping efforts.

**e-Jagriti won the Silver Award at the National e-Governance Awards 2026 :-**

e-Jagriti, the digital consumer grievance redressal platform developed by the Department of Consumer Affairs, received the Silver Award at the National e-Governance Awards 2026. The award recognizes innovative digital governance initiatives that improve public service delivery, transparency, and citizen-centric administration. e-Jagriti has transformed the functioning of consumer commissions by digitizing complaint filing, case management, hearings, and document handling, thereby making the consumer dispute resolution process more efficient and accessible.



Schmigadoon! Wins Best Musical at Tony Awards :-

The musical 'Schmigadoon!' won the Tony Award for Best Musical, celebrating its blend of humor and homage to classic Broadway shows. The awards night highlighted socially-driven works, with 'Liberation' and 'Ragtime' winning in major categories. The event showcased Broadway's diversity and creativity, celebrating performances and productions that address contemporary social issues. The Tony Awards continue to recognize the transformative power of theater in shaping cultural narratives and reflecting societal values.



Extraordinary Valour Recognised at Gallantry Awards Ceremony 2026 :-

President Droupadi Murmu conferred India's prestigious gallantry awards at the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026 at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The awards recognized exceptional acts of bravery by personnel from the Armed Forces, Central Armed Police Forces, and other security

agencies. Among the recipients were Major Ashish Kumar, Constable Sanjay Tiwari, and Assistant Commandant Mohd Shafiq, honored for their leadership and courage in counter-terrorism operations.



Welfare economist Jean Drèze wins global award for research on poverty and inequality in India :-

Renowned development economist Jean Drèze has been awarded the Global Inequality Research Award at the World Inequality Conference held at the Paris School of Economics. The award recognizes his outstanding contributions to the measurement and understanding of poverty and inequality in India. Drèze is also known for his advocacy of major welfare initiatives such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and the National Food Security Act. A Belgian-born Indian economist, he has played a pivotal role in shaping public policy debates on social justice, hunger, and welfare in India for several decades.



12 artistes from Odisha chosen for Sangeet Natak Akademi awards :-

Twelve artistes from Odisha have been selected for the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards and Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, bringing national recognition to the state's rich performing arts traditions. The awardees were chosen across diverse fields such as Odissi dance, Odissi music, Mardala, Mayurbhanj Chhau, Sambalpuri folk dance, theatre direction, stage lighting, and playwriting. Among the recipients of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards are noted gurus and performers including Bichitrnanda Swain, Ranjit Kumar Nag, Sachidananda Das, Ileana Citaristi, Pagulu Jena, and theatre director Subodh Pattnaik. The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar has been conferred on promising young artistes from Odisha for their contributions to music, dance, stagecraft, and theatre.



22nd P. Kesavadev Literary Award for Subhash Chandran :-

Renowned Malayalam writer Subhash Chandran has been selected for the 22nd P. Kesavadev Literary Award, recognizing his outstanding contribution to Malayalam literature. The award is named after P. Kesavadev, one of Kerala's most influential literary figures known for addressing social issues through his writings. Subhash Chandran is widely acclaimed for his novels, short stories, and essays that explore human relationships, social realities, and philosophical themes. His celebrated novel *Manushyanu Oru Aamukham* earned national recognition and several prestigious literary honors.



Mumbai International Film Festival Concludes with 'Silver' Winning Top Honor :-

The 19th Mumbai International Film Festival concluded with the Polish documentary 'Silver' winning the Golden Conch for Best International Documentary. The festival celebrated excellence in documentary, short fiction, and animation films, showcasing global talent and creativity. The event underscored the importance of non-feature cinema in storytelling and cultural exchange, reflecting India's commitment to promoting diverse voices in the film industry.



R. Madhavan Dedicates Padma Shri to Cinema's Magic :

Renowned actor R. Madhavan recently received the Padma Shri, dedicating the honor to the world of cinema. Expressing gratitude on social media, he highlighted the immense responsibility that accompanies this recognition. Madhavan acknowledged the support from fans, the Government of India, and Maharashtra for this prestigious award. He emphasized the importance of integrity and excellence in his craft, committing to uphold these values. The actor's dedication reflects the

deep connection between artists and their audience, showcasing how cinema transcends entertainment to inspire and impact society.



Alka Yagnik Receives Padma Bhushan Amid Health Recovery :-

Celebrated playback singer Alka Yagnik, recently honored with the Padma Bhushan, shared her heartfelt journey of recovery from health challenges. Expressing gratitude towards her supporters, she highlighted the significance of this recognition in her life. For the past two years, Yagnik has been battling sensorineural hearing loss, which kept her away from the spotlight. Her acknowledgment of the award underscores the resilience that comes from love and support. Alka's illustrious career includes numerous chartbusters, making her a beloved figure in Indian music. Her story

inspires perseverance and gratitude in the face of adversity.



Government Opens Nominations for National Teachers Awards 2026 :-

The Union Ministry of Education invited nominations for the National Teachers Awards 2026, recognizing outstanding contributions to school education. Teachers from government and private schools can apply through the National Awards Portal. The awards aim to honor educators for excellence in teaching, innovation, and student development. The selection process involves district, state, and national-level scrutiny, with final recommendations expected by August. The awards ceremony coincides with Teachers' Day celebrations on September 5, 2026.

5: Banking



RBI MPC Meeting Begins with Inflation and Growth Outlook in Focus :-

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has commenced its three-day meeting, with economists anticipating a status quo on interest rates due to inflation concerns and global uncertainties. The meeting, concluding on June 5, 2026, will address rising energy prices and geopolitical tensions impacting the economic outlook. Analysts expect cautious commentary from the RBI, focusing on inflationary pressures and potential policy adjustments. This meeting is critical for setting the tone of India's monetary policy amid evolving global and domestic economic conditions.



NPCI International Launches UPI Payments in Cambodia

NPCI International Payments Limited has partnered with ACLEDA Bank to introduce UPI acceptance in Cambodia, enhancing cross-border payment capabilities. The initiative allows Indian travelers to make seamless QR payments in Cambodia, with plans for a two-way payment corridor. This development strengthens financial connectivity between India and Cambodia, offering benefits like reduced currency exchange barriers and increased transaction efficiency for businesses.



RBI Maintains Repo Rate Amid Global Economic Challenges :-

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25% due to global uncertainties. Governor Sanjay Malhotra highlighted the robust fundamentals of the Indian economy, despite challenges such as geopolitical tensions in West Asia and global trade disruptions. The RBI aims to enhance economic resilience while addressing inflationary pressures, highlighting India's strategic position to withstand external shocks.



India Post Payments Bank announces launch of its SHG Savings Account :-

India Post Payments Bank has launched a dedicated SHG (Self-Help Group) Savings Account to promote financial inclusion and empower women-led SHGs in rural India. The account offers several customer-friendly features, including zero minimum balance requirements, no initial deposit requirement, no account closure charges, and doorstep banking services through the postal network. The initiative is aligned with national programmes such as the National Rural Livelihoods Mission and aims to bring more SHGs into the formal banking system.



RBI cancels registration certificates of 135 NBFCs :-

The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the certificates of registration of 135 Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) as part of its regulatory oversight and efforts to maintain financial sector discipline. According to the RBI, many of the affected entities were registered in West Bengal. In addition, 13 NBFCs voluntarily surrendered their registrations after exiting the business, merging with other entities, or ceasing to exist as legal entities. Such regulatory actions are aimed at ensuring that only compliant and financially sound institutions remain active in the non-banking financial sector, thereby

protecting customers and strengthening confidence in the financial system.



India-Nepal Launch Cross-Border UPI-NPI Remittance Service :-

In a landmark development India and Nepal launched a cross-border peer-to-peer remittance service by integrating India's UPI with Nepal's NPI. Facilitated by NPCI International and Nepal Clearing House, the system allows instant transfers using mobile numbers or VPA's. This initiative, making Nepal the second country after Singapore to connect with UPI, aims to support faster and cheaper remittances between the two nations. Select Nepali banks are now live on the platform, expanding UPI's international footprint to nine countries.



Over 58 crore bank accounts opened under PM Jan Dhan Yojana in last 12 years: Union Minister Gadkari :-

According to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, more than 58 crore bank accounts have been opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) during the last twelve years, highlighting the remarkable progress made in financial inclusion across India. Launched on 28 August 2014, the scheme aims to provide every household with access to banking services, including savings accounts, remittance facilities, insurance, pension benefits, and

direct benefit transfers. The initiative has played a transformative role in bringing millions of previously unbanked citizens into the formal financial system, particularly in rural and underserved areas.



Axis Bank, BITS partner for innovation research park in Hyderabad :-

Axis Bank and BITS Pilani have partnered to establish an innovation and research park in Hyderabad aimed at promoting technology-driven entrepreneurship, fintech research, and startup incubation. The initiative is expected to create a collaborative ecosystem connecting academia, industry experts, startups, and investors. Hyderabad has increasingly become a major innovation hub in India because of its strong IT infrastructure and startup-friendly environment.



World Bank sanctions Rs 4,000 crore for Jal Sanrakshit Haryana Project :-

The World Bank has approved a loan of nearly Rs 4,000 crore for the ambitious Jal Sanrakshit Haryana Project, a major water conservation and management initiative launched by the Haryana government. The total project cost is estimated at around Rs 5,714 crore and will be implemented between 2026 and 2032. The programme aims to make Haryana self-reliant in water management

by improving canal systems, restoring water bodies, promoting groundwater conservation, and encouraging efficient irrigation practices.



World Bank approves \$1.5 billion financing to support India's reform programmes :-

The World Bank has approved a \$1.5 billion financing package to support India's economic reform programmes and accelerate private sector-led growth. The funding is part of the bank's Development Policy Financing (DPF) operations aimed at strengthening structural reforms, improving job creation, and boosting investment opportunities. The initiative focuses on reforms that can improve the business environment, attract private investment, and support sustainable economic growth in India. In recent years, the World Bank has increasingly supported India's transition toward cleaner energy, low-carbon infrastructure, and green hydrogen development.

6: Books and Author



Sri Lanka: 5 Sinhala translated books on Jataka Tales launched :-

In Sri Lanka, the High Commission of India, in collaboration with Kelaniya Maha Viharaya, launched five Sinhala translations of Jataka Tale books. The launch ceremony was organized on the occasion of Nawam Poya Day, which marks the appointment of the first two chief disciples of Lord Buddha. The books were formally released by Prof. Kollupitiye Mahinda Sangharakkhita Thero and Dr. Satyanjal Pandey. Published by Amar Chitra Katha, the books have been translated into Sinhala to make Buddhist teachings more accessible to local readers. More than 5,000 copies will be distributed among Dhamma schools across Sri Lanka.



Author Shaalin Tandon Launches Debut Book "Worthless Superpowers: The Fallacy of Moksh" in Mumbai :-

Author and corporate leader Shaalin Tandon launched his debut book, "Worthless Superpowers: The Fallacy of Moksh", in Mumbai on 5 June 2026. The book is published by Verses Kindler Publications and was unveiled at Title Waves bookstore in Bandra West, Mumbai. Blending fiction, mythology, philosophy, and spirituality, the book explores the concept of Moksh (liberation) and challenges conventional assumptions about life's ultimate purpose, encouraging readers to reflect on meaning, identity, and human aspirations.



Sudhir Mishra unveils "Climate Justice-Celebrating 75 Years of Supreme Court of India" book :-

Environmental lawyer Sudhir Mishra recently launched his book "Climate Justice – Celebrating 75 Years of Supreme Court of India: 75 Judgments that Built Climate Jurisprudence in India". The book was published by OakBridge Publishing and formally released at The Lalit, New Delhi, in the presence of leading legal experts, jurists, policymakers, and environmental advocates. Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma attended as the Chief Guest, while senior legal expert Lalit Bhasin presided over the event.



Prem Nath Pandita's book 'Soham Prakash' released :-

A new book titled Soham Prakash, authored by noted writer Prem Nath Pandita, was released at K.L. Saigal Hall in Jammu. The event was organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. Dr. Ratan Talashi attended as the chief guest, while Sonali Arun Gupta, Additional Secretary of JKAACL, presided over the programme. Speakers highlighted the book's

spiritual, cultural, and literary significance, emphasizing its contribution to understanding religion, culture, and heritage. The event also featured poetry recitations and a cultural performance, making it a notable literary gathering in Jammu.



Dr. Sohini Sastri's Fifth Book on Chakras and Mantras Receives Spiritual Recognition :-

Renowned astrologer, spiritual researcher, and author Dr. Sohini Sastri has received spiritual recognition for her fifth book "The Seven Chakras Mantras – Unlocking the Energy Within for Soul Healing and Life Balance," by revered spiritual leader Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj. The book explores the ancient Indian concepts of energy centers (chakras) and sacred sound vibrations (mantras), explaining how they can contribute to mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Through her work, Dr. Sastri aims to make traditional spiritual wisdom accessible to contemporary readers seeking inner balance and self-development.



Sudha Murty's book on historic murals of Parliament launched in UK :-

A book authored by Sudha Murty, titled Tides of Time: Bharat's History through Murals in Parliament, has been

launched in the United Kingdom. The book explores the 58 historic murals displayed in the Parliament complex (Samvidhan Sadan), which depict significant events and personalities from India's civilizational journey. The publication seeks to introduce international readers to the artistic and historical narratives embedded in the Parliament murals and to showcase India's rich cultural heritage.



Union Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya releases book titled "Mahatma: A Great Communicator" :-

Mansukh Mandaviya released the book "Mahatma: A Great Communicator", which focuses on the communication skills and leadership approach of Mahatma Gandhi. The book written by Additional Director General Akashvani, Dr Dhiraj Kakadia highlights how Mahatma Gandhi used simple language, powerful ideas, and effective communication to connect with ordinary people and inspire millions during India's freedom struggle. Gandhi communicated not only through speeches but also through letters, newspapers, public movements, and personal actions.



Chandrababu Naidu releases book on his leadership, 'CBN@361 Degrees', in Singapore :-

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu released a book titled CBN@361 Degrees – Polymath during his official visit to Singapore. The event was organised by the Kakatiya Cultural Association and attended by Indian High Commissioner Dr. Shilpak Ambule and minister P. Narayana. The book examines Naidu's leadership style, governance model and major administrative decisions taken during his political career. The book was authored by journalist and editor Shakamuri Srinivasa Prasad, while former IAS officer K.V. Satyanarayana translated it into English.



Vice President releases book named "Agatthiyar- The Unifier" at Uprashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi :-

C. P. Radhakrishnan released the book "Agatthiyar- The Unifier" at Uprashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The book has been authored by O. Shama Bhat and Dr. M. N. Sudha, while Professor Kalyani translated it into Tamil. The publication highlights the life and legacy of Sage Agatthiyar (Agastya), who is regarded as a symbol of India's cultural and spiritual unity. During the event, the Vice President said India's unity is an ancient civilisational reality built by sages and thinkers over thousands of years.



Union Minister Dr. L. Murugan Releases Book 'Innovations in Indian Public Service Broadcasting' in Chennai :-

Union Minister Dr. L. Murugan felicitated Padma Shri awardee Dr. R. Sreedher during a function held at Akashvani Chennai. On the occasion, the Minister also released the book Innovations in Indian Public Service

Broadcasting, authored by Dr. N. Sundaram and endorsed by Dr. R. Sreedher. The book documents Dr. Sreedher's remarkable journey from a casual employee at All India Radio to becoming Director of both AIR and Doordarshan. It highlights his pioneering work in science communication, community radio, educational broadcasting, and innovative radio programming.

7: Defence



Ukrainian Drones Strike Russian Energy Targets in Escalating Conflict :-

In a significant escalation, Ukrainian drones targeted several Russian regions, including an oil refinery and a fuel depot. These strikes are part of Ukraine's campaign against Russian energy infrastructure. While some drones were intercepted, others caused substantial damage. This development signifies an intensifying conflict, with implications for energy supply and regional stability. The strikes also highlight the ongoing tensions between Russia and Ukraine, with global repercussions.



Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty Leads Andaman and Nicobar Command :-

Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty has taken charge as the 20th Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command, India's only tri-service operational command. With over 36 years of naval experience, he is tasked with safeguarding India's interests in the Indo-Pacific. His leadership will focus on enhancing operational preparedness and jointness among armed forces, crucial for regional security and stability.



India Hosts Army-to-Army Talks with U.S. to Enhance Defence Cooperation :-

India and the U.S. held the 29th Army-to-Army Staff Talks in Hawaii, focusing on strengthening bilateral defence ties. The discussions, led by Lt. Gen. Rajiv Ghai and Lt. Gen. Joel Vowell, aimed to enhance interoperability and military collaboration. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the strategic partnership, highlighting shared security interests in the Indo-Pacific region.



Workshop on Defence Procurement and iDEX in Delhi :-

A two-day workshop on defence procurement, iDEX, and testing procedures is scheduled in Delhi to boost MSME and startup participation in India's defence sector. Organized by the Indigenisation Directorate and CENJOWS, the event will provide insights into procurement procedures, indigenisation initiatives, and the iDEX framework. The workshop will facilitate interactions between industry representatives and defence experts, promoting innovation and indigenisation in defence manufacturing, crucial for enhancing India's strategic capabilities.



Five IAF Personnel Killed in Jorhat AN-32 Crash :-

A tragic AN-32 aircraft crash in Jorhat, Assam, claimed the lives of five Indian Air Force personnel, including Squadron Leader Prashant Singh. The incident, occurring during a routine sortie, underscores the risks faced by military personnel in service. The IAF has initiated an investigation to determine the cause of the crash, while condolences pour in from officials and citizens across the nation.



Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth to Become New Army Chief :-

Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth has been appointed as the next Chief of the Army Staff, effective June 30. With a distinguished career spanning nearly four decades, Lt Gen Seth has held various command and staff positions. His leadership is expected to drive the Indian Army's modernization and capability enhancement efforts, continuing the transformation initiated by his predecessors.



Indian Envoy Meets Rescued MT Jalveer Crew in Oman

India's Ambassador to Oman, Prashant Pise, met the 20 rescued Indian crew members of MT Jalveer, ensuring their safe repatriation. The crew was evacuated after a maritime incident off Oman. The meeting reflects India's commitment to its citizens' welfare overseas. Amid heightened diplomatic activity, India protested recent attacks on vessels affecting Indian seafarers. The situation underscores the risks in the Gulf region, with India urging measures to prevent further incidents.



DRDO Successfully Tests Long-Range Land Attack Cruise Missile :-

The Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted a flight test of the Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha. This indigenously developed missile achieved all test objectives, marking a significant boost to India's defense capabilities. The LRLACM's successful test demonstrates India's growing precision strike capabilities. The missile's development aligns with the nation's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, emphasizing self-reliance in defense technology. This achievement is expected to enhance national security and reinforce India's strategic deterrence posture.



India's Defence Production Reaches Record High of ₹1.78 Lakh Crore :-

India's defence production achieved a milestone of ₹1.78 lakh crore in FY26, reflecting a 15.6% increase from the previous fiscal. This growth underscores India's push towards self-reliance in defence manufacturing. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attributed this success to Prime Minister Modi's leadership and the collective efforts of public and private sectors. The increase highlights the expanding indigenous manufacturing capabilities and

indicates a significant rise in defence exports, reinforcing India's position in global markets.



India and Thailand Agree to Enhance Defence Cooperation :-

India and Thailand have agreed to expand defence cooperation across key areas, including manufacturing and capability development. The 10th Thailand-India Defence Dialogue focused on strengthening military ties and regional security, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to addressing shared security challenges through collaboration. The dialogue underscores India's strategic focus on enhancing defence partnerships and promoting stability in the region.



India Signs ₹425 Crore Defence Contract for Naval Generators :-

The Ministry of Defence has signed a ₹425 crore contract with Bharat Forge Limited for 1.25 MW marine gas turbine generators. This step towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat enhances maritime self-reliance and operational readiness of the Indian Navy. The contract marks a significant milestone in domestic defence manufacturing, reflecting the government's push for indigenous production.



Indian Navy Commissioned Three Indigenous Platforms :-

The Indian Navy has commissioned three indigenous platforms marking a major step in India's push for self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" and "Make in India" initiatives. The three vessels — INS Dunagiri, INS Sanshodhak, and INS Agray — commissioned in Kolkata on June 21, 2026, in a ceremony presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. All three ships were designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders Engineers in Kolkata.



INS Tarkash Visits Mauritius to Enhance Maritime Cooperation :-

INS Tarkash, an Indian Navy frigate, docked at Port Louis, Mauritius, as part of its deployment in the Indian Ocean Region. The visit aims to bolster maritime cooperation between India and Mauritius, with training sessions planned for the Mauritius Coast Guard. The ship's presence underscores India's commitment to regional security and strengthening bilateral ties through naval diplomacy and collaborative training exercises.



India and Morocco Strengthen Counter-Terrorism Cooperation :-

India and Morocco held the second Joint Working Group meeting on Counter-Terrorism in New Delhi, reaffirming their commitment to combating terrorism in all forms. The discussions focused on countering violent extremism, financing of terrorism, and the use of technology for terrorist activities. Both countries aim to enhance bilateral cooperation through information sharing and capacity building. This meeting highlights India's proactive stance in global counter-terrorism efforts and its strong international partnerships.



India and Tajikistan Reaffirm Anti-Terrorism Commitment :-

India and Tajikistan held their 5th Joint Working Group meeting on Counter Terrorism in Dushanbe, reaffirming their commitment to combat terrorism in all forms. The nations discussed threats from global terrorist groups and explored measures for enhanced cooperation, including information sharing and capacity building. The meeting emphasized coordinated action against terrorism, reflecting India's strategic partnerships in combating global security threats.

8: Economy



Centre Waives Customs Duty on Cotton Imports to Aid Textile Industry :-

The Indian government has announced a temporary waiver of customs duties on cotton imports from June 1 to October 31, 2026, to support the textile sector. This measure is expected to decrease input costs and enhance competitiveness in the textile and apparel industries. The relief aims to benefit small and medium enterprises by ensuring a steady supply of cotton, which is crucial for the domestic market.



Asian Stocks Rise as AI Boom Continues Amid Gulf Tensions :-

Asian markets saw gains driven by the AI boom, despite ongoing Gulf tensions affecting oil prices. While negotiations between the US and Iran progress, regional uncertainties persist, impacting oil supply and prices. The demand for AI-related technologies has bolstered markets in Japan and South Korea. However, the global economic outlook remains cautious, with potential inflationary impacts from rising oil prices. Analysts

highlight the need for strategic responses to geopolitical developments.



PIB Fact Check Dismisses False Claims on RBI's Gold Reserves :-

The Press Information Bureau's Fact Check unit has debunked a false media report claiming that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) sold \$12 billion worth of gold from its foreign exchange reserves. The RBI clarified that the share of gold in India's reserves has actually increased, reaching 16.85% as of May 2026. This misinformation was attributed to a misinterpretation of data, highlighting the importance of relying on verified sources for accurate financial information.



Guwahati Tea Auction Centre Achieves Record Prices :-

The Guwahati Tea Auction Centre has reached new milestones in premium tea sales, with prices hitting Rs 1,103 per kg for CTC leaf from Deckiajuli Tea Estate. This reflects strong demand and the estate's focus on quality production. The auction's success is supported by government subsidies for orthodox tea, enhancing India's position in the global tea market. GTAC aims to

expand its share, attracting export-oriented buyers and boosting the industry.



Cabinet Approves Fuel Price Support for Airlines :-

The Indian government has approved a ₹10,000 crore support package for oil marketing companies to stabilize aviation turbine fuel prices. This move aims to assist Indian airlines amid the West Asia crisis, ensuring operational stability and fare predictability. The measure is part of broader efforts to support the aviation sector during volatile fuel price periods, safeguarding air services and benefiting related sectors like tourism and trade.



India and Philippines Explore New Trade Opportunities

Bilateral trade between India and the Philippines reached \$3.9 billion in FY26. The 14th Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment meeting explored collaboration in sectors like film, energy, and ICT. Both nations aim to enhance trade ties, focusing on economic cooperation and mutual growth. The next meeting is scheduled in New Delhi.



India Facilitates First Export of GI-tagged Tezpur Litchi to Dubai :-

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has successfully facilitated the first export consignment of Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged Tezpur Litchi from Assam to Dubai. This significant achievement marks a new milestone in expanding international market access for agricultural products from the North Eastern Region. Tezpur Litchi is renowned for its sweetness, bright red color, distinctive aroma, and superior quality. The initiative has also resulted in better returns for growers, with farmers receiving nearly 10% higher prices.



India-Azerbaijan Ties Strengthened by Ambassador Kumar's Visit :-

Indian Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Abhay Kumar, visited Lankaran and Lerik to boost cooperation in culture, agriculture, and wellness. Discussions with local officials focused on promoting Ayurveda, yoga, and shared tea cultures. The visit included tours of historical sites and ecological areas, highlighting opportunities for collaboration in sustainable agriculture and eco-tourism. This visit signifies growing people-to-people ties and a commitment to enhance bilateral relations in various

sectors, reflecting mutual interests and cultural connections between India and Azerbaijan.



India and France Launch Bharat Innovates 2026 :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron inaugurated Bharat Innovates 2026 in Nice, a key event showcasing India's innovation ecosystem. This initiative aims to connect Indian startups with global investors and industry leaders, focusing on sectors like biotechnology and space technology. The event is part of the India-France Year of Innovation, highlighting the growing strategic partnership and collaborative efforts in technology and research between the two nations.



Gujarat CM Inaugurates Hexaware Centre Creating 1000 Jobs :-

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated a new Hexaware Technologies delivery centre in GIFT City, expected to create 1,000 skilled jobs. This facility will focus on advanced technology sectors such as AI and data analytics, enhancing Gujarat's status as a technology hub. The investment reflects the state's commitment to fostering innovation-driven growth and employment opportunities.



NSE Indices Launches 11 New Sectoral Benchmarks for Indian Economy :-

NSE Indices Limited announced the launch of 11 new sectoral indices, expanding its offerings to 34. These indices cover diverse industries, including power, telecom, and healthcare, providing detailed sector-level insights. The expansion aims to meet the growing demand for specialized investment tools and benchmarks, reflecting the diversification of India's economy. The new indices are expected to serve as performance benchmarks for asset managers and institutional investors.



NSE Files for India's Largest IPO Worth Over ₹30,000 Crore :-

The National Stock Exchange of India has filed for an initial public offering (IPO) worth approximately ₹30,000 crore, set to be the largest in Indian history. The offering consists of a pure offer for sale, with major financial institutions divesting shares. This IPO marks a significant milestone for the NSE, overcoming previous regulatory hurdles. The financial trajectory of the exchange shows resilience, with strong profitability metrics despite rising operating costs.



India's Litchi Exports to Italy Open New European Market :-

India has successfully exported its first consignment of Uttarakhand's Dehradun litchis to Italy, marking a significant entry into European markets. The export initiative, supported by APEDA, highlights India's growing agro-export capabilities and reflects the international acceptance of high-quality Indian produce. The move is expected to improve returns for farmers, fostering wider adoption of quality production practices.



Northeast India Emerges as a Key Growth Engine :-

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman hailed the Northeast region's development, citing Sikkim's organic farming success and infrastructure landmarks like the world's longest bi-lane tunnel. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal emphasized the region's emergence as a growth engine. Significant improvements in connectivity, healthcare, and education have transformed the region, supported by various government initiatives. The Northeast's strategic importance is further enhanced by its role in India's clean energy transition and the Act East Policy.



India's Critical Mineral Mission Achieves Major Auction Success :-

India's initiative to secure critical minerals has gained momentum with the successful auctioning of 56 mineral blocks. The Ministry of Mines announced this milestone, reflecting a 63% success rate. The auction includes strategic minerals like graphite and rare earth elements, crucial for sectors like renewable energy and defense. The expansion to states like Gujarat and Telangana marks a significant step in reducing import dependence and supporting key industries. This development is vital for India's critical mineral strategy and long-term industrial growth.



Piyush Goyal Announces Network to Leverage India-UK CETA :-

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal announced a 1,000-member advisory network to help businesses maximize benefits from the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), effective July 15, 2026. Speaking at the UK-India Week, Goyal highlighted the agreement's potential to boost bilateral trade by GBP 25.5 billion annually. The CETA provides Indian professionals working in the UK with a five-year exemption from social security contributions. Goyal encouraged businesses to seize emerging opportunities, emphasizing India's stable environment for investment and innovation.

9: International



WHO Director-General Visits Congo Amid Intensifying Ebola Outbreak :-

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, is in Congo to address the escalating Ebola outbreak. The visit highlights the need for coordinated efforts among health and humanitarian actors to manage the crisis effectively. India has pledged support by providing medical supplies to the Africa CDC. The outbreak, exacerbated by regional conflict and displacement, underscores the complexity of public health emergencies in volatile regions.



US Proposes Plan to Ease Israel-Lebanon Tensions Amid Fighting :-

The United States has proposed a plan for gradual de-escalation between Israel and Lebanon amid ongoing hostilities. The proposal includes Hezbollah halting attacks on Israel in exchange for Israel refraining from escalation in Beirut. This diplomatic effort aims to create space for an effective cessation of hostilities. However, challenges remain as Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu

has ordered deeper incursions into Lebanon, further complicating the situation.



Netanyahu Orders Deeper Incursion into Lebanon Amid Hezbollah Conflict :-

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered further military action in Lebanon against Hezbollah, despite a prior ceasefire. The conflict, which has displaced over a million Lebanese, continues to escalate as Israeli forces seek to expand control over Hezbollah territories. The situation remains tense, with international calls for restraint and diplomatic efforts to resolve the hostilities. The ongoing conflict has significant implications for regional stability and security dynamics.



Germany Lifts Airport Transit Visa for Indian Nationals :-

Effective June 3, 2026, Indian nationals transiting through German airports to other countries will no longer require a transit visa. This policy change, announced by the German Embassy, aims to facilitate smoother travel and strengthen ties between Germany

and India. The waiver follows discussions between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Merz. This decision is expected to benefit thousands of Indian travelers using Germany as a transit hub, enhancing people-to-people connections and economic relations between the two nations.



India Stands with Afghan People, Continues Humanitarian Assistance :-

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Parvathaneni Harish, reaffirmed India's commitment to supporting the Afghan people during a UN Security Council meeting. India has provided extensive humanitarian and development assistance, including delivering three tonnes of specialized flood relief supplies and 33 tonnes of vaccines to Afghanistan. India's initiatives extend across all 34 provinces, focusing on healthcare, public infrastructure, and skill development. These efforts demonstrate India's dedication to fostering peace and stability in Afghanistan.



India Contributes \$2.5 Million to UNRWA for Palestine Refugees :-

India announced a \$2.5 million contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), marking the first tranche of its

annual \$5 million assistance. Established in 1949, UNRWA provides essential services such as education and healthcare to Palestine refugees. This contribution underscores India's longstanding support for a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Additionally, India has extended humanitarian aid, including medicines and 135 metric tonnes of supplies since October 2023, reflecting its commitment to regional stability and humanitarian efforts.



PM Modi's Historic Visit to Slovakia :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Slovakia marks a significant milestone in India-Slovakia relations, being the first by an Indian PM since Slovakia's independence. The visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties, focusing on trade, technology, and people-to-people exchanges. With growing economic partnerships, Slovakia serves as a gateway for Indian businesses into European markets, reflecting deepening cooperation between the two nations.



India-Slovakia to Establish 'India Chair on AI' at Slovak University :-

India and Slovakia have announced the establishment of an 'India Chair on Artificial Intelligence' at a Slovak university, marking a significant step in technology

collaboration. This initiative was announced during PM Modi's visit to Slovakia, where a Memorandum of Understanding on digital technology was signed. The chair will facilitate research and development in AI, fostering academic and technological exchanges between the two countries. This collaboration aims to leverage AI for societal benefits, emphasizing ethical considerations and human-centric development.



PM Modi and Slovak PM Fico Honor Fallen Heroes in Bratislava :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico paid tribute at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Bratislava, honoring the sacrifices of fallen heroes. This gesture was part of PM Modi's historic visit to Slovakia, aimed at strengthening bilateral ties. The leaders discussed enhancing cooperation in trade, defense, and technology. The tribute reflects the shared values and mutual respect between India and Slovakia, reinforcing their commitment to peace and collaboration on the international stage.



India and Slovakia Establish Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism :-

India and Slovakia have announced the establishment of a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism,

emphasizing the need for a united global response to terrorism. The announcement was made during PM Modi's visit to Slovakia, where several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed in areas such as digital technologies, labor migration, and higher education. The joint efforts aim to strengthen bilateral relations and address shared challenges in a collaborative manner, highlighting the commitment of both countries to global peace and security.



Israel Seizes Control Over West Bank Shrine Planning from Palestinians :-

Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich announced the transfer of planning powers at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron from Palestinian authorities to Israeli control. The move, described as a 'historic step', aims to deepen Israeli sovereignty in the West Bank, a region Palestinians seek for statehood. The decision has drawn criticism from Palestinian leaders and international bodies, highlighting ongoing tensions over territorial control and the implications for Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.



First Traditional Hindu Temple in France to Open in September :-

France is set to open its first traditional Hindu temple in September, built with stones sourced from India. This

development highlights the cultural contributions of the Indian diaspora in France and reflects growing India-France cultural ties. The temple's inauguration will feature a 15-day celebratory program, inviting people from France, India, and the global Hindu community to participate. This initiative is a testament to the shared cultural and spiritual heritage between the two nations.



Iranian Guards Set to Benefit from U.S. Sanctions Relief :-

As U.S.-Iran negotiations progress, Iran's Revolutionary Guards stand to gain from potential sanctions relief. The elite force, deeply embedded in Iran's economy, could benefit from renewed oil exports and foreign investment. However, their terrorism designation poses challenges to lifting sanctions. The Guards' influence in Iran's business landscape underscores the complexities of negotiations aimed at ending the war and stabilizing the region. The outcome may significantly impact both Iran's economy and regional geopolitics.



International Yoga Day Gains Popularity in the US, Promotes Wellness :-

The International Day of Yoga saw widespread celebrations across the United States, reflecting its growing acceptance. Events in Texas, New York, and

Washington, D.C. highlighted yoga's role in promoting health and wellness. This year's theme, 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing,' emphasizes preventive healthcare. The celebrations, marked by resolutions and proclamations, underscore yoga's cultural significance and its influence on American wellness culture.



UN Secretary-General Promotes Yoga for Intergenerational Health :-

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres extended greetings on International Yoga Day, emphasizing yoga's global reach and its benefits across generations. This year's theme, 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing,' focuses on supporting health and well-being for all age groups. Guterres highlighted yoga's role in mindfulness and care for society and the environment, urging efforts to build a world where every generation can lead a healthy life.



Iran-US Peace Talks in Switzerland Amid Strait of Hormuz Tensions :-

High-level US-Iran peace talks are set to begin in Switzerland, despite tensions over Iran's claim of closing the Strait of Hormuz. Both nations agreed to a 60-day ceasefire, though complications arise from ongoing conflicts in Lebanon involving Israel and Hezbollah. The talks aim to advance an interim deal to end a four-month

war, with US Vice President JD Vance leading negotiations. The situation remains tense, with global energy flow at stake.



International Yoga Day Celebrated with Enthusiasm in Muscat :-

The Indian Embassy in Muscat celebrated International Day of Yoga with a focus on 'Yoga for Healthy Ageing.' The event included the Common Yoga Protocol and a special Yogasana presentation. India's Ambassador-designate to Oman, Prashant Pise, emphasized yoga's role in promoting health and well-being. The strong participation reflected yoga's growing appeal in Oman and the strengthening cultural ties between India and Oman.



EAM Jaishankar Visits Mongolia and South Korea to Boost Ties :-

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar is on a four-day visit to Mongolia and South Korea to strengthen strategic partnerships. In Mongolia, he will meet with leadership to enhance cooperation in trade and technology, while in South Korea, discussions will focus on economic ties. The visit underscores India's commitment to deepening relations in the Indo-Pacific, aligning with recent high-level engagements and shared democratic values.



Iran Oil Exports Set to Resume Amid Emerging US-Iran Deal :-

The US announced that Iran would be allowed to resume oil exports as part of ongoing diplomatic negotiations. This development could significantly impact global energy prices and major oil-importing countries like India. The agreement highlights a shift in US-Iran relations, with potential economic benefits for Iran, while also addressing broader geopolitical tensions in the region, including discussions on Iran's nuclear program.



Colombia's Election Signals Rightward Shift in Latin America :-

Colombia elected nationalist lawyer Abelardo De La Espriella as president, marking a rightward shift in Latin America. His victory, alongside conservative wins in Peru and other nations, reflects changing voter priorities amid economic challenges. De La Espriella's policies align with US interests, promising to join the 'Shield of the Americas'. This shift highlights the region's political transformation and its implications for US-Latin American relations.



Brexit Tensions Persist as UK and EU Mark a Decade Since Vote :-

Ten years after Brexit, tensions between the UK and EU remain over immigration and ideology. Despite efforts to improve ties, populist and far-right parties in Europe and the UK limit progress. Britain's economic challenges post-Brexit and the rise of right-wing nationalism complicate reconciliation. The situation highlights ongoing challenges in UK-EU relations and the broader impact of populism on European politics.



US Temporarily Eases Iran Sanctions Amid Peace Talks

The United States has issued a 60-day waiver on major sanctions against Iran, allowing the sale of Iranian crude oil as part of ongoing peace negotiations. This move aligns with efforts to secure a final peace deal between Washington and Tehran. The sanctions relief covers related services, including banking and maritime transportation. The talks have established a foundation for a permanent settlement, with global markets reacting to the potential influx of Iranian oil.



Qatar Gas Facility Explosion Claims 12 Indian Lives :-

A devastating explosion at a gas processing facility in Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial City killed 12 Indian nationals, marking one of the deadliest accidents in the global gas industry in decades. The Indian Embassy in Doha confirmed the casualties and is providing support to the affected families. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar expressed condolences, emphasizing continued efforts to assist and repatriate the deceased. This incident underscores the need for stringent safety measures in industrial operations.



UN General Assembly Adopts Declaration on HIV/AIDS

The UN General Assembly adopted a political declaration on HIV/AIDS, reaffirming the commitment to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The declaration highlights the urgency of coordinated, evidence-based global responses and stresses the importance of sustained investment and community-led efforts. Despite progress, the world is not on track to meet the 2025 HIV targets. The declaration calls for strengthened leadership, country ownership, and integrated strategies to address the epidemic and achieve global health goals.



Magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 Earthquakes Devastate Venezuela :-

Venezuela experienced two powerful earthquakes measuring 7.2 and 7.5 magnitudes, causing widespread destruction in Caracas and surrounding regions. Interim President Delcy Rodriguez reported significant casualties and ongoing rescue efforts. The USGS predicts the death toll could exceed 10,000. International aid, including from the United States, is being mobilized to support rescue and recovery operations. This disaster highlights the vulnerability of seismically active regions.



Magnitude 6.9 Earthquake Strikes Japan's Northeast, No Tsunami Warning :-

A 6.9 magnitude earthquake struck Japan's northeast coast, with the epicenter off Iwate prefecture. No tsunami warning was issued, and nuclear facilities reported no irregularities. The quake caused temporary disruptions, including halted train services and expressway inspections. Japan's preparedness for seismic events reflects its robust disaster management systems, crucial for minimizing impact in one of the world's most seismically active regions.



PM Modi Congratulates Colombia's New President Abelardo de la Espriella :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended congratulations to Abelardo de la Espriella on his victory in the Colombian presidential elections. Modi reaffirmed India's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties with Colombia, emphasizing the growing friendship between the two nations. He expressed confidence in working together to deepen relations across various sectors. The congratulatory message highlights India's proactive engagement with global partners and commitment to fostering international cooperation.



Japanese PM Sanae Takaichi to Attend India-Japan Annual Summit :-

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi will visit New Delhi for the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit from July 1 to 3. This visit, her first official trip to India since taking office, aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation and address regional and global issues of mutual interest. The summit reflects the shared commitment to enhancing the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, following PM Modi's visit to Tokyo in 2025.



India Showcases Mango Varieties in Iceland to Boost Exports :-

India held its first-ever Mango Promotion Events in Iceland, showcasing premium varieties like Dasheri, Chausa, Langra, and Kesar. The events aimed to increase agricultural exports to Northern Europe, highlighting India's rich horticultural diversity. The initiative, supported by APEDA and the Embassy of India, attracted Icelandic importers and highlighted potential trade opportunities under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement. The events reflect India's efforts to expand its global agricultural market presence.

10: Miscellaneous



India Sends 45.5 Tonnes of Medical Aid to Africa Amid Ebola Outbreak :-

Responding to a request from the African Union Commission, India has dispatched 45.5 tonnes of medical aid to support Africa's fight against the Ebola outbreak. The assistance, delivered in two tranches, includes protective gear, medicines, and diagnostic equipment. This initiative reflects India's commitment to global health partnerships and its role in strengthening public health systems in Africa. The aid aims to enhance regional response capacities and mitigate the impact of the outbreak, which has affected several countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda.



Delhi Launches 18 Namo Oxygen Parks for Urban Greening :-

On World Environment Day, Delhi inaugurated 18 Namo Oxygen Parks to improve air quality and promote urban greening as part of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav emphasized the importance of community involvement in environmental conservation. The parks aim to function as urban green lungs, enhancing biodiversity and providing recreational spaces.



Indian Mission Reunites Odisha Woman with Family After UAE Ordeal :-

The Indian Consulate in Dubai successfully repatriated Hasta Mahananda, an Odisha woman separated from her family while working in the UAE. After losing contact, consular officials traced her through official channels, securing her return with cleared dues and a flight home. Her case underscores the vital role of Indian missions in safeguarding nationals abroad and highlights the collaborative efforts between diplomatic channels and local authorities.



India Clears Campuses of Three Foreign Universities :-

The Ministry of Education has approved the establishment of campuses by the University of Bristol, University of York, and University of New South Wales in India, as part of the NEP 2020 internationalisation agenda. These campuses, set to open in Mumbai and Bengaluru, will offer programs in diverse fields, fostering global learning partnerships and research collaborations. This initiative aims to enhance access to quality education and position India as a leading international study destination.



South Korea Sentences Ex-President Yoon to 30 Years Over Drone Incursion :-

Former South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has been sentenced to 30 years in prison for ordering a drone incursion over North Korea to justify a failed martial law declaration. The Seoul Central District Court found him guilty of aiding the enemy and abuse of power. This ruling adds to a series of judgments against Yoon, who was ousted following his impeachment. The case underscores the severe legal and political consequences of unauthorized military actions and highlights the ongoing challenges in inter-Korean relations.



Gujarat CM Inaugurates Hexaware Centre Creating 1000 Jobs :-

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated a new Hexaware Technologies delivery centre in GIFT City, expected to create 1,000 skilled jobs. This facility will focus on advanced technology sectors such as AI and data analytics, enhancing Gujarat's status as a technology hub. The investment reflects the state's commitment to fostering innovation-driven growth and employment opportunities.



Ambubachi Mela Preparations in Full Swing at Kamakhya Temple :-

The annual Ambubachi Mela at Kamakhya Temple is set to begin on June 22, with preparations underway to accommodate thousands of pilgrims. The festival is one of the largest religious gatherings in eastern India. The temple doors will remain closed for three days, reopening on June 26. The event celebrates the fertility of Mother Earth and holds immense religious significance, attracting devotees and ascetics from across the country.



India Announces \$10 Million Support for Ebola Response in Africa :-

India pledged \$10 million to support Africa's Ebola outbreak response during a virtual summit with African leaders. Union Health Minister JP Nadda highlighted India's commitment to assisting Africa's health security and resilience. India has already delivered medical supplies and is ready to provide further assistance. The support includes technical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives for African health institutions, reflecting India's role as a global health partner in combating infectious diseases.



Indian Army Promotes Cultural Awareness with Tripura Heritage Lecture :-

The Indian Army's Red Shield Division organized a cultural awareness lecture on Tripura's heritage at Agartala Military Station. The lecture, delivered by academican Bindu Ranjan Chakma, focused on the state's cultural diversity and traditions. The event aimed to enhance cultural understanding among military personnel and promote social cohesion. The initiative reflects the Army's commitment to engaging with local communities and preserving India's rich cultural legacy.



NEET-UG 2026 Re-Exam Admit Cards Downloaded by 16 Lakh Candidates :-

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has announced that nearly 16 lakh candidates downloaded their admit cards for the NEET-UG 2026 re-exam, scheduled for June 21. The NTA simplified the download process, removing bank verification requirements. Elaborate security arrangements, including the use of Indian Air Force aircraft for question paper transport, have been implemented to ensure a secure examination. This re-exam follows the cancellation of the original exam due to a question paper leak.



Sri Lanka Faces Severe Dengue Outbreak :-

Sri Lanka is currently battling a severe dengue outbreak, with health authorities reporting a sharp rise in infections across several districts, especially in and around Colombo. The increase has been linked to heavy monsoon rains, stagnant water accumulation, and rapid mosquito breeding. The country's National Dengue Control Unit warned that schools, densely populated urban areas, and construction sites are among the highest-risk zones for transmission.



President Murmu Encourages Students at Rani Durgavati University Convocation :-

President Droupadi Murmu addressed the 36th convocation of Rani Durgavati University, urging students to use education for societal benefit. She emphasized the role of education in individual and community development, highlighting the importance of preserving tribal identities. The President called for innovation and research in environmental conservation and women's empowerment, aligning with national progress and policy formulation.



CBSE Class 12 Topper Emerges After Re-evaluation :-

Avni Kejriwal, a commerce student from DPS Ranchi, emerged as the CBSE Class 12 national topper with a perfect score of 500 after re-evaluation. Initially scoring 95.2%, Avni applied for re-evaluation in English, which raised her score to 100 in all main subjects. This achievement underscores the importance of accuracy in academic assessments and the value of perseverance. Avni plans to pursue Business Management, embodying the aspirations of students aiming for academic excellence.

11: National



PM Modi Praises Record-Breaking Sprinters in Mann Ki Baat :-

In his Mann Ki Baat address, Prime Minister Modi lauded sprinters Gurinder Veer Singh and Animesh Kujur for their record-breaking performances at the National Senior Athletics Championships. Highlighting their achievements as an inspiration for young athletes, PM Modi emphasized the importance of perseverance and dedication. The athletes shared their journeys of

overcoming challenges to excel in sprinting, underscoring their commitment to advancing Indian athletics on the global stage.



Centre Pushes for Faster Highway Project Execution :-

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari reviewed the status of national highway projects in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, emphasizing the need for accelerated execution and stronger quality monitoring. The review covered 12,260 km of highways, with Gadkari urging the adoption of modern construction practices to enhance road durability and commuter convenience. This initiative is part of the government's efforts to improve infrastructure, boost connectivity, and support economic growth.



India's 100th Ramsar Site: Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary :-

India's commitment to wetland conservation reached a milestone with the designation of the Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh, as the 100th Ramsar Site. This achievement underscores India's efforts in protecting biodiversity and ecosystems. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the development, highlighting the importance of wetlands in maintaining ecological balance and supporting wildlife.



India to Launch Coal Exchanges under New Regulatory Framework :-

The Indian government has announced the establishment of Coal Exchanges, a transformative step aimed at modernizing the coal supply chain and creating a transparent, market-driven trading ecosystem. The recently enacted Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025, introduced the concept of a Mineral Exchange. The Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, provide the regulatory framework for coal trading platforms, with the Coal Controller Organisation designated as the authority responsible for registration and regulation.



Noida International Airport Inaugurates Commercial Flights :-

Commercial operations began at Noida International Airport, marking a significant milestone in India's aviation sector. Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu inaugurated the airport, highlighting its role in enhancing regional connectivity. The airport's development involved significant investment and land contributions from local farmers. Positioned as a major gateway for the NCR, it complements Delhi's existing airport infrastructure. The facility aims to boost

economic activity and connectivity, with plans to expand passenger capacity in future phases.



Indian Railways Approves ₹201 Crore Kavach Project for Ambala Division :-

Indian Railways has sanctioned ₹201 crore for the installation of the Kavach system in the Ambala Division, covering key rail corridors in Haryana, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh. Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection system designed to enhance railway safety by preventing accidents and ensuring safe train operations. This initiative reflects Indian Railways' commitment to improving safety and operational efficiency on high-density routes.



Fit India Cyclothon to Promote Fitness Ahead of Yoga Day :-

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya lead a Fit India Cyclothon along Mumbai's Worli seafront on June 17, as part of the International Day of Yoga celebrations. The event aims to promote fitness and well-being, symbolizing the Fit India Movement's objectives. The cyclothon highlights the importance of physical activity and environmental sustainability, encouraging healthier lifestyles. This initiative underscores the government's

commitment to fostering a culture of fitness and wellness across the nation.



Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2026 Begins :-

The Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2026 commenced in New Delhi, bringing together young delegates to discuss India's vision for 2047. Inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, the event focuses on empowering youth to contribute to nation-building. Participants from across the country are presenting ideas and policy suggestions aimed at achieving a developed India by 2047. The event reflects the government's commitment to youth engagement and harnessing their potential for national progress.



Over 250-Year-Old Ramayan Manuscript Acquired by Ayodhya Museum :-

A rare handwritten manuscript of Tulsidas's Ramcharitmanas, over 250 years old, has been acquired by the International Ramkatha Museum in Ayodhya. Despite damage, the manuscript holds significant historical and cultural value. The acquisition is part of the museum's project to preserve Ramayana manuscripts. The document provides insights into historical writing techniques and materials. Its preservation will enrich the

museum's collection and highlight India's literary heritage.



India Aims for 26,000 km of Rural Roads by FY 2026-27 :-

The Indian government is targeting the construction of 26,474 km of rural roads by FY 2026-27, with an allocation of ₹18,907 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and related programs. This initiative aims to enhance rural connectivity and infrastructure, focusing on regions affected by left-wing extremism. The use of technology like the e-MARG platform for real-time monitoring is emphasized to ensure quality and transparency.



Centre Approves Large-Scale MSP Procurement of Pulses and Oilseeds :-

The Indian government has approved large-scale procurement of pulses and oilseeds in four states under the Price Support Scheme. Uttar Pradesh will receive the largest share, with significant procurement of moong, urad, and groundnut. The initiative aims to ensure farmers receive fair prices for their produce and to prevent distress sales, with a total procurement package valued at over ₹1,490 crore.



Tata Motors Joins Centre's Vehicle Replacement Scheme for Delhi-NCR :-

Tata Motors has partnered with the Indian government's vehicle replacement initiative to phase out old and polluting commercial vehicles in Delhi-NCR. Under the scheme, Tata Motors will offer an 8% discount on eligible trucks and buses. The initiative aims to improve air quality by accelerating the adoption of cleaner vehicles, with additional incentives from the Centre and state governments.



Amit Shah Launches ₹1,500-Crore Mahalaxmi Temple Redevelopment :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the ₹1,500-crore redevelopment project of the Shri Mahalaxmi Temple in Kolhapur. The project aims to preserve the historic shrine, enhance facilities for devotees, and boost

regional tourism. The initiative includes temple conservation, construction of new facilities, and beautification of the surrounding area. Recognized as one of India's oldest Shakti Peethas, the temple attracts millions of devotees. The redevelopment is expected to preserve cultural heritage while providing modern amenities.



NCC Cadets Celebrate International Yoga Day with Nationwide Events :-

The National Cadet Corps marked International Day of Yoga with over 8.3 lakh participants nationwide. The celebrations, held at more than 5,000 locations, emphasized yoga's role in promoting fitness and discipline among youth. Iconic locations like Sabarmati Riverfront and Marina Beach hosted events. The initiative aligns with the goal of nurturing responsible citizens and reflects the growing acceptance of yoga as a lifestyle practice.



President Murmu Reviews Project Cheetah at Kuno National Park :-

President Droupadi Murmu visited Kuno National Park to review Project Cheetah, aimed at reintroducing cheetahs in India after their extinction. The project, launched in 2022, has seen cheetahs reintroduced from Namibia, South Africa, and Botswana. The President's visit highlights the project's significance in biodiversity conservation, as Kuno was selected for its suitable habitat and prey base, marking a major step in India's wildlife conservation efforts.



India Assures E20 Ethanol Fuel is Safe Amid Misleading Claims :-

The Indian government has debunked misinformation about ethanol-blended petrol, asserting the safety and scientific validation of E20 fuel. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas emphasized that India's Ethanol Blending Programme is rigorously tested and continuously monitored. Despite social media claims, no widespread vehicle issues have been linked to E20 petrol. The initiative, aimed at reducing crude oil dependence and promoting cleaner fuels, aligns with global practices. The ministry reassures consumers about the programme's safety, economic benefits, and environmental impact.



Pension Adalat in Delhi Addresses Grievances of Retirees :-

The Principal Controller of Communication Accounts, Delhi, organized a Pension Adalat to address grievances of pensioners from BSNL, MTNL, and DoT. Chaired by Joint Controller Rajat Tripathi, the session focused on issues like pension payment and retirement benefits. Several cases were resolved, ensuring the timely redressal of concerns. This initiative reflects the government's commitment to supporting retirees and improving service delivery in the pension sector. The Pension Adalat serves as an effective platform for dialogue and resolution.



Technology-Driven Security: Project Hawk Eye for Amarnath Yatra 2026 :-

The Anantnag Police in Jammu and Kashmir have initiated 'Project Hawk Eye' to fortify security for the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026. This tech-driven surveillance project integrates aerial monitoring, facial recognition, sniper teams, and an extensive CCTV network to ensure comprehensive security. Drones and strategically placed observation posts enhance situational awareness along the pilgrimage route. This initiative underscores the commitment to leveraging modern technology for the safety and smooth conduct of the Yatra, reflecting on India's policing advancements.



Health Ministry Launched Aarogya Setu 2.0 at CCHFW Conference :-

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare held the 16th CCHFW Conference on June 29, 2026, in New Delhi. Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda launched Aarogya Setu 2.0 as part of India's digital health initiatives. The conference aims to improve Centre-State cooperation in health policy and discuss the National Health Mission, food and drug reforms, and allied health services. Aarogya Setu 2.0 will offer citizens a comprehensive Personal Health Record application, facilitating digital management of health records and integrating wearable devices.



Health Ministry Seeks Feedback on Imported Drug Shelf-Life Rules :-

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed a draft amendment to the Drugs Rules, 1945, aimed at rationalizing the residual shelf-life requirement for imported medicines. The amendment suggests a minimum 12-month shelf life at import, replacing the current 60% residual requirement. This change seeks to optimize supply chain efficiency while ensuring drug quality. Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback on the proposal, which aligns with efforts to enhance ease of doing business in the pharmaceutical sector.

12: Obituaries



PM Modi Condoles Demise of Legendary Singer Suman Kalyanpur :-

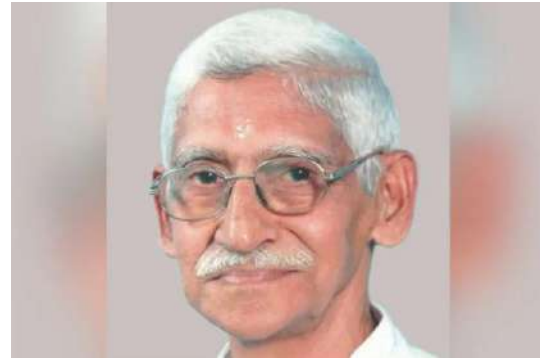
Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the passing of iconic playback singer Suman Kalyanpur. Known for her melodious voice, Kalyanpur enriched Indian music with her soulful renditions. Tributes poured in from across the political and music fraternity, highlighting her immense contribution to Indian cinema. Her legacy of timeless songs across multiple languages continues to inspire generations. Kalyanpur's passing marks the end of an era in Indian music.



Film producer and ex-CBFC chief Pahlaj Nihalani passes away :-

Veteran film producer and former chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification, Pahlaj Nihalani, passed away in Mumbai on 4 June 2026 at the age of 76 after a prolonged illness. He had been undergoing treatment for liver-related complications. Nihalani was a prominent figure in Bollywood for more than four decades and produced several successful films, including

Aankhen, Ilzaam, and Talaash. He is also credited with launching actor Govinda in the film Ilzaam.



Kerala: Former News Editor of Akashvani, P Chandrasekharan, passed away in Kozhikode :-

P. Chandrasekharan, former News Editor of Akashvani, passed away at a hospital in Kozhikode, Kerala, on 4 June 2026. He was 94 years old. During his distinguished career, Chandrasekharan served at Akashvani stations in New Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram. He was also the founder of the V. K. Narayana Bhattathiri Trust and actively participated in cultural and voluntary organizations, including Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. His contributions to public broadcasting and cultural activities earned him widespread respect in Kerala.



PM Modi Condoles Demise of Constitutional Scholar Dr. Kashyap :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed condolences on the passing of Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap, a prominent constitutional scholar. Acknowledging his contributions to parliamentary and constitutional discourse, PM Modi highlighted Dr. Kashyap's impact on strengthening

democratic institutions. His legacy as a respected authority on the Indian Constitution remains influential.



Malayalam actor Salim Kumar dies at 56 :-

Veteran Malayalam actor and filmmaker Salim Kumar passed away in Kochi, Kerala, at the age of 56. Beginning his career in theatre and mimicry, Salim Kumar made his film debut in 1997 and went on to become one of the most celebrated actors in Malayalam cinema. He was widely loved for his comic roles in films such as C.I.D. Moosa, Kalyanaraman, Meesa Madhavan, and Mayavi, while also earning critical acclaim for serious performances.



Veteran filmmaker Bharathiraja passes away :-

Legendary Tamil filmmaker Bharathiraja passed away on 10 June 2026 at the age of 84 in Chennai, marking the end of an era in Indian cinema. Widely known as the filmmaker who brought authentic rural life and village culture to the big screen, Bharathiraja revolutionized Tamil cinema with his 1977 debut film 16 Vayathinile. Over a career spanning nearly five decades, he directed numerous acclaimed films and won several National Film Awards. He was also honoured with the Padma Shri in 2004 for his contribution to Indian cinema. His death has

prompted tributes from film personalities, political leaders, and fans across the country.



Thai Princess Bajrakitiyabha Passes Away at 47 After Long Illness :-

Princess Bajrakitiyabha Narendira Debyavati of Thailand has died at the age of 47 after a prolonged illness and nearly four years in a coma. Known for her public service and diplomatic career, Princess Bajrakitiyabha was a prominent figure in improving the lives of female prisoners and promoting human rights. Her passing marks a significant loss for Thailand, where she played a key role in public life.



Indian Shooting Icon Jaspal Rana Passes Away at 49, Leaves Lasting Legacy :-

Renowned Indian shooter and coach Jaspal Rana has passed away at the age of 49 due to health complications. A pivotal figure in Indian shooting, Rana's career spanned over three decades, during which he won numerous accolades, including 15 Commonwealth Games medals and multiple Asian Games honors. As a coach, he mentored future champions like Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary. His passing is a significant loss to Indian sports, with tributes pouring in from across the nation, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



US musician Oliver Tree dies in helicopter collision in Brazil :-

American singer-songwriter and internet personality Oliver Tree has reportedly died at the age of 32 in a tragic helicopter collision over Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. According to reports, two helicopters collided mid-air on 14 June 2026, killing all six people on board. Tree, known for popular songs such as “Life Goes On” and “Miss You,” was touring Brazil as part of his world tour. The crash occurred in the Recreio dos Bandeirantes area, where one helicopter reportedly crashed into a car dealership, triggering a major fire. Authorities are investigating the cause of the accident.



James Burrows, Iconic Sitcom Director, Passes Away at 85 :-

James Burrows, the legendary director behind iconic sitcoms like 'Friends', 'Will Grace', and 'Cheers', has died at 85. Celebrated for his creative vision and nurturing talent, Burrows won 11 Emmy Awards and directed over 1,000 sitcom episodes. Tributes poured in from the casts of his shows, remembering him as a mentor and father figure. His passing marks the end of an era in television history, leaving behind a legacy of laughter and entertainment.

13: Ranks & Reports



India's Industrial Production Grows with New IIP Base Year :-

India's industrial production grew by 4.9% in April 2026, according to the revised Index of Industrial Production (IIP) with a new base year of 2022-23. The updated series reflects the current economic structure, with expanded coverage and revised weights. Manufacturing drove the growth, highlighting the sector's role in India's economic

expansion. This revision aims to provide a more accurate measure of industrial activity.



India's Services Sector Growth Reaches Six-Month High in May :-

India's services sector witnessed robust growth in May 2026, as indicated by the HSBC India Services PMI, which rose to 59.8 from 58.8 in April. This expansion, the strongest since November 2025, is attributed to rising

demand, increased business activity, and a rebound in export orders. The services sector's performance outpaced manufacturing, despite ongoing inflationary pressures. Input costs have risen due to increased expenses on food, fuel, and labor, although cost inflation has eased slightly. The sector's growth reflects healthy economic conditions and new client acquisitions, vital for sustaining India's economic momentum.



India's Environmental Progress on World Environment Day 2026 :-

On World Environment Day 2026, India showcased significant achievements in environmental conservation. The country's forest cover has expanded to over 8.27 lakh square kilometers, bolstered by initiatives like the Green India Mission and Namami Gange Programme. These efforts have improved river ecosystems and increased the number of Ramsar Sites to 99. India's strategies for waste management and disaster readiness underscore its commitment to sustainable development, balancing economic growth with ecological care.



NFHS-6 Fact Sheets Reveal Health Gains, Support Data Harmonisation Efforts :-

The release of the NFHS-6 Fact Sheets marks a significant milestone in India's health ecosystem, showcasing improvements in key health indicators. The Fact Sheets, focusing on 101 major indicators, aim to harmonize data reporting across national systems and address policy-relevant findings. Officials clarified that some indicators are tracked through specialized surveys, emphasizing the survey's role in supporting evidence-based policymaking and improving health outcomes.



PM Modi Sets Record as India's Longest-Serving Elected PM :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi achieved a historic milestone by becoming India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister, completing 4,399 days in office. His tenure, marked by transformative reforms and initiatives, reflects the enduring trust and confidence of the Indian people. Modi has led major infrastructure projects and international alliances, enhancing India's global standing. His leadership is celebrated nationally and internationally, with leaders from various countries extending their congratulations, acknowledging his impactful governance and vision for a developed India.



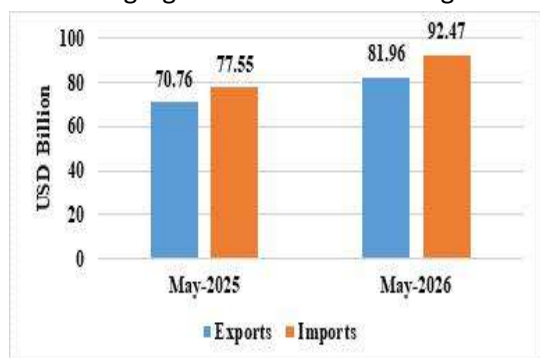
OPEC Lowers 2026 Global Oil Demand Growth Forecast Amid Geopolitical Tensions :-

OPEC has revised its 2026 global oil demand growth forecast to 970,000 barrels per day, marking the second consecutive downward revision. This adjustment comes amid ongoing geopolitical tensions, particularly the conflict involving Iran, which has led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital oil route. The resulting surge in fuel prices is impacting consumers and businesses worldwide. Despite the current forecast reduction, OPEC expects a rebound in consumption and has raised its demand growth forecast for 2027 to 1.73 million barrels per day.



India's Bioeconomy Expands to \$190 Billion in 12 Years :-

India's bioeconomy has expanded from \$10 billion in 2014 to over \$190 billion, as announced by Union MoS for Science Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh. The country aims to reach \$300 billion by 2030, showcasing India's growth as a biotechnology hub. This transformation has been driven by innovations in healthcare, genomics, and biopharmaceuticals, supported by policies like the BioE3 framework. India's advancements in healthcare technologies, including precision medicine and genomics, highlight its role as a global leader in addressing significant health challenges.



India's Total Exports Reach \$162 Billion in April-May 2026 :-

India's total exports have reached \$162.69 billion in the April-May period of the financial year 2026-27, marking a 14.66% increase from the previous year. Merchandise exports rose by 16.09% to \$88.91 billion, driven by significant growth in sectors like petroleum products, engineering goods, and chemicals. Services exports also showed a positive trend, contributing to the overall trade surplus. This export growth underscores India's robust economic performance and highlights the country's competitiveness in international markets.



Zero Poaching Achieved in Manas National Park :-

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that Manas National Park has recorded zero rhino and tiger poaching cases for three consecutive years. This achievement underscores Assam's dedication to wildlife conservation and reflects the success of intensified anti-poaching operations. Manas, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is home to diverse wildlife including the endangered one-horned rhinoceros and Royal Bengal tiger. The milestone highlights Assam's commitment to protecting its rich biodiversity and enhancing eco-tourism.



Sensex and Nifty Surge on US-Iran Deal Optimism :-

Indian equity markets rallied as the Sensex gained 544 points and the Nifty neared 24,000, driven by positive sentiment from the US-Iran deal announcement. Key sectors like real estate and consumer durables saw strong buying interest, while metal stocks remained under pressure. The easing of geopolitical tensions has boosted global and domestic market sentiment, supporting risk assets. This surge reflects investor optimism and the potential for continued market momentum in the coming days.



IIT-Delhi Tops Indian Universities in QS World Rankings 2027 :-

IIT-Delhi has emerged as India's highest-ranked university in the QS World Rankings 2027, securing the 118th position globally. India's representation in the rankings has expanded to 52 institutions, reflecting significant growth in higher education. The National Education Policy 2020 is credited with driving this progress, enhancing research, innovation, and global competitiveness. This achievement underscores India's status as a leading global knowledge hub.



Gold Imports Drop 39% in May After Import Duty Hike :-

India's gold imports fell sharply by 39% in May following a government decision to raise import duty on the precious metal from 6% to 15%. The World Gold Council report highlights that the duty hike was the steepest on record, aimed at conserving foreign exchange reserves. This led to a significant decline in gold demand, impacting the volume of imports, which were estimated at 25-30 tonnes compared to April's 46 tonnes.



Power, IT Sectors to Remain Dominant in India's Investment Landscape :-

The power and IT sectors are expected to remain dominant in attracting investments in India, driven by rising demand for digital infrastructure and energy capacity. According to a Bank of Baroda report, these sectors accounted for nearly 50% of total planned investments over the past four years, reflecting a significant transformation in the country's investment landscape.



India's AWM Sector to Double by 2030, Says PwC Report :-

According to PwC, India's Asset and Wealth Management (AWM) industry is projected to grow to \$1.7 trillion by

2030, doubling from \$0.9 trillion in 2024. The growth is driven by increasing institutional capital and retail participation. India's digital infrastructure and regulatory reforms are key factors in deepening the capital base. The report underscores the potential of India's financial markets and the increasing inclusion of retail investors.



Australia's Social Media Restrictions for Under-16s Show Limited Impact :-

Australia's restrictions on social media access for users under 16 have shown limited early impact, with many adolescents continuing to access platforms. A study from the University of Newcastle found circumvention methods, such as fake accounts, common among teens. The study highlights the challenges of enforcing age-

verification systems and the need for ongoing evaluation of digital safety measures.



IMF Highlights India's Role as Major Driver of Global Growth :-

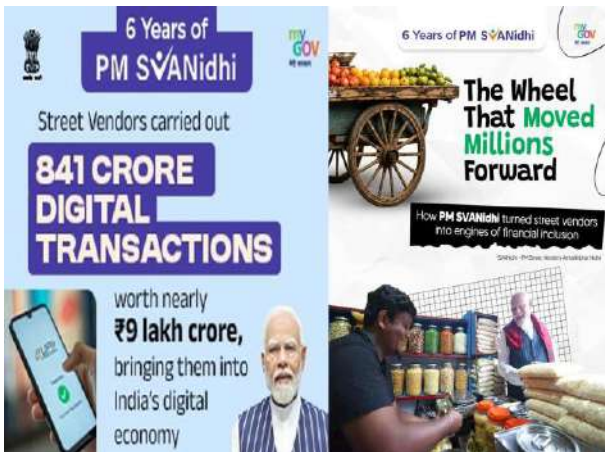
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) underscored India's significant role in driving global economic growth despite external challenges like the Iran conflict. With robust domestic demand, India's economy is projected to grow by 6.5% in fiscal year 2026-27. IMF praised India's resilience, highlighting strong momentum and reduction in US tariffs as factors supporting growth. The recent ceasefire in the Middle East and progress in reopening the Strait of Hormuz were seen as positive for the global economy.

14: Schemes & Committees



MY Bharat Expansion Aims to Engage Youth Across India :-

Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya announced plans to expand the MY Bharat initiative to every district in India. With over 2.17 crore youth volunteers, the program focuses on youth-led development and community engagement. The expansion aims to harness the potential of young citizens as leaders and mobilizers, contributing to the vision of a developed India. The initiative underscores the government's commitment to empowering youth and fostering inclusive development.



PM Modi Highlights Six Years of PM SVANidhi Scheme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the sixth anniversary of the PM SVANidhi scheme, which has revolutionized the lives of street vendors by granting them access to collateral-free credit and promoting digital transactions. Launched in 2020, this initiative has empowered millions of street vendors, integrating them into the formal financial system and fostering economic inclusion. Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar praised the scheme's success in expanding social security and enhancing vendors' dignity and self-reliance, marking it as a key pillar of India's informal urban economy.



ESIC Launches Centralized Digital Patient Feedback System :-

The Employees' State Insurance Corporation introduced a centralized online feedback system across its hospitals to capture real-time patient experiences. The system, equipped with multilingual support and real-time monitoring, aims to improve healthcare quality and accountability. Patients can provide feedback via multiple channels, including QR codes and SMS links. This

initiative seeks to enhance service delivery and patient satisfaction within the ESIC healthcare network.



India Launches MAHA Water Mission for Startups :-

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, launched the MAHA Water Mission, a Rs 200 crore initiative to support water sector startups. The mission aims to accelerate innovation in water management, focusing on sustainable practices and climate resilience. It provides funding for technology development and deployment, fostering a collaborative platform for science, industry, and grassroots action.



Scindia Launches Mission Senehjori to Boost Assam's Muga Silk Industry :-

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has launched Mission Senehjori, a comprehensive initiative to transform Assam's Muga silk sector into a global luxury brand. The mission aims to strengthen the Muga silk value chain, enhance exports, and promote silk heritage tourism. With an investment of over ₹396 crore, the initiative will modernize reeling infrastructure, promote Farmer Producer Organisations, and expand digital traceability. This project reflects the government's commitment to

preserving cultural heritage while fostering economic growth and sustainable livelihoods in the North East region.



Atmanirbhar Panchayat Workshop to Promote Financial Self-Reliance :-

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is organizing an outreach workshop on the Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The initiative aims to strengthen the financial independence of Panchayati Raj Institutions by developing revenue-generating projects. The workshop will engage Panchayat leaders and familiarize them with the program's objectives and implementation framework. This effort aligns with the broader goal of empowering local governance and fostering self-reliant communities across India.



Amit Shah to Launch Land Port Management System :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will launch the Land Port Management System (LPMS) in New Delhi, enhancing border management and trade facilitation. The digital platform will integrate operations across India's land ports, improving efficiency and transparency in cross-border trade. LPMS will enable seamless exchange of logistics and regulatory information,

aligning land ports with digital systems used at airports and seaports.



Yamuna Rejuvenation Project to be Reviewed Every 20 Days :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the progress of the Yamuna rejuvenation project. Shah emphasized the need for coordinated efforts by Delhi, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh to restore the river's ecological health. He announced that a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the National Dairy Development Board to manage dairy waste. The project aims to improve sewage treatment infrastructure and maintain the ecological flow in the river.



68 Electricity Distribution Companies Now Live on DigiLocker :-

DigiLocker, India's digital document wallet, has onboarded 68 electricity distribution companies, allowing consumers to securely access digital electricity bills. This integration covers utilities across 35 States and Union Territories, enhancing convenience and efficiency in managing utility documents. Prominent utilities like Bangalore Electricity Supply Company and BSES Yamuna

Power are part of this initiative. This development marks a significant milestone in expanding DigiLocker's ecosystem, ensuring streamlined digital service delivery and simplified access to essential documents for millions of consumers nationwide.



Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Medical Cyclotron Project and Policies :-

The Maharashtra Cabinet approved several key initiatives, including the Nagpur High-Energy Medical Cyclotron Project, aimed at enhancing medical diagnostics in Central India. The cabinet also cleared the Maharashtra Unmanned Systems Policy 2026, promoting drone manufacturing and innovation. Additionally, policies for rural drinking water and digital connectivity were approved. These decisions reflect Maharashtra's focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure, technological innovation, and rural development, contributing to the state's overall growth.



Odisha Approves Industrial Projects Worth ₹76,612 Crore :-

Odisha's High-Level Clearance Authority approved 20 industrial projects with a total investment of ₹76,612 crore, expected to create over 50,000 jobs. The projects span sectors like gemstone manufacturing, renewable

energy, and aerospace. This initiative reflects Odisha's commitment to industrial growth and regional development, positioning the state as a significant investment destination. The approval aligns with Odisha's strategy to attract investments across traditional and emerging sectors, promoting economic development.



Centre to Deploy Over 100 Area Officers for Rural Employment Mission :-

The Ministry of Rural Development will deploy more than 100 Area Officers to support states in implementing the Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission Act, 2025. The officers will facilitate implementation, strengthen local capacities, and promote knowledge sharing. The initiative aims to ensure a smooth transition to the new rural employment framework, linking guaranteed wage employment with livelihood promotion.



PM Modi Disburses ₹2,400 Crore in Employment Incentives :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the disbursement of ₹2,400 crore under the PM-Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana, an employment-linked scheme supporting job creation and social security. The initiative has facilitated 15 lakh employment opportunities,

bridging gaps between job seekers and industry, and showcasing a new India where youth empowerment and employment generation are national priorities.



President Murmu and PM Modi Unveil ₹47,600-Crore Projects in Odisha :-

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated development projects worth over ₹47,600 crore in Odisha, focusing on energy, infrastructure, and socio-economic empowerment. Major projects include the Upper Indravati Pumped Storage Project and the expansion of the IB Thermal Power Station. The event, marking two years of Odisha's government, aims to enhance connectivity, improve public services, and boost employment. The initiatives reflect a commitment to accelerating growth and development in tribal and rural regions of the state.



Centre Reviews National Highway Projects Across Three Regions :-

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari reviewed over 7,700 km of National Highway projects in Telangana, Jammu Kashmir, and Ladakh. The review emphasized project quality, maintenance, and timely completion. Gadkari directed officials to strengthen monitoring mechanisms and adopt advanced technologies to enhance highway

infrastructure durability and commuter convenience. The initiative highlights the government's focus on improving regional connectivity and economic growth through robust road infrastructure.



MY Bharat Launches National Anti-Drug Quiz and Anthem Campaign :-

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports initiated a nationwide anti-drug campaign with the National Nasha Mukti Quiz and a crowdsourcing initiative for a Nasha Mukti Anthem. The campaign aims to educate youth on substance abuse dangers and promote healthy choices. Activities include folk song competitions, awareness drives, and counselling sessions. The initiative concludes with the National Nasha Mukti Youth Conclave, recognizing outstanding participants in New Delhi.



Amit Shah Unveils Vision Document to Combat Drug Trafficking :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah unveiled the 'Vision Document on Drug Control (2026-2029)' to intensify the fight against narcotics. The plan includes a Rs 6,000 crore campaign to destroy over 2.09 lakh kilograms of narcotics and strengthen enforcement, intelligence, and rehabilitation efforts. Shah emphasized dismantling drug

cartels and supporting affected youth through de-addiction programs. The strategy aims to combat the evolving nature of drug-related crime and promote a drug-free society.



Government Unveils Roadmap for Green Urea Production :-

The Indian government announced plans to establish Green Urea production, supported by a 7.24 lakh MT Green Ammonia procurement under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. The initiative aims to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable agriculture. A subsidy mechanism will ensure cost parity between Green and Grey Ammonia, encouraging investment in green hydrogen technology. The roadmap reflects India's commitment to achieving carbon-neutral fertilizer production and supporting the long-term sustainability of agriculture.

15: Science & Technology



BHASHINI Launches VYOMA Challenge for Multilingual AI Solutions :-

The Digital India BHASHINI Division has launched the VYOMA Innovation Challenge to develop open-source, multilingual, voice-first AI solutions. This initiative, in collaboration with Current AI and Kalpa Impact, aims to enhance language accessibility and digital inclusion. Participants will work on the Sunno Sutra platform, a multilingual AI device designed for offline environments. The challenge encourages innovation in sectors like education and healthcare, promoting AI technologies that cater to India's linguistic diversity. This aligns with the government's vision of harnessing AI for inclusive and sustainable development.



Hero MotoCorp Launches Flex-Fuel Motorcycles in India

Hero MotoCorp has unveiled its first flex-fuel motorcycles, supporting India's shift towards cleaner transportation. Union ministers Nitin Gadkari and Hardeep Singh Puri highlighted the initiative's alignment with energy self-reliance goals. Flex-fuel vehicles can reduce emissions and oil imports while promoting biofuels. The launch marks a significant step in India's mobility future, with the motorcycles compatible with ethanol blends and aimed at reducing the carbon footprint.



New Blood Marker Identified for Early Lung Cancer Detection :-

Australian researchers have identified a 'blood signature' that can predict lung cancer risk over five years before diagnosis. Published in Cell, the study analyzed 48,000 blood samples, identifying a 14-protein signature. This discovery could revolutionize early cancer prevention and screening, especially in non-smokers, marking a significant advancement in global health.



NHAI Introduces Mechanised Maintenance for National Highways :-

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has rolled out advanced technology-driven measures to enhance road maintenance across national highways. This includes mechanised drain cleaning and automated pothole repair systems to improve operational efficiency and road quality. Such initiatives aim to ensure smoother travel experiences for commuters, particularly ahead of the monsoon season. The deployment of mechanised road sweeping machines and automatic pothole filling devices is expected to reduce maintenance response times significantly.



Indigenous Truenat HPV Test Achieves International Validation :-

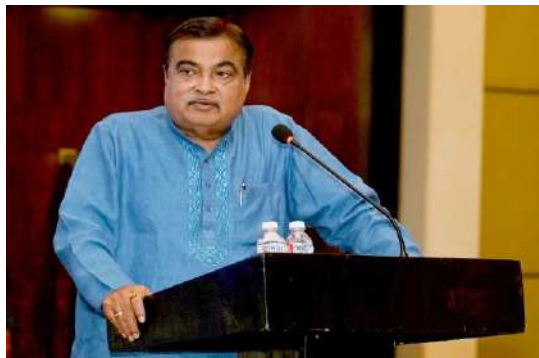
Researchers from AIIMS New Delhi, ICMR, and WHO's IARC have validated India's indigenous Truenat HR-HPV-Plus test, meeting international standards for cervical cancer screening. Developed by Molbio Diagnostics, the test detects eight high-risk HPV types responsible for nearly 95% of cervical cancers. This affordable, point-of-care test is suitable for district-level facilities, reducing reliance on expensive imports. While vaccination prevents future infections, screening remains crucial for women above 30. This breakthrough supports India's cervical cancer elimination goals through accessible early detection.



Advanced Quantum AI Lab Inaugurated at MNIT Jaipur

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced the establishment of an Advanced Quantum Computing and Quantum Communications Lab at MNIT Jaipur on June 13, 2026. Under MeitY's Electronics and ICT programme, the lab will focus on Quantum Key Distribution (QKD), quantum computing simulation, and sensing for national security and post-quantum cryptography. Students will also access Lam Research's Semiverse platform for semiconductor training. This initiative is part of India's

growing semiconductor design ecosystem and aims to enhance skills under the Chips to Startup programme, contributing to national technological advancement.



India Approves 100% Ethanol Fuel for Vehicles :-

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced the approval of 100% ethanol fuel for vehicles, marking a significant step toward reducing India's reliance on imported fossil fuels. The move aims to accelerate the transition to cleaner energy sources and decrease the carbon footprint of the transport sector. Automakers like Toyota and Hyundai are expected to introduce ethanol-compatible vehicles soon, supporting the government's broader push for biofuels. This initiative is pivotal in India's strategy to cut down on fuel import bills and promote sustainable energy solutions.

Odisha: 15-million-year-old marine fossils found in Baripada

Fossils believed to be around 15 million years old were discovered in the Baripada area of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Marine fossils, including shells and other remains of sea creatures, were found in Baripada.

The fossils are believed to be around 15 million years old, dating back to the Miocene period.

The discovery was made in the Baripada area under the Mayurbhanj district.

The fossils indicate that the region was once part of a sea millions of years ago.



A WINDOW TO THE PAST
These fossils provide important clues about marine ecosystems and the geological history of Odisha.

15-Million-Year-Old Marine Fossils Discovered in Odisha :-

Researchers have discovered 15-million-year-old marine fossils in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, revealing insights into the region's prehistoric marine ecosystem. The fossils suggest that present-day Baripada was once submerged under a shallow sea during the Miocene epoch. The findings, including shark teeth and fish bones, highlight the area's rich biodiversity. The site has

potential as a geo-heritage destination, offering opportunities for scientific research and tourism.



Australia Detects First Suspected H5 Bird Flu Case :-

Australia has reported its first suspected human case of the highly pathogenic H5N1 bird flu strain, raising fresh concerns about the global spread of avian influenza. The case involves a child who recently returned from overseas travel and was admitted to a hospital in Victoria with symptoms linked to the virus. Health authorities stated that the infection was likely acquired abroad rather than within Australia, and there is currently no evidence of human-to-human transmission.



Trump Signs Orders for Quantum Computer Development by 2028 :-

President Donald Trump has signed executive orders to accelerate the development of a powerful quantum computer by 2028. This initiative aims to enhance scientific research capabilities and protect government systems from cyber threats. Quantum computing holds promise for solving complex problems and could revolutionize fields like AI and materials science. The orders reflect the US's commitment to maintaining technological leadership and safeguarding cybersecurity in the face of emerging global challenges.

16: Sports



Teen Cricketer Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Impresses in IPL :-

Fifteen-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has emerged as a promising talent in the IPL, leading the scoring charts with 776 runs. Rajasthan Royals' head coach Kumar Sangakkara praised Sooryavanshi's maturity and fearless approach, suggesting he is ready for national selection. His performances have earned him a spot in the India A squad, with potential for further international opportunities in the future, showcasing the depth of young cricketing talent in India.



PSG Wins UEFA Champions League Against Arsenal :-

Paris Saint-Germain claimed the UEFA Champions League title after defeating Arsenal in a penalty shootout. The match, held at the Puskas Arena, ended in a 1-1 draw before PSG secured victory with a 4-3 win on penalties. This triumph marks PSG's successful defense of their title and highlights their dominance in European football. The win was a testament to the team's resilience and skill in high-pressure situations.



Fonseca Stuns Djokovic at French Open :-

Brazilian teenager Joao Fonseca achieved a stunning victory over Novak Djokovic in the French Open, ending Djokovic's quest for a 25th Grand Slam title. The match, lasting nearly five hours, showcased Fonseca's exceptional talent and determination. This victory positions Fonseca as a rising star in tennis, with potential to claim a major title. Djokovic praised his young opponent's performance, acknowledging Fonseca's skill and composure under pressure.



Manchester City Wins Women's FA Cup with Dominant Victory :-

Manchester City triumphed over Brighton to win the Women's FA Cup, securing their first trophy since 2020 and completing a domestic double. Instrumental in the victory was Bunny Shaw, whose performance capped City's successful season. Despite Brighton's strong start, City dominated the match, with goals from Alex Greenwood, Aoba Fujino, and Vivianne Miedema sealing the win. The victory marks a significant achievement for Manchester City in women's football.



Virat Kohli Leads RCB to IPL Title Defense with Masterful Knock :-

Virat Kohli delivered a stellar performance to lead Royal Challengers Bengaluru to victory against Gujarat Titans, securing their IPL title defense. Kohli's unbeaten 75 off 42 balls showcased his prowess as a chase master, helping RCB chase down 156 in 18 overs. Despite Gujarat's efforts, Bengaluru's disciplined bowling and Kohli's masterclass ensured their triumph. This victory highlights Kohli's enduring impact in T20 cricket and RCB's resilience as defending champions.



Haiti Defeats New Zealand 4-0 in World Cup Warmup Match :-

In a World Cup warmup match held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Haiti secured a convincing 4-0 victory over New Zealand. The match, marked by Haiti's strategic play and strong performance, delighted Haitian fans and showcased the team's potential ahead of the tournament. Despite visa issues affecting one of Haiti's players, the team delivered a commendable performance, highlighting their readiness for the upcoming World Cup.



PM Modi Congratulates Indian Women's U18 Hockey Team on Asia Cup Bronze :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the Indian Women's U18 Hockey Team for securing the bronze medal at the U18 Asia Cup 2026. He praised their determination and highlighted the achievement as a testament to women's hockey's growing strength in India. Modi expressed confidence in the team's future success and potential to inspire more players to the sport.



PM Modi Hails Praggnanandhaa's Historic Norway Chess Victory :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa on winning the prestigious Norway Chess title, recognizing it as a significant milestone in his career. Praggnanandhaa's victory over elite players, including Magnus Carlsen, highlights India's growing prominence in the global chess arena and serves as an inspiration for aspiring players nationwide.



Real Madrid's Florentino Perez Wins Presidential Election :-

Florentino Perez has won Real Madrid's first contested presidential election in two decades, securing four more years as president. Perez received 65% of the vote, defeating challenger Enrique Riquelme. The election follows a season without major trophies for the club. Perez's victory speech highlighted transparency and harmony within the club. He plans to strengthen the team with high-profile signings, underscoring his commitment to maintaining Real Madrid's status as a leading football club globally.



Kimi Antonelli Wins Chaotic Monaco Grand Prix :-

Kimi Antonelli claimed victory in a tumultuous Monaco Grand Prix, extending his winning streak this season to five races. The race, marked by a safety car deployment and a red flag due to track damage, showcased Antonelli's composure. The 19-year-old Italian's win solidifies his lead in the Formula One championship. Antonelli's performance underscores his potential as a rising star in motorsports, drawing comparisons to legendary drivers like Ayrton Senna.



India Dominates World Yogasana Championships with 102 Gold Medals :-

India showcased a dominant performance at the inaugural World Yogasana Championships, finishing with a total of 114 medals, including an impressive 102 gold medals. The event, held at the EKA Arena, highlighted Yogasana's evolution from an ancient Indian practice into a competitive global sport. Japan and Argentina followed with three and two gold medals, respectively. The championship attracted 522 athletes from 79 countries, marking a significant milestone for Yogasana.



US Denies Somali Referee Entry Amid Security Concerns :-

Somali soccer referee Omar Abdulkadir Artan was denied entry to the United States for the World Cup due to security concerns. Despite holding a valid visa, Artan was deemed inadmissible due to alleged links to terror organizations. This incident highlights the stringent immigration policies in place and raises questions about the impact on international sporting events. The Somali government expressed disappointment, emphasizing Artan's achievements and contributions to the sport, while FIFA stated it was not involved in immigration decisions.



FIFA World Cup 2026 Kicks Off with Mexico vs. South Africa :-

The FIFA World Cup 2026 commenced with Mexico facing South Africa in Mexico City. This tournament, featuring 48 teams across the US, Canada, and Mexico, marks the largest World Cup in history. Mexico, as co-hosts, aim to leverage home advantage, while South Africa eyes an upset. The opening match, echoing the 2010 World Cup opener, sets the stage for a month-long football spectacle, uniting fans globally and showcasing the sport's ability to transcend cultural and geographical boundaries.



Bangladesh Secures Landmark ODI Series Win Against Australia :-

Bangladesh achieved a historic victory by winning their first ODI series against Australia. In a rain-affected match in Dhaka, Bangladesh chased a revised target of 192, with key contributions from Soumya Sarkar and Najmul Hossain Shanto. Mehidy Hasan Miraz's captain's knock guided the team to victory. Australia's poor start and absence of key players contributed to their defeat. This series win marks a significant milestone for Bangladesh, showcasing their growing prowess in international

cricket and boosting their confidence ahead of future contests.



Somali Referee Artan to Officiate UEFA Super Cup After World Cup Snub :-

Somali referee Omar Abdulkadir Artan has been appointed to officiate the UEFA Super Cup between Paris St Germain and Aston Villa, following his exclusion from the World Cup due to U.S. entry denial. This decision by UEFA, in collaboration with CAF, highlights ongoing efforts to support African referees on the international stage. Artan's appointment underscores the importance of inclusivity and diversity in global football, providing him with a platform to showcase his officiating skills at a prestigious event.



World Chess Federation Suspends Russia Following CAS Ruling :-

The International Chess Federation (FIDE) has suspended Russia after the Court of Arbitration for Sport upheld Ukraine's complaint regarding Russia's control of chess in occupied Ukrainian regions. The suspension requires Russia to return control of chess bodies in these areas. While Ukrainian officials celebrate the decision, concerns remain over Russian players' participation under neutral flags. The suspension reflects ongoing tensions in

international sports governance and the impact of geopolitical conflicts on global chess.



Brazil's Cunha Shines in 3-0 Victory Over Haiti at World Cup :-

Brazil's Matheus Cunha scored twice in a 3-0 win against Haiti, helping his team advance in the World Cup. Vinicius Junior added another goal, contributing to Brazil's dominant performance. Despite Haiti's spirited play, they became the first team eliminated from the tournament. The victory puts Brazil in a strong position in Group C, reflecting their improved form after a draw with Morocco. Manager Carlo Ancelotti praised the team's effectiveness and control during the match.



India Announces Squad for England ODI Series; Kohli, Bumrah Return :-

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a 15-member squad for the ODI series against England. Notable inclusions are Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah, who return to the team. Shubman Gill will lead the squad, with Shreyas Iyer as vice-captain. Kohli's return follows a hamstring injury, and Bumrah rejoins after being rested for workload management. The series starts on July 14 at Edgbaston, with subsequent matches at Sophia Gardens and Lord's.



Hockey India Celebrates Women's Nations Cup Victory with Cash Prizes :-

Hockey India has announced cash rewards for the national women's team after their victory in the FIH Hockey Women's Nations Cup in Auckland. Each player will receive ₹3 lakh, and support staff ₹1.5 lakh. India secured the title by defeating New Zealand 2-0, earning promotion to the FIH Hockey Women's Pro League. Navneet Kaur and Sunelita Toppo scored in the final, with Lalremsiami named Player of the Match. India remained unbeaten throughout the tournament.



Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Sets Record with Fastest List A Half-Century :-

Indian cricketer Vaibhav Sooryavanshi set a new record by scoring the fastest half-century in List A cricket in just 11 balls. His explosive innings contributed significantly to India's victory over Sri Lanka A in a tri-nation series final. As a teenage sensation, he has already made a mark in the IPL, and his performances have earned him a spot in the national squad for upcoming T20 series against Ireland and England, promising a bright future for Indian cricket.



Algeria Secures 2-1 World Cup Victory Over Jordan :-

Algeria triumphed over Jordan with a 2-1 win in the World Cup, thanks to second-half goals from Nadhir Benbouali and Amine Gouiri. This victory revives Algeria's campaign after an initial loss to Argentina. The match saw Riyad Mahrez's influential performance, helping Algeria level with Austria in Group J. The win sets the stage for a crucial match against Austria, evoking memories of past World Cup controversies. Algeria's strategic plays and Mahrez's skills were pivotal in the team's success.



Messi Sets Men's World Cup Scoring Record :-

Lionel Messi broke the men's World Cup scoring record with his 17th goal, surpassing Miroslav Klose, during Argentina's match against Austria. This achievement adds to Messi's illustrious career, highlighting his impact

on the global football stage. The goal, celebrated by fans worldwide, reinforces Messi's status as one of the greatest footballers in history. His continued success at the World Cup underscores his pivotal role in Argentina's pursuit of international glory.



Mexico Advances to World Cup Knockouts with Win Over Czech Republic :-

Mexico secured a place in the World Cup knockout stages with a 3-0 victory against the Czech Republic. Goals from Mateo Chavez, Julian Quinones, and Alvaro Fidalgo led Mexico to the top of Group A. The win sets up a knockout clash for Mexico, demonstrating their strong performance and determination to advance further in the tournament.



Switzerland Tops Group B with 2-1 Win Over Canada in World Cup :-

Switzerland defeated Canada 2-1 to secure their position as Group B winners in the World Cup. Goals from Ruben Vargas and Johan Manzambi propelled Switzerland to victory. Both teams advanced to the knockout stage, showcasing their competitive performance in the tournament. The match highlighted Switzerland's strategic play and Canada's resilience on the world stage.

17: State



India to Host Second BRICS Culture Working Group Meeting :-

India will host the second BRICS Culture Working Group meeting in Varanasi, focusing on cultural cooperation under the 2026 BRICS theme. The meeting will address creative economy, cultural heritage protection, and the role of culture in sustainable development. This initiative highlights India's leadership in promoting cultural collaboration and innovation among BRICS nations, reflecting shared commitments to preserving cultural diversity.



PM Modi to Inaugurate Major Projects in Gujarat and Daman :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch over ₹21,700 crore worth of development projects in Gujarat and Daman. Key initiatives include the Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway and a 200-bed ESIC Hospital in Surat. These projects aim to enhance infrastructure, healthcare, and regional connectivity. The visit will also see the

inauguration of NAMO Airport's new terminal in Daman, expected to boost economic activity and improve healthcare access in the region.



West Bengal Becomes 33rd Digital Legislature with NeVA :-

West Bengal Legislative Assembly signed an MoU to implement the National e-Vidhan Application, joining 33 other legislatures in the digital transformation initiative. This move aims to enhance legislative efficiency, transparency, and accessibility, aligning with the Digital India vision. The platform will enable seamless digital management of legislative business and records.



PM Modi Launches Rs 2,970-Crore Development Projects in Daman :-

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated and launched development projects worth Rs 2,970 crore in Daman. Spanning sectors like healthcare, aviation, and infrastructure, these projects aim to boost regional development and public services. The initiatives reflect

continued government investment in connectivity and economic growth in the Union Territory.



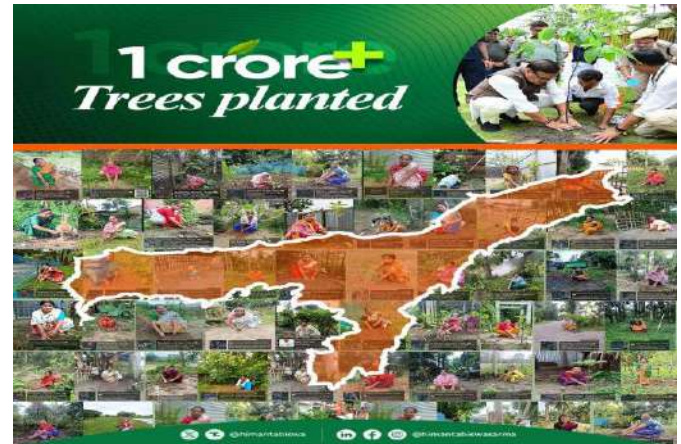
PM Modi Unveils Rs 18,800-Crore Projects in Surat :-

PM Modi inaugurated development projects worth Rs 18,800 crore in Surat, focusing on transport, industrial infrastructure, and healthcare. The projects aim to strengthen Surat's economic position and improve urban mobility. This major investment is part of a broader initiative to enhance infrastructure and connectivity in Gujarat.



Gujarat's Science Centres Attract Over 25 Lakh Visitors

Gujarat's Regional Science Centres have attracted over 25 lakh visitors in four years, promoting science education and interactive learning. Located in cities like Patan and Bhuj, they host workshops and exhibits to enhance scientific awareness. The centres reflect Gujarat's commitment to fostering innovation and inquiry-based learning.



Assam Plants Over 1 Crore Saplings on World Environment Day :-

Assam achieved a milestone by planting over 1.02 crore saplings in a single day, led by women from Self-Help Groups. This initiative, part of a broader greening drive, underscores community participation in environmental conservation. The effort reflects the state's commitment to enhancing green cover and promoting sustainable practices.



Delhi Speaker Addresses Commonwealth Parliamentary Meet :-

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta is set to address the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association India Region Zone-II North Zone Conference in Chandigarh. Themed 'Role of Aware Society and Legislators in Realising Future Challenges and the Goal of Viksit Bharat 2047,' the conference will focus on strengthening parliamentary institutions and modernizing legislative practices. Discussions will address socio-economic challenges and governance strategies, emphasizing citizen engagement in the legislative process.



West Bengal Joins Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY, Completing Nationwide Rollout :-

West Bengal has become the 36th State/Union Territory to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), marking the completion of the nationwide rollout of the world's largest health assurance scheme. The MoU was signed between the National Health Authority and the Government of West Bengal, providing approximately 1.24 crore eligible families in the state access to free and cashless healthcare services.



Ahmedabad Metro Phase 2A Approved to Enhance Connectivity :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the approval of Phase 2A of the Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project. This expansion aims to improve connectivity to the airport, reduce congestion, and support sustainable urban growth. The project includes a 6.032-km corridor with five stations and is expected to boost economic activity by enhancing public transport access. The initiative reflects the government's commitment to urban development and infrastructure improvement, promoting efficient and environmentally friendly transportation solutions in Ahmedabad.



Raipur's Charu Pandey Makes History by Clearing 19 Competitive Exams :-

Charu Pandey, a 23-year-old from Raipur, Chhattisgarh, has achieved an extraordinary feat by clearing 19 competitive exams, including SSC CGL and IBPS PO. Her dedication and hard work have made her an inspiration for many aspiring government job seekers. In recognition of her achievements, she will be honored with the prestigious 'At-Home' award at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Independence Day. Charu's journey underscores the importance of perseverance and discipline in achieving success.



Gujarat Police's Operation Milap Traces 1,470 Missing Persons :-

Gujarat State Police successfully traced 1,470 missing persons during 'Operation Milap', a month-long statewide campaign launched on May 7, 2026. The operation utilized technical intelligence, digital data analysis, and field investigations, combined with interstate coordination to resolve both old and new cases. Of those traced, 852 were women, 342 men, 234 minor girls, and 42 minor boys. Surat City Police led the initiative with 341 recoveries. This operation underscores the emphasis on family reunification,

enhancing public trust in policing, and focusing on women and child safety.



Historic Qadian-Beas Rail Link Revived After 100 Years in Punjab :-

The Centre has revived the long-pending Qadian-Beas railway line project in Punjab, originally approved during the British era. The 39.68-km corridor will enhance connectivity and bring economic opportunities to Punjab's Majha region. The project includes modern signalling systems and aims to strengthen rail operations in northern India, boosting trade and tourism in the area.



India Launches New Ayurvedic Medical College in Tripura :-

The Union Ministry of AYUSH has approved the establishment of a 60-seat Ayurvedic Medical College in Tripura, set to begin its academic session in 2026-27. This initiative aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to bolster healthcare and medical education across India. The college aims to promote traditional medicine systems and enhance healthcare services in Tripura, creating new opportunities for aspiring students.



Bihar to Receive 200 New Trains in Major Rail Expansion :-

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced the launch of a new train service between Chhapra and Delhi, as part of a plan to introduce over 200 new trains in Bihar over the next 7-8 years. The initiative aims to modernize rail infrastructure and improve connectivity in the state, with significant projects like the Delhi-Varanasi-Patna bullet train corridor approved.



Centre Approves Financial Assistance for Karnataka Mango Growers :-

The Centre approved financial assistance for Karnataka's mango growers under the Market Intervention Scheme, providing relief amid falling prices and adverse weather. Totapuri mango growers will receive Rs 1,750 per quintal for up to 1.30 lakh metric tonnes. The Price Deficiency Payment mechanism aims to protect farmers' interests during the marketing season. The scheme emphasizes procurement through notified Agricultural Produce Market Committee markets to ensure direct benefit transfers to eligible farmers.



Amit Shah Launched Bharat Taxi, First Cooperative Ride-Hailing Service :-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched 'Bharat Taxi,' India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing service, in Gujarat. The platform, operating on a 'Saarthi Hi Maalik' model, empowers drivers through ownership and social security benefits. Bharat Taxi aims to expand the cooperative movement into the transport sector, aligning with PM Modi's vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhi.' The service has gained traction in Delhi-NCR and will initially operate in 14 Gujarat cities, with plans for nationwide expansion.

18: Summits & Conferences



ECI Hosts National Conference to Enhance Electoral Legal Framework :-

The Election Commission of India held its second National Conference of ECI Counsels to discuss strategies for strengthening the electoral legal framework. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar emphasized the importance of accurate electoral rolls and praised the role of legal counsels in defending the ECI's positions. The event fostered dialogue on emerging legal challenges and aimed to enhance coordination among legal representatives and electoral bodies across the nation.



US General Engages in Rare Meeting with Cuban Military Officials :-

US General Francis Donovan met with Cuban military officials at Guantanamo Bay, marking a rare diplomatic engagement amid rising tensions. Discussions focused on operational security and maintaining communication between the two nations. This meeting follows recent high-level engagements and reflects ongoing concerns about regional stability. The dialogue underscores the importance of diplomatic channels in addressing security challenges in the Western Hemisphere.



YOGOTSAV 2026 Conclave Celebrates Diversity in Yoga

The Ministry of Ayush inaugurated YOGOTSAV 2026, a national conclave promoting dialogue among diverse yoga traditions. Held at Kaivalyadhama Yoga Institute, Lonavala, Maharashtra, the event highlights the importance of unity in India's yogic heritage. The conclave features demonstrations and discussions on various yoga practices, fostering collaboration among educators, researchers, and wellness leaders.

YOGOTSAV underscores the global relevance of yoga as a pillar of holistic wellness and sustainable living.



India and Australia to Deepen Defence Ties at Delhi Dialogue :-

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles will co-chair the second India-Australia Defence Ministers' Dialogue in New Delhi. The meeting aims to strengthen strategic and defence cooperation, focusing on military interoperability and defence industry partnerships. As key partners in the Indo-Pacific region, India and Australia continue to expand collaboration across strategic domains, reinforcing their commitment to regional peace and security.



India-Myanmar Talks Focus on Border Security and Refugee Crisis :-

During high-level talks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing discussed the impact of armed group activities along the India-Myanmar border. Modi emphasized the need for careful military operations near the border to prevent harm to Indian civilians. The discussions also tackled the refugee situation, particularly in Mizoram, with both countries working on repatriation mechanisms.



India to Host BRICS Urbanisation Forum on Resilient Cities :-

India will host the 13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum in New Delhi, focusing on inclusive and resilient urban development. The forum will bring together ministers and experts to discuss strategies for sustainable urban futures amid rapid urban growth in BRICS nations. The event underscores India's commitment to addressing shared challenges related to housing, climate risks, and urban governance, promoting cooperation among member countries.



Venezuela's Acting President Visits India to Strengthen Bilateral Ties :-

Venezuela's Acting President Delcy Rodríguez is visiting India from June 3 to June 7, 2026, to enhance cooperation in energy, trade, and healthcare sectors. The visit aims to strengthen bilateral relations and explore new avenues for collaboration. Discussions will cover energy security, investment, and renewable energy, reflecting the strategic partnership between the two nations. This visit highlights the importance of diplomatic engagements in fostering economic ties and addressing shared challenges in a rapidly changing global landscape.



President Murmu Inaugurates Tribal Development Conclave :-

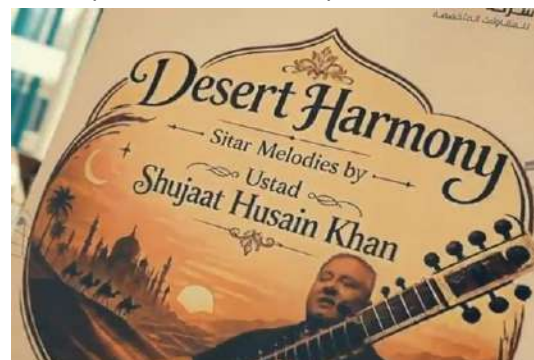
President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated a national conclave focused on strengthening tribal development agencies and projects in New Delhi. The event emphasized holistic development as essential for India's progress towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. Discussions included improving nutrition, education, and livelihoods for tribal communities, with attention to preserving cultural heritage. The conclave aims to translate development plans into actionable outcomes, ensuring inclusive growth.



BRICS Culture Working Group Discusses Creative Economy :-

The BRICS Culture Working Group meeting in Varanasi focused on creative economy collaboration and ethical AI use in the cultural sector. Delegates discussed

innovation, partnerships, and cultural exchange, emphasizing copyright protection and ethical AI considerations. The meeting aims to enhance cultural cooperation among BRICS nations, fostering inclusive development and cultural preservation.



India-Saudi Arabia Cultural Relations Strengthened :-

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh hosted 'Desert Harmony – Sitar Melodies,' a cultural event celebrating Indian classical music. The performance by sitar maestro Ustad Shujaat Husain Khan highlighted the deepening cultural ties between India and Saudi Arabia. The event emphasized the shared history and growing cooperation between the two nations, underscoring the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening bilateral relations. Such initiatives are expected to enhance people-to-people connections and mutual understanding.



IPC Holds Conclave on Indian Pharmacopoeia 2026 in Haridwar :-

The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, organized a Scientific Conclave on Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) 2026 in Haridwar to promote awareness of pharmacopoeial

standards. This event, in collaboration with the Association of Devbhumi Pharma Industries, aimed to strengthen quality compliance in the pharmaceutical sector. Key stakeholders, including pharmaceutical manufacturers, regulatory authorities, and quality assurance professionals, gathered to discuss advancements in pharmacopoeial standards.



PM Modi Chairs 11th NITI Aayog Governing Council Meeting :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog, focusing on 'Inclusive Human Development for Viksit Bharat @2047'. Chief Ministers, Union Ministers, and other officials discussed strategies to promote entrepreneurship, skill enhancement, and sustainable employment. The meeting emphasized aligning state visions with national goals, leveraging governance reforms, and data-driven systems to ensure accountability and measurable impact.



India Highlights Labour Reforms at International Labour Conference :-

At the 114th International Labour Conference in Geneva, India showcased its labour market reforms and digital public infrastructure. Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje emphasized the consolidation of 29 labour laws into four Labour Codes, improving social security and transparency. The presentation also highlighted digital platforms like the National Career Service and e-Shram Portal, expanding social protection coverage to 68.4% of the population. This reflects India's commitment to modernizing labour administration and enhancing worker welfare on a global platform.



India Advances Labour Dialogue at 114th International Labour Conference :-

Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje led the Indian delegation at the 114th International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva. Known as the 'World Parliament of Labour,' the ILC is the highest decision-making body of the International Labour Organization. India reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive growth, gender equality, and workforce welfare. Key discussions included skill development, digital transformation in employment services, and international cooperation. Bilateral meetings with countries like Nepal, France, and the US aimed at enhancing labour mobility and skill recognition, strengthening India's global labour relations.



G7 Summit in France Focuses on Global Challenges :-

G7 leaders gather in Evian-les-Bains, France, to address global challenges such as the conflict in Ukraine, economic imbalances, and AI's rise. The G7, an informal group of wealthy nations, discusses supporting Ukraine amidst ongoing conflict with Russia. Leaders are also expected to address economic imbalances, with a focus on China's trade surplus and the US's consumption patterns. AI's impact and the debt burden of developing nations are on the agenda.



India Chairs IORA Meeting to Promote Indian Ocean Regional Cooperation :-

India hosted the 28th IORA meeting, reinforcing its commitment to regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean. The discussions focused on maritime security, sustainable development, and inclusive growth. India's leadership aims to strengthen collaboration among member states and dialogue partners, addressing shared

challenges and advancing economic prosperity. The meeting highlighted India's strategic focus on enhancing regional governance and fostering cooperation for a peaceful and stable Indian Ocean Region.



India Hosts BRICS Security Meeting Focused on Non-Traditional Challenges :-

India is hosting the BRICS National Security Advisers' Meeting under the chairmanship of NSA Ajit Doval. The discussions, scheduled for June 22-23, 2026, will focus on non-traditional security challenges and the role of emerging technologies in shaping threats. The meeting aims to strengthen cooperation among BRICS nations on issues like counter-terrorism and information security. This is part of India's fourth BRICS Chairship, guided by the theme 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.



India to Host 11th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting in Gurugram :-

India will host the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting in Gurugram, focusing on energy security, sustainability, and innovation. Under the theme 'Energy for All', the

meeting aims to balance energy security with climate goals. BRICS nations, representing a significant portion of the global population and GDP, will discuss technological advancements in energy and India's progress in solar power and biofuels, showcasing its leadership in global clean energy initiatives.



PM Modi Reviews Key Infrastructure Projects at PRAGATI Meeting :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 52nd PRAGATI meeting, reviewing infrastructure projects worth ₹30,000 crore across multiple sectors. The meeting emphasized timely completion and inter-agency coordination to avoid delays and cost overruns. Modi stressed the use of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan for efficient execution. The review also covered initiatives like TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan and cybercrime grievances, underscoring the government's focus on governance and infrastructure development.



India Reaffirms Commitment to Women-Led Development at SCO Forum :-

India reaffirmed its commitment to advancing women-led development during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Women's Forum 2026 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. Union Minister Annapurna Devi highlighted India's achievements in empowering women through initiatives like Self-Help Groups and government programs such as Mission Shakti. She emphasized regional collaboration to create more opportunities for women, contributing to sustainable growth. The forum serves as a platform for member countries to exchange ideas and promote gender equality.



PM Modi Highlights India's Digital Transformation in Meeting with Queen Máxima :-

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Queen Máxima of the Netherlands to discuss India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)-led transformation in financial services. Modi emphasized how India's digital infrastructure improved financial accessibility and empowered citizens. Queen Máxima, serving as the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Financial Health, acknowledged India's role in promoting global financial inclusion. The discussions focused on technology's role in expanding access to financial services.

SECTION 2

Practice Questions with Answers



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1) Which rare dragonfly species was rediscovered in Arunachal Pradesh after 110 years?

- A) Golden-ringed Dragonfly
- B) Long-tailed Duskhawker
- C) Scarlet Skimmer
- D) Emerald Spreadwing

2) Which company commissioned the world's largest Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) outside China in 2026?

- A) Reliance Power
- B) NTPC Limited
- C) Adani Green Energy
- D) Tata Power

3) As of May 2026, India ranks what position in the Asia-Pacific region for operational data centre capacity?

- A) First
- B) Second
- C) Third
- D) Fourth

4) What is the main purpose of the Kautilya platform launched by the Indian Army in 2026?

- A) Cyber defense
- B) Drone operations
- C) AI-enabled intelligence analytics
- D) Medical logistics

5) Where will the main event of the 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 be hosted?

- A) Delhi
- B) Rishikesh
- C) Khajuraho
- D) Varanasi

6) Which state government recently announced the inclusion of over 1.36 crore families under the Ayushman Bharat health coverage?

- A) Maharashtra
- B) West Bengal
- C) Uttar Pradesh
- D) Tamil Nadu

7) Who recently assumed charge as the 48th Vice Chief of the Naval Staff of India?

- A) Vice Admiral R. Hari Kumar
- B) Admiral Karambir Singh
- C) Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar
- D) Admiral Sunil Lanba

8) Which Indian chip was recently highlighted as the country's first flagship AI System-on-Chip (SoC) at the advanced 12 nm node?

- A) Vega X
- B) Shakti 2000
- C) NETRA A2000
- D) Saksham 400

9) What is the primary objective of the BHAVYA scheme launched by the Indian government?

- A) Promoting yoga education
- B) Establishing investment-ready industrial parks
- C) Revamping public healthcare
- D) Developing rural road networks

10) Which Indian athlete set a national record by covering 282.881 km at the IAU 24-Hour Asia Oceania Championship 2026?

- A) Geeno Antony
- B) Amar Singh Devanda
- C) Saurav Kumar Ranjan
- D) Tenzin Dolma

11) As per the government's recent announcement, till which date will the customs duty exemption on cotton imports remain in effect to support the textile industry?

- A) December 31, 2026
- B) October 31, 2026
- C) June 30, 2026
- D) September 30, 2026

12) Which Indian city hosted the second National Conference of ECI Counsels to strengthen the electoral legal framework in 2026?

- E) Mumbai
- F) Chennai

G) New Delhi

H) Bengaluru

13) Which Indian sports team made history by sweeping the men's podium at the 2026 IAU 24-Hour Asia Oceania Championship?

A) Badminton Team

B) Men's Hockey Team

C) Men's Ultramarathon Team

D) Men's Kabaddi Team

14) Which area is set to host the world's largest solar energy project by 2029, as per recent reports on India's renewable expansion?

A) Thar Desert, Rajasthan

B) Kutch, Gujarat

C) Cholistan, Punjab

D) Satara, Maharashtra

15) Which Indian athlete led the women's ultramarathon team and set a new national record at the 2026 Asia-Oceania 24-hour championship?

A) Bindu Juneja

B) Aparna Choudhary

C) Tenzin Dolma

D) Shashi Mehta

16) On which date does Telangana celebrate its Statehood Day, marking its formation as India's 29th state?

A) May 1

B) June 2

C) July 15

D) August 5

17) What is the main aim of the recently launched MAHA Water Mission in India?

A) Promoting rainwater harvesting in schools

B) Supporting startups for high-impact water solutions

C) Building new dams in rural areas

D) Regulating groundwater usage

18) Which two countries recently reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen strategic partnership, focusing on trade, connectivity, and security cooperation?

A) India and Bangladesh

B) India and Myanmar

C) India and Nepal

D) India and Sri Lanka

19) Who recently assumed charge as the 20th Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command?

A) Vice Admiral SN Ghormade

B) Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty

C) Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla

D) Admiral Karambir Singh

20) Which Indian initiative aims to enhance multilingual digital access for investment and business through AI technologies?

A) Digital India BHASHINI

B) DigiLocker

C) Startup India

D) Make in India

21) Who was recently appointed as the new Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)?

A) Rahul Singh

B) Varun Bhardwaj

C) Lokhande Prashant Sitaram

D) S. Radha Chauhan

22) What is the central feature of the Gujarat Hastkala Setu Yojana (HSY) launched in 2020?

A) Free education for girls

B) Promotion of traditional arts and crafts

C) Renewable energy generation

D) Urban infrastructure development

23) Which recent event caused Ahmedabad Metro ridership to surge by 66%?

A) Gujarat Assembly Elections

B) Navratri Festival

C) IPL 2026 Final

D) Vadodara Marathon

24) Which country did India recently hand over humanitarian aid for hepatitis C treatment?

A) Iran

B) Ukraine

- C) Bangladesh
- D) Uganda

25) Which initiative recorded 23.2 billion transactions worth Rs 29.9 trillion in May 2026?

- A) RuPay
- B) NEFT
- C) Unified Payments Interface (UPI)
- D) IMPS

26) Which event led the Indian government to approve a ₹10,000 crore support package for aviation fuel price stabilization in June 2026?

- A) COVID-19 pandemic
- B) Ongoing West Asia crisis
- C) Rupee depreciation
- D) Rising domestic demand

27) Which country gained immediate duty-free access for Indian textiles and apparel exports under a CEPA agreement effective June 2026?

- A) Sri Lanka
- B) Oman
- C) Bangladesh
- D) Qatar

28) Which payment system did NPCI International launch for cross-border transactions in Cambodia in June 2026?

- A) BHIM
- B) RuPay
- C) UPI
- D) IMPS

29) Who took oath as the Chief Minister of Karnataka in June 2026?

- A) Siddaramaiah
- B) B.S. Yediyurappa
- C) D.K. Shivakumar
- D) G. Parameshwara

30) Which major initiative was launched in June 2026 to support grassroots innovators in India, especially from non-metro areas?

- A) Startup India Mission
- B) Navachar Mantra

- C) Digital India
- D) Make in India

31) Which country recently received India's first-ever sea shipment of value-added millet products?

- A) Australia
- B) New Zealand
- C) United States
- D) Singapore

32) What is the main aim of the 'Yoga 365' campaign launched by the Ministry of Ayush?

- A) Promote daily meditation
- B) Encourage year-round engagement with yoga
- C) Organize yoga camps only on International Yoga Day
- D) Fund yoga studios across India

33) Who inaugurated the new terminal building of NAMO Airport and NAMO Hospital in Daman in June 2026?

- A) President Droupadi Murmu
- B) PM Narendra Modi
- C) Union Minister Amit Shah
- D) CM Bhupendra Patel

34) What major environmental campaign was launched in Gujarat on World Environment Day 2026?

- A) Green India Mission
- B) Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 3.0
- C) Mission LiFE
- D) Swachh Van Abhiyan

35) Which two countries launched the Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory in June 2026?

- A) India and Australia
- B) India and Japan
- C) India and UK
- D) India and USA

36) In June 2026, which Indian state set a new record by planting over 1 crore saplings in a single day, led by women Self-Help Groups?

- A) Kerala
- B) Assam

- C) Maharashtra
- D) Madhya Pradesh

37) Which Indian state accounts for one-fifth of the nation's renewable energy capacity, as highlighted by PM Modi in June 2026?

- A) Tamil Nadu
- B) Karnataka
- C) Gujarat
- D) Rajasthan

38) India's real GDP growth for FY 2025-26 was estimated at what percentage, according to official data released in June 2026?

- A) 6.2%
- B) 8.3%
- C) 7.7%
- D) 7.1%

39) Which country did India recently reiterate its commitment to fight cross-border terrorism with, during Foreign Office Consultations in June 2026?

- A) Greece
- B) France
- C) Russia
- D) Japan

40) In June 2026, India lodged a protest against Pakistan's plan to hold elections in which disputed region?

- A) Balochistan
- B) Sindh
- C) Gilgit-Baltistan
- D) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

41) Who was recently awarded the UN 2005 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for her peacekeeping role in Lebanon?

- A) Major Suman Gawani
- B) Major Radhika Sen
- C) Major Abhilasha Barak
- D) Major Priya Jhingan

42) Which Indian chess player became the first from the country to win the prestigious Norway Chess title in 2026?

- A) Viswanathan Anand
- B) D Gukesh
- C) R Praggnanandhaa
- D) Vidit Gujrathi

43) Which endangered species in Tamil Nadu recorded a population increase to 1,364 in the latest 2026 survey?

- A) Indian Elephant
- B) Bengal Tiger
- C) Nilgiri Tahr
- D) Asiatic Lion

44) What is the main focus of the Centre's newly launched report for State Finance Commissions?

- A) Climate change adaptation
- B) Evidence-based fiscal governance
- C) Digital literacy enhancement
- D) Agricultural subsidies

45) Which Indian women's team recently secured a bronze medal at the U18 Asia Cup 2026?

- A) U18 Women's Football Team
- B) U18 Women's Kabaddi Team
- C) U18 Women's Hockey Team
- D) U18 Women's Volleyball Team

46) Which digital platform won the Silver Award at the National e-Governance Awards 2026 for transforming consumer justice delivery in India?

- A) e-Daakhil
- B) e-Jagriti
- C) NCDRC CMS
- D) CONFONET

47) Which two countries recently signed an MoU to develop an AI-powered multilingual language technology platform?

- A) India and Bhutan
- B) India and Bangladesh
- C) India and Nepal
- D) India and Sri Lanka

48) Which Indian government scheme has reportedly helped families save approximately Rs 2.25 lakh crore in medical costs, as per PM Modi?

- A) Jan Aushadhi Yojana
- B) Ayushman Bharat
- C) Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
- D) Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana

49) Which country did India hold the 8th Joint Commission Meeting with in June 2026 to discuss priorities under their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership?

- A) Thailand
- B) Vietnam
- C) Indonesia
- D) Malaysia

50) Which Indian government initiative was credited with expanding the country's startup ecosystem from around 400 in 2014 to over 2.3 lakh by 2026?

- A) Startup India
- B) Make in India
- C) Digital India
- D) Skill India

51) Which Indian state became the last to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), completing its nationwide rollout in June 2026?

- A) Tamil Nadu
- B) West Bengal
- C) Kerala
- D) Punjab

52) Who received the Shaurya Chakra at the 2026 Defence Investiture Ceremony for bravery during a November 2024 counter-terrorist operation in Anantnag?

- A) Major Ashish Kumar
- B) Rifleman Bhoj Ram Sahu
- C) Major Shivkant Yadav
- D) Constable Sanjay Tiwari

53) What was a significant outcome of the Italian-led SeA Care project presented in June 2026?

- A) Discovery of new marine species

- B) Detection of antibiotic resistance genes in world oceans
- C) Breakthrough in ocean-based renewable energy
- D) Establishment of new shipping routes

54) What milestone did the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) celebrate in June 2026?

- A) 5 years
- B) 15 years
- C) 10 years
- D) 20 years

55) What is the main objective of the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana (BHAVYA), launched with a digital portal in June 2026?

- A) Promote organic farming
- B) Develop 100 industrial parks
- C) Expand digital banking
- D) Boost tourism infrastructure

56) Which new digital platform was recently launched to modernise and streamline operations at India's land ports?

- A) BharatNet
- B) Vinimay (LPMS)
- C) Sagarmala
- D) Digital Seva

57) What is the main objective of the Blue Valley Cluster initiative launched by the Assam government and the EU?

- A) Promote tourism in Assam
- B) Expand cooperation in bioeconomy sectors
- C) Develop hydroelectric projects
- D) Build new highways

58) Which Indian state will host the first large-scale solar power project with battery storage on defence land?

- A) Rajasthan
- B) Maharashtra
- C) Uttar Pradesh
- D) Gujarat

59) Who recently flagged off solar-powered skill vans to expand digital access in India?

- A) Dharmendra Pradhan
- B) Chirag Paswan
- C) Jayant Chaudhary
- D) Smriti Irani

60) Which event did Chirag Paswan inaugurate to promote food processing in South Asia?

- A) AgriConnect
- B) SAPLING 2026 Dialogue
- C) Food India Expo
- D) Krishi Mela

61) According to the latest report, what percentage of the critically endangered Tapanuli orangutan population was lost due to the 2025 Indonesia floods?

- A) 2%
- B) 5%
- C) 7%
- D) 10%

62) Which country recently received a group of 14 Indian skilled workers under a bilateral labour mobility framework?

- A) Singapore
- B) United Kingdom
- C) Mauritius
- D) United Arab Emirates

63) What is the total value of investments the Indian Chamber of Commerce plans to channel into West Bengal, as per June 2026 announcements?

- A) Rs 10,000 crore
- B) Rs 25,000 crore
- C) Rs 50,000 crore
- D) Rs 1 lakh crore

64) Which Indian government scheme recently crossed one lakh guarantees, covering over Rs 48,000 crore in loans?

- A) PM-KISAN
- B) ECLGS 5.0
- C) CGSMFI-2.0

D) PMAY

65) In June 2026, which two states signed reform-linked MoUs with the Centre under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0?

- A) Bihar and Manipur
- B) Karnataka and Telangana
- C) Punjab and Haryana
- D) Odisha and Assam

66) Which two countries recently launched a direct cross-border remittance system linking their digital payment platforms UPI and NPI?

- A) India and Bhutan
- B) India and UAE
- C) India and Nepal
- D) India and Singapore

67) Which scheme under the Ministry of MSME is helping Divyangjan (differently-abled) artisans expand their market reach through railway stations?

- A) PM Mudra Yojana
- B) PM Vishwakarma Scheme
- C) PM SVANidhi Yojana
- D) PM Gram Sadak Yojana

68) India's recent capital expenditure push in the passenger vehicle sector is primarily focused on which area?

- A) Diesel engine expansion
- B) Electric vehicle adoption
- C) Luxury car imports
- D) Two-wheeler manufacturing

69) Which Indian state's salt pans recently attracted large flocks of migratory flamingos, highlighting the need for habitat protection?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Maharashtra
- C) Tamil Nadu
- D) Odisha

70) Which project aims to implement the CAQM framework for paving and greening urban roads in the NCR region of Uttar Pradesh?

- A) Smart Roads Mission
- B) Clean Cities Initiative
- C) CSIR-CRRI – PWD MoA project
- D) AMRUT 2.0

71) Which agreement underpins the recent deepening of economic ties between India and Switzerland, involving a \$100 billion investment commitment?

- A) India-EU FTA
- B) India-US Trade Pact
- C) India-EFTA TEPA
- D) India-ASEAN Agreement

72) Which major event, jointly inaugurated by PM Modi and President Macron in June 2026, aims to promote innovation-led partnerships between India and France?

- A) Vibrant India Summit
- B) Bharat Innovates 2026
- C) France-India Tech Expo
- D) Innovation for Tomorrow

73) What recent directive did FSSAI issue to improve consumer safety in food packaging?

- A) Ban on plastic bags
- B) Compulsory nutrition labeling
- C) Prohibition of metallic pins and wires
- D) Mandatory expiry date stamping

74) Which five Indian states account for nearly 50% of the country's leprosy burden, as highlighted by the Health Ministry in June 2026?

- A) Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana
- B) Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh
- C) West Bengal, Assam, Rajasthan, Kerala, Tamil Nadu
- D) Karnataka, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Assam

75) Which Indian institution unveiled the world's most detailed 3D atlas of the human brainstem in June 2026?

- A) AIIMS Delhi
- B) IIT Bombay

- C) IIT Madras
- D) NIMHANS Bengaluru

76) Who was appointed as the new Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of India and will assume office on June 30, 2026?

- A) General Upendra Dwivedi
- B) Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth
- C) Lieutenant General Satish Dua
- D) General Manoj Pande

77) Which country hosted the 16th BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in June 2026?

- A) China
- B) Russia
- C) India
- D) Brazil

78) From July 1, 2026, which organization will handle Indian passport and consular services in the UAE?

- A) BLS International Services Limited
- B) SGIVS Global
- C) Al Hind Tours and Travels
- D) VFS Global

79) What historic milestone was achieved by the Indian Military Academy (IMA) in June 2026?

- A) First foreign cadets commissioned
- B) First women cadets commissioned as officers through NDA
- C) First batch of Agniveers graduated
- D) Introduction of drone warfare training

80) Which Indian city recently saw the inauguration of a Hexaware Technologies delivery centre expected to create 1,000 skilled jobs?

- A) Bengaluru
- B) Hyderabad
- C) Noida
- D) GIFT City, Gandhinagar

81) During his June 2026 visit, which European country did Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit for the first time since its independence in 1993, marking a historic milestone in bilateral relations?

- A) Hungary
- B) Slovakia
- C) Poland
- D) Austria

82) Which Indian bowler achieved a career-best five-wicket haul in India's 64-run win over Pakistan in the Women's T20 World Cup 2026?

- A) Harmanpreet Kaur
- B) N Sree Charani
- C) Deepti Sharma
- D) Richa Ghosh

83) What is the primary objective of the 700 SHE-MARTs and 1,000 district fulfilment centres announced by the Indian government in June 2026?

- A) Promote organic farming
- B) Boost women-led enterprises
- C) Enhance agricultural exports
- D) Support digital banking

84) Which agreement was adopted by India and France in June 2026 to provide long-term direction in technology and innovation cooperation?

- A) Horizon 2047
- B) Innovation Roadmap 2030
- C) Digital India Pact
- D) Atal Tinkering Mission

85) In June 2026, which Indian naval ship concluded a successful port visit to Sri Lanka, reinforcing maritime cooperation?

- A) INS Vikramaditya
- B) INS Sharda
- C) INS Arihant
- D) INS Chakra

86) Which two countries recently elevated their relationship to a 'Comprehensive Partnership' and agreed to set up a Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism?

- A) India and France
- B) India and Slovakia
- C) India and Germany

- D) India and Japan

87) What is the primary purpose of the newly launched WT-MARUT portal in India?

- A) Monitoring water quality
- B) Tracking railway safety
- C) Strengthening wind turbine supply chain
- D) Facilitating labor migration

88) As per the latest PLFS data from May 2026, what was India's overall unemployment rate?

- A) 4.2%
- B) 5.5%
- C) 6.4%
- D) 7.2%

89) Which Indian state festival, celebrating womanhood and the onset of the monsoon, began on June 14, 2026?

- A) Onam
- B) Raja Parba
- C) Bihu
- D) Pongal

90) Which new safety technology did Indian Railways approve for installation in the Ambala and Ahmedabad divisions in June 2026?

- A) Bio-toilets
- B) Kavach Automatic Train Protection
- C) Solar-powered signals
- D) Bullet Train Corridors

91) Which prestigious award was conferred upon PM Modi by Slovakia in June 2026?

- A) Order of the Lion
- B) Order of the White Double Cross, First Class
- C) Grand Cross of the Sun
- D) Order of the Slovak Star

92) Which two companies became the first OEMs to partner with the Centre's vehicle replacement scheme for Delhi-NCR in June 2026?

- A) Tata Motors and Mahindra
- B) Ashok Leyland and Switch Mobility
- C) Eicher and Volvo
- D) Bajaj and Hero

93) What is the main objective of the partnership between BHASHINI and Government e Marketplace (GeM) announced in June 2026?

- A) Promote cashless payments
- B) Enable multilingual access to procurement
- C) Launch a new e-wallet
- D) Digitize tax collection

94) Which rare fruit, known as the 'Egg of the Sun', was offered for the first time at Ayodhya's Ram Mandir in June 2026?

- A) Alphonso Mango
- B) Miyazaki Mango
- C) Langra Mango
- D) Keitt Mango

95) Which Indian state inaugurated an Integrated Aqua Park in June 2026 to boost the fisheries sector?

- A) West Bengal
- B) Maharashtra
- C) Bihar
- D) Kerala

96) Which Indian city will host the national launch of the 'Viksit Bharat – Rozgar aur Aajeevika Mission (Gramin)' (VB-G RAM G) on July 1, 2026?

- A) Hyderabad
- B) Patna
- C) Vijayawada
- D) Visakhapatnam

97) Which Indian payment technology was launched by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal at Galleries Lafayette in Nice, France, in June 2026?

- A) RuPay
- B) Unified Payments Interface (UPI)
- C) BharatQR
- D) BHIM

98) What is the key eligibility cut-off date for beneficiaries under Delhi's JJ Cluster Rehabilitation Policy, as per the June 2026 review?

- A) January 1, 2024
- B) January 1, 2025

C) June 30, 2026

D) December 31, 2026

99) Which national park in Assam recorded zero rhino and tiger poaching cases for three consecutive years as of June 2026?

- A) Kaziranga National Park
- B) Manas National Park
- C) Nameri National Park
- D) Orang National Park

100) What major healthcare infrastructure project was approved by the Maharashtra Cabinet in Nagpur in June 2026?

- A) Super-specialty hospital
- B) High-Energy Medical Cyclotron Project
- C) AIIMS branch
- D) Cancer Research Institute

101) What was a key outcome of the Bharat Innovates 2026 summit held in Nice, France?

- A) Launch of the Indo-French Space Mission
- B) Inauguration of a new IIT campus in France
- C) Over USD 250 million funding commitments to Indian startups
- D) Signing of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement

102) Which major employment-linked incentive scheme did PM Modi announce disbursement for on June 19, 2026?

- A) PM-KISAN
- B) PM-VBRY
- C) PM-SVANidhi
- D) PM-DAKSH

103) What significant development did INS Tarkash achieve during its June 2026 port call in Seychelles?

- A) Commissioning of a new naval base
- B) Signing a defence pact with Seychelles
- C) Strengthening maritime cooperation under MAHASAGAR vision
- D) Participating in anti-piracy operations

104) Which initiative was highlighted as a global model for solar-powered agriculture, offering solutions for Africa's food security?

- A) PM-KUSUM
- B) PM-FME
- C) PM-KISAN
- D) PM-UDAN

105) During the G7 Summit in June 2026, which major bilateral agreement was welcomed by leaders?

- A) US-China Climate Accord
- B) US-Iran Preliminary Peace Deal
- C) EU-India Security Pact
- D) Japan-Australia Trade Agreement

106) Which two countries are set to jointly launch the TRISHNA satellite in 2027 for global water and food security?

- A) India and Japan
- B) India and Russia
- C) India and France
- D) India and USA

107) Which Indian city is hosting the Asian Senior Fencing Championships 2026 for the first time?

- A) Mumbai
- B) Chennai
- C) Delhi
- D) Kolkata

108) At the 2026 VivaTech Summit in Paris, what status did India hold?

- A) Official Host Country
- B) AI Country Partner
- C) Technology Jury Chair
- D) Event Media Sponsor

109) What significant change did the UAE introduce regarding social media access in June 2026?

- A) Mandatory government monitoring for all users
- B) Ban on foreign social media platforms
- C) Minimum age for access set at 15 years
- D) No restrictions on social media usage

110) What is the main benefit of the new electrolyte additive BDIM developed by INST Mohali for aqueous zinc-ion batteries?

- A) Increases voltage output
- B) Reduces manufacturing costs
- C) Improves battery durability and safety
- D) Boosts battery weight

111) Which major reform was announced in June 2026 regarding scholarship access for SC and OBC students in India?

- A) Increased scholarship amount by 50%
- B) Introduction of online interviews
- C) Removal of domicile certificate requirement
- D) Limiting scholarships to one per family

112) What milestone did India achieve in March 2026 regarding Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)?

- A) First nationwide ceasefire agreement
- B) Naxal-Free India declaration
- C) Formation of a new anti-Naxal task force
- D) Ban on arms in affected districts

113) Which three indigenously designed Indian Navy platforms were commissioned in Kolkata in June 2026?

- A) INS Vikrant, INS Arihant, INS Talwar
- B) Dunagiri, Sanshodhak, Agray
- C) INS Kolkata, INS Chennai, INS Kochi
- D) INS Shivalik, INS Satpura, INS Sahyadri

114) Which Indian institution signed an MoU in June 2026 to establish a long-term climate monitoring station in the Himalayas?

- A) ISRO
- B) IIT Delhi
- C) IITM Pune and ARIES Nainital
- D) IIM Ahmedabad

115) What significant step was taken by India in defence production and exports, as highlighted by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in June 2026?

- A) Importing advanced fighter jets
- B) Achieving defence production and export targets ahead of schedule

- C) Reducing defence budget by half
- D) Outsourcing all arms manufacturing

116) Which Indian state recently exported its famous litchis to Italy for the first time?

- A) Bihar
- B) West Bengal
- C) Uttarakhand
- D) Maharashtra

117) Which region has emerged as a major growth engine for India, featuring the world's first 100% organic state and major infrastructure projects?

- A) Western India
- B) Northeast India
- C) Southern India
- D) Central India

118) Which international agreement will officially come into force on July 15, 2026, boosting trade and innovation between India and the UK?

- A) India-UK Defence Pact
- B) India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)
- C) Indo-British Space Collaboration
- D) India-UK Green Energy Accord

119) What major step did the Ministry of Defence take to strengthen Aatmanirbhar Bharat in June 2026?

- A) Increased FDI in defence
- B) Signed contract for 1.25 MW Marine Gas Turbine Generators
- C) Imported advanced fighter jets
- D) Established a joint venture with Russia

120) Which state was recently granted approval for a new 60-seat Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital?

- A) Sikkim
- B) Assam
- C) Tripura
- D) Kerala

121) Who extended global wishes highlighting yoga's universality on International Day of Yoga 2026?

- A) Joe Biden
- B) Antonio Guterres
- C) Rishi Sunak
- D) Olaf Scholz

122) What was a key feature introduced for International Day of Yoga 2026 to promote year-round wellness?

- A) Yoga at Home
- B) Yoga 365
- C) Yoga for Schools
- D) Digital Yoga

123) Which Indian state was announced to be developed as a model 'Solar Village' by PM Modi in June 2026?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Odisha
- C) Rajasthan
- D) Madhya Pradesh

124) Who chaired the BRICS National Security Advisers' Meeting hosted by India in June 2026?

- A) S. Jaishankar
- B) Ajit Doval
- C) Narendra Modi
- D) Amit Shah

125) Which international waterway was at the center of U.S.-Iran tensions during peace talks in June 2026?

- A) Suez Canal
- B) Bab-el-Mandeb
- C) Strait of Hormuz
- D) Bosporus Strait

126) Which national park did President Droupadi Murmu visit in June 2026 to review Project Cheetah's progress?

- A) Kaziranga National Park
- B) Gir National Park
- C) Kuno National Park

D) Jim Corbett National Park

127) Which country donated the most recent batch of cheetahs to India's Project Cheetah in February 2026?

- A) Namibia
- B) South Africa
- C) Botswana
- D) Kenya

128) What is the primary focus of the ongoing US-Iran talks in Switzerland as of June 2026?

- A) Agricultural cooperation
- B) Iran's nuclear programme
- C) Oil price agreements
- D) Trade tariffs

129) INS Tarkash's June 2026 port call to Mauritius primarily aimed to:

- A) Transport relief supplies
- B) Enhance maritime cooperation
- C) Conduct a rescue operation
- D) Host a sports event

130) Which Indian city held the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting in June 2026?

- A) Bengaluru
- B) Ahmedabad
- C) Gurugram
- D) Hyderabad

131) Who recently became the all-time leading scorer in men's FIFA World Cup history with 17 goals?

- A) Cristiano Ronaldo
- B) Miroslav Klose
- C) Lionel Messi
- D) Neymar

132) Which Indian state does re-elected Rajya Sabha member Neeraj Dangi represent?

- A) Madhya Pradesh
- B) Uttar Pradesh
- C) Rajasthan
- D) Gujarat

133) Which Indian student became the CBSE Class 12 national topper in 2026 after re-evaluation?

- A) Priya Sharma
- B) Avni Kejriwal
- C) Riya Singh
- D) Neha Gupta

134) India is constructing a major oil refinery in Mongolia's Dornogovi Province with a soft Line of Credit of how much?

- A) USD 500 million
- B) USD 750 million
- C) USD 1.7 billion
- D) USD 2.5 billion

135) The Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament 2026 commenced in which Indian city?

- A) Mumbai
- B) Delhi
- C) Chennai
- D) Bengaluru

136) Who was among the prominent recipients of the Padma Bhushan award in 2026?

- A) Rohit Sharma
- B) Vijay Amritraj
- C) P. Narayanan
- D) Savita Punia

137) During the 2026 International Day of Yoga, which unique campaign connected locations along the Ganga?

- A) Yoga Yatra
- B) Ganga Yoga Abhiyan
- C) Gangotri to Gangasagar
- D) Namami Gange Yoga

138) Which Indian state recently launched the 'School on Wheels' initiative for children in salt-producing regions?

- A) Maharashtra
- B) Gujarat
- C) Rajasthan
- D) Tamil Nadu

139) Which Indian city hosted the first-ever Asian Games Fun Run for the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Games?

- A) Mumbai
- B) Bengaluru
- C) Thiruvananthapuram
- D) Chennai

140) Which art form from Rajasthan was highlighted internationally during PM Modi's Slovakia visit in June 2026?

- A) Phad painting
- B) Thewa art
- C) Blue pottery
- D) Meenakari

141) Which Indian government initiative marks the start of the 150th anniversary celebrations of 'Vande Mataram' in June 2026?

- A) Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
- B) Vande Mataram Camp
- C) Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Yatra
- D) National Youth Festival

142) What is the primary objective of the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB–G RAM G) Act commencing from July 1, 2026?

- A) Universal Healthcare
- B) Rural Employment and Livelihoods
- C) Smart Cities Development
- D) Free Education for All

143) Which atmospheric phenomenon was identified as the primary cause of France's record-breaking June 2026 heatwave?

- A) El Niño
- B) Jet Stream Split
- C) Omega Block
- D) Polar Vortex

144) Which Indian state signed a Joint Venture Agreement with NLC India in June 2026 to develop 1,000 MW of green energy projects?

- A) Tamil Nadu
- B) Gujarat
- C) Odisha

- D) Maharashtra

145) Which health scheme was launched by the Delhi government in June 2026 for construction workers and their families?

- A) Delhi Ayushman Yojana
- B) Delhi Building and Construction Workers Health Scheme
- C) Delhi Swasthya Mission
- D) Mukhyamantri Swasthya Suraksha

146) According to the IMF's June 2026 update, what is India's projected GDP growth rate for fiscal year 2026-27?

- A) 5.5%
- B) 6.0%
- C) 6.5%
- D) 7.8%

147) Which two agreements between India and the UK are scheduled to come into force on July 15, 2026?

- A) Bilateral Investment Treaty and Double Taxation Agreement
- B) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement and Double Contribution Convention
- C) Free Trade Agreement and Strategic Partnership Agreement
- D) Science and Technology Pact and Cultural Exchange Program

148) Which Indian state's mango growers received Centre-approved assistance under the Market Intervention Scheme in June 2026?

- A) Maharashtra
- B) West Bengal
- C) Karnataka
- D) Andhra Pradesh

149) What major step did the Indian government take in June 2026 to curb counterfeit vaccines and medicines?

- A) Ban on online medicine sales
- B) Mandatory hologram labels on all drugs
- C) Expansion of QR code tracking to vaccines, antimicrobials, and cancer drugs

D) Reduction of drug prices by 20%

150) Which ministry launched the AIR SUVIDHA 2.0 portal for Ebola screening of international travelers in June 2026?

A) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

B) Ministry of Civil Aviation

C) Ministry of External Affairs

D) Ministry of Home Affairs

ANSWERS

1) Correct Answer: B

The Long-tailed Duskhawker (*Gynacantha khasiaca*) was rediscovered in Arunachal Pradesh in October 2024. The last record was from the 1914 Abor Expedition. The rediscovery, published in 2026, highlights the region's rich biodiversity.

2) Correct Answer: C

Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) commissioned a 3.37 GWh BESS at Khavda, Gujarat, in May 2026. This is the largest single-location BESS outside China. The system can power nearly 10 lakh homes for a day. It marks a major step in India's renewable energy and grid stability drive.

3) Correct Answer: B

India holds the second spot in the Asia-Pacific region for operational data centre capacity, with 1.6 GW as of May 2026. Mumbai is projected to cross 1 GW by the end of 2026. This rapid growth is driven by enterprise demand and policy support.

4) Correct Answer: C

Kautilya is an AI-enabled intelligence and data analytics platform launched by the Indian Army in May 2026. It uses Natural Language Processing for rapid data-based insights. This supports faster and better battlefield decision-making.

5) Correct Answer: C

The 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 will be celebrated at the Khajuraho temples in Madhya Pradesh. The announcement was made in May 2026, with a 25-day Yoga Mahotsav countdown. Khajuraho links India's heritage with global wellness.

6) Correct Answer: B

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari declared the expansion of Ayushman Bharat to 1.36 crore families. This initiative aims to boost healthcare infrastructure

and affordability for the poor in the state. The announcement included new hospital wards, expanded vaccination drives, and mandatory reserved beds for poor patients in private hospitals.

7) Correct Answer: C

Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar took charge as the 48th Vice Chief of the Naval Staff on May 29, 2026. With over 37 years of service, he has held several key command and staff roles, including command of INS Vikramaditya and the Western Fleet.

8) Correct Answer: C

The NETRA A2000, developed by Netrasemi, is India's first flagship Edge AI SoC at the advanced 12 nm node. This chip powers real-time AI for smart vision devices and demonstrates India's growing design capability in the global semiconductor sector.

9) Correct Answer: B

The BHAVYA scheme aims to create investment-ready industrial parks, enabling rapid manufacturing activity and job creation. Announced by the DPIIT Secretary, it focuses on attracting investors and boosting India's manufacturing ecosystem.

10) Correct Answer: B

Amar Singh Devanda set a new Indian national record by covering 282.881 km at the IAU 24-Hour Asia Oceania Championship in Japan in May 2026. His performance led India's men's team to a historic gold and set a new Asia-Oceania record.

11) Correct Answer: B

The Centre has waived customs duty on cotton imports from June 1, 2026, to October 31, 2026. This measure aims to support the textile industry by lowering input costs and ensuring raw material availability. The waiver is expected to benefit manufacturers, especially SMEs.

12) Correct Answer: C

The Election Commission of India organized the second National Conference of ECI Counsels in New Delhi. This event focused on enhancing legal frameworks and strategies for electoral integrity. Such initiatives reinforce free and fair elections in India.

13) Correct Answer: C

India's men's ultramarathon team swept the podium at the 2026 IAU 24-Hour Asia & Oceania Championship in Japan. Amar Singh Devanda set a national record with 282.881 km. This feat marks India's best ever performance in ultrarunning.

14) Correct Answer: B

The Khavda solar park in Kutch, Gujarat, is projected to become the world's largest solar energy project by 2029. It will feature nearly 60 million solar panels and generate 30 GW of electricity. This demonstrates India's rapid transition to renewable energy.

15) Correct Answer: C

Tenzin Dolma led the Indian women's ultramarathon team and set a new national record with 228.939 km. Her performance placed her fourth overall at the 2026 Asia-Oceania championship. This achievement highlights the growing success of Indian women in endurance sports.

16) Correct Answer: B

Telangana celebrates Statehood Day on June 2 each year. The state was officially formed on June 2, 2014, after being carved out of Andhra Pradesh. This day marks the culmination of the long-standing movement for separate statehood.

17) Correct Answer: B

The MAHA Water Mission, launched on June 1, 2026, aims to support startups in developing high-impact water solutions. It is a Rs 200 crore initiative to foster innovation through multidisciplinary consortia. This is crucial for addressing India's water challenges.

18) Correct Answer: B

India and Myanmar reaffirmed their commitment to stronger strategic partnership during President Min Aung Hlaing's visit to India in June 2026. The talks emphasized trade, connectivity projects, and security cooperation. Such partnerships are vital due to the shared border and regional dynamics.

19) Correct Answer: B

Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty took charge as the 20th Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command. The ANC is India's only tri-service command, crucial for securing maritime interests in the Indo-Pacific. His appointment reinforces India's strategic and security posture in this region.

20) Correct Answer: A

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Digital India BHASHINI signed an MoU to expand multilingual access using AI. The BHASHINI platform supports all 22 scheduled Indian languages, making business and investment information accessible nationwide.

21) Correct Answer: C

Lokhande Prashant Sitaram, a 2001-batch IAS officer, was appointed as CBSE Chairperson. The appointment came amid controversy over the CBSE's On-Screen Marking system. He replaces Rahul Singh as part of a major administrative reshuffle.

22) Correct Answer: B

HSY, launched in 2020, supports Gujarat's traditional arts and crafts and artisans' market access. It has recorded Rs 102 crore in sales and created over 50,000 jobs. The scheme aligns with self-reliance and cultural preservation goals.

23) Correct Answer: C

The IPL 2026 final held at Narendra Modi Stadium on May 31, 2026, led to a 66% rise in Ahmedabad Metro ridership. Nearly two lakh journeys were recorded as services were extended late into the night. This highlights the impact of major sporting events on urban transport.

24) Correct Answer: B

On June 2, 2026, India handed over hepatitis C medicines to Ukraine's Ministry of Health. This aid is part of India's ongoing humanitarian support to Ukraine. The assistance strengthens India's global health diplomacy. It reflects India's commitment to international humanitarian efforts.

25) Correct Answer: C

UPI processed 23.2 billion transactions totaling Rs 29.9 trillion in May 2026, according to NPCI data. UPI is now

the backbone of India's digital payment ecosystem. This record showcases India's digital transformation. It signifies the scale and resilience of Indian fintech infrastructure.

26) Correct Answer: B

The Indian government approved the ₹10,000 crore aviation fuel support due to the ongoing West Asia crisis in June 2026. This crisis caused extreme volatility in fuel prices, impacting airline operations. The package aims to stabilize Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices for airlines.

27) Correct Answer: B

The India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) came into force in June 2026, granting Indian textiles and apparel duty-free access. Oman eliminated the existing 5% MFN duty, boosting India's export competitiveness.

28) Correct Answer: C

NPCI International launched Unified Payments Interface (UPI) acceptance in Cambodia in June 2026. This enables Indian travelers to pay at over 4.5 million Cambodian merchants via QR codes. The move strengthens digital payment connectivity and enhances convenience for travelers and businesses between India and Cambodia.

29) Correct Answer: C

D.K. Shivakumar was sworn in as the 34th Chief Minister of Karnataka in June 2026. The ceremony was attended by senior Congress leaders, marking a significant leadership transition. Shivakumar played a key role in the state Congress's recent electoral success. His appointment is important for Karnataka's political landscape and policy direction.

30) Correct Answer: B

'Navachar Mantra' was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. This programme aims to identify, nurture, and scale grassroots innovations, focusing on Tier-2, Tier-3 cities, and rural areas. The initiative is crucial for fostering inclusive entrepreneurship and strengthening India's innovation ecosystem.

31) Correct Answer: B

India sent its first-ever sea shipment of value-added millet products to New Zealand in June 2026. The export,

facilitated by APEDA, reflects the growing demand for Indian millets globally. The consignment was shipped from Karnataka and highlights India's expanding agri-food export opportunities.

32) Correct Answer: B

The 'Yoga 365' campaign, launched in June 2026 during the World Yogasana Championship, aims to encourage year-round engagement with yoga. Announced by PM Modi, it seeks to foster healthier lifestyles through continuous yoga practice.

33) Correct Answer: B

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the NAMO Airport terminal and NAMO Hospital in Daman. These projects are designed to boost healthcare and air connectivity in the Union Territory. The initiatives, costing nearly ₹2,970 crore, reflect the government's commitment to regional development. Enhanced infrastructure supports tourism and economic growth.

34) Correct Answer: B

Gujarat launched 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 3.0' on World Environment Day 2026, with CM Bhupendra Patel inaugurating the campaign. This initiative aims to plant millions of trees across the state using the 'Van Kavach' method. The campaign promotes ecological balance and community participation.

35) Correct Answer: C

India and the UK jointly launched the Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory. The initiative, involving IIT (ISM) Dhanbad and the University of Cambridge, aims to monitor and strengthen global critical mineral supply chains.

36) Correct Answer: B

Assam planted over 1.02 crore saplings in one day on World Environment Day 2026. The drive was led by women from Self-Help Groups (SHGs), with over 35 lakh women participating. This large-scale effort set a new record for community-led greening initiatives.

37) Correct Answer: C

Gujarat contributes 50 gigawatts out of India's 250 GW renewable energy capacity, or one-fifth of the total. PM Modi highlighted this during his visit to Gujarat on World

Environment Day 2026. Gujarat's leading role includes solar parks and pioneering green initiatives.

38) Correct Answer: C

India's real GDP grew by 7.7% in FY 2025-26, as per Ministry of Statistics data. The strong growth was driven by robust performance in agriculture, manufacturing, and services. This demonstrates India's economic resilience amid global uncertainties.

39) Correct Answer: A

India and Greece reaffirmed their commitment against cross-border terrorism during the 14th round of Foreign Office Consultations held in New Delhi. Both nations reviewed bilateral ties and discussed enhancing cooperation in defense, trade, and technology.

40) Correct Answer: C

India protested Pakistan's plan to hold 'Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly' elections. India reiterated that Gilgit-Baltistan is an integral part of India, illegally occupied by Pakistan. The protest highlights ongoing disputes and India's firm stance on its sovereignty over Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

41) Correct Answer: C

Major Abhilasha Barak received the UN 2005 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award on June 6, 2026. She is India's first woman combat helicopter pilot and currently serves with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. Her leadership in promoting women's participation and supporting local communities was recognized by the UN Secretary-General.

42) Correct Answer: C

R Praggnanandhaa clinched the Norway Chess 2026 title, becoming the first Indian to do so. His victory included wins against top players like Magnus Carlsen and D Gukesh. His achievement marks a major milestone for Indian chess on the global stage.

43) Correct Answer: C

The Nilgiri Tahr population in Tamil Nadu rose to 1,364 according to a June 2026 survey. This represents a 4.68% increase from the previous year, reflecting successful conservation efforts. The species inhabits the Western Ghats and is Tamil Nadu's state animal.

44) Correct Answer: B

The Centre's newly launched report aims to bolster evidence-based fiscal governance for State Finance Commissions. It provides a comprehensive mapping of essential datasets to support fiscal analysis and democratic decentralisation.

45) Correct Answer: C

The Indian U18 Women's Hockey Team won the bronze medal at the 2026 Asia Cup in Japan after defeating Korea 3-0. Standout performances were delivered by Sandeepa Kumari, Sweetu Kujur, and Nousheen Naz. The tournament showcased India's attacking prowess and defensive discipline.

46) Correct Answer: B

e-Jagriti won the Silver Award at the National e-Governance Awards 2026. Launched on January 1, 2025, e-Jagriti consolidates multiple legacy systems into one AI-enabled platform for consumer grievance redressal. It has achieved a case disposal rate exceeding 90% and improved access for NRIs.

47) Correct Answer: C

India and Nepal signed the MoU in June 2026 between Digital India BHASHINI Division and Kathmandu University's DPI-AI. The agreement aims to develop AI-driven multilingual services and digital public infrastructure. This initiative supports digital inclusion and preservation of linguistic diversity.

48) Correct Answer: B

Ayushman Bharat has helped families save around Rs 2.25 lakh crore, as stated by PM Modi on June 6, 2026. The scheme provides up to Rs 5 lakh health coverage to over 60% of Indian families. It has increased institutional deliveries and immunisation rates.

49) Correct Answer: C

India and Indonesia held their 8th Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi. The meeting covered trade, maritime security, digital connectivity, and regional cooperation. The partnership was elevated in 2018, marking deepening ties. Strengthened India-Indonesia relations bolster India's Act East policy and ASEAN engagement.

50) Correct Answer: A

Startup India was highlighted by Union Minister Jitendra Singh as a driver of the surge in Indian startups, growing from a few hundred in 2014 to over 2.3 lakh in 2026. The initiative fuels job creation and innovation, with a notable presence in Tier-II/III cities.

51) Correct Answer: B

West Bengal joined AB PM-JAY on June 8, 2026, becoming the 36th state/UT to implement the scheme. This marked the completion of the nationwide rollout of the world's largest health assurance program. Over 1.24 crore West Bengal families now benefit from health coverage.

52) Correct Answer: A

Major Ashish Kumar was awarded the Shaurya Chakra for his leadership in a November 2024 counter-terrorist operation in Anantnag. His actions led to the elimination of two terrorists, including a Category A++ operative. This recognition highlights India's commitment to combating terrorism and honoring military bravery.

53) Correct Answer: B

The SeA Care project found antibiotic-resistance genes across global oceans, as reported in June 2026. This indicates oceans act as reservoirs for pollution and antibiotic traces. The study warns of health risks due to global pollution spread.

54) Correct Answer: C

PMSMA marked its 10th anniversary in June 2026 with a 'Decade of Care' campaign. Launched in 2016, the scheme provides free antenatal care to pregnant women. It has helped lower India's maternal mortality and improve maternal health.

55) Correct Answer: B

The BHAVYA scheme, launched in June 2026, aims to develop 100 world-class industrial parks across India. The BHAVYA Portal supports digital project management. The initiative is expected to drive large-scale investment and job creation.

56) Correct Answer: B

Vinimay (Land Port Management System - LPMS) was inaugurated by Home Minister Amit Shah. It enables seamless coordination among customs, immigration, and other agencies at land ports. This state-of-the-art

platform integrates land ports into a unified digital system.

57) Correct Answer: B

The Blue Valley Cluster aims to expand cooperation in bioeconomy sectors such as natural flavours, fragrances, and AYUSH. Launched in Guwahati, it connects European and Indian enterprises. The initiative supports sustainable industrial growth and innovation.

58) Correct Answer: C

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved a 250 MW solar power project with battery storage in Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh. This is the first such project on defence land in India. It will enhance energy security for defence establishments and promote renewable energy.

59) Correct Answer: C

Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, flagged off five Solar Community Hub Skill Vans. The vans bring AI-enabled learning and digital tools to underserved communities. This initiative is in collaboration with Dell Technologies and NSDC.

60) Correct Answer: B

Chirag Paswan inaugurated the SAPLING 2026 Dialogue in Ahmedabad. The event focuses on advancing food processing for employment and sustainable growth in South Asia. It is a joint initiative of MoFPI and the World Bank Group.

61) Correct Answer: C

At least 7% of the Tapanuli orangutan population was lost in the 2025 Sumatra floods. The disaster killed 58 orangutans out of a total population of about 800. Human-induced climate change and deforestation intensified the impact.

62) Correct Answer: C

Mauritius received 14 Indian workers under the India-Mauritius G2G Labour Mobility Framework in June 2026. The initiative ensures ethical recruitment and worker welfare. It is part of India's strategy to expand overseas opportunities for its skilled workforce.

63) Correct Answer: D

The Indian Chamber of Commerce outlined plans to facilitate investments worth Rs 1 lakh crore in West

Bengal in June 2026. This demonstrates strong industry confidence in the state's economic prospects. Such large-scale investments are expected to accelerate regional growth.

64) Correct Answer: B

The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0 surpassed one lakh guarantees and covered Rs 48,484 crore in loans as of June 9, 2026. The scheme mainly benefits MSMEs facing stress from geopolitical crises. It ensures liquidity support and business continuity.

65) Correct Answer: A

Bihar and Manipur signed reform-linked MoUs with the Centre under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 in June 2026. The agreements aim to ensure sustainable, community-driven rural drinking water systems. These reforms enhance water access and quality.

66) Correct Answer: C

India and Nepal operationalized a direct remittance linkage between UPI and NPI. This integration enables real-time and secure money transfers, enhancing financial connectivity. The system supports travellers and businesses by simplifying cross-border payments.

67) Correct Answer: B

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme supports Divyangjan artisans via the OSOP (One Station One Product) initiative. Dedicated outlets at railway stations enhance visibility and sales. The scheme promotes economic inclusion and financial independence among differently-abled artisans.

68) Correct Answer: B

According to a June 2026 Crisil report, over Rs 24,000 crore of planned capex is allocated to electric vehicle (EV) expansion. This reflects a structural shift towards EVs in India's automobile industry. Key drivers include increased model availability, declining costs, and better driving ranges.

69) Correct Answer: C

Thoothukudi salt pans in Tamil Nadu have seen a large influx of migratory flamingos in June 2026. Experts stress the ecological importance of such coastal habitats.

Flamingos use these areas as vital feeding and resting grounds during migration.

70) Correct Answer: C

CSIR-CRRI and the Uttar Pradesh PWD signed an agreement on June 11, 2026, to implement the CAQM framework on urban roads. The project focuses on sustainable road design, reducing dust pollution, and promoting greener urban environments.

71) Correct Answer: C

India and Switzerland reaffirmed their commitment under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA). The agreement involves a \$100 billion investment over 15 years and aims to create one million jobs. TEPA is crucial for integrating India into global trade and value chains, enhancing long-term economic growth.

72) Correct Answer: B

Bharat Innovates 2026 was jointly inaugurated by PM Modi and President Macron in Nice, France. This event brings together Indian innovators, HEIs, and global investors. It is a cornerstone in enhancing India's role in global innovation networks, especially in deep-tech and emerging technologies.

73) Correct Answer: C

FSSAI directed food businesses to stop using metallic pins, staple pins, and wires in food packaging. This move addresses reported incidents of such materials in food, which pose choking and injury risks. The directive strengthens food safety standards and consumer protection across India.

74) Correct Answer: B

The Health Ministry identified Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh as accounting for about 50% of India's leprosy cases. Targeted interventions in these states are crucial for achieving a leprosy-free India, highlighting the importance of state-specific health strategies.

75) Correct Answer: C

IIT Madras released the ANCHOR atlas, the world's most detailed 3D atlas of the human brainstem. Developed by the Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre, this innovation aids global research and clinical applications in

neurobiology, placing India at the forefront of brain science.

76) Correct Answer: B

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth will take charge as COAS on June 30, 2026. He is currently serving as the Vice Chief and has four decades of military experience. His appointment comes as the Army focuses on modernization and enhanced capability, vital for India's strategic readiness.

77) Correct Answer: C

India hosted the 16th BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The meeting on June 12-13, 2026, emphasized farmer-centric initiatives and sustainable agriculture. India's leadership in the event highlights its commitment to global food security and agricultural innovation.

78) Correct Answer: C

Al Hind Tours and Travels LLC will be the new outsourced service provider for Indian passport and consular services in the UAE from July 1, 2026. This change follows a tendering process and marks a major transition for the Indian diaspora.

79) Correct Answer: B

Nine women cadets were commissioned as officers from IMA after entering through the National Defence Academy (NDA). This marks the first time women received direct permanent commissions into the Indian Army at commissioning.

80) Correct Answer: D

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the Hexaware Technologies delivery centre in GIFT City, Gandhinagar. The facility will generate about 1,000 skilled technology jobs over the next three years. This development strengthens Gujarat's position in emerging digital sectors, supporting India's innovation and employment growth.

81) Correct Answer: B

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's June 2026 visit to Slovakia was the first by an Indian PM since Slovakia's independence in 1993. This visit is significant for deepening India-Slovakia cooperation. Key meetings with Slovak leaders are expected to boost bilateral ties.

82) Correct Answer: C

Deepti Sharma took 5 wickets for 10 runs, her career-best figures, against Pakistan in the Women's T20 World Cup 2026. Her performance dismantled Pakistan's batting, leading to a comprehensive 64-run victory for India. Deepti's bowling turned the game decisively in India's favor.

83) Correct Answer: B

The government plans to set up 700 SHE-MARTs and 1,000 fulfilment centres to boost market access for women-led enterprises. This initiative supports the goal of creating six crore 'Lakhpatti Didis' under DAY-NRLM. It aims to empower rural women entrepreneurs.

84) Correct Answer: B

The India-France Innovation Roadmap 2030 was adopted to guide cooperation in technology and innovation. It sets a long-term framework for bilateral collaboration in emerging sectors. The agreement reflects the growing depth of India-France ties.

85) Correct Answer: B

INS Sharda concluded a successful visit to Colombo, Sri Lanka, in June 2026. The port call featured professional training and sporting exchanges with the Sri Lankan Navy. Such visits enhance operational capabilities and maritime security cooperation.

86) Correct Answer: B

India and Slovakia elevated their ties to a Comprehensive Partnership. This move was announced during PM Modi's historic visit to Slovakia, the first ever by an Indian PM. The two countries also agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism.

87) Correct Answer: C

WT-MARUT portal, launched on June 15, 2026, is India's first dedicated wind turbine supply chain management portal. It aims to boost the domestic wind manufacturing ecosystem and enhance compliance with sourcing requirements.

88) Correct Answer: B

India's overall unemployment rate remained steady at 5.5% in May 2026 according to the PLFS data. This figure reflects unchanged conditions year-on-year, with urban unemployment declining and rural unemployment seeing a slight increase.

89) Correct Answer: B

Raja Parba, a three-day festival, began on June 14, 2026 in Odisha. It celebrates the onset of the monsoon, womanhood, and Mother Earth. This festival highlights Odisha's agrarian traditions and promotes environmental consciousness and cultural heritage.

90) Correct Answer: B

Indian Railways approved the installation of the indigenously developed Kavach Automatic Train Protection system for Ambala and Ahmedabad divisions in June 2026. Kavach enhances railway safety by preventing collisions, applying brakes automatically, and regulating speeds, crucial for operational efficiency.

91) Correct Answer: B

The 'Order of the White Double Cross, First Class' is Slovakia's highest civilian honour, conferred upon PM Modi in June 2026. The award recognized his efforts in strengthening bilateral relations. This honour underlines India's rising global stature and deepens India-Slovakia friendship.

92) Correct Answer: B

Ashok Leyland and its electric subsidiary, Switch Mobility, became the first to join the government's vehicle replacement scheme in June 2026. This initiative encourages replacing old polluting vehicles with BS-VI or electric vehicles, supporting clean mobility and reducing air pollution in Delhi-NCR.

93) Correct Answer: B

The June 2026 MoU between BHASHINI and GeM aims to enable multilingual access to public procurement platforms. Using AI-powered language tools, the partnership will make procurement services accessible in multiple Indian languages, boosting inclusion for MSMEs and startups nationwide.

94) Correct Answer: B

The Miyazaki mango, known as the 'Egg of the Sun', is the world's costliest mango and was offered at Ayodhya's Ram Mandir in June 2026. Grown by a local farmer, its successful cultivation in India is seen as a horticultural achievement and a cultural milestone.

95) Correct Answer: C

Bihar inaugurated a ₹31.21-crore Integrated Aqua Park in Bhojpur in June 2026. The park aims to modernize aquaculture, enhance fish production, and support local livelihoods, making Bihar a leading inland fish-producing state.

96) Correct Answer: C

The national launch of VB-G RAM G will take place from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, on July 1, 2026. Andhra Pradesh was chosen due to its model practices in rural governance. The event will showcase Andhra Pradesh's success in rural development and panchayat models.

97) Correct Answer: B

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) was launched in France by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal in June 2026. This enables Indian travelers to make digital payments directly in France. The move strengthens Indo-French digital and economic ties.

98) Correct Answer: B

The eligibility cut-off date for Delhi's JJ Cluster Rehabilitation Policy has been set as January 1, 2025. This was finalized in the June 2026 review meeting chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah. The policy aims to benefit around four lakh slum families in Delhi.

99) Correct Answer: B

Manas National Park achieved zero rhino and tiger poaching for three years, announced in June 2026. This reflects intensive conservation and anti-poaching efforts by Assam's authorities. Manas is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and critical for endangered wildlife.

100) Correct Answer: B

The High-Energy Medical Cyclotron Project (HEMCP) was approved for Nagpur in June 2026. This Rs 300 crore project will supply radioisotopes for advanced cancer diagnostics. It will reduce dependence on Mumbai and Hyderabad for such services.

101) Correct Answer: C

Bharat Innovates 2026 concluded with over USD 254.5 million in funding commitments for Indian startups. The summit showcased India's deep-tech innovation and fostered global partnerships. Over 40 Indian startups secured investor follow-ups, highlighting robust international investor interest.

102) Correct Answer: B

PM Modi disbursed Rs 2,400 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY). The scheme encourages formal job creation and workforce participation. Launched in August 2025, it aims to generate over 3.5 crore jobs in two years.

103) Correct Answer: C

During its June 2026 visit, INS Tarkash engaged in activities to strengthen maritime cooperation under India's MAHASAGAR vision. The ship conducted outreach, hosted cultural events, and reinforced India-Seychelles maritime ties.

104) Correct Answer: A

India's PM-KUSUM scheme was showcased as a model for solar-powered agriculture in Africa. The scheme has facilitated millions of solar pumps, improving irrigation and farmer incomes. It demonstrates how clean energy can address food security and sustainable development.

105) Correct Answer: B

At the June 2026 G7 Summit, leaders welcomed the US-Iran preliminary peace deal. The agreement aims to end the Iran war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. The G7's support underlines international commitment to peace in West Asia.

106) Correct Answer: C

India and France will jointly launch the TRISHNA satellite in 2027. The mission is designed to enhance global water and food security. Announced by PM Modi during his Paris visit, this collaboration reflects the deepening India-France partnership in science and technology.

107) Correct Answer: C

Delhi is hosting the Asian Senior Fencing Championships 2026 for the first time. The event, from June 19-24, marks a historic milestone in Indian sports. It showcases India's growing capacity to host major international sporting events and aligns with the Khelo Bharat Niti 2025 vision.

108) Correct Answer: B

India was the AI Country Partner at VivaTech 2026 in Paris. This status, highlighted by Foreign Secretary Misri and PM Modi, reflects India's growing influence in global

technology and its emphasis on inclusive, people-centric AI solutions.

109) Correct Answer: C

The UAE set 15 years as the minimum age for social media access in June 2026. The regulation aims to enhance child safety online, requiring strict age verification and privacy protections. This move sets a new standard for digital child protection in the region.

110) Correct Answer: C

The BDIM additive improves durability and safety of aqueous zinc-ion batteries. Developed by INST Mohali in June 2026, it suppresses side reactions and dendrite growth, extending operational life. This innovation supports affordable, sustainable energy storage for India's renewable energy goals.

111) Correct Answer: C

The government removed the need for a domicile certificate under Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes for SCs and OBCs in June 2026. This reform simplifies documentation and reduces compliance costs. Nearly 1.2 crore students benefit annually, especially those studying outside their home states.

112) Correct Answer: B

On March 31, 2026, India declared itself effectively free from Left-Wing Extremism after nearly six decades. This followed a 12-year integrated strategy of security, development, and rehabilitation. The transformation reduced LWE-affected districts from 126 to just 2.

113) Correct Answer: B

The Indian Navy commissioned Dunagiri (stealth frigate), Sanshodhak (survey vessel), and Agray (ASW craft) in Kolkata. These ships enhance maritime combat, surveying, and anti-submarine capabilities. Over 75% indigenous content reflects India's growing shipbuilding strength.

114) Correct Answer: C

IITM Pune and ARIES Nainital signed an MoU to set up a climate observation station at Devasthal, Uttarakhand. This forms part of the Bharat Climate Observation Network (BCON) for advanced climate research. The 50-year partnership will support climate data collection, policy-making, and model validation for India.

115) Correct Answer: B

Rajnath Singh announced that India is set to achieve ₹3 lakh crore in defence production and ₹50,000 crore in exports ahead of schedule. Indigenous manufacturing and exports have risen sharply since 2014. This strengthens India's self-reliance and global presence in defence technology.

116) Correct Answer: C

Uttarakhand exported its Dehradun litchis to Italy in June 2026. This inaugural export was facilitated by APEDA, marking the entry of Indian horticultural products into European markets. The Dehradun litchi is renowned for its sweetness and quality. This development boosts India's agri-exports and benefits farmers with better returns.

117) Correct Answer: B

The Northeast region is now home to global landmarks like Sikkim (first 100% organic state), the world's longest bi-lane tunnel, and the tallest girder rail bridge. Government policy and infrastructure expansion have driven this transformation. Improved connectivity and clean energy initiatives are notable.

118) Correct Answer: B

The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will take effect on July 15, 2026. This agreement aims to unlock new trade, investment, and technological innovation opportunities. It is seen as a milestone in India-UK relations.

119) Correct Answer: B

The Ministry of Defence signed a Rs 425 crore contract with Bharat Forge for 12 sets of 1.25 MW Marine Gas Turbine Generators. Over 60% indigenous content is mandated in these generators for the Indian Navy. This step enhances maritime self-reliance in critical technologies.

120) Correct Answer: C

Tripura received approval to establish a 60-seat Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital at Udaipur, Gomati district. The college will admit students from the 2026-27 academic session. This initiative will strengthen traditional medicine education and healthcare in Tripura.

121) Correct Answer: B

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres extended greetings on International Day of Yoga 2026. He praised yoga's ancient Indian roots and global appeal, emphasizing its role in promoting well-being across generations. His endorsement further elevates India's cultural diplomacy.

122) Correct Answer: B

The 'Yoga 365' initiative was introduced during IDY 2026 to encourage the regular practice of yoga throughout the year, not just on a single day. This approach aims to integrate yoga into daily life in homes, schools, and workplaces. This is vital for preventive healthcare in India.

123) Correct Answer: B

Pahadpur village in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district was announced by PM Modi as a model 'Solar Village.' This initiative will ensure access to solar power in every household and aligns with India's sustainable development goals. It sets a template for similar projects nationwide.

124) Correct Answer: B

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval chaired the BRICS National Security Advisers' Meeting in June 2026. The meeting, held under India's BRICS Chairship, focused on non-traditional security challenges and emerging technologies. BRICS cooperation is crucial for global stability.

125) Correct Answer: C

The Strait of Hormuz was central to U.S.-Iran tensions as Iran's Revolutionary Guards claimed to have shut it during June 2026 peace talks. This strait is a crucial corridor for global oil and gas supplies. Disruption threatened energy security and global markets.

126) Correct Answer: C

President Murmu visited Kuno National Park to assess Project Cheetah. Project Cheetah is India's flagship initiative to reintroduce cheetahs, extinct in the country, into the wild. Kuno was chosen for its suitable habitat and low human disturbance.

127) Correct Answer: C

Botswana donated the latest batch of cheetahs to India's Project Cheetah, arriving in February 2026. This followed

earlier batches from Namibia and South Africa. The international cooperation highlights the global effort in wildlife reintroduction.

128) Correct Answer: B

The primary agenda of the US-Iran talks in Switzerland in June 2026 is Iran's nuclear programme. Discussions also include regional security issues. The negotiations aim to prevent further conflict in the Middle East. Such talks have global implications for peace and security, affecting India's interests too.

129) Correct Answer: B

INS Tarkash visited Port Louis, Mauritius, in June 2026 to enhance maritime cooperation. The Indian Navy conducted training for the Mauritius Coast Guard. Such visits reinforce bilateral defense relations and regional security. Maritime collaboration is crucial for India's Indian Ocean strategy.

130) Correct Answer: C

Gurugram, Haryana organised the 11th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting in June 2026. The summit was focus on energy security, innovation, and sustainability. BRICS represents major global economies, impacting energy policy worldwide. India's role as host showcases its growing leadership in clean energy transitions.

131) Correct Answer: C

Lionel Messi set the record by scoring his 17th World Cup goal. This surpassed the previous record held by Miroslav Klose. Messi achieved this milestone during the 2026 World Cup, marking his sixth tournament appearance.

132) Correct Answer: C

Neeraj Dangi represents Rajasthan in the Rajya Sabha. His oath was administered by the Rajya Sabha Chairman at Parliament House, New Delhi. Such representation strengthens Rajasthan's voice in national policy discussions.

133) Correct Answer: B

Avni Kejriwal from Ranchi secured a perfect 500/500 after re-evaluation in June 2026. She is a commerce student at DPS Dhurva, Ranchi. Her case highlights the importance of review mechanisms in exams. This achievement motivates students to trust their preparation and the official process.

134) Correct Answer: C

India extended a USD 1.7 billion soft Line of Credit for Mongolia's oil refinery project. This initiative was reviewed during EAM Jaishankar's visit in June 2026. The project is India's largest overseas soft LoC and deepens bilateral strategic ties.

135) Correct Answer: D

The seventh edition of the Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament began in Bengaluru. The event is organized by the Air Force Sports Control Board. It honors Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh and promotes sportsmanship in the armed forces.

136) Correct Answer: B

Vijay Amritraj received the Padma Bhushan in 2026. The awards were conferred by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Padma Bhushan is India's third-highest civilian award. Recognizing Vijay Amritraj highlights India's appreciation for excellence in sports and international representation.

137) Correct Answer: C

The 'Gangotri to Gangasagar' campaign was a major highlight of IDY 2026. It covered nearly 2,525 km along the Ganga, connecting key locations through yoga sessions. The event emphasized the role of yoga in holistic wellness.

138) Correct Answer: B

Gujarat launched the 'School on Wheels' project in June 2026. It converted retired buses into solar-powered mobile classrooms for Agariya community children. This addresses educational challenges due to seasonal migration.

139) Correct Answer: C

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, hosted the first-ever Fun Run for the 2026 Asian Games. The event drew over 40,000 participants. It reflects Kerala's strong sporting culture and India's growing role in Asian sports. Such events boost public engagement and youth fitness.

140) Correct Answer: B

Thewa art, known for gold engravings on colored glass, was spotlighted during PM Modi's Slovakia trip. Cufflinks with Thewa motifs were gifted to Slovakia's President.

This 400-year-old craft from Pratapgarh, Rajasthan, gained global attention.

141) Correct Answer: B

The Vande Mataram Camp began at Brainware University, West Bengal in June 2026. It commemorates the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram', composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. The camp is organized by Mera Yuva Bharat under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

142) Correct Answer: B

The VB-G RAM G Act focuses on rural employment and livelihoods from July 1, 2026. It aims to drive rural development through Panchayati Raj Institution-led planning and convergence of various government schemes. By emphasizing water security, infrastructure, and climate resilience, it targets sustainable rural growth and job creation.

143) Correct Answer: C

The Omega Block caused the June 2026 French heatwave. This atmospheric pattern traps high-pressure, leading to prolonged heat. The phenomenon is intensified by climate change, making heatwaves more frequent and severe, impacting societies and infrastructure across Europe.

144) Correct Answer: C

Odisha partnered with NLC India in June 2026 for 1,000 MW of renewable energy projects. The agreement includes wind and floating solar power, boosting Odisha's clean energy targets and reinforcing its commitment to sustainable industrial growth.

145) Correct Answer: B

The Delhi Building and Construction Workers Health Scheme was announced in June 2026. It covers 2.7 lakh workers and their families for cashless medical services,

addressing long-standing health vulnerabilities and promoting social security for a vital workforce.

146) Correct Answer: C

The IMF forecasts India's economy will grow by 6.5% in FY 2026-27. This projection was maintained in the IMF's June 2026 briefing, reflecting India's resilience amid global headwinds and energy shocks. The upward revision from previous forecasts highlights strong domestic demand and policy support.

147) Correct Answer: B

The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Double Contribution Convention (DCC) are set to come into effect on July 15, 2026. Announced by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, these agreements aim to deepen economic and strategic ties.

148) Correct Answer: C

Karnataka's Totapuri mango growers received financial assistance through the Market Intervention Scheme. The June 2026 package provides Rs 1,750 per quintal to address price falls and weather impacts. The move aims to protect farmers' incomes and support agricultural stability.

149) Correct Answer: C

The government expanded QR code-based tracking to vaccines, antimicrobials, anti-cancer, and narcotic drugs in June 2026. This regulatory change strengthens supply chain integrity and safety. By ensuring traceability, it helps combat counterfeit medicines and improves public health outcomes.

150) Correct Answer: B

The Ministry of Civil Aviation, in collaboration with Delhi International Airport Limited, launched the AIR SUVIDHA 2.0 portal in June 2026. The portal enhances public health surveillance amid the Ebola outbreak by requiring international travelers to submit health declarations.

SECTION 3

Detailed Analysis of Important Events



Economics

IIP Growth Slows to 4.9% in April 2026



Why in the News?

India's industrial output, measured through the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**, registered a growth of **4.9% in April 2026**, compared to **5.8% growth in April 2025**. Alongside the release of industrial production data, the government introduced a **revised IIP series with a new base year of 2022–23**, replacing the earlier 2011–12 series.

The revision aims to better reflect the current structure of the Indian economy, technological changes, and emerging industrial activities.

What is the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)?

The **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** is a key economic indicator that measures the **short-term changes in the volume of production of industrial sectors in India**.

It is compiled and released every month by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.

The IIP serves as an important barometer of the country's industrial health and provides insights into:

- Industrial growth trends
- Manufacturing performance
- Economic activity levels
- Investment and production patterns
- Business cycle movements

Since industry forms a significant part of India's economy, IIP data is closely monitored by policymakers, investors, economists, and financial markets.

Components of IIP

The index primarily covers three major sectors:

Sector	Significance
Mining and Quarrying	Extraction of minerals and raw materials
Manufacturing	Production of goods in factories
Electricity	Power generation and distribution

Among these, **manufacturing carries the highest weight**, accounting for nearly **75% of the overall IIP**, making it the most influential component of industrial growth.

New IIP Series (Base Year 2022–23)

To ensure that the index reflects the contemporary industrial landscape, the government has revised the IIP series.

Change in Base Year

Particular	Old Series	New Series
Base Year	2011–12	2022–23
Base Index Value	100	100

The base year is revised periodically so that the index accurately captures changing production patterns, technological advancements, and the emergence of new industries.

Expansion of Product Basket

One of the most significant changes in the revised series is the expansion of coverage.

New Series

- **1,042 products**
- **463 item groups**

Earlier Series

- **839 products**
- **407 item groups**

The larger basket allows the index to better represent the current industrial structure of the country.

Major Changes Introduced

The revised IIP broadens its scope beyond traditional industrial activities by incorporating several service-linked utility sectors that play a crucial role in modern industrial production.

Newly Included Activities

- Gas supply
- Water supply
- Sewerage activities
- Waste management activities

These sectors are essential components of urban infrastructure and industrial ecosystems and align the IIP more closely with international statistical standards.

Sector-wise Performance in April 2026

1. Mining and Quarrying

- Output contracted by **more than 5%**.
- Weak performance in mining exerted downward pressure on overall industrial growth.

Possible reasons include:

- Lower extraction activity
- Operational disruptions
- Demand fluctuations in key mineral sectors

2. Manufacturing

- Grew by **6.2%** in April 2026.
- Continued to remain the primary driver of industrial growth.

Given its large weight in the index, manufacturing growth helped offset weakness in mining.

Growth was supported by:

- Strong domestic demand
- Expansion in consumer and capital goods production
- Improved industrial capacity utilization

3. Utilities and Infrastructure-linked Activities

The inclusion of gas, water, sewerage, and waste management activities is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of industrial infrastructure development and public utility services.

Significance of the New IIP Series

The revised IIP series is important because it:

Reflects Structural Changes

India's economy has undergone significant transformation since 2011–12, with new industries, technologies, and infrastructure sectors gaining prominence.

Improves Policy Formulation

More accurate industrial data enables the government and the Reserve Bank of India to make better policy decisions regarding:

- Growth strategies
- Industrial incentives
- Monetary policy

Enhances Data Quality

A larger product basket improves statistical representation and reduces distortions arising from outdated industrial weights.

Aligns with Global Practices

The inclusion of utility and environmental management activities brings India's industrial statistics closer to international standards used by advanced economies.

Base Year Revision of Wholesale Price Index (WPI)



Why in the News?

The Government of India has approved a major revision of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), changing its base year from **2011-12 to 2022-23**. Alongside the revised WPI series, India will also introduce a new set of **Producer Price Indices (PPIs)** from **15 June 2026**. The move is aimed at modernising the country's inflation measurement framework and aligning it with international statistical standards.

The revision was undertaken by the **Office of Economic Adviser (OEA)** under the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

What is the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)?

The **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** measures the average change in prices of goods traded in bulk at the wholesale level before they reach retail consumers.

It is one of India's key inflation indicators and reflects price movements from the perspective of producers, manufacturers, and wholesalers.

Key Features of WPI

- Measures changes in wholesale prices of goods.
- Covers only **goods**, not services.
- Used for economic analysis, policy formulation, and inflation monitoring.
- Published monthly by the Office of Economic Adviser.
- Acts as an indicator of cost pressures in the production and supply chain.

Present Structure of WPI

The existing WPI series is based on **2011-12 prices** and broadly covers three major groups:

1. Primary Articles
2. Fuel and Power
3. Manufactured Products

Why is the Base Year Revised?

A base year serves as the reference year against which price changes are measured. Over time, the structure of an economy changes significantly due to technological advancements, industrial diversification, changing production patterns, and the emergence of new products.

Periodic revision of the base year helps ensure that the index remains representative of current economic realities.

Objectives of Base Year Revision

- Reflect the latest structure of the economy.
- Capture emerging industries and products.
- Remove obsolete commodities.
- Improve data quality and statistical accuracy.
- Align inflation measurement with current production patterns.
- Enhance comparability with international statistical practices.

The shift to **2022-23** provides a more realistic picture of India's rapidly evolving economy, particularly in sectors such as renewable energy, electronics, advanced manufacturing, and modern services.

Major Changes in the Revised WPI Series**1. Significant Expansion of Item Basket**

The number of commodities covered under WPI has increased substantially:

Particulars	Previous Series	Revised Series
Number of Items	697	957

The inclusion of additional products ensures better representation of the contemporary production landscape and improves the accuracy of inflation measurement.

Benefits

- Wider sectoral coverage.
- Better representation of industrial output.
- Improved measurement of producer-level inflation.
- Reduced distortions arising from outdated commodity baskets.

2. Inclusion of Renewable Energy Sources

One of the most significant reforms is the inclusion of emerging energy sources under the electricity category.

Newly Included Energy Sources

- Solar Energy
- Wind Energy
- Nuclear Electricity

Importance

India's energy mix has undergone substantial transformation due to the expansion of renewable energy capacity and commitments towards clean energy transitions.

Including these sources helps:

- Reflect actual energy production patterns.
- Capture price movements in green energy sectors.
- Support evidence-based energy policy formulation.
- Align inflation statistics with India's sustainability goals.

What are Producer Price Indices (PPIs)?

The **Producer Price Index (PPI)** measures changes in prices received by producers for their output and paid by them for inputs during the production process.

Unlike traditional wholesale price indices, PPIs provide a broader and more comprehensive view of producer-level inflation.

The index is widely used across developed economies, including the United States, European Union, Canada, Japan, and Australia.

Relationship Between WPI and PPI

The WPI can be viewed as a limited form of producer price measurement because it tracks price changes for goods sold by producers.

However, PPIs provide a more comprehensive framework.

Feature	WPI	PPI
Covers Goods	Yes	Yes
Covers Services	No	Yes
Measures Output Prices	Partly	Yes
Measures Input Prices	No	Yes
Tracks Production Stages	Limited	Comprehensive
International Standard	Limited	Widely Accepted

Thus, the new PPI system represents an evolution from a goods-centric inflation indicator to a broader producer inflation framework.

Components of Producer Price Indices

1. Output Producer Price Index (OPPI)

The OPPI measures prices received by producers when they sell their products.

Significance

- Closest equivalent to the traditional WPI.
- Reflects producer earnings.
- Indicates inflation originating from production activities.

Since WPI primarily tracks prices of goods sold by producers, it is broadly comparable to the OPPI component.

2. Input Producer Price Index (IPPI)

The IPPI measures prices paid by producers for inputs used during production.

These include:

- Raw materials
- Fuel
- Energy
- Machinery
- Intermediate goods
- Industrial services

Importance

The IPPI provides early warning signals of cost-push inflation by identifying rising production costs before they are passed on to consumers.

Limitation of WPI

The current WPI does not separately measure producer input costs, making the IPPI a significant addition.

3. Service Producer Price Index (SPPI)

The Service Producer Price Index measures price changes in the services sector.

Coverage

It may include sectors such as:

- Banking
- Insurance
- Telecommunications
- Railways
- Aviation
- Logistics
- Professional Services

Importance

Given the increasing contribution of services to India's GDP, incorporating service-sector inflation will make inflation measurement more representative of the modern economy.

This component is entirely absent in the traditional WPI framework.

Significance of the Reform

The revised WPI and the introduction of PPIs represent one of the most important statistical reforms in India's inflation measurement system.

Benefits

Better Inflation Monitoring

Provides a more accurate assessment of producer-level inflation.

Improved Policy Formulation

Helps policymakers identify inflationary pressures at different stages of production.

Alignment with Global Standards

Brings India closer to internationally accepted producer price frameworks.

Enhanced Industrial Analysis

Offers sector-specific insights into cost and pricing trends.

Better Economic Planning

Improves forecasting and macroeconomic analysis.

Support for Monetary and Fiscal Policy

Provides additional inputs for inflation management and growth-oriented policymaking.

Mission "Senehjori" for Assam Muga Silk



Why in the News?

Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, launched **Mission Senehjori**, a cluster-based initiative aimed at transforming Assam's renowned **Muga silk sector** into a globally competitive luxury textile ecosystem. The mission seeks to strengthen the entire value chain of Muga silk production, from silkworm rearing to finished products, while enhancing livelihoods and promoting international recognition of this unique heritage textile.

The initiative is a collaborative effort involving:

- Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER)
- Government of Assam
- Central Silk Board
- Ministry of Textiles

About Muga Silk

Muga silk is a unique variety of silk known for its natural golden-yellow sheen and exceptional durability. It is considered one of the rarest and most valuable silks in the world.

Key Features

- World's only naturally golden silk.
- Produced primarily in Assam.
- Renowned for its glossy texture and long-lasting quality.
- Becomes shinier with every wash.
- Traditionally used for making sarees, mekhela chadors, shawls, and ceremonial garments.

Geographical Distribution

Although small-scale production occurs in some neighbouring states, commercial production is overwhelmingly concentrated in Assam due to its favourable climatic conditions and the availability of host plants such as Som and Soalu.

Muga Silk and GI Tag

Muga silk holds a special place in India's intellectual property landscape as it became **India's first Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged silk product**.

What is a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag?

A **Geographical Indication (GI)** is a form of intellectual property protection granted to products originating from a specific geographical area whose quality, reputation, or characteristics are essentially linked to that location.

Importance of GI Tag

- Protects traditional products from imitation.
- Preserves cultural heritage.
- Enhances market value and brand recognition.
- Supports local producers and artisans.
- Facilitates exports through authenticity certification.

What is Mission Senehjori?

Mission Senehjori is a comprehensive cluster-based development programme designed to modernise and expand Assam's Muga silk industry while preserving its traditional heritage.

The mission aims to build an integrated ecosystem connecting farmers, rearers, reelers, weavers, designers, exporters, and market institutions.

Major Objectives of Mission Senehgori

1. Global Branding of Assam Muga Silk

The mission seeks to position Muga silk as a premium luxury textile in international markets.

Focus Areas

- International promotion campaigns.
- Luxury textile branding.
- Participation in global textile exhibitions.
- Market linkages with high-end fashion industries.

2. Improve Export Potential

The initiative aims to increase the global demand for Muga silk products through:

- Better quality standards.
- Product diversification.
- Export facilitation measures.
- International certifications.

Expected Benefits

- Increased foreign exchange earnings.
- Expansion into premium global markets.
- Greater competitiveness of Indian silk products.

3. Strengthen Traceability and Quality Assurance

Consumers worldwide increasingly demand authenticity and sustainability.

The mission therefore focuses on:

- Traceable supply chains.
- Product authentication systems.
- Standardised production practices.
- Improved quality control mechanisms.

Significance

This will help establish Muga silk as a trusted luxury product and protect it from counterfeit products.

4. Enhance Livelihoods of Stakeholders

Mission Senehgori seeks to increase incomes across the value chain, particularly for:

- Silkworm rearers.
- Reelers.
- Weavers.

- Artisans.
- Rural entrepreneurs.
- Women's self-help groups.

Socio-Economic Impact

The initiative is expected to generate employment opportunities and strengthen rural economies in Assam.

Cluster-Based Development Approach

The mission adopts a cluster-based model, which focuses on developing production hubs where all stakeholders are geographically connected and can benefit from shared infrastructure, training, technology, and market access.

Advantages of the Cluster Model

- Economies of scale.
- Better coordination among producers.
- Improved access to finance and technology.
- Enhanced marketing and branding.
- Efficient supply chain management.

Districts Covered Under Mission Senehgori

The mission focuses on major Muga silk-producing regions of Assam:

- Jorhat
- Sivasagar
- Lakhimpur
- Dhemaji
- Dibrugarh
- Tinsukia
- Majuli
- Sualkuchi

Among these, Sualkuchi is widely known as the "Silk Village of Assam" due to its long tradition of handloom weaving.

Niveshak Shivir by IEPFA and SEBI



Why in the News?

The **Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)** and the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** held a **Niveshak Shivir** in Bhopal on **5 June 2026**. The initiative aims to assist investors in resolving issues related to **unclaimed dividends, shares, and pending claims**, while promoting investor awareness and financial inclusion.

Key Highlights

Organised By

- Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

Objectives

- Enhance investor awareness.
- Facilitate grievance redressal.
- Assist investors in recovering unclaimed investments.
- Strengthen trust and participation in financial markets.

Services Provided at Niveshak Shivir

The camp will offer direct assistance for:

Recovery of

- Unclaimed dividends.
- Unclaimed shares.

On-the-Spot Services

- KYC (Know Your Customer) updation.
- Nomination registration and modification.

Claim Resolution

- Assistance in filing and tracking IEPFA claims.
- Resolution of pending IEPFA-related issues.
- Guidance regarding documentation and procedural requirements.

What is IEPFA?

The **Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)** is a statutory authority functioning under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Functions

- Protect investor interests.
- Promote investor education and financial literacy.
- Facilitate recovery of unclaimed investments.

- Administer the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF).

Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF)

The **Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF)** was established under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.

Purpose

The fund receives:

- Unclaimed dividends.
- Unclaimed shares.
- Matured deposits and debentures.
- Other investor-related amounts remaining unclaimed for a prescribed period.

The fund is utilized for:

- Investor education.
- Awareness programmes.
- Refund of eligible claims to rightful investors.

When are Shares and Dividends Transferred to IEPF?

Under the Companies Act, 2013:

- If a dividend remains unclaimed for **seven consecutive years**, the corresponding amount is transferred to the IEPF.
- The **related shares** on which such dividends remain unclaimed for seven consecutive years are also transferred to the IEPF Authority.

Investors or their legal heirs can subsequently apply to reclaim these assets through the prescribed process.

What is SEBI?

The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** is India's principal regulator of the securities and capital markets.

Establishment

- Established: **1988**
- Granted statutory powers through the SEBI Act, 1992

Functions

- Protect investor interests.
- Regulate securities markets.
- Promote market development.
- Prevent fraudulent and unfair trade practices.
- Ensure transparency and efficiency in capital markets.

Objectives of the Initiative

The Niveshak Shivar seeks to:

Simplify Investor Claims

- Reduce procedural difficulties.
- Provide direct support for claim settlement.

Promote

- Financial inclusion.
- Investor protection.
- Financial literacy.

Strengthen

- Transparency in financial markets.
- Investor confidence in the securities ecosystem.

About Registrars and Transfer Agents (RTAs)

Registrars and Transfer Agents (RTAs) are specialized entities that provide investor-related services on behalf of companies and mutual funds.

Key Functions

- Maintain shareholder records.
- Process share transfers and transmission requests.
- Handle dividend payment records.
- Manage KYC and nomination details.
- Assist investors in resolving service-related issues.

Importance in Niveshak Shivar

RTAs play a crucial role in helping investors trace and recover unclaimed shares and dividends by providing accurate records and facilitating claim processing.

Coal Exchange Rules, 2026**Why in the News?**

The **Ministry of Coal** notified the **Coal Exchange Rules, 2026** on 4 June 2026, paving the way for the

establishment of Coal Exchanges in India. The initiative seeks to modernise coal marketing by introducing transparent, competitive, and market-driven trading mechanisms, thereby improving efficiency in the coal sector.

Background**Legal Basis**

The concept of Coal Exchanges originates from the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025**.

The amendment introduced a framework for the creation of **Mineral Exchanges** and empowered the Central Government to facilitate transparent and efficient trading of minerals.

Key Provisions of the Amendment

The Act:

- Introduced the concept of a **Mineral Exchange**.
- Enabled market-based trading mechanisms for minerals.
- Promoted transparency and competition in mineral transactions.
- Empowered the Central Government to regulate and facilitate such exchanges.

Coverage

The exchange framework covers:

- Coal
- Processed forms of coal (such as washed coal and coal products)
- Other minerals notified by the Central Government

What is a Coal Exchange?

A **Coal Exchange** is an organised electronic marketplace where multiple buyers and sellers can trade coal through transparent and competitive mechanisms.

It functions similarly to commodity exchanges, where transactions occur on digital platforms under a regulated framework.

Shift from Traditional Coal Marketing**Traditional System****One Seller → Many Buyers**

Historically, coal marketing in India has largely been dominated by a few producers supplying coal to multiple

consumers through long-term linkages and direct contracts.

Exchange-Based System

Many Sellers ↔ Many Buyers

The new framework enables:

- Multiple coal producers to offer coal on a common platform.
- Multiple consumers to participate in bidding.
- Market-based price discovery.
- Greater competition and efficiency.

Key Features of Coal Exchanges

Electronic Trading Platform

Coal Exchanges will operate through digital platforms that facilitate:

- Online bidding
- Price discovery
- Trade execution
- Settlement and reporting

Transparent Pricing

Prices will be determined through competitive market mechanisms rather than solely through administrative allocation or bilateral negotiations.

Wider Market Participation

The framework allows participation from:

- Coal mining companies
- Captive coal block operators
- Coal traders
- Industrial consumers
- Power generation companies
- Other eligible buyers

Improved Market Efficiency

The exchange mechanism is expected to:

- Reduce information asymmetry.
- Enhance liquidity in coal markets.
- Improve allocation efficiency.
- Increase transparency in transactions.

Regulation of Coal Exchanges

Coal Exchanges will be authorised and regulated by the **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)**.

Registration Validity

- Registration will remain valid for **25 years**.

Functions of Coal Exchanges

Authorised exchanges will:

- Establish and operate electronic trading platforms.
- Frame market rules and bye-laws.
- Facilitate coal transactions.
- Ensure fair trading practices.
- Maintain transparency and accountability.
- Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Role of the Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)

About CCO

The **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)** is one of the oldest institutions associated with coal regulation in India.

Establishment

- Established in **1945**.

Administrative Control

- Functions under the **Ministry of Coal**.

Headquarters

- Located in **Kolkata**.

Functions of CCO

The organisation performs several regulatory and administrative functions:

Coal Quality Regulation

- Monitors and regulates the quality of coal produced and supplied in the country.

Coal Statistics

- Collects, compiles, and disseminates data relating to coal production, supply, and consumption.

Coal Grading Standards

- Ensures compliance with prescribed coal grading and quality standards.

Regulation of Coal Exchanges

Under the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, the CCO will:

- Register Coal Exchanges.
- Monitor their functioning.
- Ensure adherence to regulations.
- Protect market integrity and transparency.

Significance of the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026

Transparent Price Discovery

- The exchange mechanism will enable market-based pricing, improving transparency in coal transactions.

Enhanced Competition

- Participation by multiple buyers and sellers is expected to create a more competitive coal market.

Efficient Coal Allocation

- Coal resources can be allocated more efficiently based on market demand and supply conditions.

Ease of Doing Business

- Digital trading platforms will simplify transactions and reduce procedural bottlenecks.

Modernisation of the Coal Sector

- The initiative marks a significant shift from traditional coal marketing towards a modern, technology-driven, and market-oriented ecosystem.

Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI) & National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)



Why in the News?

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has launched the **Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)** to provide a transparent and credible mechanism for certifying green hydrogen production in the country. The portal is expected to strengthen regulatory compliance, improve traceability, and facilitate the growth of India's green hydrogen ecosystem.

Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI)

About GHCI

- Developed by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- Serves as the official digital platform for certifying green hydrogen production in India.
- Operates under the **Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India (GHCI Scheme)**.
- Enables producers to apply for certification and verify compliance with prescribed standards.
- Creates a transparent system for monitoring the origin and production process of green hydrogen.

Objectives

- Ensure that hydrogen labelled as "green" is produced using renewable energy sources.
- Enhance transparency and traceability across the hydrogen value chain.
- Improve investor confidence and market credibility.
- Facilitate domestic and international trade in certified green hydrogen and its derivatives.
- Support India's climate commitments and decarbonization goals.

National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)

About the Mission

The **National Green Hydrogen Mission** was launched by the Government of India in **2023** to make India a global leader in the production, utilization, and export of green hydrogen and its derivatives.

Financial Outlay

- Total outlay: **₹19,744 crore**

Major Objectives

- Promote domestic manufacturing of electrolyzers.
- Reduce dependence on fossil fuels and imported energy.
- Decarbonize hard-to-abate sectors such as steel, fertilizers, refining, shipping, and heavy transport.
- Create a complete green hydrogen value chain from production to storage and utilization.

Targets by 2030

	Goal
Green Hydrogen Production	5 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) annually
Renewable Energy Capacity	125 GW dedicated capacity
Investment Mobilization	₹8 lakh crore
Employment Generation	6 lakh jobs
Carbon Emission Reduction	50 million tonnes of CO ₂ annually

Key Progress under the Mission

Policy Support

- **6 States** have introduced dedicated Green Hydrogen Policies.
- **7 States** have integrated green hydrogen provisions into existing industrial or renewable energy policies.

Electrolyser Manufacturing

- Incentives awarded to **15 companies** for establishing **3,000 MW per year** electrolyser manufacturing capacity.

Green Hydrogen Production

- Under the **SIGHT (Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition)** Programme, incentives have been approved for:
 - **8.62 lakh Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA)** of green hydrogen production.

Refinery Sector

- Contracts awarded for the supply of:
 - **30,000 MTPA** of green hydrogen to petroleum refineries.

Fertilizer Sector

- Agreements signed for:
 - **6.7 lakh MTPA** of Green Ammonia supply to **11 fertilizer plants**.

Steel Sector

- **₹84 crore** sanctioned for pilot projects involving hydrogen injection in steel manufacturing processes.

Transport Sector

- **₹208 crore** allocated for:
 - 37 hydrogen-powered vehicles.
 - 9 hydrogen refuelling stations.

Research and Development

- **₹113 crore** allocated for R&D projects focusing on hydrogen technologies, storage systems, and fuel applications.

Startup Ecosystem

- Startup fund of **₹100 crore** established.
- First **9 startups** approved with support worth **₹22 crore**.

What is Green Hydrogen?

Definition

Green Hydrogen is hydrogen produced through the **electrolysis of water using electricity generated entirely from renewable energy sources** such as solar, wind, or hydropower.

Production Process

1. Renewable energy generates electricity.
2. Electricity powers an electrolyser.
3. Water (H₂O) is split into:
 - Hydrogen (H₂)
 - Oxygen (O₂)
4. The resulting hydrogen is stored and used as a clean fuel.

Why is it Important?

- Produces **no greenhouse gas emissions** during production when powered by renewable energy.
- Can be stored and transported for later use.
- Helps decarbonize sectors where direct electrification is difficult.

Major Applications

- Steel manufacturing
- Fertilizer production (ammonia)
- Petroleum refining
- Shipping and maritime transport
- Heavy-duty road transport
- Power generation and energy storage

Types of Hydrogen

Type	Production Method	Carbon Emissions
Green Hydrogen	Electrolysis using renewable energy	Near Zero
Blue Hydrogen	Natural gas with carbon capture and storage (CCS)	Low

Type	Production Method	Carbon Emissions
Grey Hydrogen	Natural gas/coal without CCS	High
Brown/Black Hydrogen	Coal gasification	Very High

Environment & Diversity

Vembanad Lake



Why in the News?

The Government of Kerala recently initiated action against pollution caused by houseboats operating in Vembanad Lake following directions issued by the Kerala High Court. The move aims to protect the ecological health of the lake, which is one of India's most important wetland ecosystems.

About Vembanad Lake

Vembanad Lake, also known as **Vembanad Kayal**, **Punnamada Lake**, and **Kochi Lake**, is the **largest lake in Kerala** and the **longest lake in India**. It forms the core of Kerala's famous backwater system and is a vital ecological, economic, and cultural resource. The lake extends across the districts of Alappuzha, Kottayam, and Ernakulam.

Source Rivers

The lake receives freshwater inflow from several major rivers of Kerala, including:

- Pampa River
- Meenachil River

- Achankovil River
- Manimala River

These rivers help sustain the lake's hydrological balance and rich biodiversity.

Ecological Importance

Vembanad Lake is one of the most significant wetland ecosystems on India's southwest coast.

Key ecological features include:

- Designated as a Ramsar Site in 2002.
- Represents the **largest tropical wetland ecosystem** along India's southwestern coastline.
- Supports diverse fish species, migratory birds, aquatic vegetation, and other wildlife.
- Plays an important role in **flood control**, **groundwater recharge**, and maintenance of regional ecological balance.
- Included under the **National Wetlands Conservation Programme** for long-term conservation and sustainable management.

Agricultural Significance

The lake is closely associated with the Kuttanad region, often referred to as the **"Rice Bowl of Kerala."**

A unique feature of Kuttanad agriculture is **below sea-level farming**, where paddy cultivation is carried out on reclaimed land protected by embankments. This makes it one of the few regions in the world practicing large-scale farming below sea level.

Tourism and Cultural Importance

Vembanad Lake is the centrepiece of Kerala's internationally renowned backwater tourism.

Major attractions include:

- Traditional and luxury **houseboat tourism**
- Inland water transport network connecting villages and towns
- Scenic backwater cruises attracting domestic and foreign tourists

The lake also hosts the famous Nehru Trophy Boat Race, held every August at Punnamada Lake. The event showcases Kerala's traditional **snake boats (Chundan Vallams)** and is one of the state's most celebrated cultural festivals.

Challenges

Despite its ecological importance, Vembanad Lake faces several environmental threats:

- Pollution from houseboats and tourism activities
- Untreated sewage discharge
- Encroachment and land reclamation
- Declining fish populations
- Invasive aquatic species

The recent intervention by the Kerala government seeks to address these concerns and ensure the long-term conservation of this critical wetland ecosystem.

EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)



Why in the News?

A recent study by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research found that the European Union's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** could substantially strengthen global climate action by reducing **carbon leakage** and encouraging wider adoption of carbon pricing policies across the world.

What is the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)?

The **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** is a carbon-pricing instrument introduced by the European Union to ensure that imported goods face a carbon cost comparable to products manufactured within the EU.

Under CBAM:

- Importers of carbon-intensive products into the EU must pay a carbon levy.
- The levy is linked to the carbon emissions generated during production.
- If the exporting country already imposes an equivalent carbon price, the importer receives a corresponding adjustment, avoiding double taxation.

In essence, CBAM seeks to ensure that imported products bear a similar carbon cost as goods produced under the EU's climate regulations.

Objectives of CBAM

1. Prevent Carbon Leakage

CBAM aims to stop industries from relocating production to countries with weaker environmental regulations to avoid carbon costs.

2. Protect EU Industries

European manufacturers operating under strict climate regulations often incur higher production costs. CBAM helps create a level playing field between domestic producers and foreign competitors.

3. Encourage Global Carbon Pricing

The mechanism incentivizes trading partners to introduce carbon pricing systems such as carbon taxes or emissions trading schemes.

4. Support Global Decarbonisation

By assigning a cost to carbon-intensive imports, CBAM encourages cleaner production methods worldwide and contributes to global emission reductions.

What is Carbon Leakage?

Carbon leakage occurs when industries shift production from countries with stringent climate policies to countries with less strict environmental regulations.

How It Happens

1. A country imposes strict emission regulations.
2. Production costs increase for domestic industries.

3. Firms move factories to countries with lower environmental standards.
4. Emissions decrease in the first country but rise elsewhere.

As a result, global greenhouse gas emissions may remain unchanged or even increase despite domestic climate efforts.

Example

If a steel manufacturer relocates production from Europe to a country with weaker emission standards, European emissions may fall, but global emissions may rise due to more carbon-intensive production methods.

Key Findings of the Study

The study highlights the significant role CBAM can play in improving the effectiveness of climate policies.

Without CBAM

- Approximately **40% of the EU's emission reductions** could be offset by carbon leakage.
- Industries may continue relocating to regions with lower environmental costs.

With CBAM

- Carbon leakage could fall to about **15%**.
- Emission reductions achieved within the EU would translate into larger net global reductions.
- The effectiveness of climate policies would improve considerably.

Wider Global Impact

The study suggests that global emission reductions could increase further if major trading partners respond by introducing their own carbon pricing mechanisms.

What is Carbon Pricing?

Carbon pricing refers to placing a monetary cost on greenhouse gas emissions to encourage cleaner production and consumption choices.

The principle is simple:

"Polluters should pay for the environmental damage caused by their emissions."

By making carbon-intensive activities more expensive, governments create incentives for businesses and consumers to adopt low-carbon technologies.

Major Forms of Carbon Pricing

1. Carbon Tax

A government directly imposes a tax on each tonne of carbon dioxide emitted.

Features

- Fixed price per unit of emissions.
- Predictable cost for businesses.
- Generates government revenue that can be invested in climate initiatives.

2. Emissions Trading System (ETS)

An ETS establishes a cap on total emissions and allows companies to buy and sell emission permits.

Features

- Total emissions are limited through a cap.
- Market forces determine the price of carbon.
- Firms that reduce emissions efficiently can sell excess permits.

The EU currently operates one of the world's largest carbon markets through the **EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)**.

Sectors Covered Under CBAM

CBAM initially targets highly carbon-intensive sectors that are particularly vulnerable to carbon leakage, including:

- Iron and steel
- Cement
- Aluminium
- Fertilisers
- Hydrogen
- Electricity

These sectors account for a significant share of industrial emissions and international trade.

Significance for Developing Countries

CBAM has major implications for developing economies that export carbon-intensive products to Europe.

Potential Challenges

- Increased compliance costs.
- Requirement to monitor and report emissions accurately.
- Need for investment in cleaner technologies.
- Reduced competitiveness for carbon-intensive exports.

Countries with limited financial and technological resources may face difficulties adapting quickly to the new requirements.

Criticism of CBAM

Despite its climate objectives, CBAM has attracted criticism from several developing nations and trade experts.

Higher Export Costs

Exporters from developing countries may face additional costs when accessing the EU market.

Risk of Becoming a Trade Barrier

Critics argue that CBAM could function as a form of "green protectionism," restricting market access under the guise of climate policy.

Limited Support for Developing Countries

Many countries contend that the EU has not provided adequate:

- Climate finance
- Technology transfer
- Capacity-building support

to help poorer nations decarbonise their industries.

Equity Concerns

Developing countries argue that advanced economies bear greater historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and therefore should provide stronger assistance before imposing carbon-related trade measures.

India's Biodiversity: Commitments and Achievements



Why in the News?

The Government of India recently highlighted its achievements and policy initiatives related to biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological

resources, and biodiversity governance under the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). India showcased progress in community participation, species conservation, forest protection, and implementation of international biodiversity commitments.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to the variety and variability of living organisms on Earth, including:

- Plants
- Animals
- Microorganisms
- Genetic diversity within species
- Ecosystems and ecological processes

Biodiversity is essential for maintaining ecological balance, food security, climate regulation, pollination, water purification, and human well-being.

Biodiversity Governance Structure in India

India has established a **three-tier biodiversity governance system** under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

1. National Level

- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

2. State Level

- State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)

3. Local Level

- Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)

This decentralized framework ensures biodiversity conservation from the national level down to villages and urban local bodies.

Current Status

India has established:

- More than **2,76,653 Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)**
- More than **2,72,648 People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)**

These figures reflect one of the world's largest community-based biodiversity governance systems.

Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)

Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) are statutory local bodies constituted under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

Functions

- Conservation of local biodiversity
- Documentation of biological resources
- Preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers
- Protection of traditional knowledge
- Facilitation of Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

BMCs act as the grassroots institutions connecting local communities with biodiversity governance.

Biological Diversity Act, 2002

The **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** is India's principal legislation for biodiversity conservation.

Objectives

- Conservation of biological diversity
- Sustainable use of biological resources
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from biological resources

The Act was enacted to fulfill India's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023

The **Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023** introduced reforms to make biodiversity governance more accessible and innovation-friendly.

Key Features

- Promotion of scientific research and innovation
- Support for traditional medicine and AYUSH practices
- Simplification of compliance procedures
- Encouragement of community participation
- Facilitation of sustainable utilization of biological resources

The amendment seeks to balance conservation objectives with economic development and research needs.

People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)

A **People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)** is a comprehensive local database prepared by Biodiversity Management Committees.

Information Recorded

- Local flora and fauna
- Traditional knowledge
- Indigenous practices
- Ecosystems and habitats

- Medicinal plants
- Agricultural biodiversity

Importance

- Preserves traditional ecological knowledge
- Supports biodiversity conservation planning
- Helps identify resources for benefit-sharing mechanisms

Digitisation Initiative

India is currently undertaking a nationwide campaign to convert physical PBRs into **electronic People's Biodiversity Registers (e-PBRs)**, enhancing accessibility and data management.

Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) is a mechanism ensuring that benefits arising from the use of biological resources are shared fairly with local communities who conserve and maintain them.

Benefits May Include

- Monetary compensation
- Technology transfer
- Capacity building
- Research collaboration
- Community development projects

India's Performance

As of May 2026:

- Around **₹145 crore** has been distributed to beneficiaries.
- Approximately **11,000 Biodiversity Management Committees** have benefited through ABS mechanisms.

Nagoya Protocol

The **Nagoya Protocol** was adopted in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010.

Objective

To ensure:

- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.
- Protection of traditional knowledge associated with biological resources.

Significance

The protocol operationalizes the third objective of the Convention on Biological Diversity and strengthens community rights over biological resources.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted during CBD COP-15 in Montreal in 2022.

Global Goal

Halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

Major Targets

- Conservation of ecosystems
- Restoration of degraded habitats
- Sustainable use of biodiversity
- Reduction of pollution
- Mobilization of biodiversity finance
- Enhanced participation of indigenous and local communities

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2024–2030

India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2024–2030 aligns national biodiversity priorities with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Key Features

- Whole-of-government approach
- Whole-of-society participation
- Mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors
- Strengthening community-led conservation
- Monitoring and reporting mechanisms

Key Achievements Highlighted by India

1. Forest and Tree Cover

India's forest and tree cover has reached:

- **8.27 lakh square kilometres**
- **25.17% of the country's geographical area**

This contributes significantly to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation.

2. Protected Area Network

India currently has:

- More than **1,134 protected areas**
- Covering approximately **1.88 lakh square kilometres**

These include:

- National Parks
- Wildlife Sanctuaries
- Conservation Reserves
- Community Reserves
- Tiger Reserves

3. Tiger Conservation Success

India's tiger population has increased from:

Year	Tiger Population
2014	2,226
Latest Assessment	3,682

This represents one of the world's most successful large carnivore conservation efforts.

Major Factors Behind Success

- Project Tiger
- Habitat protection
- Anti-poaching measures
- Community participation
- Improved monitoring technologies

Odisha's Groundwater Revival under 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari'



Why in the News?

Odisha has emerged as a leading example of community-driven groundwater conservation under the 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari' initiative. By combining scientific water management with active public participation, the State has successfully transformed monsoon rainfall into a sustainable source of groundwater recharge through rooftop rainwater harvesting systems and aquifer recharge structures.

The initiative demonstrates how local communities, government institutions, and technical agencies can work together to address growing concerns related to

groundwater depletion, water scarcity, and climate-induced water stress.

What is 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari'?

'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari' is a nationwide water conservation initiative that seeks to promote sustainable water resource management through people's participation. It is based on the principle of **"Whole of Government, Whole of Society,"** emphasizing that long-term water security can only be achieved when citizens actively participate alongside government institutions.

The initiative encourages:

- Community ownership of water resources.
- Scientific management of groundwater.
- Rainwater harvesting and recharge.
- Local participation in water conservation activities.
- Sustainable use of available water resources.

By involving citizens directly in conservation efforts, the programme aims to create a culture of responsible water use while strengthening groundwater reserves across the country.

Objectives of the Initiative

The primary objectives of 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari' include:

- Recharging depleted groundwater aquifers.
- Improving long-term water security.
- Reducing dependence on external water sources.
- Building resilience against droughts and future water stress.
- Promoting sustainable and efficient use of water resources.
- Enhancing groundwater availability for domestic, agricultural, and industrial needs.

Odisha's Groundwater Recharge Strategy

Odisha has adopted a simple but effective approach—**capturing rainwater where it falls and directing it into underground aquifers.**

Instead of allowing large quantities of monsoon runoff to flow away unused, the State has developed a network of recharge systems that facilitate the percolation of water into groundwater reserves.

The strategy focuses on two major components:

Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting

Rainwater collected from rooftops of:

- Schools
- Colleges
- Government offices
- Institutional buildings

is channelled through filtration units before being directed into recharge wells or borewells.

This process helps replenish groundwater reserves while reducing wastage of rainwater during the monsoon season.

Recharge Structures in Water Bodies

Odisha has also established groundwater recharge systems in:

- Ponds
- Tanks
- Community water bodies

These structures enable excess monsoon runoff to infiltrate deeper layers of the soil and recharge aquifers, thereby improving groundwater availability during dry periods.

CHHATA Scheme

About

The **CHHATA Scheme** focuses on the installation of **Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting Systems (RRHS)** in institutional and public buildings.

The scheme seeks to utilise unused rooftop spaces as catchment areas for collecting rainwater and directing it into groundwater recharge systems.

Functions

The scheme performs three key functions:

- Collection of rooftop runoff during rainfall.
- Filtration of harvested rainwater to remove impurities.
- Recharge of groundwater through borewells and recharge wells.

Benefits

The CHHATA Scheme provides multiple benefits:

- Improves groundwater levels in urban and semi-urban areas.
- Reduces seasonal water shortages.

- Enhances groundwater availability during summer months.
- Supports revival of declining urban aquifers.
- Reduces pressure on conventional water supply systems.

ARUA Scheme

About

The **ARUA Scheme** has been designed to facilitate groundwater recharge through the utilisation of ponds, tanks, and other water bodies.

A major component of the scheme is the construction of **Recharge Shafts**, which help transfer surface water into deeper aquifer zones.

Functions

The scheme works by:

- Diverting surplus surface runoff into recharge structures.
- Enhancing deep aquifer recharge.
- Increasing groundwater storage capacity.
- Reducing wastage of monsoon water.

Benefits

The scheme contributes to:

- Improved groundwater availability in rural areas.
- Better utilisation of seasonal rainfall.
- Strengthened water security for communities.
- Reduced dependence on groundwater extraction.
- Sustainable management of local water resources.

Significance of Odisha's Model

Odisha's approach highlights the importance of integrating infrastructure, community participation, and scientific planning in groundwater management. By combining rooftop rainwater harvesting with aquifer recharge systems, the State has demonstrated how monsoon rainfall can be converted into a reliable water resource.

Global Wind Day 2026



Why in the News?

India hosted the Global Wind Day 2026 Conference on 15 June 2026 in Goa under the theme **"Wind Energy: From Ambition to Acceleration."** The conference brought together policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and international partners to discuss strategies for accelerating wind energy deployment, strengthening domestic manufacturing, and advancing offshore wind development. The event highlighted India's growing role in the global renewable energy transition and its commitment to achieving ambitious clean energy targets.

About Global Wind Day

Global Wind Day is an international event celebrated annually on **15 June** to raise awareness about the importance of wind energy as a clean, sustainable, and renewable source of power.

The day serves as a platform to:

- Promote public awareness about wind energy.
- Highlight the role of wind power in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Encourage investment and innovation in renewable energy technologies.
- Showcase advances in onshore and offshore wind projects worldwide.
- Support global efforts to combat climate change and achieve energy security.

Wind energy has emerged as one of the fastest-growing renewable energy technologies globally, playing a crucial role in the transition towards low-carbon economies.

India's Wind Energy Status

India has established itself as a major global player in the wind energy sector.

Global Ranking

India currently ranks **fourth in the world** in terms of installed wind power capacity, after major wind energy leaders such as China, United States, and Germany.

Installed Capacity Growth

India's installed wind power capacity has witnessed substantial growth over the last decade:

- 2014: 21.04 GW
- March 2026: 56.09 GW

This represents a significant expansion of renewable energy infrastructure and demonstrates the increasing contribution of wind energy to India's electricity generation mix.

Ongoing Projects

An additional **28 GW** of wind power projects are currently under various stages of implementation, indicating strong future growth potential.

Record Capacity Addition

During 2025–26, India achieved a record annual addition of **6.05 GW** of wind energy capacity, reflecting improved policy support, increased investor confidence, and enhanced project execution capabilities.

Wind Resource Potential in India

India possesses vast wind energy resources across several states and coastal regions.

Estimated Wind Potential

According to assessments conducted by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), India's wind energy potential is estimated at:

- **695.5 GW** at 120-metre hub height.
- **1,163.9 GW** at 150-metre hub height.

The increase in potential at higher hub heights reflects technological advancements that allow modern wind turbines to capture stronger and more consistent wind speeds.

Leading State

Rajasthan has the highest assessed wind energy potential among all Indian states, owing to its vast land availability and favorable wind conditions.

Other major wind-rich states include:

- Gujarat
- Tamil Nadu
- Karnataka
- Maharashtra
- Andhra Pradesh

Wind Monitoring Infrastructure

To improve resource assessment and project planning, more than **900 wind-monitoring stations** have been installed across the country.

These stations collect long-term data on:

- Wind speed
- Wind direction
- Atmospheric conditions
- Seasonal wind variations

The data supports investors, developers, and policymakers in identifying suitable project locations.

Manufacturing and Industrial Development

India has developed a strong domestic manufacturing ecosystem for wind energy equipment.

Manufacturing Capacity

The country's annual wind turbine manufacturing capacity has increased to approximately **24 GW**, making India one of the world's major manufacturing hubs for wind energy components.

Indigenisation

The sector has achieved **70–80% indigenisation**, significantly reducing dependence on imported equipment.

Domestic Supply Chain Strength

India possesses robust manufacturing capabilities for:

- Wind turbine blades
- Towers
- Gearboxes
- Generators
- Power electronics
- Control systems

This manufacturing base supports the Government's vision of self-reliance and strengthens export opportunities for Indian renewable energy industries.

Key Government Initiatives

The Government of India has introduced several policy measures to accelerate wind energy deployment and attract investment.

Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for Offshore Wind

The Union Government approved ₹6,853 crore under the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme for the development of **1,000 MW offshore wind projects** off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

The objective is to make offshore wind projects commercially viable during the initial stages of sector development.

Generation Based Incentive (GBI)

During 2025–26, approximately ₹500 crore was disbursed under the Generation Based Incentive (GBI) Scheme.

The scheme rewards developers based on actual electricity generation, encouraging efficient project performance and higher energy output.

Contracts for Difference (CfD) Pilot Project

A **500 MW Contracts for Difference (CfD) pilot project** was launched to provide greater revenue certainty to renewable energy developers.

Under a CfD mechanism:

- A reference electricity price is established.
- Developers receive compensation when market prices fall below the agreed level.
- Excess revenues are returned when prices exceed the reference level.

This reduces financial risk and promotes investment.

Dedicated Wind Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO)

The Government has introduced a dedicated Wind Renewable Purchase Obligation requiring electricity distribution companies and large consumers to procure a specified share of electricity from wind energy sources. This policy creates stable long-term demand for wind-generated electricity.

Green Energy Open Access Rules

The Green Energy Open Access Rules have been notified to facilitate easier access to renewable energy for consumers.

The rules:

- Simplify approval procedures.

- Reduce transaction barriers.
- Encourage direct procurement of renewable energy.
- Promote private sector participation.

Hybrid and Round-the-Clock Renewable Projects

The Government is actively promoting:

Hybrid Renewable Energy Projects

These combine:

- Wind power
- Solar power
- Energy storage systems

Hybrid projects improve grid stability and increase renewable energy utilization.

Round-the-Clock (RTC) Renewable Energy

RTC projects integrate multiple renewable sources and storage technologies to ensure continuous power supply, helping address intermittency challenges.

International Cooperation

India is actively collaborating with global partners to strengthen technological capabilities and accelerate offshore wind deployment.

India–UK Offshore Wind Taskforce

In 2026, India and the United Kingdom launched the India–UK Offshore Wind Taskforce.

The initiative focuses on:

- Offshore wind policy development
- Technology transfer
- Supply chain development
- Investment facilitation
- Skill development

Cooperation with Belgium

India's partnership with Belgium emphasizes:

- Offshore wind technology
- Research and development
- Port infrastructure
- Maritime engineering expertise

Partnership with Denmark

India's offshore wind cooperation with Denmark, originally initiated in 2019, was renewed in 2025.

The partnership supports:

- Offshore wind planning
- Regulatory frameworks

- Technical capacity building
- Best practice sharing
- Project implementation support

Significance for India

Wind energy is expected to play a critical role in India's clean energy transition and climate commitments. Expansion of both onshore and offshore wind capacity will help:

- Reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- Enhance energy security.
- Lower carbon emissions.
- Generate green jobs.
- Promote domestic manufacturing.
- Support sustainable economic growth.

With strong policy support, growing manufacturing capabilities, expanding international partnerships, and abundant natural resources, India is well-positioned to emerge as one of the world's leading wind energy economies in the coming decades.

Giant World of Fungi Beneath Our Feet



Why in the News?

A landmark study published in the journal *Science* has produced the first global map of **arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi**, uncovering the extraordinary scale of underground fungal networks and their critical role in regulating the Earth's climate. The research highlights how these hidden fungal systems store vast amounts of carbon, support plant growth, and contribute significantly to global carbon sequestration.

Key Findings of the Study

The study provides one of the most comprehensive assessments of underground fungal networks ever undertaken.

Scale of Fungal Networks

- Global topsoils contain an estimated **110 quadrillion kilometres of fungal hyphae**.
- This distance is equivalent to nearly **one billion journeys between the Earth and the Sun**.
- The findings illustrate the immense extent of biological infrastructure that exists beneath terrestrial ecosystems.

Carbon Storage Capacity

- AM fungal networks store approximately **300 million tonnes of carbon** globally.
- This amount is estimated to be **four to six times the weight of the entire human population**.
- The stored carbon contributes to long-term soil carbon reservoirs, helping mitigate climate change.

Data and Methodology

The research team analysed data from more than **16,000 soil cores** collected across different ecosystems worldwide. Advanced **machine-learning techniques** were employed to map the global distribution and density of fungal networks, enabling the creation of the first worldwide assessment of AM fungi.

Symbiotic Relationship with Plants

- AM fungi form mutually beneficial partnerships with nearly **70% of all plant species**.
- Plants provide fungi with carbon-rich compounds produced through photosynthesis.
- In return, fungi supply plants with water and essential nutrients from the soil.

Carbon Sequestration

These fungal networks contribute significantly to climate mitigation by:

- Capturing and storing carbon below ground.
- Supporting plant productivity and ecosystem resilience.
- Sequestering an estimated **4 billion tonnes of CO₂-equivalent annually**.

This amount is roughly **11% of annual human-induced global carbon emissions**, demonstrating their importance in reducing atmospheric greenhouse gases.

What are Arbuscular Mycorrhizal (AM) Fungi?

Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi are a specialized group of soil fungi belonging to the phylum Glomeromycota.

Characteristics

- They colonize the roots of plants and establish **mycorrhizae**, a symbiotic association between fungi and plant roots.
- Their thread-like structures, known as **hyphae**, spread extensively through the soil.
- These hyphae function as an extension of the plant root system, increasing access to nutrients and water.

Mechanism of Nutrient Exchange

The fungal network absorbs nutrients and moisture from areas of soil beyond the reach of plant roots. These resources are transferred to plants, while plants provide carbohydrates and other organic compounds to the fungi.

Benefits of AM Fungi

Enhanced Nutrient Uptake

AM fungi improve the absorption of:

- Phosphorus
- Nitrogen
- Micronutrients such as zinc and copper
- Water

Improved Plant Growth

- Promote healthier root systems.
- Increase crop productivity.
- Enhance resistance to environmental stress.

Greater Drought Tolerance

The extensive fungal network helps plants access water during dry periods, improving survival under drought conditions.

Soil Health and Fertility

- Improve soil aggregation and structure.
- Enhance nutrient cycling.
- Increase overall soil fertility and ecosystem productivity.

Long-Term Carbon Storage

By transferring carbon into the soil and stabilizing soil organic matter, AM fungi contribute significantly to long-term carbon sequestration.

Biodiversity Hotspots Identified

The study identified several regions with particularly dense AM fungal networks.

Grassland Ecosystems

Approximately **40% of the world's AM fungal networks** are concentrated in grasslands.

Important hotspots include:

- South Sudan
- Tibetan Plateau
- Banni Grasslands

These ecosystems serve as major reservoirs of underground biodiversity and carbon storage.

Major Threats to Fungal Networks

Agricultural Expansion

The study found that:

- Croplands contain approximately **50% lower fungal density** than natural ecosystems.
- Intensive agricultural practices often disrupt fungal communities through tillage, excessive fertilizer use, and habitat alteration.

Rapid Grassland Conversion

Grasslands are currently being converted into agricultural land at a rate **four times faster than forests**.

This trend threatens:

- Soil biodiversity
- Carbon storage capacity
- Nutrient cycling processes
- Ecosystem resilience

Climate Change and Land Degradation

Rising temperatures, soil erosion, pollution, and unsustainable land-use practices may further weaken fungal networks and reduce their ecological functions.

Why is the Study Important?

Recognition of Fungi as Living Infrastructure

The research highlights fungi as a form of **“living infrastructure”** that underpins ecosystem functioning and agricultural productivity.

Implications for Climate Policy

The findings strengthen the argument that climate strategies should extend beyond forests and include:

- Soil biodiversity conservation
- Protection of underground ecosystems
- Sustainable land-use practices
- Restoration of degraded grasslands

Importance of Grassland Conservation

While forests often receive greater conservation attention, the study demonstrates that grasslands are equally important carbon reservoirs because of the vast fungal networks they support.

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2026



Why in the News?

On the occasion of the **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (17 June)**, celebrations were organized across **813 project areas** under the **Watershed Development Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC–PMKSY 2.0)**. The event highlighted the government's commitment towards sustainable land management, drought mitigation, and watershed-based rural development.

About WDC–PMKSY 2.0

The **Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC–PMKSY 2.0)** is a flagship programme implemented by the **Department of Land Resources (DoLR)** under the **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)**.

The programme focuses on restoring ecological balance in rainfed and degraded regions through scientific watershed management. It aims to improve soil health,

conserve water resources, and enhance agricultural productivity while ensuring sustainable livelihoods for rural communities.

Key Objectives

- Soil and water conservation.
- Restoration of degraded and wasteland areas.
- Improvement of groundwater recharge.
- Enhancement of resilience in rainfed agriculture.
- Promotion of sustainable watershed development.
- Strengthening climate adaptation and drought preparedness.

Major Interventions under WDC–PMKSY 2.0

The scheme undertakes a range of watershed development activities to improve water availability and land productivity.

These include:

- **Check Dams** – To slow runoff and improve groundwater recharge.
- **Percolation Tanks** – To enhance infiltration of rainwater into the ground.
- **Farm Ponds** – For on-farm water storage and supplemental irrigation.
- **Water Harvesting Structures** – To capture and store rainwater.
- **Groundwater Recharge Structures** – To replenish depleted aquifers.
- **Land Development Works** – To reduce soil erosion and improve fertility.

Key Outcomes

The implementation of watershed-based interventions has generated several benefits for rural communities:

Improved Water Availability

Conservation structures increase water retention and groundwater levels, ensuring water availability even during dry periods.

Increased Cropping Intensity

Availability of irrigation enables farmers to cultivate **second and third crops**, reducing dependence on a single monsoon crop.

Higher Farmer Income

Improved productivity and diversified agricultural activities contribute to enhanced rural incomes and livelihood security.

Drought Resilience

The programme helps communities withstand periods of water scarcity by improving local water storage and resource management.

Climate Adaptation

By restoring ecosystems and conserving natural resources, the scheme strengthens resilience against climate variability and extreme weather events.

Activities Conducted During the Celebration

Several large-scale activities were undertaken across project areas:

- **Bhoomi Poojan** of **1,444** new watershed development works.
- **Lokarpan (Inauguration)** of **8,341** completed watershed assets.
- Plantation of **51,299** saplings under the “**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**” campaign.

These activities emphasized public participation in environmental conservation and sustainable resource management.

Significance

The celebration under WDC–PMKSY 2.0 highlights the growing importance of integrated watershed management in India's development strategy.

Environmental Significance

- Supports restoration of degraded lands.
- Helps combat desertification.
- Conserves soil and water resources.
- Enhances ecological sustainability.

Economic Significance

- Improves agricultural productivity.
- Increases rural employment opportunities.
- Strengthens livelihood security for farmers.

Social Significance

- Encourages community participation in resource management.
- Promotes collective responsibility for environmental conservation.

Climate Significance

- Enhances drought preparedness.
- Supports climate-resilient agriculture.
- Contributes to sustainable water security.

Conclusion

WDC–PMKSY 2.0 represents a comprehensive approach to **land restoration, water conservation, and sustainable rural development**. The large-scale observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought underscores the programme's role in building a **drought-resilient, climate-resilient, and water-secure India**, while advancing the broader goal of sustainable development in rural areas.

Governance

Prime Minister Research Chair (PMRC) Scheme 2026



Why in the News?

The Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education has invited applications for the **Prime Minister Research Chair (PMRC) Scheme 2026**. The initiative is aimed at attracting highly accomplished researchers, scientists, innovators, and professionals of Indian origin working abroad and integrating them into India's rapidly expanding research and innovation ecosystem.

The scheme reflects India's broader vision of strengthening domestic research capacity, enhancing

technological self-reliance, and positioning the country as a global hub for advanced scientific research.

About the PMRC Scheme

The Prime Minister Research Chair (PMRC) Scheme is a flagship initiative designed to connect:

- Indian-origin researchers and experts working overseas,
- Leading global academics and innovators of Indian heritage,

with:

- Indian universities,
- Higher educational institutions,
- National research laboratories,
- Centres of excellence.

The scheme seeks to leverage the expertise of the Indian scientific diaspora and facilitate knowledge transfer, collaborative research, and technological innovation within India.

Objectives of the Scheme

Strengthening India's Research Ecosystem

The scheme aims to enhance the quality and global competitiveness of research being conducted in Indian institutions by bringing internationally recognized experts into the system.

Promoting International Academic Collaboration

By connecting overseas researchers with Indian institutions, the PMRC Scheme seeks to foster long-term partnerships, joint projects, and cross-border scientific cooperation.

Advancing Innovation and Technology Development

The initiative encourages cutting-edge research that can lead to new technologies, patents, startups, and commercially viable innovations.

Supporting Mission-Oriented Research

The scheme aligns research efforts with national developmental priorities and strategic sectors that are critical for India's future growth and security.

Building Human Capital

The presence of world-class researchers is expected to strengthen mentoring, training, and capacity-building for Indian students, scholars, and early-career scientists.

Key Features

- Attracts global Indian talent to work with Indian institutions.
- Encourages collaborative and interdisciplinary research.
- Supports high-impact projects in emerging technologies.
- Facilitates exchange of expertise, ideas, and best practices.
- Strengthens India's position in global research rankings and innovation indices.

Thematic Areas Covered

The PMRC Scheme focuses on **13 national priority sectors**, reflecting India's strategic and technological aspirations.

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Research in machine learning, generative AI, intelligent automation, and AI-driven governance solutions.

2. Quantum Computing

Development of quantum technologies, quantum communication, quantum cryptography, and advanced computing systems.

3. Semiconductors

Research related to chip design, fabrication technologies, semiconductor materials, and electronics manufacturing.

4. Cybersecurity

Strengthening digital security infrastructure, cyber defence systems, and secure communication networks.

5. Biotechnology

Advancing genetic engineering, bio-manufacturing, agricultural biotechnology, and industrial biotechnology.

6. Healthcare and MedTech

Development of medical devices, diagnostics, digital health solutions, and next-generation healthcare technologies.

7. Space and Defence Technologies

Research supporting indigenous capabilities in aerospace engineering, satellite systems, defence equipment, and strategic technologies.

8. Advanced Materials

Innovation in nanomaterials, smart materials, energy materials, and high-performance industrial materials.

9. Blue Economy

Research on sustainable utilization of marine resources, ocean technologies, fisheries, and coastal development.

10. Atomic Energy

Advancement of nuclear science, reactor technologies, and peaceful applications of atomic energy.

11. Climate Change and Sustainability

Research focused on climate resilience, clean energy, carbon reduction, environmental conservation, and sustainable development.

12. Emerging Strategic Technologies

Development of technologies critical for national competitiveness and security.

13. Future-Oriented Innovation Areas

Support for frontier scientific disciplines likely to shape the next generation of technological transformation.

Significance of the Scheme

Reversing Brain Drain

The PMRC Scheme provides a mechanism to engage highly skilled Indian-origin experts who have built careers abroad, enabling India to benefit from their knowledge and experience.

Enhancing Research Quality

Global researchers can bring international standards, advanced methodologies, and access to worldwide scientific networks.

Boosting Innovation and Startups

Collaborative research can translate into patents, technology transfers, and deep-tech startups, strengthening India's innovation ecosystem.

Supporting National Missions

The scheme complements initiatives such as:

- National Research Foundation
- Atal Innovation Mission
- Digital India
- Make in India
- National Quantum Mission

Improving Global Competitiveness

A stronger research ecosystem can enhance India's contribution to scientific publications, patents, technological breakthroughs, and global innovation rankings.

NIXI Celebrates 23rd Foundation Day



Why in the News?

The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) celebrated its 23rd Foundation Day on 19 June 2026, marking over two decades of efforts to strengthen India's internet infrastructure, enhance digital self-reliance, and promote a secure and resilient internet ecosystem. The occasion highlighted NIXI's achievements in domain management, internet traffic exchange, and IP address allocation, which have played a crucial role in supporting India's rapidly expanding digital economy.

About NIXI

The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) is a not-for-profit organization established under the aegis of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

It was created to increase the efficiency and reliability of internet services within the country by ensuring that domestic internet traffic remains within India rather than being routed through foreign servers.

Since its establishment in 2003, NIXI has emerged as a key institution in India's digital infrastructure framework, supporting internet growth, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion.

Major Functions of NIXI

Management of .IN and .भारत Domains

NIXI manages India's country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), including:

- **.IN** – India's primary internet domain.
- **.भारत** – Enables internet access in Indian languages and scripts.

Through these domains, NIXI promotes a uniquely Indian digital identity and encourages wider participation in the digital ecosystem.

Internet Exchange Services

NIXI operates Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) that enable Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), and other network operators to exchange internet traffic domestically.

This reduces dependence on international routing, lowers latency, improves network performance, and decreases bandwidth costs.

IP Address Allocation

Through the Indian Registry for Internet Names and Numbers (IRINN), NIXI allocates IPv4 and IPv6 addresses to Indian organizations.

This function supports the continued expansion of internet connectivity and digital services across the country.

Key Achievements

Over the past two decades, NIXI has achieved several important milestones:

- Manages more than **3.9 million .IN domain names**.
- India is among the **top ten country-code domain registries globally**.
- Operates **79 Internet Exchange Points (IXPs)** across the country.
- Supports domain registration in **22 Indian languages**, promoting multilingual internet access.
- Facilitated migration of banking platforms to the **.bank.in** domain, enhancing trust and security.
- India's **IPv6 penetration has reached 78.34%**, making it one of the leading adopters of the next-generation internet protocol.

New Initiative: AI-Powered WHOIS Screening Platform

To further strengthen domain security, NIXI has launched an **AI-Powered WHOIS Screening Platform**.

Objective

The platform aims to:

- Improve the trustworthiness of the .IN domain ecosystem.

- Detect suspicious registrations and fraudulent activities.
- Enhance domain verification mechanisms.
- Strengthen cybersecurity and consumer confidence.

Significance

By leveraging Artificial Intelligence, the platform can proactively identify anomalies in domain registration data and support faster action against malicious actors.

Important Concepts

Internet Exchange Point (IXP)

An Internet Exchange Point (IXP) is a physical infrastructure through which Internet Service Providers (ISPs) exchange internet traffic directly with one another.

Benefits include:

- Reduced latency.
- Faster internet speeds.
- Lower international bandwidth costs.
- Improved network efficiency.

WHOIS

WHOIS is a publicly accessible database that stores information related to domain name registrations, including:

- Registrant details.
- Administrative contacts.
- Registration and expiry dates.
- Technical information regarding domain ownership.

It serves as an important tool for transparency, cybersecurity investigations, and domain management.

IPv6

Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) is the latest version of the Internet Protocol used to identify and communicate between devices on the internet.

Key features include:

- Vastly larger address space compared to IPv4.
- Better support for the growing number of connected devices.
- Enhanced network efficiency.
- Improved scalability for future internet growth.

Strategic Importance of NIXI

NIXI plays a vital role in advancing India's digital ambitions by:

- Enhancing **digital sovereignty** through domestic internet infrastructure.
- Strengthening **cybersecurity and internet resilience**.
- Promoting **multilingual internet access** and digital inclusion.
- Supporting the growth of e-governance, digital commerce, and online services.
- Facilitating India's transition towards a knowledge-based and digitally empowered society.

Overall Significance

The National Internet Exchange of India has become a cornerstone of India's digital ecosystem. Through domain management, internet traffic exchange, and IP resource allocation, NIXI contributes significantly to secure, efficient, and inclusive internet access. Its latest AI-driven initiatives further demonstrate India's commitment to building a trusted and future-ready digital infrastructure capable of supporting the country's expanding digital economy.

RBI Temporarily Lifts Interest Rate Ceiling on FCNR(B) & NRE Deposits



Why in the News?

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has temporarily withdrawn the interest rate ceiling on select Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) [FCNR(B)] deposits and Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits from **17 June 2026**

to 30 September 2026. The move is aimed at attracting larger foreign currency inflows from Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), strengthening the rupee, and improving external financing conditions.

The relaxation applies to:

- Fresh and renewed **FCNR(B) deposits** with maturities of **3–5 years**.
- Fresh and renewed **NRE deposits** with maturities of **3 years and above**.

What are FCNR(B) Deposits?

Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Deposits [FCNR(B)] are fixed-term deposits maintained by NRIs in designated foreign currencies such as US Dollar, Pound Sterling, Euro, Japanese Yen, and others.

Key Features

- Deposits are maintained in foreign currency.
- Both principal and interest are protected from exchange-rate fluctuations.
- Fully repatriable along with accrued interest.
- Available for fixed tenures prescribed by RBI.

Recent RBI Relaxation

The RBI has temporarily removed the interest rate ceiling on fresh and renewed FCNR(B) deposits of **3–5 years**, enabling banks to offer higher returns to attract overseas funds. Following the announcement, several banks have increased FCNR(B) rates to around **7%** on US dollar deposits.

What are NRE Deposits?

Non-Resident External (NRE) Accounts are rupee-denominated accounts maintained by NRIs for parking income earned abroad.

Key Features

- Deposits are maintained in Indian Rupees.
- Principal and interest are fully repatriable.
- Interest income is exempt from Indian income tax under prevailing rules.
- Suitable for NRIs wishing to maintain savings in India.

RBI's Temporary Relaxation

The interest rate ceiling on fresh and renewed NRE deposits of **three years and above** has been removed until 30 September 2026. However, transfers from **Non-**

Resident Ordinary (NRO) accounts to NRE accounts are not eligible for this relaxation.

RBI's Objective Behind the Move

The RBI has adopted this measure as part of a broader strategy to strengthen India's external sector position and improve foreign exchange liquidity.

Major Objectives

1. Attract Foreign Currency Inflows

Higher deposit rates make Indian banks more attractive for NRIs, encouraging greater inflows of foreign savings.

2. Strengthen Foreign Exchange Reserves

Additional FCNR(B) and NRE deposits increase the stock of foreign exchange available within the banking system.

3. Support Rupee Stability

Higher inflows help cushion the rupee against external shocks and volatility in global financial markets.

4. Lower Overseas Borrowing Costs

Enhanced foreign currency liquidity can reduce the cost of raising funds abroad for banks and public sector entities.

5. Complement the RBI Forex Swap Facility

The measure works alongside the RBI's concessional forex swap facility announced in June 2026, under which the central bank bears the hedging cost on eligible FCNR(B) deposits.

Expected Impact

Increased NRI Deposits

Analysts estimate that the relaxation could bring **\$30–50 billion** in additional inflows during FY27 if banks aggressively mobilise overseas deposits.

Improved Foreign Currency Liquidity

Higher FCNR(B) mobilisation will strengthen banks' foreign currency resources and improve access to external financing.

Support for the Rupee

Additional dollar inflows can help moderate pressure on the Indian rupee and reduce vulnerability to global capital outflows.

Historical Precedent

A similar FCNR(B) mobilisation programme introduced in **2013** attracted nearly **\$25 billion**, helping India navigate a period of external-sector stress.

Significance for the Indian Economy

The RBI's decision represents a targeted and temporary measure to boost foreign capital inflows without altering domestic monetary policy. By allowing banks greater flexibility in pricing NRI deposits, the central bank aims to strengthen India's external sector, improve forex liquidity, and maintain exchange-rate stability during a period of global uncertainty.

History

Mountbatten Plan at 79: How it redrew the subcontinent



Why in the News?

The year **2026** marks the **79th anniversary of the June 3 Declaration**, popularly known as the **Mountbatten Plan**, announced on 3 June 1947 by the last Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten. The plan formally accepted the **Partition of British India into India and Pakistan**, ending decades of constitutional negotiations that had largely sought to preserve a united subcontinent.

The declaration represented a decisive shift from earlier British initiatives, particularly the **Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946**, which had attempted to maintain Indian unity through a federal structure. The June 3 Plan instead acknowledged that political realities and growing communal tensions had made Partition unavoidable.

Historical Background: How Did British India Reach the Stage of Partition?

The Partition of India was not a sudden decision. It emerged from a combination of political deadlock, communal tensions, and changing British priorities after World War II.

1. Rise of Communal Polarisation

During the final decades of British rule, political identities increasingly became organised along religious lines.

- The **Indian National Congress** advocated a united and independent India.
- The **All-India Muslim League**, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, argued that Muslims constituted a separate nation requiring constitutional safeguards.
- The **Lahore Resolution of 1940** strengthened demands for a separate Muslim homeland, later crystallising into the demand for Pakistan.

As negotiations continued, distrust between the Congress and the Muslim League deepened.

2. Direct Action Day and Escalating Violence

On 16 August 1946, the Muslim League observed **Direct Action Day** to press its demand for Pakistan.

The result was widespread communal violence, particularly in Calcutta, where thousands lost their lives. The violence soon spread to:

- Noakhali
- Bihar
- Bombay
- Punjab
- United Provinces
- Other regions of British India

The scale of bloodshed convinced many leaders that communal harmony had severely deteriorated.

3. Failure of Constitutional Negotiations

Several attempts were made to preserve Indian unity.

Cabinet Mission Plan (1946)

The British proposed:

- A united India.
- A weak central government.
- Provincial groupings with significant autonomy.

Although initially accepted, disagreements over interpretation and implementation caused the plan to collapse.

The failure demonstrated that Congress and the Muslim League could not agree on a workable constitutional framework.

4. British Desire for Rapid Withdrawal

Following World War II:

- Britain faced severe economic difficulties.
- Maintaining colonial control became increasingly expensive.
- Domestic political opinion favoured decolonisation.
- The Labour government wanted an early transfer of power.

The British administration concluded that it could no longer govern India indefinitely.

Why Did Lord Mountbatten Conclude That Partition Was Inevitable?

When Mountbatten arrived in India in March 1947, the political and security situation had deteriorated sharply.

Administrative Breakdown

Communal riots were threatening civil administration across several provinces. Law and order machinery was increasingly unable to contain violence.

Political Deadlock

The Congress and the Muslim League remained divided over:

- Federal structure
- Representation
- Distribution of power
- Minority safeguards

No compromise appeared feasible.

Persistence of the Pakistan Demand

Jinnah and the Muslim League remained firmly committed to establishing Pakistan.

The League argued that Muslims would be politically marginalised in a Hindu-majority state.

Time Constraints

Britain had already announced its intention to leave India. Mountbatten was tasked with ensuring a rapid and orderly transfer of power.

Security Concerns

British officials feared that continued delays could lead to:

- Civil war
- Administrative collapse
- Military fragmentation

Partition increasingly appeared to them as the only practical solution.

The Rejected “Plan Balkan” or “Dickie Bird Plan”

Before announcing the June 3 Plan, Mountbatten considered an alternative known as **Plan Balkan**.

Main Proposal

Instead of dividing India into two dominions, the proposal suggested:

- Provinces could become independent successor states.
- Provinces would decide their own future individually.
- British authority would be transferred to multiple political entities.

Why It Was Rejected

Jawaharlal Nehru strongly opposed the proposal.

He argued that:

- It would fragment India into numerous states.
- It would create administrative chaos.
- It could lead to prolonged instability and conflict.

As a result, Mountbatten abandoned the proposal and developed the June 3 Plan.

Key Provisions of the June 3 Declaration**Creation of Two Dominions**

British India would be divided into:

- India
- Pakistan

Both would initially remain Dominions within the British Commonwealth while enjoying full internal sovereignty.

Partition of Punjab and Bengal

The provinces of:

- Punjab
- Bengal

contained mixed religious populations.

Separate meetings of Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority legislators were held.

If a majority voted for division, the province would be partitioned.

Both provinces ultimately voted in favour of partition.

Boundary Commission

A Boundary Commission headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe was established.

Its task was to:

- Draw the borders between India and Pakistan.
- Determine the division of Punjab and Bengal.
- Allocate districts based primarily on religious demographics.

The resulting boundaries became known as the **Radcliffe Line**.

Referendums**North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)**

A referendum was conducted to determine whether the province would join:

- India, or
- Pakistan

The majority voted for Pakistan.

Sylhet District of Assam

A separate referendum decided whether Sylhet would remain in Assam or join East Bengal.

The district voted to join Pakistan.

Status of Princely States

Approximately **565 princely states** existed outside direct British administration.

The plan ended British paramountcy over these states.

They were advised to accede to either:

- India, or
- Pakistan

based largely on geographical contiguity.

The British administration did not support the option of complete independence.

Separate Constituent Assemblies

Each dominion would establish its own sovereign Constituent Assembly to draft a constitution.

This allowed India and Pakistan to develop independent political systems.

Accelerated Transfer of Power

The original British deadline had been June 1948.

The June 3 Plan advanced the transfer of power dramatically.

India and Pakistan became independent on:

- 14 August 1947 (Pakistan)
- 15 August 1947 (India)

Why Did Congress Accept Partition?

Although Congress had long opposed Partition, its leaders eventually accepted the proposal.

Preventing Further Violence

Congress leaders feared that continued political uncertainty would intensify communal bloodshed.

Ensuring Governability

They believed that governing a smaller but politically cohesive state would be more practical than managing a deeply divided federation.

Preference for a Strong Centre

Congress leaders favoured a strong central government. The federal arrangements proposed earlier appeared increasingly unworkable.

Speedy Independence

Partition seemed to offer the fastest path to ending British rule.

Key Congress Leaders and Their Positions

Jawaharlal Nehru

- Viewed Partition as unfortunate but necessary.
- Prioritised independence and political stability.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

- Supported a pragmatic settlement.
- Believed continued deadlock would worsen violence and instability.

Why Did the Muslim League Support the Plan?

Achievement of Pakistan

The plan fulfilled the League's central political objective—the creation of Pakistan.

Political Security

The League argued that a separate state would better protect Muslim political interests.

Self-Determination

Supporters presented Pakistan as an expression of the right of Muslims to self-government.

Validation of the Two-Nation Theory

The acceptance of Partition appeared to validate the League's argument that Hindus and Muslims constituted distinct political nations.

Major Objections to the June 3 Plan

Muslim League Concerns

Despite supporting Pakistan, the League opposed:

- Partition of Punjab
- Partition of Bengal

Many League leaders preferred that both provinces remain intact within Pakistan.

Sikh Concerns

The Sikh community faced significant challenges because many of its religious and economic centres lay in areas affected by Partition.

Key concerns included:

- Security of Sikh populations
- Division of religious sites
- Economic dislocation

Congress Concerns

Congress leaders accepted Partition reluctantly.

They viewed it as:

- A tragic compromise
- A setback to national unity
- A potential source of future regional tensions

NWFP Leadership Concerns

Several leaders in the North-West Frontier Province argued that:

- The referendum should have included independence as an option.
- The electorate was restricted to choosing only between India and Pakistan.

Why Did Boundary Decisions Become So Controversial?

The boundary issue emerged as one of the most contentious aspects of Partition.

Delayed Announcement

The Radcliffe Award was announced only after Independence.

Millions of people did not know which country they would belong to.

Administrative Confusion

Government officials lacked clarity regarding:

- Jurisdiction
- Property rights
- Law enforcement responsibilities

Mass Uncertainty

Communities were unsure whether they would become minorities in India or Pakistan.

This uncertainty fuelled panic migration.

Communal Mobilisation

Political groups exploited fears regarding the future status of territories.

Violence intensified across Punjab and Bengal.

Long-Term Territorial Disputes

Boundary decisions contributed to later disputes, including:

- Kashmir
- River-water issues
- Border management challenges

Immediate Consequences of the Mountbatten Plan

Political Consequences

Emergence of Two Independent States

The plan led directly to the birth of:

- India
- Pakistan

as sovereign political entities.

Constitution-Making

Separate Constituent Assemblies began framing independent constitutional systems.

Humanitarian Consequences

Mass Migration

Partition triggered one of the largest forced migrations in modern history.

Historians estimate that:

- Around 14–18 million people crossed borders.
- Millions moved in both directions seeking safety.

Communal Violence

The Partition witnessed:

- Killings
- Abductions
- Looting
- Destruction of property

Hundreds of thousands lost their lives.

Refugee Crisis

The movement of displaced populations created enormous humanitarian and administrative challenges for both new states.

Geopolitical Consequences

India-Pakistan Rivalry

Partition laid the foundation for a long and often adversarial relationship between the two countries.

Kashmir Dispute

The accession of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir soon became a major source of conflict, leading to wars and continuing diplomatic tensions.

Birsa Munda and the Evolution of Adivasi Identity and Rights



Why in the News?

On 9 June 2026, the death anniversary of Birsa Munda was observed across Jharkhand. The occasion gained added significance amid debates regarding the status of tribal converts within the Scheduled Tribes framework, bringing renewed attention to Birsa Munda's ideas on Adivasi identity, land rights, cultural preservation, and self-governance.

Who was Birsa Munda?

Birsa Munda was one of the most influential tribal leaders in India's anti-colonial history.

Key Facts

Particulars	Details
Birth	15 November 1875, Ulihatu (present-day Jharkhand)
Death	9 June 1900, Ranchi Jail
Tribe	Munda Tribe

Particulars	Details
Revered As	<i>Dharti Aba</i> ("Father of the Earth")
Roles	Tribal leader, social reformer, religious preacher, anti-colonial freedom fighter

Contributions

- Mobilised Adivasi communities against British colonial rule.
- Opposed exploitation by landlords, moneylenders, and non-tribal settlers.
- Advocated preservation of tribal culture and traditions.
- Promoted social reforms and moral regeneration among tribal communities.
- Inspired a political consciousness centred on self-rule and protection of tribal resources.

Ulgulan (The Great Tumult), 1899–1900

The **Ulgulan Movement** was a major tribal uprising led by Birsa Munda in the Chotanagpur region.

Meaning

- "Ulgulan" means **Great Tumult** or **Great Uprising**.
- It represented both a political revolt and a socio-cultural movement.

Causes of the Uprising

1. Land Alienation

- Traditional tribal lands were increasingly transferred to outsiders.
- Indigenous landholding patterns were disrupted under colonial policies.

2. Exploitation by Colonial Institutions

- British revenue policies burdened tribal communities.
- Zamindars and moneylenders extracted excessive rents and debts.

3. Rise of "Dikus"

- Tribal communities used the term **Dikus** for exploitative outsiders.
- These groups often gained control over tribal resources and livelihoods.

4. Cultural and Religious Pressures

- Traditional tribal customs faced increasing challenges.
- Missionary influence and changing social structures created tensions.

5. Decline of Traditional Governance

- Customary institutions that regulated community life were weakened by colonial administration.

Objectives of the Ulgulan

The movement sought:

- Restoration of traditional tribal land rights.
- Protection of tribal identity and customs.
- Expulsion of exploitative outsiders.
- End of British domination.
- Establishment of self-rule based on tribal traditions.

The Concept of "Disum"

A central idea in Birsa Munda's political thought was **Disum**.

Meaning

- Refers to **self-rule** or autonomous tribal governance.

Significance

Disum reflected:

- Adivasi sovereignty.
- Community ownership of land and forests.
- Decentralised governance.
- Cultural autonomy.
- Collective control over natural resources.

This vision anticipated later debates on tribal self-governance and local autonomy in India.

Dombari Buru: Symbol of Resistance

Dombari Buru became the focal point of the Ulgulan movement.

Events

- Thousands of followers gathered there in January 1900 to assert tribal rights.
- British forces opened fire on the gathering.
- Many tribals were killed in the repression.

Importance

- Remembered as one of the most significant episodes of tribal resistance.

- Became a powerful symbol of sacrifice and anti-colonial struggle in Adivasi memory.

The Khuntkatti System

The **Khuntkatti** system was the traditional Munda land tenure arrangement.

Features

- Land belonged collectively to descendants of the original settlers.
- Such families were known as **Khuntkattidars**.
- Rights over land were linked to community membership.
- Combined economic ownership with customary governance structures.

Importance

The system ensured:

- Community control over resources.
- Protection against individual land alienation.
- Preservation of tribal social organisation.

Chotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, 1908

Background

Following decades of tribal resistance, including the Ulgulan movement, the British administration recognised the need for legal safeguards.

This led to the enactment of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908.

Objectives

- Prevent transfer of tribal land to non-tribals.
- Protect customary tribal land rights.
- Recognise traditional tenure systems such as Khuntkatti.
- Reduce exploitation by landlords and moneylenders.

Significance

The CNT Act remains one of the most important legal protections for tribal land rights in eastern India and is considered a lasting legacy of the struggles led by Birsa Munda.

Legacy of Birsa Munda

Birsa Munda's movement was not merely a revolt against colonial rule; it was a struggle for:

- Land rights,
- Cultural identity,

- Social justice,
- Community ownership of resources,
- Tribal self-governance.

Today, he is remembered as one of India's foremost tribal freedom fighters whose ideas continue to influence debates on indigenous rights, forest governance, land protection, and Adivasi empowerment. His life symbolizes resistance against exploitation and the assertion of dignity, identity, and self-rule for tribal communities.

Mohenjo-daro's "Dancing Girl": History, Identity and the Debate on Modesty



Why in News?

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) restored the original image of the iconic Mohenjo-daro bronze figurine in a Class 9 textbook after an earlier version had shaded its bare torso, reviving debates over cultural representation and historical interpretation.

About Mohenjo-daro

Mohenjo-daro was one of the largest and most sophisticated urban centres of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization (also known as the Harappan Civilization), flourishing between approximately 2600 BCE and 1900 BCE.

- The name *Mohenjo-daro* means "**Mound of the Dead**" in Sindhi.
- It is located on the banks of the Indus River in present-day Pakistan.
- The site was discovered in 1922 by Indian archaeologist Rakhaladas Banerji.

- It is renowned for its advanced urban planning, including:
 - Grid-pattern streets
 - Sophisticated drainage systems
 - Public baths
 - Standardized brick architecture
 - Granaries and civic structures
- In 1980, Mohenjo-daro was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its outstanding archaeological significance.

About the Figurine

- A bronze statuette discovered at Mohenjo-daro in 1926, dating to around **2500 BCE**.
- Approximately **10.5 cm tall**.
- Crafted using the **lost-wax casting technique**, demonstrating remarkable metallurgical expertise.
- Depicts a young female figure standing confidently with one hand on her hip.
- The figure wears numerous bangles on one arm, a necklace, and other ornaments.
- It is among the most celebrated artistic creations of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Lost-Wax Casting Technique

The figurine was produced through the *cire perdue* (lost-wax) method:

1. A wax model of the object was prepared.
2. The model was covered with clay.
3. The clay mould was heated, melting the wax.
4. Molten metal was poured into the cavity.
5. After cooling, the mould was broken to reveal the final bronze figure.

This technique is still used in parts of India today and reflects the advanced craftsmanship of Harappan artisans.

Why is its Identity Contested?

- Archaeologist John Marshall identified the statuette as a **“Nautch Girl”** or **“Dancing Girl”** based on her posture and appearance.
- However, several modern scholars question this interpretation.

- Historian Upinder Singh argues that there is no archaeological evidence proving that the figure represents a professional dancer.
- Archaeologist Gregory L. Possehl also challenged the dancer interpretation.
- Some scholars suggest the figurine may represent:
 - An ordinary young woman,
 - A member of an elite community,
 - A symbolic or ritual figure,
 - Or simply an artistic representation without a specific occupational identity.

Thus, the title “Dancing Girl” remains a modern interpretation rather than an established archaeological fact.

Major Artefacts Recovered from Mohenjo-daro

Apart from the Dancing Girl, several important artefacts have been discovered at Mohenjo-daro:

1. Priest King

- A famous steatite (soapstone) sculpture of a bearded male figure.
- Features a robe decorated with trefoil patterns.
- Considered one of the finest examples of Harappan sculpture.
- Its actual identity is unknown; the term “Priest King” is also a modern interpretation.

2. Indus Seals

- Thousands of seals bearing animal motifs and undeciphered Indus script.
- Common animals include unicorns, bulls, elephants, and rhinoceroses.
- Likely used for trade, administration, and identification.

3. Great Bath

- One of the most remarkable public structures of the ancient world.
- Believed to have been used for ritual bathing and community ceremonies.

4. Terracotta Figurines

- Human and animal figurines made of baked clay.
- Provide insights into daily life, beliefs, and artistic traditions.

5. Toys and Miniature Carts

- Wheeled carts, animal models, and toys indicate the importance of craftsmanship and trade.

6. Weights and Measures

- Standardized stone weights demonstrate a highly organized commercial system.

7. Copper and Bronze Tools

- Tools, weapons, mirrors, and utensils showcasing advanced metallurgy.

Partition and Ownership Debate

- Following the Partition of India in 1947, approximately **12,000 Harappan artefacts** housed in Delhi became subjects of dispute between India and Pakistan.
- Both countries eventually agreed to a **50:50 division** of artefacts from Mohenjo-daro and Chanhudaro.
- Pakistan reportedly selected the **Priest King** figurine, while India retained the **Dancing Girl**.
- The Dancing Girl is currently preserved in India and is widely regarded as part of the shared cultural heritage of South Asia.

Significance of the Dancing Girl

- Demonstrates the advanced **metallurgical and artistic skills** of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- Provides evidence of sophisticated bronze-casting technology more than 4,500 years ago.
- Reflects the creativity and aesthetic sensibilities of Harappan society.
- Highlights how colonial interpretations and contemporary social values influence historical understanding.
- Continues to inspire debates regarding heritage ownership, gender representation, modesty, and cultural identity.
- Serves as one of the most recognizable symbols of the Indus Valley Civilization and ancient South Asian heritage.

Conclusion

The Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-daro is far more than a small bronze statuette. It is a remarkable testament to

the technological sophistication, artistic excellence, and cultural richness of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Rakhigarhi Skeletons To Undergo DNA Analysis & Facial Reconstruction



Why in the News?

The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has sent nearly **5,000-year-old human skeletons** excavated from **Rakhigarhi** for advanced **ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis** and **facial reconstruction**. The study aims to reveal crucial information about the people of the **Indus Valley Civilization**, including their ancestry, health, appearance, and way of life.

Key Highlights

Discovery of Human Skeletons

- Five well-preserved skeletons have been selected for detailed scientific examination.
- Preliminary anthropological assessment indicates:
 - **3 females**
 - **2 males**
- Estimated age at death: **30–40 years**.
- The excavation also uncovered **three disturbed burials** containing fragmentary skeletal remains at **Mound No. 7**, identified as the ancient cemetery of Rakhigarhi.

Scientific Institutions Involved

Anthropological Survey of India

Responsible for:

- Anthropological examination of skeletal remains.
- Facial reconstruction using forensic and digital techniques.
- Estimation of age, sex, stature, and physical characteristics.

Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences

Responsible for:

- Extraction and analysis of **ancient DNA (aDNA)**.
- Genetic profiling and ancestry studies.
- Investigation of inherited traits and possible diseases.

Objectives of the Study

The multidisciplinary research seeks to answer several important questions regarding Harappan society:

- Determine the **genetic ancestry** of the individuals.
- Identify their relationship with modern populations.
- Detect hereditary diseases or infections.
- Estimate **cause of death**, where possible.
- Reconstruct **facial features** and overall physical appearance.
- Estimate **height, diet, occupation, and lifestyle**.
- Understand **social status** through burial practices.
- Reconstruct the **palaeo-environment** and climatic conditions during the Harappan period.

The findings are expected to significantly improve understanding of the biological history of one of the world's earliest urban civilizations.

About Rakhigarhi

- Located in **Hisar district, Haryana**.
- It is the **largest known site** of the **Indus Valley (Harappan) Civilization**, covering nearly **350 hectares**, making it larger than both Harappa and Mohenjo-daro.
- Flourished during the **Mature Harappan Phase (2600–1900 BCE)**.
- Excavations have revealed:
 - Planned urban settlements.
 - Sophisticated drainage systems.

- Granaries and storage structures.
- Craft production centres.
- Burial grounds and cemetery remains.
- Pottery, beads, ornaments, seals, and copper artefacts.

- Excavations have been carried out by the **ASI and Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute**, making Rakhigarhi one of the most significant archaeological sites in South Asia.

Ancient DNA (aDNA)

Ancient DNA (aDNA) refers to **genetic material extracted from ancient biological remains**, such as:

- Bones
- Teeth
- Hair
- Soft tissues (when preserved)

Applications of Ancient DNA

- Tracing **human migration** patterns.
- Studying **population genetics** and ancestry.
- Understanding **human evolution**.
- Identifying ancient diseases and pathogens.
- Reconstructing kinship and family relationships.
- Investigating interactions between ancient populations.

Challenges

Ancient DNA is often:

- Highly fragmented.
- Chemically degraded.
- Easily contaminated by modern DNA.
- Difficult to recover in tropical climates like India due to high temperatures and humidity.

Significance

The study represents one of India's most ambitious efforts to combine **archaeology, genetics, forensic anthropology, and palaeo-environmental science**. By reconstructing the biological and cultural profile of Harappan individuals, researchers hope to gain deeper insights into:

- The origins and genetic diversity of the Harappan people.
- Their health, nutrition, and disease burden.
- Population continuity and migration patterns.

- Environmental conditions during the Bronze Age.
- The evolution of one of the world's earliest urban civilizations.

The findings could substantially enrich our understanding of the **Indus Valley Civilization** and contribute to global research on ancient human populations.

International Relations

NATO Baltic Command Centre



Why in the News?

Germany and the Netherlands have announced the establishment of a joint NATO tactical headquarters in the Baltic region to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture against Russia. The move comes amid heightened security concerns in Europe following the Russia-Ukraine conflict and reflects NATO's continued efforts to reinforce its eastern flank.

Key Highlights

- The joint command centre is known as the **1st German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC)**.
- It will primarily operate in the Baltic states of:
 - Estonia
 - Latvia
- The headquarters can command up to **50,000 troops** during military operations.
- It will function as a high-readiness NATO land command capable of leading multinational forces during crises and conflicts.
- The initiative is part of NATO's broader strategy to improve military readiness and rapid deployment capabilities along its eastern borders.

Functions of the 1GNC

The corps will perform several strategic and operational roles:

1. Military Planning and Exercises

- Organising and supervising multinational military drills.
- Testing interoperability among NATO member states.
- Enhancing preparedness against conventional and hybrid threats.

2. Operational Command During Conflicts

- Acting as a field headquarters during wartime or emergencies.
- Coordinating combat operations involving multiple allied forces.

3. Strengthening NATO's Eastern Flank

- Reinforcing security in the Baltic region.
- Supporting NATO's forward defence concept.
- Serving as a deterrent against potential military aggression.

4. Rapid Response Capability

- Facilitating quick mobilisation of NATO troops.
- Improving command-and-control mechanisms during crises.
- Enhancing coordination between land, air, and maritime forces.

About the German-Netherlands Corps (1GNC)

- Established in **1995** after the Cold War as a symbol of deep military cooperation between:
 - Germany
 - Netherlands
- Headquarters located in Münster.
- Leadership rotates between German and Dutch commanders.

- Supported by military personnel from **14 NATO member countries**.
- Recognised as one of NATO's **High Readiness Force Headquarters (HRF HQs)**.

NATO's Eastern Flank: What Does It Mean?

The "eastern flank" refers to NATO member states located closest to Russia and Belarus, including:

- Poland
- Estonia
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Romania

Since 2022, NATO has significantly increased troop deployments, air policing missions, and military exercises in these countries to deter any potential aggression.

NATO's New Force Model

The establishment of the 1GNC aligns with NATO's **New Force Model**, adopted during the 2022 Madrid Summit.

Key Features

- Over **300,000 troops** kept at high readiness.
- Faster deployment timelines.
- Greater integration of national military forces.
- Improved command structures and logistics.

The 1GNC will play an important role in implementing this new force structure in Northern and Eastern Europe.

Strategic Importance of the Baltic Region

The Baltic region has emerged as one of NATO's most strategically sensitive areas because:

- It borders Russia directly through the Russian exclave of **Kaliningrad**.
- It lies close to the **Suwalki Gap**, a narrow corridor connecting Poland and Lithuania that is considered one of NATO's most vulnerable points.
- The Baltic Sea has become increasingly important for energy security, trade routes, and military mobility.
- The accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO has further enhanced the alliance's presence in Northern Europe.

Significance for NATO

Political Significance

- Demonstrates strong European commitment to collective defence.
- Reflects deeper military integration among NATO allies.

Military Significance

- Enhances NATO's command-and-control structure.
- Improves operational readiness and troop mobility.
- Strengthens deterrence against conventional and hybrid threats.

Geopolitical Significance

- Sends a signal of alliance unity amid continuing tensions with Russia.
- Reinforces NATO's ability to defend every member state under **Article 5** of the NATO Treaty, which states that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all.

India-U.K. Critical Minerals Partnership



Why in the News?

India and the United Kingdom have launched the **Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory (GSCO)** to deepen cooperation in critical minerals, clean energy technologies, and resilient global supply chains. The initiative is aimed at strengthening the ability of both countries to monitor vulnerabilities in mineral supply chains and support the global energy transition. The development is part of the broader India-U.K. strategic partnership in trade, technology, climate action, and innovation.

What is the GSCO?

The **Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory (GSCO)** is a data-driven platform designed to:

- Monitor global critical mineral supply chains.
- Analyse supply risks and disruptions.
- Improve transparency in mineral sourcing.
- Support policy-making through advanced data analytics.
- Strengthen international cooperation on resource security.

The observatory seeks to provide governments, industries, and researchers with actionable insights into the availability, production, processing, and transportation of critical minerals.

Institutions Involved

The GSCO will be jointly operated by:

- Technology Innovation in Exploration and Mining Foundation (TEXMiN)
- Indian Institute of Technology (ISM) Dhanbad
- University of Cambridge

This collaboration combines India's expertise in mining and mineral exploration with the U.K.'s strengths in research, analytics, and technology.

Background

The initiative was first announced during the visit of Keir Starmer to India in October 2025. It reflects the growing recognition that access to critical minerals will be central to future economic growth, technological advancement, and energy security.

During the discussions, India's Union Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy emphasized that the observatory would contribute significantly to building resilient and diversified global supply chains.

Why are Critical Minerals Important?

Critical minerals are minerals that are economically important but face a high risk of supply disruption. They are indispensable for modern industries and emerging technologies.

Major Uses

Clean Energy Transition

- Solar panels
- Wind turbines

- Battery storage systems
- Hydrogen technologies

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

- Lithium-ion batteries
- Charging infrastructure
- Power electronics

Electronics and Digital Technologies

- Smartphones
- Semiconductors
- Computers
- Telecommunications equipment

Defence and Aerospace

- Precision-guided systems
- Advanced weaponry
- Satellites
- Military communication systems

Examples of Critical Minerals

Mineral	Major Use
Lithium	EV batteries and energy storage
Cobalt	Battery cathodes
Nickel	High-performance batteries
Graphite	Battery anodes
Rare Earth Elements (REEs)	Magnets, defence systems, wind turbines
Copper	Electrical transmission and renewable energy infrastructure

Strategic Significance of GSCO

1. Supply Chain Resilience

The observatory will help identify bottlenecks and vulnerabilities in global mineral supply chains, reducing dependence on a limited number of supplier countries.

2. Energy Security

As countries move toward net-zero emissions, securing access to critical minerals becomes essential for renewable energy deployment.

3. Technological Cooperation

The initiative promotes:

- Technology sharing
- Research collaboration
- Innovation in mining and processing

- Sustainable extraction practices

4. Economic and National Security

Disruptions in critical mineral supplies can affect manufacturing, defence preparedness, and industrial competitiveness. The observatory will support strategic planning and risk mitigation.

India's Interest in Critical Minerals

India's demand for critical minerals is expected to rise sharply due to:

- Expansion of electric mobility
- Renewable energy targets
- Semiconductor manufacturing
- Defence modernisation

To address this challenge, India has been:

- Identifying and classifying critical minerals.
- Encouraging domestic exploration.
- Acquiring overseas mineral assets.
- Building strategic partnerships with resource-rich countries.

Other Areas Discussed During India–U.K. Talks

Apart from critical minerals, both countries discussed cooperation in:

- Trade and investment
- Defence and security
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Climate change and clean energy
- Technology and innovation
- Education and research
- People-to-people ties

India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also held discussions with Yvette Cooper on strengthening bilateral cooperation.

Conclusion

The launch of the GSCO marks an important step in the India–U.K. strategic partnership. By improving monitoring and analysis of global critical mineral supply chains, the initiative will support energy security, technological development, and economic resilience. As the global race for clean energy technologies accelerates, access to critical minerals is becoming a key determinant of both economic competitiveness and national security.

US Court Strikes Down Trump's \$100,000 H-1B Fee



Why in the News?

A US federal judge recently struck down President **Donald Trump's** proposed **\$100,000 fee on new H-1B visas**, ruling that the measure amounted to an unlawful tax that could not be imposed without approval from the **United States Congress**. The decision has renewed attention on the H-1B visa programme, which serves as a major pathway for skilled foreign professionals to work in the United States.

What is the H-1B Visa Programme?

The **H-1B visa** is a **non-immigrant work visa** issued by the **United States**.

It allows US employers to hire foreign professionals in **specialty occupations** that require:

- At least a bachelor's degree (or equivalent qualification).
- Specialized theoretical and technical knowledge.
- Professional expertise in a specific field.

The visa is employer-sponsored, meaning a foreign worker can only obtain an H-1B visa if a US employer files a petition on their behalf.

Objectives of the H-1B Programme

The programme aims to:

- Address shortages of highly skilled workers in the US labour market.
- Support innovation and technological advancement.
- Enable American companies to access global talent.

- Strengthen sectors that require specialized expertise.

Major Sectors Employing H-1B Workers

H-1B visa holders are employed across a wide range of knowledge-intensive industries, including:

Information Technology (IT)

The largest share of H-1B workers is employed in:

- Software development
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Data science
- Cloud computing
- Cybersecurity

Engineering

Fields include:

- Mechanical engineering
- Electrical engineering
- Civil engineering
- Semiconductor design

Healthcare

- Physicians
- Medical researchers
- Healthcare specialists

Finance

- Financial analysts
- Quantitative researchers
- Risk management professionals

Consulting

- Business consultants
- Technology consultants
- Management specialists

Research and Academia

- Scientists
- University researchers
- Technical experts

Annual H-1B Cap

The H-1B programme is subject to an annual numerical limit established by US law.

General Cap

- **65,000 visas** annually.
- Applicable to most private-sector employers.

Advanced Degree Exemption

An additional:

- **20,000 visas** are reserved for applicants who possess advanced degrees (Master's degree or higher) from US institutions.

Thus, the total regular annual allocation is generally **85,000 visas**.

Cap-Exempt Entities

Certain organisations are exempt from the annual H-1B cap and can file petitions throughout the year.

These include:

Universities

Accredited higher education institutions can sponsor foreign professionals without being subject to the annual quota.

Non-Profit Research Organisations

Research-focused non-profit institutions can recruit international talent year-round.

Government Research Institutions

Federal, state, and government-affiliated research bodies are also exempt from the annual cap.

H-1B Selection Process

When applications exceed the annual cap, the **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services** conducts a computerized lottery system to select eligible applicants.

The process generally involves:

1. Employer registration.
2. Lottery selection (if applications exceed available visas).
3. Filing of H-1B petition.
4. Approval and visa issuance.

Importance for India

India is the largest beneficiary of the H-1B programme.

Key Significance

- A substantial majority of H-1B visas are granted to Indian professionals.
- Indian IT companies are among the largest users of the programme.
- The visa facilitates the movement of highly skilled Indian workers to the United States.
- It strengthens technological and economic ties between India and the US.

The programme is particularly important for professionals working in software services, engineering, finance, and emerging technologies.

Criticisms and Challenges

The H-1B programme has often been debated in US immigration policy.

Supporters Argue

- It helps address skill shortages.
- Promotes innovation and competitiveness.
- Supports growth in high-technology sectors.

Critics Argue

- It may affect employment opportunities for domestic workers.
- Some firms may use it to reduce labour costs.
- The lottery system creates uncertainty for employers and applicants.

Significance of the Recent Court Ruling

The federal court's decision striking down the proposed \$100,000 H-1B fee reinforces the principle that major taxes and fees require authorization from Congress.

The ruling is significant because it:

- Prevents a substantial increase in the cost of H-1B applications.
- Maintains access to skilled foreign talent for US employers.
- Provides certainty to prospective applicants.
- Has particular relevance for Indian professionals, who constitute the largest share of H-1B beneficiaries.

India-Slovakia Relations Elevated to a Comprehensive Partnership



Why in the News?

India and Slovakia elevated their bilateral relationship to a **“Comprehensive Partnership”** during Prime Minister **Narendra Modi’s** visit to **Bratislava**. The visit is historically significant as it marks the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Slovakia since the country emerged as an independent state in 1993 following the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

The upgrade reflects the growing convergence between the two countries in strategic, economic, technological, and multilateral domains.

What is a Comprehensive Partnership?

A Comprehensive Partnership represents a higher level of bilateral engagement that expands cooperation beyond traditional diplomatic ties to include:

- Strategic and security cooperation
- Defence and military collaboration
- Trade and investment
- Science, technology, and innovation
- Education and research
- Labour mobility and people-to-people exchanges
- Coordination in regional and global forums

The new framework is expected to provide institutional mechanisms for deeper engagement across emerging sectors.

Key Outcomes of the Visit

1. Comprehensive Partnership Established

India and Slovakia formally upgraded their bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Partnership.

The two countries agreed to intensify cooperation in:

- Strategic sectors
- Emerging technologies
- Defence manufacturing
- Innovation and research
- Economic and industrial collaboration

This elevation signifies a long-term commitment to strengthening bilateral relations.

2. Defence Cooperation

A **Letter of Intent (LoI)** was signed to enhance defence collaboration.

Areas of Cooperation

- Defence technologies

- Defence industrial cooperation
- Capacity building and training
- Joint research and development (R&D)
- Exchange of expertise and best practices

Significance

Slovakia possesses strengths in defence manufacturing and engineering, while India is pursuing self-reliance under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiative.

The agreement opens opportunities for:

- Technology transfer
- Joint production
- Defence exports
- Industrial partnerships

Defence has been identified as a key pillar of the newly established Comprehensive Partnership.

3. Labour Migration and Mobility

Both countries signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on labour migration and mobility.

Key Features

- Facilitates legal movement of workers
- Promotes exchange of information between authorities
- Enhances protection of migrant workers
- Supports skill mobility

Social Security Agreement

India and Slovakia also agreed to conclude a **Social Security Agreement (SSA)**.

Such agreements generally help workers by:

- Avoiding double social security contributions
- Ensuring portability of benefits
- Protecting the interests of professionals working abroad

This is expected to benefit Indian skilled workers and professionals seeking opportunities in Slovakia and the broader European region.

4. Education and Research Cooperation

An MoU was signed between the higher education authorities of both countries.

Focus Areas

- Academic partnerships
- Institutional collaboration
- Joint research projects

- Faculty exchanges
- Student mobility programmes

Priority Disciplines

- Science
- Technology
- Engineering
- Mathematics (STEM)
- Humanities and social sciences

The agreement aims to strengthen knowledge exchange and foster innovation-driven collaboration.

5. Digital and Emerging Technology Cooperation

India and Slovakia signed an MoU on digital technologies.

Areas of Collaboration

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Semiconductors
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Start-up ecosystems
- Digital innovation
- 6G standardisation

Importance

The partnership aligns with India's ambitions to become a major global technology hub and Slovakia's advanced industrial and manufacturing capabilities.

Collaboration in semiconductor and AI sectors is particularly important amid growing global competition for technological leadership.

6. Trade and Investment Cooperation

Both sides committed to expanding bilateral trade and investment flows.

Priority Sectors

- Automobiles
- Electronics
- Advanced manufacturing
- Green technologies
- Railway infrastructure
- Industrial engineering

Economic Significance

Slovakia is one of Europe's major automobile manufacturing centres, while India offers:

- A large consumer market
- Expanding manufacturing capabilities
- Skilled workforce

- Investment opportunities

The two countries also expressed optimism that the proposed **India–European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** would provide additional momentum to bilateral economic relations.

7. Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

India and Slovakia agreed to establish a **Joint Working Group on Terrorism**.

Joint Position

Both countries:

- Strongly condemned the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack.
- Reaffirmed zero tolerance towards terrorism.
- Called for stronger international cooperation against terror networks.

Key Demands

- Action against terrorists and their sponsors
- Disruption of terror financing networks
- Effective implementation of the **United Nations Security Council 1267 Sanctions Committee** regime
- Early adoption of the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)**

India has long advocated the adoption of CCIT to create a universally accepted legal framework against terrorism.

8. Multilateral and Global Cooperation

Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to:

- Multilateralism
- Rules-based international order
- International cooperation through the United Nations

UNSC Reforms

India and Slovakia supported reforms of the **United Nations Security Council** to make it more representative and effective.

They endorsed:

- Expansion of permanent membership
- Expansion of non-permanent membership
- Greater representation of developing countries

Support for India

Slovakia reiterated support for:

- India's bid for a permanent seat in the UNSC
- India's membership in the **Nuclear Suppliers Group**

This reflects growing international backing for India's role in global governance institutions.

Significance for India

The India–Slovakia Comprehensive Partnership is important because it:

- Strengthens India's engagement with Central Europe.
- Expands defence and technology cooperation.
- Creates new opportunities for trade and investment.
- Facilitates mobility of skilled professionals.
- Enhances collaboration in AI, semiconductors, and innovation.
- Builds stronger support for India in international forums.
- Reinforces cooperation against terrorism and transnational threats.

U.S.-Iran 14-Point Framework Agreement



Why in the News?

The **United States** and **Iran** have reportedly reached a **14-point framework agreement** aimed at reducing bilateral tensions, addressing concerns over Iran's nuclear programme, easing economic sanctions, and promoting stability in West Asia. The framework is expected to serve as the basis for further negotiations on contentious issues such as uranium enrichment, sanctions relief, and regional security.

Key Features of the Framework Agreement

The proposed agreement seeks to establish confidence-building measures between the two countries while creating conditions for a broader and more permanent settlement.

Iran's Commitments

Under the framework, Iran has reportedly agreed to:

- Never develop or produce nuclear weapons.
- Maintain the current status of its nuclear programme during negotiations.
- Down-blend (dilute) its stockpile of highly enriched uranium under the supervision of International Atomic Energy Agency.
- Restore pre-conflict commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz within 30 days.

U.S. Commitments

The United States has reportedly agreed to:

- Facilitate the release of frozen Iranian assets.
- Support an economic development package worth **\$300 billion**.
- Remove sanctions on:
 - Crude oil exports.
 - Petrochemical products.
 - Financial and banking services.
- End naval restrictions and reduce military deployments in surrounding waters.
- Commit to lifting both primary and secondary sanctions under a final agreement.

Other Important Provisions

The framework also includes:

- Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Commitment to an immediate and permanent cessation of regional hostilities, including in Lebanon.
- Continued negotiations on unresolved issues such as:
 - The future of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile.
 - Long-term nuclear enrichment rights.
 - Permanent sanctions relief mechanisms.

Major Flashpoint: Nuclear Enrichment

Iran's Position

Iran argues that nuclear enrichment for peaceful purposes, including electricity generation and scientific research, is a sovereign right under international law.

U.S. Position

The United States has traditionally sought a **zero-enrichment** arrangement, insisting that no uranium enrichment should take place on Iranian soil.

Why It Matters

This issue remains the most difficult obstacle to a final agreement because:

- Enrichment technology can be used for both civilian and military purposes.
- The level and quantity of enriched uranium determine the potential for weaponisation.
- Any compromise must balance Iran's sovereign rights with international non-proliferation concerns.

Strait of Hormuz



Location

The **Strait of Hormuz** connects:

- The Persian Gulf
- The Gulf of Oman
- The Arabian Sea

Strategic Importance

- One of the world's most important maritime chokepoints.
- A major share of global crude oil exports passes through the strait.
- A significant portion of global Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) trade also transits this route.
- Any disruption can lead to higher global energy prices and supply-chain instability.

Importance for India

For India, the Strait of Hormuz is strategically significant because:

- A large share of India's crude oil imports originates from Gulf countries.
- Smooth passage through the strait is vital for energy security.
- Stability in the region helps maintain uninterrupted trade and shipping routes.

Significance of the Agreement

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The framework could reduce concerns regarding the potential military use of Iran's nuclear programme.

Economic Benefits

Sanctions relief may help revive Iran's economy, increase oil exports, and improve global energy market stability.

Regional Stability

Reduced tensions between the U.S. and Iran could lower the risk of conflict across West Asia and improve maritime security.

Global Energy Security

Reopening shipping routes and ensuring freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz would benefit international trade and energy markets.

Conclusion

The reported 14-point U.S.–Iran framework represents an important diplomatic effort to de-escalate tensions and revive engagement after years of confrontation. However, the issue of **nuclear enrichment rights** remains the central challenge. The success of future negotiations will depend on finding a balance between Iran's demand for peaceful nuclear autonomy and international concerns regarding nuclear proliferation.

Polity

Report on Datasets for State Finance Commissions (SFCs)



Why in News?

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has released the **Report of the Committee on Datasets for State Finance Commissions (SFCs)** to strengthen evidence-based fiscal decentralisation and improve the financial governance of local bodies across India. The report was released by V. Anantha Nageswaran. The initiative aims to enhance data quality, transparency, and informed decision-making in local governance.

Key Highlights of the Report

The report seeks to strengthen:

- **Fiscal decentralisation** by improving the financial autonomy of local governments.
- **Local public finance management** through better financial data systems.
- **Data-driven governance** for more effective policy formulation and implementation.

It focuses on improving the availability and quality of data relating to:

- Panchayats
- State Finance Commissions (SFCs)
- Local government finances
- Service delivery outcomes

Why is the Report Important?

According to the Chief Economic Adviser, **better data leads to better governance.**

Need for Reliable Fiscal Data

Effective fiscal decision-making requires:

- **Reliable data** – accurate and trustworthy information.

- **Timely data** – updated and available when needed.
- **Granular data** – detailed information at the village and local-body level.

Without robust datasets, State Finance Commissions face difficulties in assessing the financial needs and performance of Panchayats.

Strengthening Local Governance

Empowered local governments are essential for delivering basic public services such as:

- Drinking water supply
- Rural roads
- Street lighting
- Sanitation
- Anganwadi and welfare services

Improved fiscal data can help ensure that financial resources are allocated more efficiently and equitably.

Major Recommendations

1. Panchayat-Level Fiscal Database

The report recommends creating a comprehensive fiscal database covering:

- Revenue receipts
- Expenditure patterns
- Assets
- Liabilities

This would provide a complete picture of Panchayat finances and support evidence-based recommendations by SFCs.

2. Use of Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI)

The **Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI)** should be integrated into SFC assessments.

Benefits include:

- Measuring developmental performance of Panchayats.
- Identifying regional disparities.
- Linking fiscal transfers with developmental outcomes.

3. Establishment of State Finance Commission Cells

Dedicated **SFC Cells** should be created within State Governments to provide:

- Data collection support
- Research assistance

- Technical and analytical expertise
- Institutional continuity between successive commissions

4. Standardised Accounting Framework

The report recommends a uniform accounting and reporting system across States to:

- Improve transparency.
- Enhance comparability of financial data.
- Reduce inconsistencies in reporting.

5. Common Reporting Framework

A standard format for SFC reports should be adopted nationwide.

This would:

- Facilitate inter-state comparison.
- Improve consistency in recommendations.
- Enable easier monitoring and evaluation.

6. Publication of Data Handbooks

States should regularly publish comprehensive **Panchayat Data Handbooks** containing:

- Financial indicators
- Development indicators
- Governance performance metrics

7. State Finance Commission Manual

A standardized operational manual should be prepared to guide future SFCs regarding:

- Methodology
- Data collection practices
- Financial analysis techniques
- Reporting standards

State Finance Commission (SFC)

Constitutional Basis

The State Finance Commission is provided under:

Article 243-I of the Constitution of India

It mandates that the **Governor of every State constitute an SFC every five years.**

Functions of State Finance Commission

The SFC is responsible for:

1. Reviewing Local Finances

- Examining the financial position of Panchayats and Municipalities.
- Assessing their revenue-generating capacity and expenditure needs.

2. Recommending Revenue Sharing

The Commission recommends the distribution between the State Government and local bodies of:

- State taxes
- Duties
- Tolls
- Fees

3. Strengthening Local Government Finances

It suggests measures for:

- Improving financial sustainability.
- Enhancing revenue mobilisation.
- Increasing efficiency in expenditure management.

Significance

The report is an important step toward **strengthening cooperative federalism and grassroots democracy**. By creating robust fiscal datasets and standardised financial systems, it aims to make State Finance Commissions more effective, improve transparency in local governance, and ensure that Panchayats have the resources necessary to deliver essential public services efficiently.

Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyaan (PMSMA)



Why in the News?

The **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyaan (PMSMA)** completed **10 years** on **9 June 2026**. To mark the occasion, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched nationwide celebrations highlighting a decade of progress in maternal healthcare. Since its launch in

2016, more than **7.5 crore pregnant women** have received antenatal care (ANC) services under the scheme, making it one of India's largest maternal health interventions.

About PMSMA

The **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyaan (PMSMA)** is a flagship maternal healthcare programme of the Government of India aimed at providing **assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care (ANC) services free of cost** to all pregnant women.

Launch Details

- **Launched on:** 9 June 2016
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)
- **Coverage:** Across government health facilities in both rural and urban areas
- **Service Day:** Special ANC services are provided on the **9th day of every month**.

Objectives of PMSMA

The scheme seeks to:

- Ensure **safe pregnancy and safe childbirth**.
- Provide at least one specialist ANC check-up during pregnancy.
- Improve early detection and management of complications.
- Reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.
- Ensure timely referral and treatment of high-risk cases.
- Strengthen the continuum of maternal healthcare services.

Beneficiaries

PMSMA primarily targets:

Pregnant Women in:

- **Second Trimester:** 13–27 weeks
- **Third Trimester:** 28 weeks until delivery

Special Focus Groups

- Women with **high-risk pregnancies (HRPs)**
- Women who have missed routine ANC visits
- Women residing in remote and underserved areas.

Key Features of PMSMA

1. Fixed-Day Monthly ANC Services

A unique feature of PMSMA is the **"9th of Every Month" model**, under which designated government health facilities conduct special ANC sessions.

This fixed-day approach ensures predictability and universal access to maternal healthcare services.

2. Comprehensive Antenatal Care Package

Pregnant women receive a complete package of maternal healthcare services, including:

- Detailed clinical examination
- Blood pressure monitoring
- Blood investigations
- Urine testing
- Ultrasonography
- Free medicines and supplements
- Nutritional counselling
- Birth preparedness counselling
- Awareness on danger signs during pregnancy
- Referral services when required.

High-Risk Pregnancy (HRP) Identification

What is a High-Risk Pregnancy?

A high-risk pregnancy is one in which the mother or baby has an increased likelihood of complications before, during, or after delivery.

Early identification is one of PMSMA's most important achievements.

PMSMA Screens for 25 High-Risk Conditions

Major conditions include:

- Severe anaemia
- HIV/AIDS
- Syphilis
- Gestational diabetes mellitus
- Pregnancy-induced hypertension
- Hypothyroidism
- Tuberculosis
- Malaria
- Hepatitis B
- Twin or multiple pregnancy
- Previous Caesarean section
- History of stillbirth
- Teenage pregnancy
- Advanced maternal age pregnancy

- Rh-negative blood group and other obstetric complications

Women identified with HRP are marked for closer monitoring and referral.

Colour-Coded Risk Identification

PMSMA follows a simple visual identification system:

- **Green Sticker:** Normal pregnancy
- **Red Sticker:** High-risk pregnancy requiring special monitoring

This helps frontline health workers quickly identify vulnerable cases and ensure appropriate follow-up care.

Follow-Up and Referral Mechanism

Once a woman is identified as having a high-risk pregnancy:

- She is linked to the nearest **First Referral Unit (FRU)** or higher health facility.
- Individual case tracking is carried out.
- Follow-up visits are scheduled regularly.
- Continuous monitoring is ensured until safe delivery.

Extended PMSMA (e-PMSMA)

Recognising the need for stronger post-identification monitoring, the Government launched **Extended PMSMA (e-PMSMA)** in January 2022.

Objective

To strengthen follow-up care and improve outcomes for high-risk pregnancies.

Key Features

- Additional ANC visits beyond the regular PMSMA check-up.
- Continuous monitoring of high-risk pregnancies.
- Digital tracking through online platforms.
- SMS reminders sent to:
 - Beneficiary
 - ASHA worker
- Name-based tracking of HRP women.
- Financial incentives for:
 - High-risk pregnant women
 - Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)
- Extra visits to ensure safe delivery outcomes.

Achievements of PMSMA

Over the last decade, PMSMA has emerged as a cornerstone of India's maternal health strategy.

Key Milestones

- More than **7.5 crore pregnant women** have received ANC services under PMSMA.
- Millions of high-risk pregnancies have been identified and managed through timely intervention.
- The programme has contributed to improvements in maternal health indicators.
- India's **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)** declined significantly from **130 maternal deaths per lakh live births (2014–16)** to **87 per lakh live births (2022–24)**, reflecting broader gains in maternal healthcare delivery.

Significance

PMSMA has transformed maternal healthcare delivery by ensuring that every pregnant woman receives at least one specialist antenatal check-up during pregnancy. Through early detection of high-risk conditions, timely referrals, and strengthened follow-up mechanisms, the programme has played a crucial role in reducing preventable maternal and neonatal deaths and advancing India's maternal health goals.

Supreme Court Dismisses Meenakshi Natarajan's Plea Against Rejection of Rajya Sabha Nomination



Why in the News?

The Supreme Court recently dismissed a petition filed by Congress leader **Meenakshi Natarajan** challenging the rejection of her nomination for the Rajya Sabha elections from Madhya Pradesh. The Court reaffirmed the constitutional principle that courts should ordinarily not interfere in an ongoing electoral process and that election-related disputes must be resolved through election petitions after the completion of the election.

Background of the Case

Meenakshi Natarajan was the sole candidate of the Congress Party for one of the three Rajya Sabha seats from Madhya Pradesh.

On 9 June 2026, the Returning Officer (RO) rejected her nomination on the ground that she had allegedly failed to disclose a pending criminal proceeding in Hyderabad in **Form 26**, the statutory election affidavit submitted by candidates.

Following the rejection of her nomination, the three Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates—

- **Tarun Chugh**
- **Rajneesh Agrawal**
- **Mahesh Kewat**

were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh.

Natarajan subsequently approached the Supreme Court seeking judicial intervention against the Returning Officer's decision.

Constitutional Basis: Article 329(b)

What does Article 329(b) provide?

Article 329(b) of the Constitution of India bars judicial interference in electoral matters during the conduct of elections.

It states that:

- Elections to Parliament and State Legislatures cannot ordinarily be challenged in courts while the election process is underway.
- Such disputes can be questioned only through an **election petition** filed in accordance with the law after the election process is completed.

The provision seeks to ensure that elections are not delayed or disrupted by continuous litigation.

Purpose of Article 329(b)

The constitutional bar serves several objectives:

- Ensures timely completion of elections.
- Prevents judicial intervention from interrupting electoral processes.
- Maintains certainty and stability in democratic institutions.
- Provides a specialized mechanism for resolving election disputes through election petitions.

Supreme Court's Ruling

The Supreme Court held that it lacked jurisdiction under **Article 32** and **Article 226** to interfere with the Returning Officer's decision during the ongoing election process.

The Court observed that accepting exceptions based on alleged "patent" or "glaring" errors would amount to creating principles that are not contemplated under Article 329(b).

Accordingly, it ruled that the proper remedy available to the petitioner was to file an election petition before the competent High Court after the election process had concluded.

Reliance on Judicial Precedent

N.P. Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer (1952)

The Court relied on the landmark judgment in **N.P. Ponnuswami v. Returning Officer**, which laid down the principle of judicial non-interference during elections.

The judgment established that:

- Election disputes arising before the completion of elections should ordinarily not be entertained by courts.
- The appropriate remedy is an election petition after the election process concludes.
- Courts must avoid disrupting the electoral process through interim interventions.

Arguments Advanced by Meenakshi Natarajan

Senior Advocate **A. M. Singhvi**, appearing for Natarajan, argued that:

- The Returning Officer had committed a "patent error" in rejecting the nomination.
- Under **Section 33A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**, disclosure is required only in cases where charges have been framed by a court.

- Permitting her candidature would facilitate, rather than obstruct, free and fair elections.
- Judicial intervention was necessary to correct an apparent illegality in the nomination process.

Counter Arguments

Arguments by the Respondents

Senior Advocate **Mukul Rohatgi** contended that:

- The right to contest an election is a statutory right and not a fundamental right.
- Consequently, a petition under Article 32 of the Constitution was not maintainable.

Stand of the Election Commission of India

The **Election Commission of India** argued that:

- Candidates are required to disclose all pending criminal proceedings, irrespective of the stage of the case.
- The legal mechanism for challenging the rejection of a nomination is an election petition.
- Judicial intervention during the election process would be contrary to Article 329(b).

Court's Clarification

While dismissing the writ petition, the Supreme Court clarified that its order would not prejudice any election petition that Meenakshi Natarajan may subsequently file before the concerned High Court.

This means that the merits of her challenge to the Returning Officer's decision remain open for judicial examination through the statutory election petition process.

Significance of the Judgment

The ruling reinforces a long-standing constitutional doctrine that electoral disputes should generally be resolved only after the completion of elections.

The judgment is significant because it:

- Reaffirms the constitutional sanctity of Article 329(b).
- Strengthens the principle of uninterrupted electoral processes.
- Reiterates the distinction between constitutional remedies and statutory election remedies.

- Upholds the precedent established in the Ponnuswami case.
- Emphasizes that election petitions remain the primary mechanism for resolving electoral grievances.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's decision in the Meenakshi Natarajan case underscores the constitutional

commitment to ensuring that elections proceed without judicial interruption. By directing the petitioner to pursue an election petition rather than invoking writ jurisdiction, the Court reaffirmed the principle that election-related disputes must ordinarily be addressed through the specialized legal framework established under election law, thereby preserving the integrity and continuity of the democratic process.

Science, Technology, Art & Culture

Webb Telescope Captures Weather on Exoplanet WASP-94A b



Why in News?

Scientists using the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) have, for the first time, observed a repeating weather cycle on the exoplanet WASP-94A b, located about 690–700 light-years from Earth. The findings were published in the journal *Science* on 21 May 2026. The study revealed cloud formation, atmospheric circulation, and dynamic weather patterns on a distant alien world.

Key Findings of the Study

Using JWST's advanced infrared instruments, astronomers discovered:

- A daily cycle of cloud formation and dissipation.
- Strong atmospheric winds transporting clouds across the planet.
- Significant differences between the planet's morning and evening atmospheres.
- The clearest evidence yet of weather systems operating on a "Hot Jupiter" exoplanet.

About WASP-94A b

WASP-94A b is:

- A gas giant exoplanet orbiting a Sun-like star.
- Approximately 1.7–2 times the size of Jupiter.
- Around half the mass of Jupiter.
- Located nearly 700 light-years away.
- Extremely close to its host star.
- Completing one orbit in just four Earth days.

Because of its proximity to its star, the planet experiences extremely high temperatures and belongs to a class of planets known as **Hot Jupiters**.

What are Hot Jupiters?

Hot Jupiters are massive gaseous exoplanets that orbit very close to their parent stars.

Characteristics

- Comparable in size to Jupiter or larger.
- Surface temperatures often exceed 1,000°C.
- Extremely short orbital periods (a few days).
- Usually tidally locked due to strong gravitational interactions with their stars.

What is a Tidally Locked Planet?

A planet is said to be **tidally locked** when:

- Its rotation period equals its revolution period.
- It always shows the same face to its host star.

Consequences

- One hemisphere experiences permanent daylight.
- The opposite hemisphere remains in perpetual darkness.
- Large temperature differences develop between the day and night sides.
- Strong winds circulate heat and atmospheric gases across the planet.

Weather on WASP-94A b

The study found remarkable differences between the planet's two atmospheric regions.

Morning Side

The cooler "morning" region contains clouds made of:

- Magnesium silicate
- Iron
- Magnesium sulphide

These mineral-rich clouds resemble vaporized rock and metal particles rather than water clouds found on Earth.

Evening Side

The hotter "evening" region is comparatively cloud-free, allowing scientists to observe the deeper atmosphere more clearly.

Cloud Cycle

Scientists propose the following cycle:

1. Clouds form on the cooler night side.
2. Powerful winds transport them toward the day side.
3. Intense heat causes the clouds to evaporate.
4. New clouds form again on the night side.

This creates a continuous weather cycle similar to Earth's hydrological cycle, but involving minerals instead of water.

How Did Scientists Study the Atmosphere?

1. Spectroscopy

Spectroscopy involves splitting starlight into different wavelengths.

- Atmospheric gases absorb specific wavelengths.
- These absorption patterns act as chemical fingerprints.
- Scientists can determine the atmospheric composition from the missing wavelengths.

This technique revealed the presence of water vapour and mineral clouds in the atmosphere.

2. Transit Method

The transit method is used when a planet passes in front of its host star.

During a transit:

- A small fraction of starlight passes through the planet's atmosphere.
- Atmospheric particles absorb part of that light.

- JWST measures these changes with exceptional precision.

By analysing different parts of the transit, researchers separately examined the planet's morning and evening regions.

VYOMA Innovation Challenge



Why in the News?

The **Digital India BHASHINI Division** under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has launched the **VYOMA Innovation Challenge** to promote the development of multilingual, voice-first, and offline Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions tailored to India's diverse linguistic and connectivity landscape.

The initiative has been launched in collaboration with **Current AI** and **Kalpa Impact** and seeks to encourage the creation of open-source AI technologies that can operate effectively even in low-connectivity and remote regions.

About the VYOMA Innovation Challenge

The VYOMA Innovation Challenge is a national innovation programme aimed at fostering the development of:

- Multilingual AI applications
- Voice-based digital solutions
- Open-source AI technologies
- Offline and edge-computing AI systems

The challenge aligns with India's vision of creating inclusive digital public infrastructure that can serve citizens across languages, geographies, and socio-economic backgrounds.

About Sunno Sutra

The VYOMA Innovation Challenge is built around **Sunno Sutra**, a multilingual voice-first handheld AI reference device.

Developed By

- BHASHINI
- Current AI

Sunno Sutra has been designed as a portable AI-powered device capable of delivering conversational assistance in multiple Indian languages without relying heavily on internet connectivity or cloud infrastructure.

Features of Sunno Sutra**Multilingual Conversational AI**

The device supports natural voice interactions in various Indian languages, enabling users to access information and services in their preferred language.

Offline Functionality

It can operate without continuous internet access, making it suitable for remote and underserved regions.

On-Device AI Processing

AI models run directly on the device rather than on distant cloud servers, ensuring faster response times and greater reliability.

Suitable for Rural and Low-Resource Areas

The device is designed to function effectively in environments where digital infrastructure and internet connectivity remain limited.

Enhanced Privacy

Since data processing occurs locally, user information is less dependent on external servers, improving privacy and data security.

Objectives of the VYOMA Innovation Challenge**Encourage Multilingual AI Development**

Promote AI solutions capable of understanding, processing, and generating content in India's numerous languages.

Advance Voice-Based Technologies

Support innovations that enable users to interact with digital services through speech rather than text.

Improve Digital Accessibility

Bridge the digital divide by making technology accessible to populations with limited literacy or digital skills.

Enhance Language Inclusion

Ensure that linguistic diversity does not become a barrier to accessing government services, education, healthcare, and information.

Promote Edge AI Innovation

Accelerate the development of AI systems that can function directly on devices without requiring constant cloud connectivity.

What is Edge AI?

Edge AI refers to the deployment and execution of Artificial Intelligence algorithms directly on local devices such as smartphones, handheld devices, sensors, or embedded systems, rather than relying on remote cloud servers.

How It Works

Instead of sending data to a central server for processing, the AI model performs computations on the device itself, enabling real-time decision-making.

Advantages of Edge AI**Faster Processing**

Local computation reduces latency and enables instant responses.

Offline Functionality

Devices can continue operating even when internet connectivity is unavailable or unreliable.

Better Privacy and Security

Sensitive data remains on the device, reducing exposure to external networks.

Reduced Internet Dependence

Minimizes bandwidth requirements and operational costs.

Improved Reliability

Services remain available in remote areas where network infrastructure may be weak.

Lower Operational Costs

Less dependence on cloud resources can reduce long-term infrastructure expenses.

Sectors Targeted by the Challenge**Education**

- Multilingual learning assistants
- Voice-enabled educational content
- Personalized tutoring systems

Agriculture

- Crop advisory services
- Weather and market information in local languages

- Voice-based support for farmers

Healthcare

- Rural health information systems
- Telemedicine support tools
- Multilingual patient assistance platforms

Governance

- Citizen service delivery in regional languages
- Voice-enabled government information systems
- Public grievance assistance tools

Public Service Delivery

- Access to welfare schemes
- Digital inclusion initiatives
- Information dissemination in remote regions

Next Generation Nanomedicine for Breast Cancer



Why in the News?

Scientists at the Agharkar Research Institute have developed a **biodegradable nanomedicine platform** capable of silencing cancer-driving genes in breast cancer cells. The breakthrough offers a promising approach for **precision oncology**, enabling targeted tumour inhibition while minimizing damage to healthy tissues. The findings were published in the journal *Advanced Healthcare Materials* and were supported by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**.

What is Nanomedicine?

Nanomedicine refers to the application of nanotechnology in healthcare, where materials and devices at the nanometre scale (1–100 nm) are used for:

- Disease diagnosis
- Drug delivery

- Medical imaging
- Regenerative medicine
- Treatment of various disorders, including cancer

Nanomedicine enables drugs to be delivered more efficiently to specific tissues, improving therapeutic outcomes while reducing adverse effects.

What is Precision Nanomedicine?

Precision nanomedicine combines nanotechnology with personalized medicine to target diseased cells selectively.

Key Features

- Delivers treatment directly to affected cells.
- Minimizes exposure of healthy tissues.
- Enhances therapeutic effectiveness.
- Reduces side effects associated with conventional chemotherapy.
- Allows personalized treatment based on genetic and molecular characteristics of a disease.

In cancer therapy, precision nanomedicine can target specific genes, proteins, or pathways responsible for tumour growth.

Technology Used in the Research

Mesoporous Silica Nanoparticles (MSNs)

The researchers developed a platform based on **mesoporous silica nanoparticles**, which are tiny porous particles capable of carrying therapeutic molecules.

Characteristics

- **Biodegradable** and safe for biological systems.
- **High drug-loading capacity** due to their porous structure.
- **Tunable surface chemistry**, allowing targeted delivery.
- Improved stability and controlled release of therapeutic agents.

Role in the Study

These nanoparticles were used to transport **small interfering RNA (siRNA)** into breast cancer cells to suppress genes responsible for tumour growth.

What is siRNA?

Small Interfering RNA (siRNA) is a short double-stranded RNA molecule that can selectively switch off or “silence” specific genes.

Mechanism of Action

1. siRNA enters the target cell.
2. It binds to complementary messenger RNA (mRNA).
3. The mRNA is degraded before it can produce proteins.
4. As a result, the targeted gene is effectively silenced.

Applications

- Gene therapy
- Cancer treatment research
- Viral disease management
- Genetic disorder treatment

Significance of the Development

For Cancer Treatment

- Targets cancer-causing genes with high precision.
- Suppresses tumour growth more effectively.
- Reduces toxicity compared to conventional chemotherapy.
- Improves treatment outcomes in breast cancer.

For Precision Oncology

- Moves cancer treatment from generalized therapy to gene-specific intervention.
- Supports personalized medicine approaches.
- May be adapted for other cancers and genetic diseases in the future.

For India

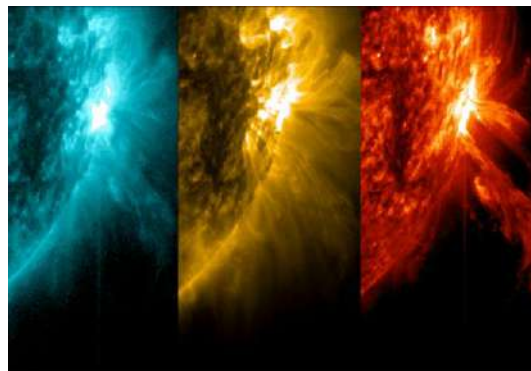
- Demonstrates indigenous innovation in advanced biomedical research.
- Strengthens India's capabilities in nanotechnology and biotechnology.
- Supports the government's push for cutting-edge healthcare solutions.

Challenges Ahead

- Large-scale clinical trials are required before human application.
- Long-term safety and efficacy need evaluation.
- Manufacturing and regulatory approvals may take time.

- Cost-effective commercialization remains a challenge.

100 Years of Solar Data Reveal Clues About Sun's Activity Cycle



Why in News?

Scientists from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have uncovered important insights into the relationship between the Sun's surface convection patterns and its 11-year magnetic activity cycle. The study utilized more than a century of observations collected by the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory and analyzed over 34,000 digitized Ca II K solar images. The findings were recently published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

The research provides new evidence that large-scale convection structures on the Sun, known as supergranulations, are strongly influenced by variations in solar magnetic activity. These results could improve future predictions of solar cycles and enhance our understanding of changes in solar radiation that affect Earth's space environment.

Background of the Study

The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory possesses one of the world's longest continuous records of solar observations. Scientists digitized and analyzed more than 34,000 historical Ca II K images spanning over 100 years.

The Ca II K spectral line is particularly useful for studying the Sun's chromosphere and magnetic activity. By examining these images, researchers investigated how supergranular characteristics such as lane widths and intensities change over different phases of solar cycles. The study compared these properties with sunspot numbers, which serve as a key indicator of solar activity.

What are Supergranulations?

Supergranulations are large-scale convection cells present on the Sun's surface. They arise due to the movement of hot plasma from the Sun's interior toward the surface and play an important role in transporting magnetic fields.

These structures form a network-like pattern across the solar surface and influence the distribution of solar magnetic flux.

Key Features of Supergranulations

- Average lifetime: Approximately 24 hours.
- Average diameter: Around 30,000 kilometres.
- Intergranular lane width: About 6,000 kilometres.
- Function: Help transport magnetic fields and energy across the solar surface.

What are Intergranular Lanes?

Intergranular lanes are the darker and relatively cooler regions located between bright granules on the Sun's surface. These lanes act as channels where plasma sinks back into the solar interior after releasing heat.

Scientists measured the width and intensity of these lanes to understand their relationship with solar magnetic activity.

Major Findings of the Study**1. Strong Correlation with Solar Activity**

The researchers discovered that both the widths and intensities of supergranular lanes show a significant correlation with sunspot numbers.

Since sunspots are manifestations of intense magnetic activity, the findings indicate that supergranular structures are strongly influenced by the Sun's magnetic field.

2. Latitude-Dependent Behaviour

The strongest correlations were observed in the latitude belt between $\pm 11^\circ$ and $\pm 22^\circ$, which coincides with the region where most sunspots appear during a solar cycle. Important observations include:

- Peak lane-width correlation at approximately 18° North and 20° South.
- Peak intensity correlation at approximately 13° North and 14° South.

These results suggest that the interaction between convection and magnetic activity is strongest in the active solar latitudes.

3. Time Lag Between Solar Maximum and Supergranular Response

One of the most significant findings was the existence of a time lag between solar activity peaks and changes in supergranular properties.

Lane Width Response

- Correlations in lane widths peak during the solar maximum phase itself.

Intensity Response

- Intensity correlations peak approximately 1.25 to 1.5 years after solar maximum.

This indicates that different physical processes govern the evolution of lane widths and intensities.

4. Latitude Variation in Time Lag

The study also found that the time lag varies with latitude.

- Near $\pm 20^\circ$ latitudes, the lag is almost zero.
- The lag increases as one moves closer to the equator.

This pattern provides new clues about the transport of magnetic flux across the Sun's surface and the evolution of magnetic fields during the solar cycle.

Significance of the Research

The study has major implications for solar physics and space weather research.

Understanding Solar Dynamics

The findings improve scientific understanding of how convection processes interact with magnetic fields within the Sun.

Magnetic Flux Transport

The observed latitude-dependent behaviour offers valuable insights into how magnetic fields move across the solar surface during different stages of the solar cycle.

Solar Irradiance Variations

Changes in supergranular properties can influence the amount of ultraviolet radiation emitted by the Sun. Understanding these variations is important because

solar UV radiation affects Earth's upper atmosphere and space weather conditions.

Improved Solar Cycle Prediction

Since supergranular properties show systematic relationships with solar activity, they could serve as additional indicators for forecasting future solar cycles.

Such predictions are important for:

- Satellite operations.
- Space missions.
- Communication systems.
- Navigation networks.
- Power grid management.

About Kodaikanal Solar Observatory

The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO) is one of the oldest solar observatories in the world and remains a globally significant centre for solar research.

Key Facts

- Location: Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu.
- Established: 1899.
- Operated by: Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA).
- Speciality: Possesses one of the longest continuous solar observation records globally.

Its extensive archive has become an invaluable resource for studying long-term solar variability and magnetic activity.

Understanding the Solar Cycle

The Sun experiences a periodic cycle of magnetic activity approximately every 11 years.

Solar Maximum

A phase characterized by:

- Increased sunspot numbers.
- Frequent solar flares.
- Enhanced solar radiation.
- Strong magnetic activity.

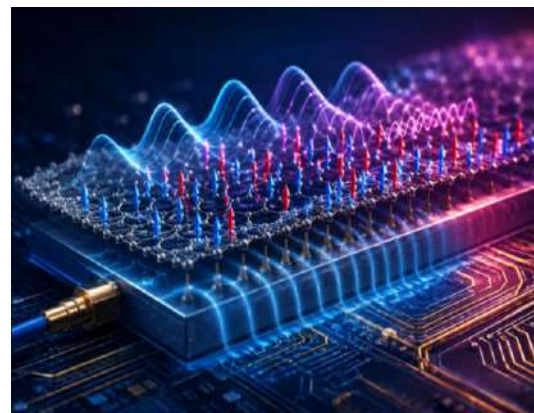
Solar Minimum

A phase characterized by:

- Fewer sunspots.
- Reduced solar activity.
- Weaker magnetic disturbances.

The transition between solar minimum and maximum reflects changes in the Sun's magnetic field and influences the entire heliosphere.

Sound Waves for Energy-Efficient Next-Generation Computing



Why in the News?

Researchers at the **Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST)** have discovered a novel mechanism to generate and control **spin currents** using **Surface Acoustic Waves (SAWs)**. The breakthrough, published in the scientific journal **Physical Review B**, could pave the way for **low-power electronics, advanced spintronic devices, quantum computing, and next-generation communication technologies**.

The research demonstrates how sound waves can efficiently generate and manipulate **magnon-based spin currents**, offering an alternative to conventional charge-based electronic systems.

Key Highlights of the Research

- Researchers generated **magnon-mediated spin currents** using **Surface Acoustic Waves (SAWs)**.
- The technique enables precise control of spin transport without relying heavily on electric currents.
- The discovery could significantly reduce energy consumption in electronic devices.
- The study opens new possibilities for:
 - Energy-efficient computing
 - Spintronic memory devices
 - Quantum information processing
 - High-speed communication systems

Why is this Discovery Important?**Limitations of Conventional Electronics**

Modern electronic devices operate by moving **electrical charges (electrons)** through circuits.

Challenges of Charge-Based Electronics

- Significant heat generation.
- Energy loss due to electrical resistance.
- Increased power consumption.
- Difficulty in miniaturization beyond certain limits.
- Reduced efficiency as devices become smaller and denser.

As computing demands continue to grow, these limitations are becoming major obstacles for future technologies.

What is Spintronics?**Definition**

Spintronics (Spin Electronics) is an emerging field of electronics that utilizes the **spin** of electrons, in addition to their electric charge, for storing and processing information.

Electrons possess an intrinsic quantum property called **spin**, which can generally exist in two states:

- Spin Up (↑)
- Spin Down (↓)

Instead of encoding information solely through charge flow, spintronics uses these spin states as information carriers.

Advantages of Spintronics**Lower Power Consumption**

Information can be processed without moving large numbers of electrons, reducing energy requirements.

Faster Processing

Spin-based operations can occur at extremely high speeds.

Reduced Heat Generation

Less charge movement means lower resistive heating.

Higher Storage Density

Spintronic devices can store more data in smaller spaces.

Non-Volatile Memory

Information can remain stored even when power is switched off.

What are Magnons?**Definition**

Magnons are the quantum particles associated with **spin waves**.

They represent collective oscillations of aligned electron spins inside a magnetic material.

Simple Analogy

Imagine a row of aligned compass needles.

If one needle is disturbed, the disturbance travels through the entire row as a wave.

This travelling disturbance is called a **spin wave**, and its quantum unit is known as a **magnon**.

Importance of Magnons

Magnons can transport spin information:

- Without transporting electric charge.
- With extremely low energy loss.
- Over relatively long distances.

This makes them highly attractive for future spintronic and quantum devices.

What are Surface Acoustic Waves (SAWs)?

Surface Acoustic Waves (SAWs) are sound waves that travel along the surface of a solid material.

Unlike ordinary sound waves that propagate through the entire material, SAWs remain confined near the surface.

Characteristics of SAWs

- Produce tiny mechanical vibrations.
- Can interact strongly with magnetic materials.
- Can be generated and controlled precisely.
- Consume very little energy.

Current Applications of SAWs

SAWs are already widely used in:

Mobile Communication Systems

- Signal filtering in smartphones.
- Radio-frequency communication devices.

Sensors

- Pressure sensors
- Biosensors
- Chemical sensors

Signal Processing Devices

- Frequency filters
- Oscillators
- Delay lines

How Did the Researchers Use SAWs?

The researchers demonstrated that **Surface Acoustic Waves** can interact with magnetic materials and excite **magnons**.

Process

1. SAWs generate mechanical vibrations on the material surface.
2. These vibrations interact with magnetic moments.
3. Spin waves (magnons) are produced.
4. Magnons carry spin information.
5. A controllable spin current is generated.

Energy-Efficient Electronics

Future processors could operate with significantly lower power consumption.

Quantum Computing

Magnons can serve as carriers of quantum information and may facilitate communication between quantum components.

Advanced Data Storage

Spintronic memories could achieve:

- Faster read/write speeds
- Greater storage density
- Lower energy requirements

Next-Generation Communication Technologies

SAW-driven spin transport may contribute to ultrafast communication devices with reduced power demands.

Internet of Things (IoT)

Low-power spintronic devices could improve battery life in connected devices and sensors.

India's Space Economy Poised to Reach USD 45 Billion



Why in the News?

Union Minister **Dr. Jitendra Singh** announced that India's space economy is expected to expand from its current size of approximately **USD 8–9 billion** to nearly **USD 40–45 billion over the next decade**. The statement was made in the context of the growing success of India's space reforms, increasing private-sector participation, and the emergence of a vibrant space startup ecosystem. The development reflects India's ambition to become a major global player in the commercial space sector and aligns with the broader vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

About India's Space Economy

India's space economy encompasses all economic activities related to the design, development, manufacturing, launch, operation, and application of space technologies and services. It includes satellite manufacturing, launch services, ground infrastructure, satellite communication, Earth observation, navigation services, and emerging sectors such as space-based analytics and downstream applications.

Historically, India's space programme was driven primarily by the government through the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). However, recent reforms have opened the sector to private participation, enabling startups, industries, and investors to contribute to the growth of the ecosystem.

Growth of the Space Startup Ecosystem

One of the most significant developments in recent years has been the rapid rise of space startups in India.

- India now has more than **400 space startups**, compared to only a handful a decade ago.
- These startups are working in areas such as satellite manufacturing, launch vehicles, geospatial services, propulsion systems, artificial intelligence applications, and space-based data analytics.
- More than **125 startups and technology innovators** participated in the **RISE Conclave 2026**, highlighting the increasing maturity of the sector.

The expansion of the startup ecosystem has helped accelerate innovation while creating new employment opportunities in high-technology sectors.

Key Factors Driving Growth

- **Liberalisation of the Space Sector**

The Government of India has introduced major reforms to encourage private participation in space activities. These reforms have reduced regulatory barriers and enabled non-governmental entities to undertake activities that were previously limited to government agencies.

- **Private Sector Participation**

Indian companies are increasingly contributing to satellite production, launch services, space applications, and component manufacturing. This has expanded the commercial potential of the sector and attracted domestic and international investment.

- **Institutional Support**

The establishment of organizations such as Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center has facilitated the participation of private players by providing regulatory support and access to ISRO facilities.

- **Collaboration and Innovation**

Partnerships among industry, academia, research institutions, and government agencies are creating a stronger innovation ecosystem. Such collaboration is expected to play a crucial role in developing advanced technologies and enhancing India's global competitiveness.

Major Achievements of India's Space Programme

- **Chandrayaan-3**

The successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon demonstrated India's technological capabilities and established the country among the leading space-faring nations of the world.

- **Mars Orbiter Mission**

India's Mars Orbiter Mission showcased the country's ability to execute complex interplanetary missions at remarkably low cost, earning global recognition for efficiency and innovation.

- **Gaganyaan Mission**

The upcoming Gaganyaan mission aims to send Indian astronauts into space, marking a major milestone in the

nation's space journey and strengthening indigenous technological capabilities.

Role of Space Technology in Governance and Development

India is increasingly integrating space-based technologies into governance and public service delivery.

- **PM Gati Shakti**

The PM Gati Shakti initiative uses geospatial and satellite data for integrated infrastructure planning and coordination among various government departments.

- **Urban Development**

Satellite imagery and geospatial technologies are being used for urban planning, land-use management, and monitoring infrastructure projects.

- **Drone-Based Monitoring**

The integration of satellite systems with drone technologies has improved project monitoring, resource management, and implementation efficiency.

- **Transparency and Service Delivery**

Space-based applications enhance transparency, improve decision-making, and enable better delivery of government services, particularly in agriculture, disaster management, and infrastructure development.

PSLV Mission Anomaly

The government has also informed that the analysis of the recent **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) anomaly** has been completed.

- The causes of the anomaly have been identified.
- Necessary corrective measures have been initiated.
- The findings will help strengthen future launch reliability and mission success rates.

The prompt response reflects India's strong emphasis on mission assurance and continuous technological improvement.

RISE Conclave 2026

Theme

"Innovation & Entrepreneurship Driven Growth for Viksit Bharat 2047."

Objectives

The conclave served as a platform for collaboration among:

- Researchers
- Startups
- Investors
- Industry leaders
- Policymakers

Key Areas Showcased

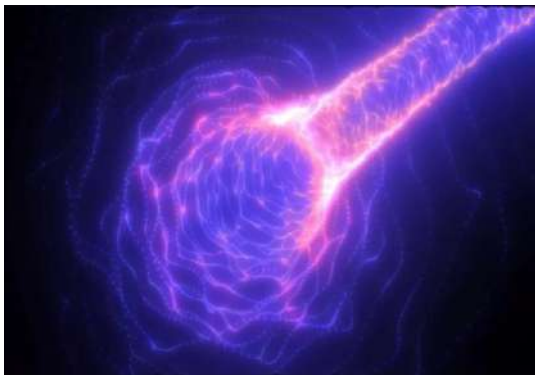
- Aerospace technologies
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Deep-tech innovations
- Agri-food technologies
- Advanced manufacturing solutions

The event highlighted the growing role of innovation-led entrepreneurship in achieving India's long-term economic and technological goals.

Significance

The projected expansion of India's space economy to **USD 40–45 billion** represents a transformative opportunity for the country. It reflects the success of policy reforms, the rise of private enterprise, and the growing integration of space technologies into governance and economic development.

Fast X-ray Transients (FXTs)



Why in the News?

Astronomers from the **Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA)** have identified the most likely origin of the rare **Fast X-ray Transient (FXT)** event **EP241107a**, which was detected by China's **Einstein Probe** in **November 2024**. The study provides new insights into one of the least understood classes of high-energy cosmic explosions and strengthens the link between Fast X-ray Transients and Gamma-Ray Bursts (GRBs).

Key Findings

- **Fast X-ray Transients (FXTs)** are extremely energetic, **non-repeating flashes of X-rays** that typically last from **a few minutes to several hours**.
- They represent a **newly recognized class of transient astronomical events**, whose exact origin has remained uncertain.
- Researchers successfully detected the **radio counterpart** of **EP241107a** using the **Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array (VLA)**.
- The discovery was supported by follow-up observations from:
 - **Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT)**
 - **GROWTH India Telescope (GIT)**
 - **Upgraded Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (uGMRT)**
- Multi-wavelength observations enabled astronomers to reconstruct the event's evolution and determine its probable source.

Likely Origin of EP241107a

Scientists believe the event was most likely produced by either:

- The **core collapse of a massive star**, resulting in a **supernova** followed by a **Gamma-Ray Burst (GRB)**, or
- The **merger of two neutron stars**, another well-known source of powerful GRBs.

The researchers concluded that **EP241107a** is most likely an **"orphan afterglow."**

What is an Orphan Afterglow?

An **orphan afterglow** is the remnant radiation from a **Gamma-Ray Burst** whose highly focused gamma-ray jet is **not directed toward Earth**. Consequently:

- The initial gamma rays remain undetected.
- Only the later **X-ray, optical, and radio afterglow** becomes visible.
- Such events are believed to represent **lower-energy or off-axis members of the Gamma-Ray Burst population**.

The identification of EP241107a as an orphan afterglow supports the idea that many FXTs are simply **off-axis**

GRBs, helping astronomers better estimate the true number of GRBs occurring across the Universe.

Fast X-ray Transients (FXTs)

Fast X-ray Transients are a relatively new category of cosmic explosions characterized by:

- Sudden flashes of **soft (low-energy) X-rays**.
- Non-repeating, short-duration events.
- Lifetimes ranging from **minutes to several hours**.
- Rapid fading after discovery.
- Association with extremely energetic astrophysical explosions.

Unlike conventional X-ray sources, FXTs appear unexpectedly and disappear quickly, making them difficult to study.

Possible Sources of FXTs

Scientists propose several possible origins:

- **Core-collapse supernovae**
- **Binary neutron star mergers**
- **Magnetars** (highly magnetized neutron stars)
- **Tidal disruption events**, where a white dwarf is torn apart by a black hole
- **Gamma-Ray Bursts (GRBs)** viewed away from the jet axis

The latest observations of EP241107a provide some of the strongest evidence yet that at least a fraction of FXTs are closely related to GRBs.

Gamma-Ray Bursts (GRBs)

Gamma-Ray Bursts are the **most energetic explosions known in the Universe**.

Characteristics

- Emit enormous amounts of **gamma radiation**.
- Duration ranges from **a few milliseconds to several minutes**.
- Can release in seconds as much energy as the Sun will emit over its entire lifetime.
- Followed by long-lasting **afterglows** observed in **X-ray, optical, infrared, and radio wavelengths**.

Types of GRBs

1. Long-duration GRBs

- Last **more than 2 seconds**.

- Produced by the collapse of massive stars into black holes.
- Usually associated with **Type Ic supernovae**.

2. Short-duration GRBs

- Last **less than 2 seconds**.
- Produced by mergers of:
 - Two neutron stars, or
 - A neutron star and a black hole.
- Often generate gravitational waves along with electromagnetic radiation.

Neutron Stars

A **neutron star** is the ultra-dense remnant left behind after a massive star undergoes a supernova explosion.

Characteristics

- Mass: approximately **1.4–2 solar masses**
- Diameter: only about **20 km**
- Density: a teaspoon of neutron-star material would weigh **billions of tonnes** on Earth.
- Composed almost entirely of **closely packed neutrons**.
- Possess extremely strong gravitational and magnetic fields.

Some neutron stars rotate rapidly as **pulsars**, while highly magnetized ones are known as **magnetars**, both of which are capable of producing powerful bursts of high-energy radiation.

Significance of the Discovery

The identification of **EP241107a** as a likely **orphan afterglow** is significant because it:

- Helps explain the long-standing mystery surrounding the origin of Fast X-ray Transients.
- Strengthens the observational link between FXTs and Gamma-Ray Bursts.
- Demonstrates the importance of **multi-wavelength astronomy**, combining X-ray, optical, and radio observations.
- Suggests that many GRBs remain undetected because their jets are not directed toward Earth.
- Improves understanding of stellar explosions, neutron star mergers, and the high-energy Universe.

Security Issues

General N.S. Raja Subramani Assumes Charge as Chief of Defence Staff



Why in News?

General N.S. Raja Subramani has assumed office as India's third Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and Secretary of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA). His appointment marks a significant development in India's ongoing efforts to strengthen military integration, enhance jointness among the armed forces, and modernise national security structures.

After taking charge, he paid homage to fallen soldiers at the National War Memorial and received a ceremonial Tri-Services Guard of Honour at South Block, New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- Assumed charge as the **third Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** of India.
- Paid tribute at the National War Memorial.
- Received a ceremonial Tri-Services Guard of Honour.
- Emphasised a **"Whole of Nation" approach** towards national security.
- Reaffirmed commitment to enhancing military preparedness, jointness, and indigenous defence capabilities.

What is the "Whole of Nation" Approach?

The **Whole of Nation Approach** refers to the coordinated participation of:

- Government institutions

- Armed Forces
- Industry
- Academia
- Scientific community
- Citizens

in safeguarding national security and addressing strategic challenges.

The concept recognises that modern security threats require integrated responses extending beyond the military domain.

What is "JAI"?

General Subramani highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of **JAI**, which stands for:

J – Jointness

- Greater integration among the Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- Unified planning, logistics, training, and operations.
- Enhanced interoperability during military operations.

A – Aatma Nirbharta

- Promotion of indigenous defence production.
- Reduction in dependence on foreign military equipment.
- Support for the vision of **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in defence manufacturing.

I – Innovation

- Adoption of emerging technologies.
- Development of advanced military capabilities.
- Encouragement of research and innovation in defence systems.

About the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)

The **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** is the highest-ranking military officer in India.

Key Functions

- Acts as the **Principal Military Adviser** to the Defence Minister on tri-service matters.
- Facilitates coordination among the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

- Promotes integration and joint planning among the services.
- Enhances efficiency in defence procurement and resource utilisation.
- Provides strategic military advice to the government.

Position in Defence Structure

The CDS functions as:

- Head of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA).
- Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC).
- Principal facilitator of military reforms and theatre command initiatives.

Permanent Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC)

The Chiefs of Staff Committee consists of:

- Chief of the Army Staff
- Chief of the Naval Staff
- Chief of the Air Staff

As its Permanent Chairman, the CDS:

- Coordinates among the three services.
- Resolves inter-service issues.
- Guides joint military planning and operations.
- Advances theatre command reforms.

Department of Military Affairs (DMA)

Establishment

The **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)** was created in **December 2019** under the Ministry of Defence following the recommendations aimed at improving military integration.

Functions

The DMA is responsible for:

1. Promoting Jointness

- Joint planning and operations.
- Integrated logistics and training.
- Enhanced interoperability among the services.

2. Military Staffing Matters

- Recruitment policies.
- Personnel management.
- Career progression and service conditions.

3. Training and Capacity Building

- Standardisation of military training.
- Development of joint training institutions.
- Strengthening professional military education.

4. Integration of Services

- Facilitating integrated theatre commands.
- Improving coordination among the three armed forces.
- Streamlining military administration.

5. Procurement and Modernisation

- Prioritising indigenous defence acquisitions.
- Enhancing operational readiness.
- Supporting defence reforms and modernisation efforts.

Nepal on Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura Dispute



Why in News?

The Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura border dispute has once again come into focus after Nepal's Foreign Minister, Shisir Khanal, reiterated Nepal's claim over the disputed territories while emphasizing that Kathmandu seeks a diplomatic resolution through bilateral engagement with India rather than third-party mediation.

The issue resurfaced following India's announcement of the 2026 Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra route through the Lipulekh Pass. Nepal subsequently lodged protests with both India and China regarding activities in the disputed region.

At the same time, Nepal clarified that its recent engagement with the United Kingdom was only to obtain access to historical archival documents related to the

dispute and should not be interpreted as an attempt to seek foreign mediation.

Location of the Disputed Area

The disputed region lies in the northwestern corner of Nepal at the tri-junction involving:

- India
- Nepal
- China (Tibet Autonomous Region)

The dispute primarily concerns three areas:

Kalapani

A strategically important region located near the headwaters of the Kali River.

Lipulekh Pass

A high-altitude Himalayan mountain pass connecting India with Tibet.

Limpiyadhura

An area that Nepal claims as the true source of the Kali River and therefore the basis of its territorial claim.

The region lies in the eastern Himalayas and is characterized by difficult terrain, high mountains, and significant strategic value.

Strategic Importance of Lipulekh Pass

Gateway for Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra

Lipulekh Pass serves as one of the principal routes used by Indian pilgrims travelling to:

- Mount Kailash
- Lake Mansarovar

located in Tibet.

Trade Connectivity

The pass is also important for:

- India-Tibet border trade
- Cross-border movement of goods
- Economic interaction between local Himalayan communities

Security Significance

Being located close to the India-China border, the area has substantial strategic and military importance. Control over mountain passes and access routes is crucial for border management and national security.

Historical Background: Treaty of Sugauli (1816)

The roots of the dispute lie in the **Treaty of Sugauli**, signed in 1816 between:

- The British East India Company
- The Kingdom of Nepal

Main Provision

The treaty identified the **Kali River (Mahakali River)** as the western boundary of Nepal.

However, the treaty did not clearly define the exact origin of the river, creating differing interpretations that continue to fuel the dispute today.

Core Issue: Origin of the Kali River

The central disagreement revolves around identifying the true source of the Kali River.

Nepal's Position

Nepal argues that:

- The Kali River originates from Limpiyadhura.
- Therefore, all territory east of Limpiyadhura belongs to Nepal.
- Consequently, Kalapani, Lipulekh, and Limpiyadhura are part of Nepalese territory.

Nepal supports its claim using historical maps, archival records, and interpretations of the Treaty of Sugauli.

India's Position

India maintains a different interpretation regarding:

- The origin of the Kali River.
- The alignment of the boundary established under the treaty.

India exercises administrative control over Kalapani and regards the territory as part of the state of Uttarakhand.

2020 Map Controversy

The dispute intensified in 2020 after India inaugurated a road connecting Dharchula in Uttarakhand to Lipulekh Pass, facilitating access to Kailash-Mansarovar.

Nepal's Response

Nepal released a new official political map that included:

- Kalapani
- Lipulekh
- Limpiyadhura

within Nepal's national boundaries.

Constitutional Amendment

Subsequently, Nepal amended its Constitution to formally incorporate the revised map into the national emblem and official records.

Nepal's Current Position

The present Nepalese leadership has indicated that while territorial claims remain important, Kathmandu seeks to strengthen cooperation with India.

According to Nepalese officials:

- The dispute should be resolved peacefully.
- Existing diplomatic channels should be utilized.
- Both countries should focus on development-oriented cooperation.
- Relations should move beyond historical geopolitical tensions.

This reflects Nepal's attempt to balance national interests with the need for strong economic and strategic ties with India.

India's Position

India has consistently maintained that:

- The dispute should be resolved through bilateral dialogue.
- Existing boundary mechanisms are sufficient.
- There is no role for external mediation or international intervention.

India and Nepal have established diplomatic channels and joint mechanisms to discuss boundary-related issues.

India–Nepal Relations: Areas of Cooperation

Despite periodic boundary disputes, India and Nepal continue to maintain close civilizational, economic, and people-to-people ties.

Trade and Connectivity

India remains Nepal's largest:

- Trading partner
- Source of foreign investment
- Transit route to global markets

Energy Cooperation

The two countries have expanded cooperation in:

- Hydropower development
- Cross-border electricity trade
- Transmission infrastructure

Digital Connectivity

A major recent development has been the operationalization of a **peer-to-peer cross-border digital payment system**.

The arrangement involves:

- Nepal Clearing House Limited (NCHL)
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

This initiative allows seamless digital financial transactions between citizens and businesses of both countries.

About Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra

The Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra is one of the most revered pilgrimages in Asia.

Sacred Significance

For Hindus

Mount Kailash is regarded as the abode of Lord Shiva.

For Buddhists

The mountain is associated with spiritual enlightenment and sacred cosmology.

For Jains

It is believed to be the site where the first Tirthankara, Rishabhadeva, attained liberation.

For Bon Followers

The mountain is considered the spiritual centre of the ancient Bon religion of Tibet.

Indian Routes to Kailash-Mansarovar

Lipulekh Pass Route (Uttarakhand)

- Traditional route.
- Managed by the Government of India.
- Shorter and relatively accessible.

Nathu La Route (Sikkim)

- Alternative route through Sikkim.
- Facilitates easier transportation for pilgrims.

Taiwan Fires HIMARS in Anti-Invasion Drill



Why in the News?

Taiwan conducted its first live-fire exercise using the **High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS)** on its western coast. The drill simulated precision strikes against an invading force from mainland China and showcased the system's ability to rapidly fire and relocate using the "shoot-and-scoot" tactic. The exercise is part of Taiwan's broader efforts to strengthen its deterrence capabilities amid rising cross-strait tensions.

What is HIMARS?

HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System) is a highly mobile, precision-guided rocket artillery system developed by the American defence company Lockheed Martin.

Key Features

Feature	Details
Full Form	High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS)
Manufacturer	Lockheed Martin
Country of Origin	United States
Type	Wheeled Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)
Platform	Mounted on a 6×6 military truck chassis
Crew	Typically 3 personnel
Role	Precision long-range artillery strikes
Mobility	Air-transportable and highly mobile

Unlike traditional tracked rocket launchers, HIMARS is mounted on a wheeled vehicle, allowing it to move quickly across roads and rough terrain while maintaining a smaller logistical footprint.

Weapon Capabilities

HIMARS can fire various types of precision-guided munitions, including:

Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS)

- Range: Around **70–90 km**
- High accuracy through GPS guidance.

Extended-Range GMLRS (ER-GMLRS)

- Range: Up to **150 km**

- Enhanced strike capability against distant targets.

Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS)

- Range: Up to **300 km**
- Capable of striking strategic military installations.

Precision Strike Missile (PrSM)

- Next-generation missile with a range exceeding **500 km** (used by the U.S. military).

For Taiwan, HIMARS equipped with long-range missiles can potentially target military facilities in China's **Fujian Province**, located across the Taiwan Strait.

What is the "Shoot-and-Scoot" Capability?

One of HIMARS' most significant battlefield advantages is its **shoot-and-scoot** tactic.

How it Works

1. Move rapidly to a firing location.
2. Launch rockets within minutes.
3. Immediately relocate before enemy radar detects the launch point.
4. Avoid counter-battery fire or retaliatory missile strikes.

Advantages

- Enhances survivability.
- Reduces vulnerability to enemy attacks.
- Enables repeated strikes from different locations.
- Particularly useful against technologically advanced adversaries.

This capability has gained global attention due to HIMARS' successful use in modern conflicts, especially in Ukraine.

Strategic Importance for Taiwan

The induction and deployment of HIMARS significantly enhance Taiwan's asymmetric warfare strategy.

Key Benefits

- Provides long-range precision strike capability.
- Strengthens deterrence against a potential amphibious invasion.
- Improves the ability to target troop concentrations, ports, airfields, and logistics hubs.

- Allows rapid relocation across Taiwan's road network.
- Increases survivability against missile and air attacks.

Given the relatively narrow width of the Taiwan Strait, long-range HIMARS missiles can cover critical areas on both sides of the strait, thereby complicating military planning for an adversary.

Significance in Modern Warfare

HIMARS has emerged as one of the most influential artillery systems of the 21st century because it combines:

- Precision
- Mobility
- Long-range strike capability
- Network-centric targeting
- Rapid deployment

Conclusion

Taiwan's first live-fire HIMARS exercise marks a major step in strengthening its defence posture. By demonstrating the system's precision-strike and "shoot-and-scoot" capabilities, Taiwan showcased a key component of its strategy to deter aggression and enhance battlefield survivability. HIMARS represents a modern, highly mobile artillery platform capable of delivering devastating long-range strikes while remaining difficult for adversaries to target.

Indigenous Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) Inducted into Indian Coast Guard



Why in the News?

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) inducted the first of six indigenously built Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs), commonly known as hovercraft, at Goa on 18 June 2026. The induction marks a significant milestone in strengthening India's coastal security architecture and promoting indigenous defence manufacturing under the vision of **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**.

About the Induction

The hovercraft is the first in a series of six Air Cushion Vehicles being built for the Indian Coast Guard by **Chowgule & Company Private Limited** under a contract awarded by the Ministry of Defence.

The contract for the construction of six indigenous ACVs was signed on 24 October 2024. The project represents a major step towards reducing dependence on foreign suppliers while enhancing domestic shipbuilding and maritime engineering capabilities.

Key Highlights

- First indigenous Air Cushion Vehicle inducted into Indian Coast Guard service at Goa.
- Part of a programme to build six hovercraft for the Coast Guard.
- Contract signed between the Ministry of Defence and Chowgule & Company Pvt. Ltd. on 24 October 2024.
- Supports the objectives of **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** in defence production.
- Strengthens India's indigenous maritime manufacturing ecosystem.
- Enhances operational capabilities in coastal and shallow-water regions.

What is an Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV)?

An Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV), commonly called a hovercraft, is a high-speed vehicle that travels on a cushion of pressurised air generated beneath its hull. Unlike conventional boats, an ACV remains slightly above the surface, allowing it to move seamlessly across different types of terrain.

Working Principle

The vehicle uses powerful lift fans to create a cushion of air underneath its structure. Flexible skirts around the

hull trap the air, enabling the craft to hover above the surface while propulsion systems drive it forward.

This design minimizes friction and allows movement over areas inaccessible to conventional vessels.

Operational Capabilities

ACVs can operate over:

- Water bodies
- Mudflats
- Marshes
- Sandbanks
- Tidal zones
- Shallow coastal waters
- Beaches and estuaries

Because of their amphibious nature, hovercraft combine characteristics of both marine vessels and aircraft.

Strategic Importance for the Indian Coast Guard

The induction of indigenous ACVs significantly enhances the Coast Guard's ability to perform a wide range of maritime security and humanitarian missions.

Coastal Surveillance and Security

Hovercraft can rapidly patrol shallow coastal regions and creeks where conventional patrol vessels face navigational challenges. This strengthens surveillance against:

- Smuggling
- Illegal fishing
- Infiltration attempts
- Maritime crimes

Search and Rescue Operations

Their ability to operate across land-water interfaces makes them highly effective during emergencies, natural disasters, and rescue missions in coastal areas.

Disaster Response

ACVs can access flooded regions, marshlands, and areas affected by cyclones, enabling quick evacuation and relief operations.

Protection of Critical Coastal Infrastructure

They improve the security of ports, harbours, offshore installations, and other strategic maritime assets.

Contribution to Aatmanirbhar Bharat

The project reflects India's growing emphasis on indigenous defence production and self-reliance. Construction of these hovercraft by an Indian shipbuilder contributes to:

- Development of domestic shipbuilding expertise.
- Employment generation in the defence manufacturing sector.
- Strengthening of India's maritime industrial base.
- Reduced dependence on imported platforms and technologies.

Overall Significance

The induction of the first indigenous Air Cushion Vehicle marks an important advancement in India's coastal defence and maritime security capabilities. With their unique ability to operate across both land and water, these hovercraft will enhance the Indian Coast Guard's effectiveness in surveillance, search and rescue, disaster response, and law enforcement missions. The project also reinforces India's commitment to building a self-reliant defence manufacturing ecosystem under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

Trivia

MY Bharat Receives Guinness World Records Recognition



Why in News?

Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) has been awarded a **Guinness World Records** title for the “**Most Users to Take an Online Quiz in One Week.**” The achievement was secured after **390,812 participants** successfully completed and qualified in an online quiz conducted under the **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders’ Dialogue (VBYLD)** initiative.

The recognition highlights the growing role of digital platforms in engaging India's youth and promoting participation in national development initiatives.

Key Highlights

Guinness World Record Achievement

- Record Category: **Most Users to Take an Online Quiz in One Week**
- Assessment Period: **25 October – 31 October 2025**
- Certified Participants: **390,812**
- Verification Process:
 - Digital forensic audits
 - Independent data validation
 - Guinness World Records verification procedures

During the assessment period:

- More than **8.39 lakh quiz participations** were recorded.
- After rigorous verification, **390,812 participants** were officially recognized for the world record.

Viksit Bharat Young Leaders’ Dialogue (VBYLD) Quiz

The record-setting quiz was conducted under the **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders’ Dialogue (VBYLD)** programme.

Objective

The quiz aimed to:

- Increase awareness about the vision of **Viksit Bharat@2047**.
- Encourage informed youth participation in nation-building.
- Promote leadership and civic engagement among young citizens.
- Create a platform for youth to contribute ideas for India's development journey.

Massive Youth Participation

The initiative witnessed participation from across the country:

- Total Youth Participants: **Over 50.42 lakh**
- Geographic Coverage:
 - All **28 States**
 - All **8 Union Territories**

The extensive reach demonstrates the growing digital connectivity and enthusiasm among Indian youth for developmental initiatives.

Growth of MY Bharat Platform

The MY Bharat platform has witnessed rapid expansion since its launch.

Registration Statistics

- **2.19 crore registrations** recorded within three years.

This reflects the platform's emergence as one of India's largest youth engagement ecosystems.

Statement by the Union Minister

Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Mansukh Mandaviya, highlighted the importance of youth

participation by noting that approximately **65% of India's population is below the age of 35 years**.

He emphasized that empowering young people is essential for achieving the national goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Significance of the Achievement

The Guinness World Record underscores several important aspects of youth engagement in India:

Digital Youth Engagement

- Demonstrates the ability of technology platforms to reach millions of young people.
- Encourages active participation in governance and developmental discussions.

Leadership Development

- Provides opportunities for young citizens to develop leadership skills.
- Promotes informed decision-making and civic responsibility.

Volunteerism and Community Service

- Encourages youth to participate in social and community initiatives.
- Strengthens grassroots-level nation-building efforts.

Support for Viksit Bharat@2047

- Aligns with India's long-term vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.
- Creates awareness regarding developmental priorities and citizen participation.

About Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat)

Mera Yuva Bharat is a flagship youth engagement platform launched by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.

It serves as a **technology-driven institutional platform** designed to connect, empower, and engage young Indians in nation-building activities.

Objectives of MY Bharat

The platform seeks to:

- Empower youth through meaningful participation.
- Foster leadership and innovation.
- Encourage volunteerism and social responsibility.

- Facilitate experiential learning opportunities.
- Build a strong network of youth contributors across the country.

Focus Areas of MY Bharat

1. Leadership Development

- Cultivating future leaders.
- Encouraging civic awareness and public participation.

2. Volunteerism

- Promoting community service and social engagement.
- Creating opportunities for grassroots action.

3. Skill Enhancement

- Supporting personal and professional development.
- Improving employability and practical competencies.

4. Community Participation

- Connecting youth with local development initiatives.
- Encouraging collaborative problem-solving.

5. Nation-Building Initiatives

- Mobilising youth participation in government programmes.
- Supporting the vision of an inclusive and developed India.

Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR)



Why in the News?

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) Project, India's first bullet train corridor, has achieved

several major construction milestones in 2026. Significant progress has been recorded in civil works, station development, track laying, and tunnel construction, including India's first undersea rail tunnel. The project is now expected to commence operations from August 2027, marking a transformative step in the modernization of India's railway infrastructure. The article is structured in the explanatory style reflected in the uploaded sample document.

About the MAHSR Project

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) Project is India's first High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridor and represents one of the country's most ambitious transportation infrastructure initiatives.

The foundation stone for the project was laid in September 2017. The corridor spans approximately 508 kilometres and connects the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, along with the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The project is being implemented by the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), a special purpose vehicle established to develop and operate high-speed rail systems in India.

The corridor consists of 12 stations, strategically located to serve major urban and industrial centres along the route. Among them, the Sabarmati station is being developed as a major multimodal transportation hub integrating high-speed rail, metro rail, Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS), and conventional railway services, thereby enhancing last-mile connectivity and passenger convenience.

High-Speed Rail: Concept and Features

High-Speed Rail (HSR) refers to railway systems designed to operate at speeds exceeding 250 km/h on specially constructed tracks.

Under the MAHSR project:

- Design Speed: 350 km/h
- Operational Speed: 320 km/h
- Estimated Mumbai–Ahmedabad travel time:
Around 1 hour 58 minutes

The corridor is expected to significantly reduce travel time between two of India's most important economic

centres, while providing a safe, efficient, and environmentally sustainable mode of transportation.

Technology and International Collaboration

The project is being developed using the world-renowned Japanese Shinkansen technology, which has maintained an exceptional safety record for several decades.

Beyond transportation benefits, the project is facilitating the creation of India's first domestic high-speed rail ecosystem through technology transfer, skill development, and local manufacturing initiatives.

The collaboration is expected to strengthen indigenous capabilities in advanced railway engineering, signalling systems, rolling stock maintenance, and infrastructure construction.

Major Technical Features

The MAHSR corridor incorporates several advanced railway technologies, including:

Track System

The project uses J-Slab ballastless track technology, which offers:

- Greater stability at high speeds
- Lower maintenance requirements
- Enhanced passenger comfort
- Longer service life compared to conventional ballast tracks

Electrification System

The corridor will operate through a 2×25 kV overhead traction system, ensuring reliable and uninterrupted power supply for high-speed operations.

The electrification network includes:

- More than 20,000 Overhead Equipment (OHE) masts
- 12 traction substations
- 16 distribution substations

These installations will provide the electrical infrastructure necessary for safe and efficient train movement at speeds exceeding 300 km/h.

Rolling Stock Depots

Dedicated maintenance depots are being developed at:

- Sabarmati
- Surat

- Thane

These facilities will support train inspection, maintenance, repairs, and operational management.

Engineering Highlights

Elevated Corridor

Approximately 90% of the entire corridor is being constructed as an elevated structure.

The project employs the Full Span Launching Method (FSLM), a highly advanced construction technique that enables the installation of large bridge spans in a single operation.

Compared to conventional segmental construction methods, FSLM is nearly ten times faster, significantly accelerating project execution while ensuring high levels of precision and safety.

River and Steel Bridges

The corridor includes extensive bridge infrastructure:

River Bridges

A total of 25 river bridges are being constructed:

- Gujarat: 21 bridges
- Maharashtra: 4 bridges

These bridges are designed to withstand floods, seismic activity, and varying hydrological conditions.

Steel Bridges

The project also includes 28 steel bridges crossing:

- National highways
- Railway lines
- Rivers
- Canals

These structures play a crucial role in maintaining uninterrupted connectivity along the route.

India's First Undersea Rail Tunnel

One of the most remarkable engineering achievements of the project is India's first undersea rail tunnel beneath Thane Creek.

Key features include:

- Total tunnel length: 21 km
- Undersea section: 7 km
- TBM cutter head diameter: 13.6 metres (largest used in any Indian railway project)

Construction is being carried out using:

Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM)

A TBM is a highly specialized machine used to excavate tunnels through rock and soil with minimal surface disruption.

New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM)

NATM is a modern tunnelling approach that utilizes the surrounding rock mass itself as a load-bearing component, improving structural stability and reducing construction risks.

The successful completion of this tunnel is expected to establish new benchmarks in Indian underground engineering.

Advanced Safety Systems

Safety remains one of the defining features of the MAHSR project.

Early Earthquake Detection System

The corridor will be equipped with:

- 28 seismometers

These sensors detect primary seismic waves and automatically trigger power shutdown mechanisms before stronger secondary waves arrive, reducing the risk of accidents.

Rainfall Monitoring System

The network includes:

- 6 rain gauge stations

These stations transmit real-time rainfall data to the Operation Control Centre (OCC), enabling timely operational decisions during adverse weather conditions.

Wind Speed Monitoring System

The project will deploy:

- 14 anemometer stations

These systems continuously monitor wind speed and direction. When wind speeds exceed prescribed safety limits, operational restrictions can be imposed automatically to ensure passenger safety.

Economic and Developmental Significance

The MAHSR project is expected to generate substantial economic benefits.

Employment Generation

The project is projected to create:

- Around 4,000 direct jobs
- Approximately 35,000–40,000 indirect jobs

Employment opportunities will arise across construction, manufacturing, operations, maintenance, logistics, and ancillary industries.

Boost to Make in India

The project supports the Government's Make in India initiative through:

- Technology transfer
- Indigenous manufacturing
- Skill development

- Creation of domestic supply chains

This will help India build long-term capabilities in advanced rail technologies and reduce dependence on imports.

Human Resource Development

A dedicated High-Speed Rail Training Institute has been established at Vadodara to train engineers, technicians, and operational staff for future high-speed rail networks across the country.

ADMISSIONS OPEN
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