



SHAPING TALENT SINCE 2009

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

JUNE 2026



$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

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Rakhigarhi Skeletons Sent for DNA and Facial Reconstruction Studies

Context: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has sent nearly 5,000-year-old human skeletons excavated from Rakhigarhi, Haryana for anthropological, DNA, and facial reconstruction studies.

Key Highlights

- Five complete skeletons (three females and two males, aged 30–40 years) have been recovered in the latest excavation.
- Around 70 skeletons have been unearthed from Rakhigarhi through excavations by the ASI and Deccan College, Pune.
- The studies aim to determine the cause of death, diseases, ancestry, physical features, and social status of the individuals.
- Facial reconstruction and palaeo-environmental studies will help recreate the appearance and living conditions of Harappan people.
- The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the health, ancestry, and social organisation of the Harappan Civilization.



Other Excavation Findings

- Three additional burials with fragmentary remains were discovered in Mound No. 7, the site's ancient cemetery.
- Some graves contained up to 40 pottery offerings, indicating the high social status of the deceased.
- Artefacts recovered include painted pottery, earthen stands, copper and gold ornaments, terracotta toys, and seals.
- Earlier excavations revealed well-planned houses, streets, drainage systems, and a jewellery-manufacturing unit, highlighting advanced urban planning and specialised craft production.

Sanchi Stupa Relics

Context: The sacred relics of Sariputra and Maudgalyayana, the chief disciples of Lord Buddha, were recently sent from Sanchi Stupa (Madhya Pradesh) for a special exhibition in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

Key Highlights

- The relics belong to Sariputra (known for his wisdom) and Maudgalyayana (known for his spiritual powers).
- Both disciples were born near Rajagriha in the ancient kingdom of Magadha (present-day Bihar).
- The relics were discovered inside Stupa 3 of the Sanchi Buddhist Complex.
- They hold great religious significance, especially for followers of the Theravada (Hinayana) tradition.

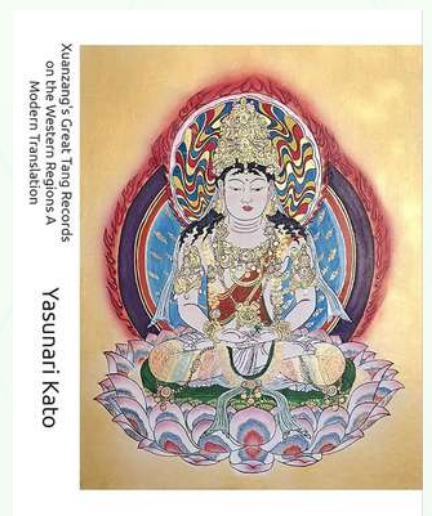


About Sanchi Stupa

- Located in Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh.
- It is the oldest surviving Buddhist sanctuary and a remarkable example of ancient Buddhist art and architecture.
- Originally built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE to promote Buddhism.
- Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1989.
- Rediscovered in 1818 by British officer Henry Taylor and later restored through conservation efforts.

The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions

Context: India and China are in advanced discussions for a joint UNESCO nomination of "The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions", the travel account of the 7th-century Chinese Buddhist monk-scholar Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang).



Other Proposed UNESCO Joint Nominations

- Panchatantra – Joint nomination by India and Iran.
 - The Panchatantra became an important part of Persian literature and folklore.
- Philosophy of Satyagraha – Joint nomination by India and South Africa.
 - Satyagraha was first developed and practised by Mahatma Gandhi during his struggle against racial discrimination in South Africa.

About Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang)

- Xuanzang (602–664 CE) was a Chinese Buddhist monk, scholar, and pilgrim of the Tang Dynasty.
- He left China in 629 CE to collect authentic Buddhist scriptures and study Buddhism in India.
- Travelled across Central Asia and spent nearly 19 years in India during the reign of Harshavardhana.
- Studied Buddhist philosophy at Nalanda University under the renowned scholar Śīlabhadra.
- Enjoyed the patronage of Harshavardhana and participated in his religious assemblies.
- His travel account remains one of the most important sources for understanding the political, social, cultural, and religious history of 7th-century India.

Mohenjodaro's 'Dancing Girl'

Why in News?

NCERT's new Class 9 Art textbook has attracted attention for its modified depiction of the iconic Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl' sculpture.

About the 'Dancing Girl'

- A famous bronze figurine of the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2500 BCE) and a masterpiece of Harappan art. (UPSC Prelims 2025)
- Discovered: In 1926 by archaeologist Ernest Mackay at Mohenjodaro (present-day Pakistan).
- Present Location: Preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi, after being allocated to India following the Partition (1947).

Key Features

- Material & Technique: Made of copper-alloy bronze using the lost-wax (cire perdue) casting technique, reflecting advanced Harappan metallurgical skills.
- Posture: Depicts a confident standing figure with one hand on the hip, symbolizing grace and self-confidence.
- Artistic Excellence: A 10.5 cm tall figurine with elongated limbs, natural posture, distinct facial features, and hair tied in a bun.
- Ornaments: Though unclothed, it is adorned with numerous bangles and a pendant necklace, indicating the importance of ornamentation in Harappan society.



National Family Health Survey-6 (NFHS-6)

Why in News?

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the National Family Health Survey-6 (NFHS-6) (2023-24), covering 6.79 lakh households across 715 districts.

Key Findings

Maternal & Newborn Health

- Institutional deliveries increased from 88.6% to 90.6%.
- Antenatal Care (ANC) coverage reached 95.9%; first-trimester ANC rose from 70.0% to 76.2%.
- Newborn check-ups within two days of birth improved to 85.3%.

Child Health & Nutrition

- Full immunisation (12-23 months) increased from 83.8% to 87.1%.
- Rotavirus vaccine coverage rose sharply from 36.4% to 85.4%.
- Stunting declined from 35.5% to 29.3%.
- Severe wasting reduced from 7.7% to 5.2%.

Health Coverage

- Families covered under health insurance/government schemes increased from 41.0% to 60.2%, reducing out-of-pocket healthcare expenses.

Women's Empowerment

- Women who have used the internet increased from 33.3% to 64.3%.
- 89% of women now operate their own bank accounts.
- Mobile phone ownership among women reached 63.6%.

Population

- Total Fertility Rate (TFR) remained at 2.0, slightly below the replacement level (2.1), indicating stabilising population growth.

Key Challenges

- Rising obesity and lifestyle diseases alongside persistent undernutrition (double burden of malnutrition).
- Increasing cases of diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases.
- Skewed Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) persists in some states due to son preference.
- Anaemia remains widespread among women and children.

Way Forward

- Promote preventive healthcare, early screening, and healthy lifestyles.
- Improve dietary diversity through Anganwadi and school nutrition programmes.
- Focus resources on underperforming districts using NFHS-6 data.
- Expand health insurance to cover outpatient care, diagnostics, and routine treatment.

Significance of NFHS-6

- Provides district-level data for evidence-based policymaking.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of government health and welfare schemes.
- Tracks India's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.
- Reflects strong public confidence in the public healthcare system through high utilisation of government health services.

Ammonia Gas Leak in Tamil Nadu Seafood Unit

Why in News?

An ammonia gas leak at a shrimp processing unit in Periyapalayam, Tamil Nadu, caused deaths and injuries, highlighting gaps in industrial safety and chemical disaster management.

Key Highlights

- The incident is classified as a Chemical Industrial Disaster, caused by the accidental release of hazardous chemicals due to technological or mechanical failures.
 - Major Examples: Bhopal Gas Tragedy (1984): Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) leak.
 - Visakhapatnam Gas Leak (2020): Styrene gas leak at LG Polymers.

Ammonia (NH₃): Hazard Profile

- Properties: Colorless, toxic gas with a sharp, pungent smell.
- Industrial Use: Widely used as a refrigerant in seafood processing due to high cooling efficiency, low cost, and zero Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP).
- Health Effects: Exposure can cause severe respiratory burns, breathing difficulty, lung damage, and even asphyxiation.

Disaster Management Measures

- Prevention: Regular safety audits, leak detection systems, equipment maintenance, and strict regulatory compliance.
- Preparedness: Mandatory On-site and Off-site Emergency Plans with periodic mock drills involving industries, DDMA, fire services, and police.
- Response: Rapid evacuation, medical treatment, and deployment of NDRF CBRN teams.
- Recovery: Compensation, specialised medical care, and accountability for safety violations.

Haber-Bosch Process

- Industrial process that produces ammonia (NH₃) by combining nitrogen (N₂) and hydrogen (H₂) using an iron catalyst under high temperature and pressure.



Key Challenges

- Weak enforcement of industrial safety norms.
- Inadequate emergency infrastructure in industrial clusters.
- Poor worker safety training and awareness.
- Higher vulnerability of inter-State migrant workers due to language barriers and unsafe housing near chemical storage facilities.

Global Initiatives

- Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), 2023
- ILO Convention No. 174 on Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents.
- UNEP Chemical Accident Prevention and Preparedness (CAPP) Programme.
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030).

Way Forward

- Adopt real-time digital leak detection and early warning systems.
- Strict enforcement of MSIHC Rules, EPPR Rules, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.
- Ensure safe separation between worker housing and hazardous chemical storage.
- Promote Community-Based Disaster Management (CBDM) through multilingual alerts, sirens, and community awareness.

Prelims Pointer: Ammonia (NH_3) is a colourless, toxic gas widely used as an industrial refrigerant because of its high cooling efficiency and zero Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP).

El Niño and Rising Water Stress Districts

Why in News?

The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has identified 315 districts as meteorologically vulnerable due to an active El Niño, which has delayed the monsoon and reduced rainfall by 43% below the Long Period Average (LPA), threatening the Kharif season.

Vulnerable Districts

- High Priority (111 districts): Less than 25% irrigation coverage; highly dependent on rainfall. (Maharashtra has 20 such districts.)
- Medium Priority (76 districts): 25–50% irrigation coverage.
- Low Priority (128 districts): More than 50% irrigation coverage through canals, dams, and reservoirs.
- Affected districts are spread across 12 states, including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.

Government Measures

- ICAR's District Agriculture Contingency Plans to reduce crop losses.
- Promotion of drought-tolerant crop varieties and crop diversification.
- Strengthening fodder supply chains for livestock.
- Integrating water conservation works under MGNREGA and VB-GRAMG to improve rural water storage.

About El Niño

- El Niño is the warm phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).
- Characterised by warmer-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.
- Leads to:
 - Weakening of trade winds.
 - Reduced cold-water upwelling off Peru and Ecuador.
 - Weaker Indian Southwest Monsoon and below-normal rainfall.
- It also influences global weather patterns by altering atmospheric pressure and rainfall.

ENSO Phases

- El Niño: Warm phase; generally weakens the Indian monsoon.
- La Niña: Cool phase; strengthens trade winds and usually enhances the Indian monsoon.
- Neutral: Near-normal oceanic and atmospheric conditions.

El Niño vs La Niña (Prelims Focus)

El Niño

Warm sea surface temperatures

Weakens Southwest Monsoon

Often causes below-normal rainfall in India

La Niña

Cool sea surface temperatures

Strengthens Southwest Monsoon

Often brings normal or above-normal rainfall

Signs of a Possible El Niño

- Rising Sea Surface Temperature (SST) anomalies in the equatorial Pacific.
- Expansion of subsurface warm water (100–250 m depth).
- Forecasts by NOAA, Severe Weather Europe, and ECMWF indicate a possible El Niño in 2026.

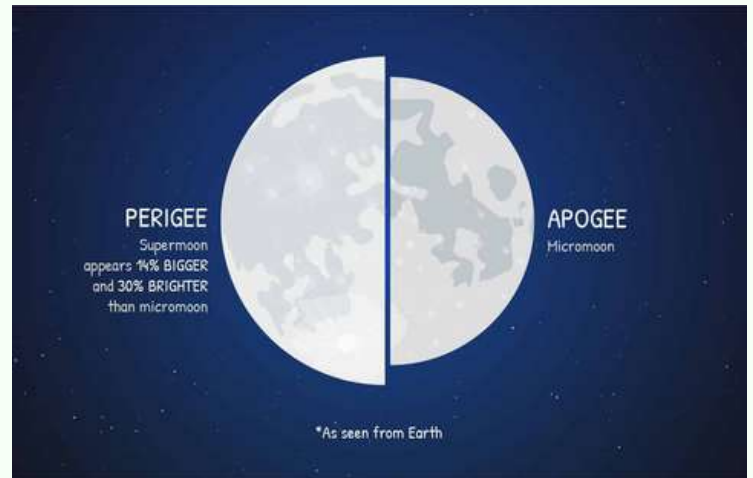
Likely Impacts

- Increased risk of heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, and extreme weather events globally.
- In India, El Niño may suppress monsoon rainfall, affecting agriculture, water availability, and food security.

Blue Micromoon

Why in News?

A rare astronomical event, the Blue Micromoon, was observed on 31 May 2026.



About Blue Micromoon

- A Blue Micromoon occurs when a Blue Moon coincides with a Micromoon.
- The 2026 Blue Micromoon was the smallest and dimmest full moon of the year.
- The next Blue Micromoon is expected in 2053.

Blue Moon

- A Blue Moon is the second full moon in a calendar month, occurring about once every 2-3 years due to the Moon's 29.5-day synodic cycle.
- Despite its name, the Moon does not actually appear blue.

Micromoon

- A Micromoon occurs when a full moon takes place near the Moon's apogee (farthest point from Earth), making it appear slightly smaller and dimmer.
- Apogee: About 403,945 km from Earth.
- Perigee: About 363,711 km from Earth.

Science Behind It

- The Moon follows an elliptical orbit around Earth.
- A full moon near apogee appears smaller and less bright (Micromoon).
- A full moon near perigee appears larger and brighter, known as a Supermoon.

SC Recognizes Homemakers as 'Nation Builders'

Why in News?

The Supreme Court held that the unpaid work of homemakers has significant economic value and should be assessed at a minimum of ₹30,000 per month while calculating compensation in motor accident death claims.

Key Highlights of the Judgment

- **Minimum Compensation:** Motor Accident Claims Tribunals (MACTs) must consider ₹30,000 per month as the minimum value of a homemaker's unpaid work.
- **Inflation Adjustment:** The amount will increase by 10% every three years.
- **Dual Income Benefit:** If the deceased homemaker had a salaried job, compensation for unpaid domestic work will be in addition to her regular income.
- **New Head of Compensation:** Introduced "Loss of Domestic Care" as a separate category for awarding damages.
- **Timely Justice:** Directed that motor accident compensation cases should normally be decided within one year.

About MACT

- **Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT)** is a special tribunal established under Section 165 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 to adjudicate compensation claims arising from motor vehicle accidents.

Recognition of Homemakers

- The Court preferred the term "homemaker" over "housewife" to acknowledge the dignity and economic value of unpaid domestic work.
- While anyone can be a homemaker, the ruling focused on women due to the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work they bear in society.

Important Judicial Precedents

- **Lata Wadhwa v. State of Bihar (2001):** Recognised the economic value of homemakers' work.
- **Arun Kumar Agrawal v. National Insurance Co. Ltd. (2010):** Rejected gender-biased valuation of homemakers' contribution.
- **Kirti v. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. (2021):** Held that homemakers are entitled to future prospects in compensation.
- **Arvind Kumar Pandey v. Gyanesh Pandey (2024):** Ruled that a homemaker's value should not be lower than the wages of a skilled worker.

Challenges

- The ruling currently applies only to accident compensation claims, not as a salary or welfare entitlement.
- Higher compensation may increase motor insurance premiums.
- It does not address the broader issue of unpaid care work or women's limited participation in the workforce.

Way Forward

- Include unpaid care work in national accounting through satellite accounts.
- Expand affordable childcare and eldercare facilities to reduce the unpaid care burden.
- Issue uniform guidelines for MACTs and insurance companies to ensure smooth implementation of the judgment.

The Ordinance Route and the Absence of Parliament

Why in News?

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026 was promulgated to increase the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court, reviving the debate over the frequent use of Ordinances instead of parliamentary legislation.

Constitutional Framework

- Article 123 empowers the President to promulgate an Ordinance when:
 - Both Houses of Parliament are not in session, and
 - Immediate legislative action is necessary.
- An Ordinance has the same force as an Act of Parliament but is temporary.
- It is issued on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers.
- It can be withdrawn by the President or ceases to operate if:
 - Parliament disapproves it, or
 - It is not approved within six weeks of Parliament reassembling.

Key Judicial Pronouncements

Case	Principle
R.C. Cooper (1970)	Ordinances are subject to judicial review.
A.K. Roy (1982)	Should be used only in genuine emergencies.
D.C. Wadhwa (1987)	Re-promulgation is a fraud on the Constitution.
Krishna Kumar Singh (2017)	Ordinances cannot become a routine legislative practice.

Concerns

- Expands the Executive's law-making powers, reducing Parliament's role.
- Weakens parliamentary debate, scrutiny, and accountability.
- Reduces transparency and public participation in law-making.
- May normalize governance through Executive decree.
- Undermines the principle of deliberative democracy.

Arguments in Favour

- Enables swift action during emergencies when Parliament is not in session.
- Prevents a legislative vacuum and ensures continuity of governance.
- Useful for addressing judicial directions, economic issues, public health emergencies, and national security.
- Constitutionally valid under Article 123 and subject to later parliamentary approval.

Way Forward

- Strengthen the Parliamentary Committee System for better scrutiny of Bills.
- Ensure Ordinances are used only in exceptional situations with clear justification.
- Promote greater parliamentary debate on major legislation.
- Strengthen Question Hour to improve executive accountability.
- Enhance research support for MPs to improve legislative quality.
- Review the Anti-Defection Law to encourage informed legislative discussions.

Three-Pronged DNA Test in Paternity Disputes

Why in News?

The Supreme Court upheld a mandatory DNA test in a paternity dispute, balancing a child's right to identity and inheritance with an individual's right to privacy under Article 21.

Supreme Court's Three-Step Test

A court may order a DNA test only if:

- Paternity is the central issue in the dispute.
- No other reliable evidence is available to determine parentage.
- The test is necessary to serve the interests of justice.

Key Observations

- Right to Privacy is not absolute and may be restricted to protect a child's inheritance and identity rights.
- DNA tests should be used only as a last resort, not for speculative or fishing inquiries.

Evolution of Judicial Approach

Case	Key Principle
Goutam Kundu v. State of West Bengal (1993)	Routine DNA tests discouraged; protect children from stigma.
Nandlal Wasudeo Badwaik v. Lata Badwaik (2014)	Scientific evidence prevails over legal presumptions.
Dipanwita Roy v. Ronobroto Roy (2014)	DNA tests should be avoided if other evidence is sufficient.
Ivan Rathinam v. Milan Joseph (2025)	Introduced the proportionality test balancing competing rights.
Present SC Judgment (2026)	DNA testing allowed to establish paternity and protect inheritance rights.

Legal Significance

- **Maintenance Claims:** Helps determine eligibility under Section 144 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (formerly Section 125 CrPC) and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act.
- **Custody Cases:** Prevents misuse of DNA testing to make allegations of infidelity while safeguarding the child's welfare.

Key Challenges

- Balancing the father's right to privacy and bodily autonomy with the child's right to identity, maintenance, and inheritance.
- Section 116 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) presumes a child born during a valid marriage to be legitimate unless proved otherwise.
- Risks of emotional trauma, misuse of DNA testing, data privacy breaches, and family discord.

Way Forward

- Enact a clear legal framework incorporating the Supreme Court's three-step test.
- Maintain separate standards for civil and criminal cases involving DNA evidence.
- Ensure strict privacy safeguards, secure handling of genetic data, and testing only through accredited laboratories.
- Conduct paternity disputes through in-camera proceedings to protect dignity and confidentiality.

Fixed-Dose Combination (FDC) Drugs

Why in News?

- The Union Health Ministry has banned 16 Fixed-Dose Combination (FDC) drugs, including some painkillers, skin creams, and stomach medicines, under Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, after they were found to be irrational, unsafe, or ineffective.

About Fixed-Dose Combinations (FDCs)

- FDCs are medicines containing two or more Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) in a fixed ratio within a single dosage form.
- Common examples include:
 - Pain and cold medicines.
 - Anti-diabetic drugs.
 - Multivitamins and nutritional supplements.



Classification of FDCs (CDSCO)

- Group I: FDCs containing new drugs; require full clinical trials under the NDCT Rules, 2019.
- Group II: First-time combinations of approved drugs; require additional safety and efficacy data.
- Group III: Existing FDCs with a changed ratio or new therapeutic claim; require supporting evidence.
- Group IV: Well-established combinations used mainly for patient convenience; require minimal additional data.

Key Challenges

- Marketing of irrational drug combinations without adequate scientific evidence.
- Difficulty in identifying the specific drug causing adverse reactions.
- Irrational antibiotic FDCs contribute to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).
- Weak coordination between State Licensing Authorities and DCGI.
- Inadequate post-marketing surveillance and delayed regulatory action.

Way Forward

- Conduct regular scientific reviews of marketed FDCs.
- Strengthen coordination between CDSCO, DCGI, and State regulators.
- Improve pharmacovigilance and post-marketing monitoring.
- Promote evidence-based prescribing and rational drug use.
- Align regulations with WHO guidelines and strengthen efforts under the National Action Plan on AMR.

Right to Be Forgotten (RTBF)

Why in News?

The Delhi High Court held that the Right to be Forgotten (RTBF) is part of the Right to Privacy under Article 21 and laid down guidelines for de-indexing court records and masking personal details online in the absence of a specific law.

About the Right to Be Forgotten (RTBF)

- RTBF allows individuals to seek the deletion, de-indexing, or restricted access to personal information that is outdated, irrelevant, or harmful to their privacy and reputation.
- It is based on the principle of informational self-determination, giving individuals greater control over their digital footprint.

Open Justice vs. Right to Privacy

- Open Justice: Ensures transparency and public access to court proceedings.
- Right to Be Forgotten: Protects an individual's dignity, reputation, and privacy by limiting unnecessary digital access to past legal records.



Key Highlights of the Judgment

- RTBF is part of Article 21, which guarantees the Right to Privacy.
- Persons acquitted, discharged, or whose cases have been quashed are entitled to have this reflected in their digital identity.
- Search engines cannot indefinitely link individuals to past legal proceedings through name-based searches once the matter has been resolved.
- The Court clarified that open justice promotes transparency in judicial proceedings but does not justify perpetual online exposure of a person's past legal disputes.
- De-indexing orders issued by the Court will have global effect, requiring search engines to remove links from all their domains.

Significance

- Strengthens the Right to Privacy in the digital age.
- Protects individuals from long-term reputational harm after acquittal or settlement.
- Balances judicial transparency with personal dignity and rehabilitation.

Trauma Care as a Constitutional Right

Why in News?

In *SaveLIFE Foundation & Anr. vs Union of India & Ors.* (2026), the Supreme Court held that access to trauma care is an integral part of Article 21 (Right to Life), making emergency healthcare a justiciable constitutional right.

Key Directions of the Supreme Court

- **Integrated Emergency Response:** All States and UTs must integrate emergency helpline numbers 100, 101, 102, 108, 1033, and 1091 with the single emergency number 112 within three months.
- **Standardised Ambulance Services:** All public and private ambulances must comply with the National Ambulance Code, install GPS tracking, and be connected to the 112 emergency network.
- **Trauma Care Infrastructure:** States must establish trauma registries linked to a national database and classify hospitals based on their trauma-care capacity across highways, urban, peri-urban, and rural areas.
- **PM RAHAT & Good Samaritan Protection:** Directed timely implementation of the PM RAHAT cashless treatment scheme and strengthened grievance redressal mechanisms for Good Samaritans assisting accident victims.

Significance

- Recognises emergency trauma care as a constitutional obligation, not merely a welfare measure.
- Strengthens access to timely emergency medical services and improves road accident response.
- Enhances coordination through a unified emergency response system and standardised trauma care.

- Time constraints if revisions are conducted close to elections.
- Digital literacy gaps may hinder online verification and corrections.
- Political controversies over alleged selective deletions.
- Potential impact on universal adult suffrage under Article 326.

Way Forward

- Strengthen safeguards such as notice, hearing, and appeal mechanisms.
- Ensure inclusive verification for vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Use technology to improve accuracy and prevent duplication.
- Increase transparency in verification and deletion procedures.
- Expand voter awareness through SVEEP campaigns.
- Improve training and capacity of Booth Level Officers (BLOs).
- Establish fast-track grievance redressal mechanisms.
- Balance electoral roll purity with democratic inclusion and voting rights.

Conclusion: The Supreme Court's verdict reaffirms the ECI's authority to maintain accurate electoral rolls while emphasizing procedural fairness. The challenge lies in balancing electoral integrity with the constitutional guarantee of inclusive democratic participation.

Right to Walk on Footpath – A Fundamental Right

Why in News?

In *Maniyar Iliyaz @ Shaikh Riyaz v. P. Ayyappan*, the Supreme Court held that the right to walk safely on well-maintained footpaths is a Fundamental Right under Part III of the Constitution.

Key Observations of the Supreme Court

- **Right to Walk:** Safe and properly demarcated footpaths are an essential part of the Fundamental Right to life and mobility.
- **Pedestrians First:** The rights of pedestrians take priority over motor vehicles.
- **Government's Duty:** Whenever a road is constructed, the government has a corresponding duty to build and maintain footpaths.
- **Liability:** Citizens can seek compensation from local authorities if this right is violated, independent of claims under the Motor Vehicles Act.



Authorities Responsible

The Court identified the following as duty-bearers:

- Urban Development Authorities
- Municipal Corporations and Municipalities
- Gram Panchayats

Directions Issued

- Directed the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), and Ministry of Rural Development to develop a statutory framework for pedestrian rights.
- Requested the Law Commission of India to assist in drafting a dedicated law defining responsibilities and remedies.
- Recommended establishing an independent regulatory body to plan, monitor, and enforce pedestrian infrastructure across the country.

Significance

- Recognises pedestrian safety as a constitutional right.
- Promotes inclusive and accessible urban planning.
- Strengthens accountability of local bodies for providing safe public infrastructure.

Passport Not a Proof of Citizenship

Why in News?

On the 14th Passport Seva Divas (24 June 2026), the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clarified that an Indian passport is a travel document and not conclusive proof of Indian citizenship for domestic purposes.

Key Highlights

- **Statutory Basis:** Passports are issued under the Passports Act, 1967.
- A passport certifies identity and nationality for international travel, but it is not a final proof of citizenship within India.
- Similar distinctions apply to:
 - Aadhaar: Proof of identity and residence, not citizenship.
 - Voter ID: Proof of electoral eligibility, not citizenship.

Passport Reforms

- India has launched Passport Seva Programme (PSP) 2.0 and Global Passport Seva Programme (GPSP) 2.0.
- E-Passports now contain an RFID chip and secure electronic antenna compliant with ICAO standards.
- Citizen data is stored exclusively on MEA-controlled servers, while TCS provides technological support.
- Passport microchips are processed by the India Security Press, Nashik.

Global Mobility

- Indian passport holders now enjoy:
 - 27 visa-free destinations (up from 16 in 2019).
 - 47 Visa-on-Arrival destinations.
 - 66 e-Visa destinations.

Emigration Support

- The eMigrate 2.0 platform digitises emigration clearance and helps protect overseas workers from exploitation and human trafficking.

Recognised Proofs of Citizenship

- Birth Certificate (Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969).
- Citizenship Certificate issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (for citizenship by registration or naturalisation).
- Domicile Certificate establishes residence but does not by itself confer citizenship.

'What papers prove we're citizens?'

MEA officials' clarification triggers social media debate

TOI

A netizen posts:

'Passport is not a document of citizenship, Aadhaar card is not a document of citizenship, voter ID card is not a document of citizenship. Then what is?'

Many point out that

passport is issued only to Indians after extensive document checks and verification that shows the holder is a citizen, so how can it not count as citizenship proof?

"A passport is primarily a travel document and should not be treated as proof of citizenship.", a senior MEA official said

NAFEX.in

Why in News?

The Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation launched NAFEX.in, the digital auction platform of NAFED.

About NAFEX.in

- NAFEX.in is a digital auction platform developed by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED).
- Provides an online interface for conducting agricultural auctions.
- Aims to improve transparency, efficiency, and ease of doing business in agricultural marketing.
- Benefits farmers, cooperative institutions, and other stakeholders by enabling a more efficient and transparent auction process.



Solicitor-General of India (SGI)

Why in News?

The Union Government has reappointed Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta for a three-year term beginning 1 July 2026.

About the Solicitor-General of India

- The Solicitor-General of India (SGI) is the second-highest law officer of the Union Government and the principal assistant to the Attorney General of India.
- Represents the Government of India in important legal matters before the Supreme Court and other courts.

Key Features

- **Constitutional Status:** The office is not mentioned in the Constitution.
- **Governed by the Law Officers (Conditions of Service) Rules, 1987,** framed under the proviso to Article 309.
- **Eligibility:** No constitutional qualifications are prescribed. By convention, eminent advocates with extensive Supreme Court experience are appointed.
- **Appointment:** Appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by the Prime Minister.
- **Tenure:** Normally three years and eligible for reappointment.
- **Removal:** Holds office during the pleasure of the Government of India.



52nd G7 Summit

Why in News?

The 52nd G7 Summit is being held in Évian-les-Bains, France, under the French Presidency, with the theme “Forging New Partnerships and Rebuilding International Solidarity.” India participated as an outreach partner.



Key Outcomes

- **Ukraine & Global Security:** Reaffirmed support for Ukraine, including military and energy assistance; called for peace efforts in West Asia.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Agreed to develop technical and ethical frameworks for safe, secure, and responsible AI.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** Decided to diversify supply chains by expanding manufacturing partnerships with countries such as India, Vietnam, and Mexico.
- **Climate Action:** Reviewed the G7 2030 Nature Compact and recognised land degradation, desertification, and drought as major global security challenges.
- **Global South:** Invited countries, including India, emphasized reforms in development finance and greater support for developing nations.

About the G7

- An informal grouping of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, with the European Union (EU) participating.
- The presidency rotates annually among member countries.
- Operates through consensus and has no binding legal authority, but significantly influences global policy.

Objectives

- Promote global economic stability and sustainable growth.
- Coordinate responses to financial, trade, and security challenges.
- Address issues such as climate change, health, food security, and AI governance.
- Uphold democracy, human rights, and the rules-based international order.

Why India Matters to the G7

- One of the fastest-growing major economies with a large consumer market.
- Represents the Global South on issues like climate justice and development finance.
- Key partner for Indo-Pacific security and supply chain diversification.
- Leader in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), including UPI.
- Important partner in renewable energy and the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- Maintains strategic autonomy, enabling engagement with both Western countries and Russia.

Challenges for India

- Rising trade protectionism in advanced economies.
- Geopolitical tensions affecting energy security and global supply chains.
- Challenges in AI governance, cybersecurity, and data sovereignty.
- Balancing economic growth with climate commitments.

Way Forward

- Strengthen engagement with the G7, while maintaining active participation in G20, BRICS, and Quad.
- Continue advocating the interests of the Global South.
- Expand cooperation in trade, clean energy, critical minerals, AI, and digital technologies.
- Preserve strategic autonomy while deepening partnerships with major global powers.

G7 vs G20 (Prelims Focus)

Basis	G7	G20
Formation	1975	1999
Members	7 advanced economies + EU	19 countries + EU + African Union
Nature	Informal strategic forum	Global economic coordination forum
Focus	Political, security & economic issues	Global economy, finance & development
India's Status	Outreach partner	Permanent member

India-Nepal Relations

Why in News?

During his visit to India, Nepal's Foreign Minister Shishir Khanal emphasized resolving the India-Nepal boundary dispute through dialogue and existing bilateral mechanisms.

Key Outcomes of the Visit

- **Digital Payments:** Launch of Peer-to-Peer (P2P) linkage between India's UPI and Nepal's National Payments Interface (NPI) for seamless cross-border remittances.
- **Digital Cooperation:** Digital India Bhashini and Kathmandu University signed an MoU to develop a Voice First language translation platform.

Key Challenges

- **Boundary disputes** over Kalapani, Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura, and Susta despite about 98% of the boundary being demarcated.
- Nepal's increasing engagement with China and growing geopolitical competition in the region.
- Demands in Nepal to review the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.
- Security concerns arising from the porous border, including smuggling, fake currency, and cross-border crime.



India-Nepal Relations

Economic Relations

- Nepal's exports to India: Hydropower, agricultural products, pashmina, handicrafts, resin, jewellery, and yarn.
- India's exports to Nepal: Petroleum products, fertilizers, vehicles, rice, sugar, salt, cotton, and copper.
- Bilateral remittances are estimated at US\$ 3 billion (Nepal to India) and US\$ 1 billion (India to Nepal).

People-to-People Ties

- Shared civilisational links based on religion, culture, and traditions.
- Major pilgrimage centres include Pashupatinath-Kashi and Lumbini.
- Around 80 lakh Nepalese live and work in India, while nearly 6 lakh Indians reside in Nepal under the 1950 India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

Strategic Cooperation

- Share an open border of about 1,800 km, facilitating movement of people and trade.
- Cooperation in defence, including recruitment of Gorkha soldiers into the Indian Army and exchange of honorary military ranks.
- India supports Nepal through railways, integrated check posts, petroleum pipelines, roads, and hydropower projects.

Way Forward

- Resolve boundary issues through bilateral dialogue and established mechanisms.
- Use historical records, treaty documents, and modern surveying techniques for boundary settlement.
- Expand cooperation in trade, connectivity, hydropower, and digital infrastructure.
- Build confidence through regular institutional dialogue and respect for each other's sovereignty and security concerns.
- Ensure political differences do not affect the long-standing people-to-people relationship.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

Why in News?

India's Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal has been appointed Vice-President of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for the 2026-27 term.



About FATF

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental body that sets global standards to combat:
 - Money Laundering (AML)
 - Terrorist Financing (CFT)
 - Proliferation Financing
- Established: 1989 by the G7 Summit in Paris.
 - Mandate expanded in 2001 to include terrorist financing.
 - Expanded further in 2012 to cover proliferation financing.
- Headquarters: OECD, Paris, France.

Objectives

- Develop international standards to prevent money laundering.
- Strengthen global efforts against terrorist financing.
- Monitor member compliance through Mutual Evaluations.

Membership

- FATF has 40 members:
 - 38 jurisdictions
 - 2 regional organisations - European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).
- India became a full member in 2010.
- In India, FATF recommendations are implemented mainly through:
 - Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002
 - Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967

FATF Plenary

- The Plenary is the highest decision-making body and meets three times a year.
- The President and Vice-President are elected by members for a two-year term.

FATF Recommendations

- FATF issues 40 Recommendations covering:
 - Anti-Money Laundering (AML)
 - Counter-Terrorist Financing (CFT)
 - Transparency
 - Regulatory oversight
 - International cooperation

FATF Lists

- Grey List (Increased Monitoring): Countries with strategic deficiencies that are working with FATF to improve.
- May face increased financial scrutiny, reduced investment, and higher borrowing costs.
- Black List (High-Risk Jurisdictions): Countries with serious AML/CFT deficiencies.
- Can face international sanctions and financial isolation.



Beaufort Castle

Why in News?

The Israeli military captured Beaufort Castle, a strategic hilltop fortress in southern Lebanon, overlooking the Litani River.

About Beaufort Castle

- Beaufort Castle (Qalaat al-Shaqif in Arabic) is a 900-year-old medieval fortress located near Nabatiyeh in southern Lebanon.
- Built as a Crusader castle in the 12th century over older fortifications.

Key Features

- **Strategic Location:** Situated on elevated hills overlooking the Litani River, providing a commanding view of southern Lebanon and northern Israel.
- **Historical Control:** The fortress has been controlled by:
 - Crusaders
 - Saladin's forces
 - Mamluks
 - Ottoman Empire
 - French Mandate authorities
 - Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)
- **Modern History:** Captured by Israel from the PLO in 1982, held until 2000, and recaptured on 31 May 2026, when the Israeli flag was raised there after 26 years.

International Protection

- Beaufort Castle has been granted provisional enhanced protection by UNESCO under the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the protection of cultural property during armed conflict.

Malaysia Bans Social Media for Under-16s

Why in News?

Malaysia has started enforcing a nationwide ban on social media accounts for children below 16 years.



Reasons for the Ban

- **Protect Children:** Prevent exposure to harmful, violent, sexual, or misleading online content.
- **Curb Cyberbullying:** Reduce online harassment and psychological abuse among minors.
- **Support Mental Health:** Address rising concerns over anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and social media addiction.
- **Limit Addictive Features:** Restrict algorithms and platform designs that encourage excessive screen time.
- **Enhance Online Safety:** Protect children from online predators, scams, exploitation, and privacy risks.
- **Global Trend:** Malaysia joins countries like Australia, Brazil, and Indonesia in introducing age-based social media restrictions.

US Section 301 and India

Why in News?

The US Trade Representative (USTR) proposed an additional 12.5% tariff on India under Section 301 over forced-labour concerns.

About US Section 301

- Section 301 is a provision of the US Trade Act, 1974.
- It empowers the USTR to investigate and take unilateral trade action against foreign practices considered unfair, discriminatory, or harmful to US trade.

Key Features

- **Trade Enforcement Tool:** Allows the US to impose measures such as additional tariffs on imports from countries found violating fair trade practices.
- **Recent Shift:** After a US Supreme Court ruling (2026) limited the use of emergency tariffs under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), the US has increasingly relied on Section 301 for trade enforcement.
- **Expanded Scope:** Earlier used mainly for market access and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) disputes, it is now also being used to address forced labour, labour standards, and supply chain compliance.



International Security Forum (ISF)

Why in News?

At the first International Security Forum (ISF) in Moscow, India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval called for zero tolerance towards terrorism and reforms in global security institutions.

About International Security Forum (ISF)

- The International Security Forum (ISF) is a high-level multilateral platform for discussions on:
 - Global security
 - Strategic stability
 - Counter-terrorism
 - Cybersecurity
 - Geopolitical challenges

Key Features

- Established: 2016
- Origin: Associated with Russia-led international security dialogues held in Moscow.
- Objective: Promote international cooperation on security issues, strengthen multilateralism, and provide a platform for the Global South and non-Western countries.
- Participants: Representatives from 140+ countries, including members of:
 - BRICS
 - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
 - ASEAN
 - African, Latin American, and West Asian nations.
- India's Participation: India regularly participates through its National Security Adviser, Defence Minister, Defence Secretary, and other senior officials to advance its strategic and security interests.

Bedouin Communities

Why in News?

Amnesty International has accused Israel of forcibly displacing Bedouin and Palestinian herding communities in the West Bank.

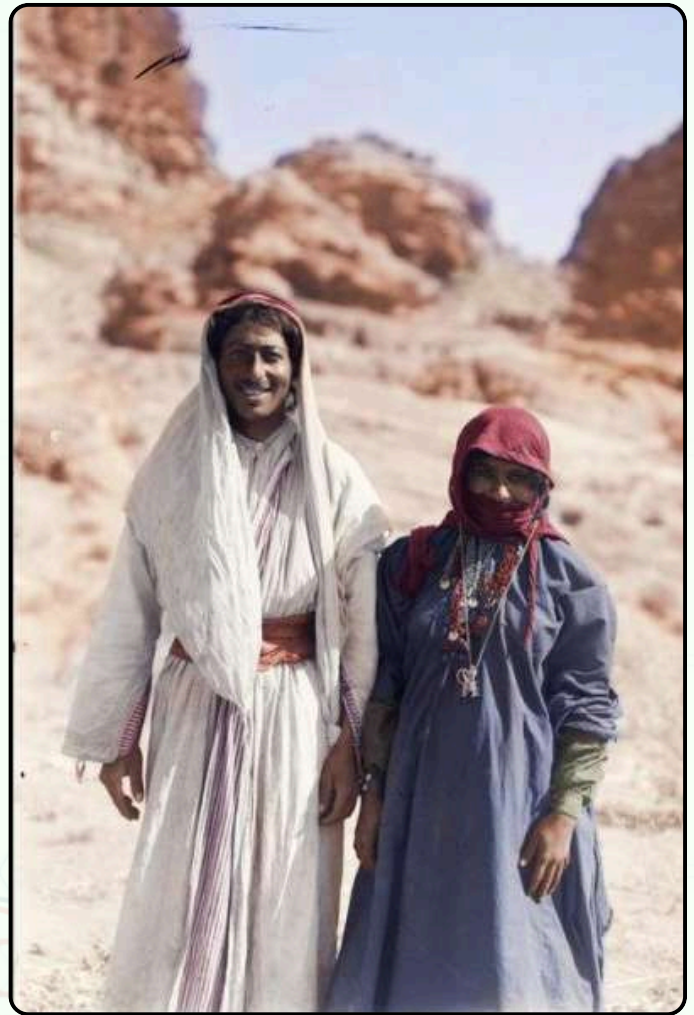


About Bedouin Communities

- Bedouins are traditionally nomadic Arab pastoral communities found across West Asia and North Africa.

Key Features

- **Traditional Livelihood:** Primarily depend on sheep, goat, and camel herding, relying on grazing lands and water resources.
- **Pastoral Lifestyle:** Live in small settlements or encampments, with their culture and economy closely linked to pastoralism.
- **Presence in the West Bank:** Many Bedouin communities live in the semi-arid regions of Area C, which is under Israeli security and administrative control.
- **Vulnerability:** Their dependence on common grazing lands and mobile lifestyle makes them highly vulnerable to displacement and loss of livelihood.



13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum

Why in News?

India hosted the 13th BRICS Urbanisation Forum in New Delhi under its BRICS Chairship 2026, focusing on inclusive and resilient urban development.



About the Forum

- Held on: 11–12 June 2026
- Venue: Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi
- Organised by: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)

Key Highlights

- Objective: Strengthen cooperation among BRICS countries on sustainable urban development, governance, and city planning.
- Theme: "Cities for People: BRICS Cooperation for Inclusive and Resilient Urban Futures."
- Host: India hosted the Forum for the fourth time after:
 - New Delhi (2013)
 - Visakhapatnam (2016)
 - Virtual edition (2021)
- Participants: Ministers and officials from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the UAE, and Indonesia.
- Upcoming Event: The 18th BRICS Summit will be held in New Delhi on 12–13 September 2026.

NITI Aayog Releases 'Future of India's Semiconductor Industry' Roadmap

Why in News?

NITI Aayog's Frontier Tech Hub has released "Future of India's Semiconductor Industry", India's first 10-year roadmap for developing a globally competitive semiconductor ecosystem.

Key Highlights

- The global semiconductor market is expected to exceed USD 1.5 trillion by 2035, driven by AI, 5G/6G, EVs, industrial automation, edge computing, and data centres.
- India's semiconductor demand is projected to reach USD 200 billion by 2035.

Key Findings

- High Import Dependence: Around 90–95% of India's semiconductor demand is met through imports.
- Rising Import Bill: India spent nearly USD 150 billion on semiconductor imports (FY2017–FY2025), which could rise to USD 240 billion annually by 2035 without domestic manufacturing.
- Strong Design Capability: India has nearly 20% of the global semiconductor design workforce.
- Investment Need: Building a competitive ecosystem will require USD 135–180 billion over the next decade.
- Global Target: India aims to capture 10–13% of the global semiconductor market by 2035.
- Policy Shift: Under India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0, the focus is expanding from manufacturing to R&D, IP creation, advanced packaging, and innovation.

Five Strategic Pillars (5Ps)

- **Pioneering:** Promote R&D, AI-driven chip design, and indigenous IP.
- **Policy & Investment:** Stable policies, incentives, and single-window clearances.
- **Production:** Expand wafer fabrication, advanced packaging, and OSAT facilities.
- **People:** Develop skilled technicians, engineers, and researchers.
- **Partnership:** Strengthen collaboration with the US, Japan, EU, and South Korea.

Major Challenges

- Heavy dependence on imports.
- High capital and infrastructure requirements.
- Shortage of skilled semiconductor professionals.
- Rapid technological changes.
- Long gestation period for fabrication plants.

Way Forward

- Increase long-term investment through a National Semiconductor Investment Programme.
- Develop integrated semiconductor manufacturing clusters with world-class infrastructure.
- Promote AI-enabled chip design and R&D.
- Encourage domestic demand through government procurement.
- Build a skilled workforce through specialised semiconductor training institutions.

Centre Scraps Taxes on FII Investments in Government Bonds

Why in News?

The Union Government has abolished capital gains tax and withholding tax on Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) investing in Indian Government Securities (G-Secs).

About Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)

- FIIs are foreign entities such as mutual funds, pension funds, insurance companies, sovereign wealth funds, and asset management companies that invest in a country's financial markets.
- **Investment Avenues:** Equities, Government Securities (G-Secs), corporate bonds, and other marketable securities.
- **Nature of Investment:** FIIs make portfolio investments and do not seek management control.
- **Importance:** They bring foreign capital, improve market liquidity, deepen financial markets, and support economic growth.

Key Announcements

- **Capital Gains Tax Exemption:** Both short-term (30%) and long-term (12.5%) capital gains tax on FII investments in Government Securities have been removed.
- **Interest Income Relief:** The 20% withholding tax on interest earned from Government Securities has also been abolished.
- **Implementation:** The changes take effect from 1 April 2026 through an ordinance amending the Income Tax Act, 2025.
- **Coverage:** The exemption applies to FIIs and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

Why the Decision?

- To help reduce the projected Balance of Payments (BoP) deficit.
- To support the Indian Rupee against depreciation.
- To attract greater foreign investment into India's government bond market.
- To improve the global competitiveness of Indian Government Securities.

About Balance of Payments (BoP)

- BoP records all economic transactions between a country and the rest of the world.
- A BoP deficit occurs when foreign exchange outflows exceed inflows, which can weaken the currency and reduce forex reserves.

Bihar's New GI Products

Why in News?

Three traditional products of Bihar—Bawan Buti Saree & Fabric, Patharkatti Stone Craft, and Pidhiya Painting—have received the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.

New GI-Tagged Products

Bawan Buti Saree & Fabric (Nalanda)

- A unique handloom textile known for weaving 52 symbolic motifs (Bawan Buti) into the fabric.
- Origin: Baswan Bigha village, Nalanda district, Bihar.

Patharkatti Stone Craft (Gaya)

- A traditional stone-carving craft famous for intricate sculptures and artistic workmanship.
- Origin: Patharkatti village, Gaya district.
- Practised for nearly 300 years.

Pidhiya Painting (Bhojpur)

- A traditional folk art depicting the social and cultural life of rural Bihar.
- Origin: Predominantly practised by women in the Bhojpur region.

About Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- A GI Tag is an Intellectual Property Right (IPR) that identifies products originating from a specific geographical region with unique qualities or reputation.
- Issued by: Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai, under DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- Legal Basis: Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 (effective from 2003).
- International Recognition: Protected under the WTO's TRIPS Agreement.
- Validity: 10 years, with renewable protection for successive 10-year periods.



Index of Services Production (ISP)

Why in News?

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) will launch the Index of Services Production (ISP) in July 2026 as a monthly indicator to track the performance of India's services sector.

About Index of Services Production (ISP)

- The ISP is a high-frequency economic indicator that measures monthly output and growth in the services sector, similar to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- Nodal Agency: National Statistical Office (NSO) under MoSPI.



Key Features

- **Coverage:** Includes major formal service sectors such as:
 - Trade
 - Transport
 - Banking & Insurance
 - Telecommunications
 - Hospitality
 - Real Estate
 - Professional Services
 - Entertainment
- **Data Sources:** Uses GST data, administrative records, and the Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE).
- **Methodology:** Compiled using a fixed-weight Laspeyres Volume Index with 2024-25 as the base year.
- **Periodicity:** Released monthly with a time lag of about 60 days.
- **Exclusions:** Does not cover the unorganised sector, public administration, defence, and central banking activities.

Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Based Train

Why in News?

Indian Railways has approved the rollout of India's first indigenous hydrogen fuel cell-based train on the Jind-Sonipat route (Haryana).



About Hydrogen-Powered Train

- A hydrogen-powered train is a zero-emission railway system that generates electricity using hydrogen fuel-cell technology instead of diesel engines.
- Developed by: Indian Railways through the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO).

Key Features

- **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Technology:** Hydrogen stored onboard reacts with oxygen from the air inside a fuel cell.
- The electrochemical reaction generates electricity to power the train.
- **Clean Energy:** Emits only water vapour and heat, making it an environmentally friendly alternative to diesel locomotives.
- **Propulsion:** Equipped with a 1,200 kW fuel-cell-based propulsion system.
- **Speed:** The 10-coach train is designed to run at a maximum speed of 75 km/h during the initial phase.



Mission Queen Pineapple

Why in News?

The Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) launched Mission Queen Pineapple to promote the Tripura Queen Pineapple.

About Tripura Queen Pineapple

- State Fruit: Tripura
- Known for its sweet taste, distinctive aroma, juiciness, low fibre content, and firm texture.

Key Features

- Major Growing State: Tripura is one of India's leading pineapple-producing states.
 - Major Varieties: Queen (most popular and commercially important)
 - Kew
- Cultivation Season: Mainly grown between mid-May and mid-September.
- GI Tag: Received the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag in 2015.
- Suitable Soil: Grows best in humus-rich laterite soils with low calcium content.
 - Ideal Climate: Temperature: 15.6°C–32.2°C
 - Annual Rainfall: 1000–1500 mm

Mission Senehjori

Why in News?

The Government has launched Mission Senehjori to develop Assam's Muga silk sector into a globally competitive luxury textile industry.

About Mission Senehjori

- A cluster-based initiative to strengthen the Muga silk value chain and promote high-value silk products.
 - Nodal Agencies: Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER)
 - Government of Assam
 - Central Silk Board
 - Ministry of Textiles
- Duration: 2026–2028 (3 years)

About Muga Silk

- Produced by the silkworm *Antheraea assamensis*.
- World's only naturally golden-coloured silk, produced mainly in Assam.
- GI Tag: India's first GI-tagged silk.
- Production: Assam contributes about 90% of global Muga silk production.
- Special Features: Known for its golden sheen, exceptional durability, and becomes glossier with age and washing.
- Cultural Importance: Widely used in traditional Assamese attire such as the Mekhela Chador, Gamosa, and ceremonial garments.

Tezpur Litchi Export

Context:

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the first export of GI-tagged Tezpur Litchi from Assam to Dubai, enhancing global market access for agricultural products from Northeast India.

About Tezpur Litchi

- Tezpur Litchi is a premium fruit mainly cultivated in Sonitpur district, Assam.
- Its cultivation history dates back to 1923, when Padmanath Gohain Baruah, noted litterateur and former chairman of Tezpur Municipality, established litchi orchards in the region.

Key Features

- Known for its exceptional sweetness, juicy pulp, bright-red colour, and distinctive aroma.
- Major indigenous varieties include Bombaya, Bilati, Elaichi, Piyaji, and Sahi, each having unique taste and quality traits.
- Its premium quality and Geographical Indication (GI) status increase export potential and support value-added agricultural trade.

GI Recognition

- Tezpur Litchi received the GI Tag in 2015.
- Another GI-tagged litchi variety in India is Shahi Litchi of Bihar (2018).

Significance

- Promotes agricultural exports from Northeast India.
- Enhances farmers' income through access to international markets.
- Strengthens the branding of India's unique GI products globally.

India's 18th Railway Zone

Context:

The South Coast Railway (SCoR) zone became fully operational on 1 June 2026 following a Gazette notification by the Ministry of Railways. Headquartered in Visakhapatnam, it is India's 18th railway zone.



About South Coast Railway (SCoR)

- **Headquarters:** Temporarily operates from 'The Deck' building, Siripuram (Visakhapatnam), while the permanent headquarters is being developed at Mudasarlova.
- **Legal Basis:** Established under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, which mandated a separate railway zone for Andhra Pradesh after state bifurcation.

About Railway Zones in India

- Indian Railways is divided into Railway Zones, which are further subdivided into Divisions for efficient administration.
- Each zone is headed by a General Manager (GM), who reports to the Railway Board.
- Since Railways is a Union List subject, the Central Government, through the Ministry of Railways, has the authority to create, reorganize, or rename railway zones and divisions.



Oilseeds Kisan Mitra

Context:

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has launched Oilseeds Kisan Mitra, India's first AI-powered WhatsApp chatbot for oilseed farmers.

About Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra

- It is a free, multilingual, 24×7 WhatsApp-based chatbot that provides research-backed advisory services on oilseed cultivation and crop management.
- Developed by: ICAR through the ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research (ICAR-IIOR).
- Objective: To improve oilseed productivity, promote scientific farming practices, and reduce India's dependence on edible oil imports.

Surha Tal Becomes India's 100th Ramsar Site

Context: On World Environment Day 2026, Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary (Surha Tal) in Uttar Pradesh was designated as India's 100th Ramsar Site.

About Surha Tal (Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary)

- **Location:** Ballia district, Uttar Pradesh, in the middle Ganga basin.
- **Wetland Type:** A natural perennial oxbow lake formed from an abandoned meander of the Ganga River and fed by three freshwater channels.
- **Formation:** Established in 1991 by consolidating land from 45 villages over 3,432.93 hectares; renamed Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary in 2002.
 - **Ecological Importance:** Supports irrigation and groundwater recharge.
 - Comprises floodplains, marshes, seasonal wetlands, and agricultural wetlands.
 - Serves as an important wintering habitat for migratory birds along the Central Asian Flyway (CAF).

What is an Oxbow Lake?

- An oxbow lake is a horseshoe-shaped water body formed when a river cuts off one of its meanders.
- It functions as a vital wetland, supporting biodiversity, fisheries, groundwater recharge, and migratory birds.

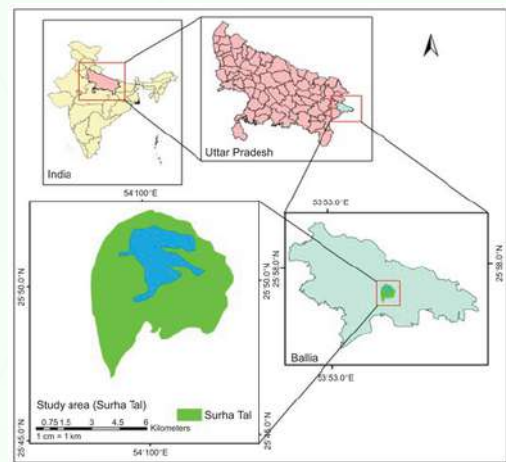
About Wetlands

- Wetlands are ecosystems where water is the primary factor influencing plant and animal life.
- Under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, river channels, paddy fields, aquaculture ponds, salt pans, and irrigation structures are excluded from the definition of wetlands.

Ramsar Convention

- Adopted in 1971 at Ramsar, Iran, and came into force in 1975; it is the first global treaty dedicated to wetland conservation.
 - **Three Pillars:** Conservation of wetlands of international importance.
 - Wise use of all wetlands.
 - International cooperation on shared wetlands and migratory species.
- India joined the Convention in 1982, with Chilika Lake and Keoladeo National Park as its first Ramsar Sites.
- World Wetlands Day is observed every year on 2 February.





Biochar

Context: India burns millions of tonnes of crop residue every year, causing severe air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and soil degradation. Biochar offers a sustainable solution by converting agricultural waste into a carbon-rich soil enhancer.

About Biochar

- Biochar is a charcoal-like, carbon-rich material produced by heating biomass in an oxygen-limited environment through a process called pyrolysis.
- Raw Materials: Agricultural residues, wood chips, manure, forestry waste, and other biomass.
 - Properties: Black, lightweight, porous, and fine-grained.
 - Contains about 70% stable carbon and can remain in soil for 100-1,000 years.
- By-products: Syngas and bio-oil, which can be used as clean energy sources.

Why is Biochar Important for India?

- Reduces Crop Residue Burning: Converts agricultural waste into a useful resource, lowering air pollution and GHG emissions.
- Restores Soil Health: Improves soil organic carbon, fertility, and structure.
- Enhances Water Retention: Its porous nature increases soil moisture, helping crops withstand dry conditions.
- Improves Nutrient Efficiency: Reduces nutrient loss and enhances fertilizer use efficiency, lowering farming costs.
- Boosts Crop Yields: Studies show 10-30% higher productivity, especially in degraded and nutrient-poor soils.

Production Potential in India

- India generates over 600 million tonnes of agricultural residue and 60 million tonnes of municipal solid waste annually.
- Utilizing 30-50% of this biomass could produce 15-26 million tonnes of biochar each year and remove around 0.1 GtCO₂e annually.

Energy Potential

- Syngas: Can generate 8–13 TWh of electricity annually, replacing 0.4–0.7 million tonnes of coal.
- Bio-oil: Annual production of 24–40 million tonnes could substitute 12–19 million tonnes of diesel/kerosene, reducing crude oil imports and fossil-fuel emissions.

WHA Declares Stroke a Public Health Priority

Context:

The 79th World Health Assembly (WHA) recognised stroke as a global public health priority for the first time, calling for stronger prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation systems.

What is a Stroke?

- A stroke is a medical emergency caused by an interruption or reduction in blood supply to the brain, depriving brain cells of oxygen and nutrients.
- It can result in brain damage, permanent disability, or death if not treated promptly.
- According to the WHO, stroke is an acute neurological condition caused by impaired cerebral blood circulation, with symptoms lasting over 24 hours or resulting in death.

Major Risk Factors

- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Tobacco and alcohol use
- Obesity and physical inactivity
- Air pollution and unhealthy diet

Types of Stroke

- Ischaemic Stroke: Caused by blockage of a blood vessel supplying the brain; the most common type, often linked to hypertension, diabetes, and atherosclerosis.
- Haemorrhagic Stroke: Caused by rupture of a blood vessel in the brain, leading to internal bleeding; commonly associated with uncontrolled hypertension and aneurysms.
- Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA): A temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain, also known as a mini-stroke; serves as an early warning sign of future stroke risk.

Stroke Burden in India

- India records an estimated 108–172 stroke cases per 1,00,000 population annually, with high rates of mortality and long-term disability.



Whale Graveyard

Context:

Scientists have discovered the world's largest, deepest, and oldest whale graveyard in the Diamantina Fracture Zone of the southeastern Indian Ocean.

What is a Whale Graveyard?

- A whale graveyard is an area on the ocean floor where the remains of numerous whales accumulate over time, forming nutrient-rich ecosystems known as whale falls.
- A whale fall occurs when a dead whale sinks to the deep seabed, creating a biological hotspot that supports diverse marine life for decades or even up to a century.
- Unlike the mythical elephant graveyards, whale graveyards are formed mainly due to oceanographic and geological processes.

About the Discovery

- Researchers identified nearly 500 whale skeletons and fossil sites, making it the largest, deepest, and oldest whale graveyard known.
- Location: Diamantina Fracture Zone, southeastern Indian Ocean, about 1,200 km long and nearly 7,000 metres below sea level, west of Australia.

Key Features

- Oldest Known Site: Some whale fossils date back 5.3 million years.
- Massive Scale: Around 485 whale-fall and fossil sites have been documented, with millions of whale carcasses likely spread across the region.
- Biodiversity Hotspot: Supports unique deep-sea organisms such as bone-eating worms, brittle stars, jellyfish, and several species potentially new to science.
- Evolutionary Significance: Fossils of extinct beaked whales and the newly identified species *Pterocetus diamantinae* provide valuable insights into whale evolution.

The Pavona clavus Colony ("Potato Patch")

Context:

Researchers have documented a giant Pavona clavus coral colony near Kadmat Island, Lakshadweep, which may be among the world's largest living coral colonies.



About the Pavona clavus Colony (Potato Patch)

- The Potato Patch is a massive hard coral colony of the species *Pavona clavus* (Potato Coral), known for its distinctive columnar and club-shaped growth.
- Location: Southeastern coastal waters of Kadmat Island in the Lakshadweep Archipelago, India's only atoll island chain.
- Formation: Built over 700–1,800 years through continuous deposition of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3) by coral polyps (age subject to scientific verification).

Key Features

- Massive Size: Covers about 4,250 sq. m. (1.05 acres), making it larger than many previously recorded giant coral colonies.
- Exceptional Longevity: Believed to be one of the oldest living coral structures in the Indian Ocean.
- High Survival Rate: Around 58.47% of the colony remains alive despite repeated coral bleaching, cyclones, and marine heatwaves.
- Ecological Importance: Provides a vital habitat, nursery, and feeding ground for diverse marine species, supporting the rich reef ecosystem of Lakshadweep.

Khurasani Imli (Baobab Fruit)

Context:

Khurasani Imli, the fruit of the Baobab tree, from Mandu, Madhya Pradesh, has recently received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, boosting its recognition and market value.

About Khurasani Imli

- Khurasani Imli is the fruit of the Baobab tree (*Adansonia digitata*), found mainly in the Mandu region of Madhya Pradesh.

Key Features

- Origin: Native to Africa and believed to have been introduced to Mandu around 600 years ago by Afghan and Arab traders.
- Distribution: Mandu has India's largest natural population of Baobab trees, with over 1,000 trees.
 - Botanical Characteristics: Known as the "Tree of Life" due to its massive water-storing trunk.
 - Features distinctive inverted tree-like branches and is highly drought-resistant.
 - Nutritional & Medicinal Value: Rich in Vitamin C, antioxidants, and essential minerals.
 - Traditionally used by tribal communities to treat digestive disorders, fatigue, fever, and other ailments using its pulp, juice, seeds, and bark.



World Environment Day 2026

Context:

India reaffirmed its commitment to ecological restoration, climate action, and sustainable development on World Environment Day 2026, observed on 5 June in Baku, Azerbaijan.

About World Environment Day

- World Environment Day was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) during the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.
- It is observed annually on 5 June to promote global environmental awareness and action.

World Environment Day 2026

- Host Country: Azerbaijan, with the global celebrations held in Baku.
- The event builds on Azerbaijan's role as the host of COP29 (UN Climate Change Conference).
- Theme: "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future."
- Campaign Hashtag: #NowForClimate.

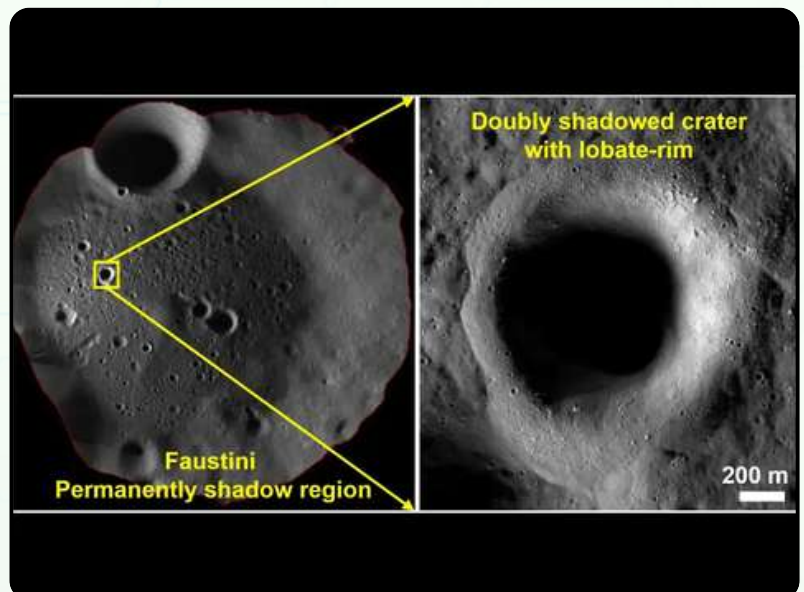
Significance

- Encourages global action for climate change mitigation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable development.
- Reinforces international cooperation to address emerging environmental challenges.

Chandrayaan-2 Detects Possible Presence of Subsurface Ice

Context:

Nearly six years after its launch, Chandrayaan-2 has provided fresh evidence suggesting the possible presence of subsurface water ice in the Moon's south polar region.



The Science Behind the Discovery

- The study focused on doubly shadowed craters—small craters located within larger Permanently Shadowed Regions (PSRs) near the lunar poles.
- These regions receive no direct sunlight or significant reflected radiation, making them among the coldest places on the Moon.
- Their extremely low temperatures allow them to act as cold traps, preserving water ice and other volatile compounds over geological timescales.

How Was the Ice Detected?

- Scientists used advanced radar polarimetric analysis to distinguish possible ice-rich material from rocky terrain.
 - Key Indicators: Circular Polarization Ratio (CPR) > 1.0
 - Degree of Polarization (DOP) < 0.13
- A 1.1 km-wide crater within Faustini Crater showed radar signatures and surface features indicating a possible ice-rich subsurface layer.

Significance of the Discovery

- Supports In-Situ Resource Utilization (ISRU): Lunar ice could provide drinking water, oxygen, and hydrogen-based rocket fuel for future missions.
- Deep-Space Exploration: Accessible lunar water could make the Moon a refuelling hub for missions to Mars and beyond.
- Continued Success of Chandrayaan-2: Despite the Vikram lander's unsuccessful soft landing in 2019, the Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter continues to deliver valuable scientific data through its Dual Frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar (DFSAR) for lunar polar studies.

100-Year Solar Data Reveals New Insights into the Sun's 11-Year Cycle

Context: Scientists from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) analysed over 100 years of solar observations from the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO) to better understand how the Sun's surface changes during its 11-year solar cycle.

Key Findings of the Study

- Extensive Analysis: Researchers studied nearly 34,000 Ca II K spectroheliograms (solar images) recorded since 1907, covering more than nine solar cycles.
- Linked to Solar Cycle: Large convection cells on the Sun's surface (supergranules) change with the 11-year solar activity cycle, especially between 11° – 22° latitude in both hemispheres.
- Latitude-wise Variation: Different regions of the Sun respond differently to solar activity, indicating complex surface behaviour.
- Time Delay Observed: Changes in supergranule size occur near the solar maximum, while changes in network brightness appear 1.25–1.5 years later.
- Magnetic Field Influence: The study shows that magnetic flux plays a key role in shaping the Sun's surface convection patterns.

About Supergranulation

- Supergranules are large convection cells on the Sun's surface, about 30,000 km wide, with a lifespan of around 24 hours.
- Their boundaries contain concentrated magnetic fields, forming the chromospheric network visible in Ca II K images.
- They help transport magnetic flux across the Sun's surface.

About Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO)

- Location: Palani Hills, Tamil Nadu.
- Established: 1899; operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA).
- Maintains one of the world's longest continuous solar observation records (over 100 years).
- Conducts multi-wavelength observations, making it a valuable resource for studying long-term solar activity.

Ethylene Glycol (EG) & Diethylene Glycol (DEG)

Context: The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) conducted a training programme on Gas Chromatography-based detection of Ethylene Glycol (EG) and Diethylene Glycol (DEG) in oral liquid medicines to strengthen drug safety and quality control.

Gas Chromatography (GC): An analytical technique used to separate, identify, and measure volatile substances in a sample.

About Ethylene Glycol (EG)

- Ethylene Glycol ($C_2H_6O_2$) is a colourless, odourless, sweet-tasting industrial alcohol that is highly toxic and prohibited in pharmaceutical formulations.
- Production: Manufactured from ethylene oxide derived from petroleum.
 - Key Features: Highly soluble in water with low volatility.
 - Even small amounts can cause acute kidney injury (AKI), poisoning, and death.
 - Cheap cost increases the risk of accidental or deliberate substitution in medicines.
 - Major Uses: Automotive antifreeze and coolants
 - Production of polyester fibres and PET bottles
 - Industrial solvents, paints, inks, and hydraulic fluids

Health Impacts of EG & DEG

- Kidney Damage: Toxic metabolites can cause acute kidney injury (AKI) and renal failure.
- Neurological Effects: May lead to seizures, coma, central nervous system depression, and death.
- Public Health Concern: Contaminated cough syrups and oral medicines containing EG/DEG have caused child fatalities, highlighting the need for strict pharmaceutical quality control.

About Diethylene Glycol (DEG)

- Diethylene Glycol ($C_4H_{10}O_3$) is a colourless, odourless industrial solvent formed as a by-product during ethylene glycol production.
 - Key Features: Higher viscosity and boiling point than EG.
 - Used as a solvent and moisture-absorbing agent.
 - Contamination in pharmaceutical ingredients has caused several fatal medicine-related incidents worldwide.
 - Major Uses: Textile lubricants and conditioning agents
 - Natural gas dehydration
 - Resins, dyes, and printing inks

Centre Bans Over-the-Counter (OTC) Sale of Cough Syrups

Context: The Central Government has made doctor's prescription mandatory for the sale of cough syrups after contamination-related child deaths and growing safety concerns.

Why was the Rule Changed?

- The decision follows incidents of Diethylene Glycol (DEG) and Ethylene Glycol (EG) contamination in cough syrups.
- Since 2022, Indian-made cough syrups have been linked to child deaths in The Gambia, Uzbekistan, and Cameroon, leading to WHO safety alerts.

Key Changes

- **Prescription Mandatory:** Cough syrups and other medicinal syrups can now be sold only with a valid doctor's prescription.
- **Amendment to Rules:** The Ministry of Health amended the Drugs Rules, 1945 by removing the word "Syrup" from Schedule K.
- **Licensed Pharmacies Only:** Cough syrups can now be dispensed only through licensed pharmacies under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

Why is this Important?

- Strengthens quality control and monitoring of medicines.
- Prevents misuse, contamination, and unregulated sale of cough syrups.
- Enhances patient safety, especially for children.

About Schedule K

- Schedule K of the Drugs Rules, 1945 lists categories of drugs that are exempt from certain provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, subject to specified conditions.
- Earlier, it allowed limited exemptions for the sale of cough syrups, particularly in villages with populations below 1,000.



Bolide

Context: Residents across several towns in the USA reported loud explosion-like sounds and ground vibrations, likely caused by a bolide entering Earth's atmosphere.

What is a Bolide?

- A bolide is an exceptionally bright meteor (fireball) that enters Earth's atmosphere at very high speed and often explodes in the air before reaching the ground.
- The explosion occurs due to intense heat and pressure generated by friction with the atmosphere, causing the object to break apart (airburst).

Key Features

- Produces an extremely bright flash visible over large distances.
- Creates sonic booms and shockwaves that can shake buildings.
- May break into meteorites, though most bolides disintegrate completely in the atmosphere.
- Releases a large amount of energy during the explosion.

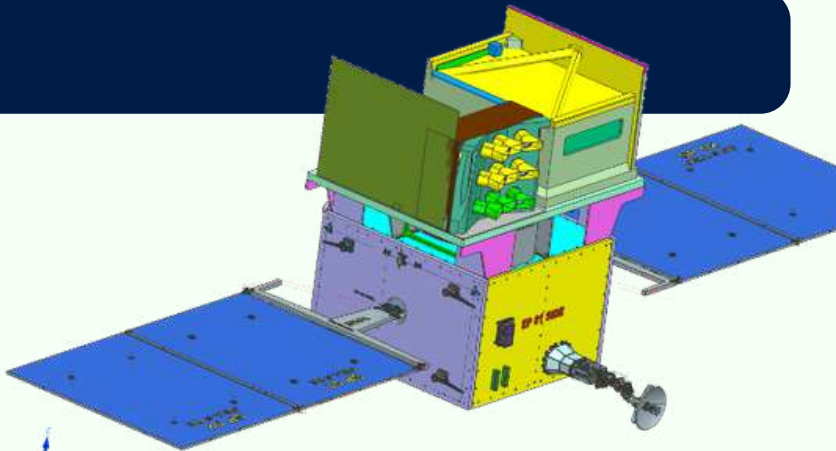
Previous Example

- Chelyabinsk Meteor (Russia, 2013): A bolide exploded with an energy of about 500 kilotons of TNT, damaging buildings and injuring over 1,000 people.

Bolide vs Meteor	
Meteor	Bolide
Any space rock that burns up in Earth's atmosphere	An exceptionally bright meteor that explodes in the atmosphere
Usually burns up quietly	Produces bright flashes, shockwaves, and sonic booms
Smaller and less energetic	Larger, more energetic, and may leave meteorites

TRISHNA Satellite

Context: India and France will jointly launch the TRISHNA Satellite in 2027 to improve monitoring of water resources, agriculture, and climate change.



About TRISHNA Satellite

- TRISHNA stands for Thermal InfraRed Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment.
- It is a joint Earth observation mission of ISRO and France's CNES.
- Objective: To monitor water stress, crop health, irrigation efficiency, droughts, and agricultural productivity.

Key Features

- **Advanced Technology:** Uses thermal infrared sensors to accurately measure land surface temperature.
 - **Major Payloads:** TIR Payload (CNES): Measures land surface temperature and emissivity.
 - VNIR-SWIR Payload (ISRO): Measures vegetation, surface reflectance, and biophysical parameters.
- **Orbit:** Will operate in a Sun-Synchronous Orbit (SSO) at an altitude of 761 km.
- **Mission Life:** 5 years.

Significance

- Supports monitoring of evapotranspiration, heat stress, glacier changes, and ecosystem health.
- Provides crucial data for water resource management, precision agriculture, disaster preparedness, and climate change adaptation.

Indian Army Uniform Code 2026: Indigenisation & Removal of Colonial Legacies

Context: The Indian Army Uniform Code 2026 introduces new dress regulations to promote indigenous identity while removing unnecessary colonial-era symbols and practices, without compromising military discipline and traditions.

What is Military Decolonisation?

- Military decolonisation is the process of removing colonial influences from defence institutions and aligning military symbols, traditions, and practices with the identity of an independent nation.
- It aims to strengthen national identity while preserving professionalism and operational efficiency.



Key Features

- **Removal of Colonial Symbols:** Replaces British-era symbols, terminology, and customs that reflect colonial rule.
- **Promotion of Indigenous Identity:** Gives greater importance to Indian history, military heroes, and cultural traditions.
- **Selective Reform:** Retains traditions that promote discipline and military professionalism while removing colonial elements.
- **Sovereign Military Identity:** Builds a defence force that reflects India's values, heritage, and aspirations.

Major Changes in Uniform Code 2026

- **Bandi Jacket Introduced:** Officers will wear an indigenous closed-neck Bandi Jacket as formal civil dress instead of Western-style coats.
- **Simplified Ceremonial Dress:** Pouch belts removed from Mess Dress No. 5 & 6 to modernise ceremonial uniforms.
- **Sword-Carrying Rules Revised:** Only Parade Commanders, Contingent Commanders, and designated personnel will carry ceremonial swords during parades.
- **New Winter Dress:** Battle Jacket introduced as the standard winter working uniform, replacing the jersey-based dress (transition till June 2029).
- **Uniform Discipline:** Strict rules on hairstyles, beards, tattoos, piercings, visible gadgets, and make-up while in uniform.
- **Restrictions on Uniform Use:** Wearing uniform is prohibited at political gatherings, religious events, protests, weddings, private parties, and unauthorised media appearances.

Why is Military Decolonisation Important?

- Strengthens national identity and pride.
- Removes symbols associated with colonial rule.
- Recognises Indian military heroes and traditions.
- Promotes indigenous military culture and values.
- Enhances morale and strengthens the civil-military connect.
- Complements broader defence modernisation and indigenisation efforts.

Challenges

- Balancing military tradition with modernisation.
- Preserving valuable military heritage while removing colonial symbols.
- Ensuring smooth implementation through training and phased transition.
- Maintaining uniformity and discipline across all ranks.
- Extending indigenisation beyond uniforms to technology, doctrine, and organisational reforms.

Way Forward

- Adopt a balanced approach by preserving valuable military traditions while removing colonial remnants.
- Implement reforms gradually with proper training and logistics.
- Expand indigenisation to defence technology, training, and operational systems.

Border Security Management (BSM)

Context: Gujarat has created a new Banaskantha Police Range by bifurcating its Pakistan-border police jurisdiction to strengthen border security and improve coordination.

Border Guarding Forces in India

Force	Border/Area of Responsibility
Border Security Force (BSF)	India–Pakistan & India–Bangladesh borders
Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)	India–China (LAC)
Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)	India–Nepal & India–Bhutan borders
Assam Rifles (AR)	India–Myanmar border
Indian Army	Line of Control (LoC) & sensitive LAC sectors
Indian Navy & Indian Coast Guard	Maritime borders and coastal security

Key Changes in Gujarat

- **New Banaskantha Range:** Gujarat's 10th Police Range has been created to improve administration and security along the India–Pakistan border.
 - **Division of Responsibilities:** Banaskantha Range: Banaskantha, Patan, and Vav-Tharad districts.
 - **Border Range:** Kutch and adjoining border areas.
- **Better Supervision:** Two Inspector General (IG)-level officers will now oversee border policing instead of one.
- **Focus Areas:** Tackling illegal migration, drug trafficking, border village security, and protecting strategic infrastructure like energy and solar parks.

What is Border Security Management (BSM)?

- **Border Security Management (BSM)** is a comprehensive system to protect India's borders by preventing illegal infiltration, terrorism, smuggling, trafficking, and other cross-border crimes, while facilitating legitimate trade and movement.

Role of States in Border Management

- **Law & Order:** State Police act as the second line of defence by maintaining internal security and investigating border-related crimes.
- **Intelligence Sharing:** Coordinate with Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) to identify infiltrators, smugglers, and criminal networks.
- **Border Area Development:** Implement schemes like the Border Infrastructure and Management Scheme (BIMS) and Vibrant Villages Programme to improve border regions.
- **Auxiliary Support:** Deploy Border Wing Home Guards to assist CAPFs in surveillance and patrolling.

Significance

- Strengthens national security and border surveillance.
- Improves coordination between Central and State agencies.
- Enhances protection against cross-border terrorism, illegal migration, and smuggling.
- Promotes balanced development and security in border areas.

Project Kusha

Context: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh described Project Kusha as a "game changer" for India's air defence and national security.



About Project Kusha

- Project Kusha is an indigenous long-range Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) system designed to provide a multi-layered air defence shield against modern aerial threats.
- Developed by: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Key Features

- **Long-Range Air Defence:** Uses three interceptor missiles with ranges of 150 km, 250 km, and 400 km for layered protection.
- **Counters Advanced Threats:** Capable of intercepting stealth aircraft, drones, cruise missiles, and hypersonic weapons.
- **Multi-Layered Defence Network:** Detects, tracks, and neutralises hostile aerial targets at different ranges and altitudes.
- **Indigenous Technology:** Demonstrates India's capabilities in missile systems, advanced radars, command-and-control networks, and defence electronics.

Significance

- Strengthens India's air and missile defence architecture.
- Enhances protection against next-generation aerial threats.
- Reduces dependence on imported air defence systems and supports Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence.
- Improves India's strategic preparedness through an integrated, long-range defence shield.



RudraM-II Air-to-Surface Missile

Context: The DRDO and the Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully tested the indigenous RudraM-II air-to-surface missile from a Su-30MKI fighter aircraft, enhancing India's precision-strike capabilities.



About RudraM-II

- RudraM-II is an indigenous Air-to-Surface Anti-Radiation Missile (ARM) developed by DRDO for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- It is designed for Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD) operations by targeting enemy radar and air-defence systems.

Key Features

- **Targets Enemy Air Defences:** Destroys radars, communication systems, and radio-frequency emitters, weakening hostile air-defence networks.
- **Successful Flight Test:** Successfully launched from a Su-30MKI under challenging flight conditions, achieving accurate target engagement.
- **Performance Verified:** Flight monitored by the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, confirming all mission objectives.
- **Part of RudraM Series:** Includes RudraM-I, RudraM-II, and RudraM-III, providing layered indigenous precision-strike capability.
- **Long-Range & Hypersonic:** Has an estimated range of 300 km and can reach speeds of Mach 5.5, enabling stand-off attacks.

Mach Speed: A measure of speed relative to the speed of sound.

- Mach 1: Speed of sound
- Mach 5: Five times the speed of sound

Significance

- Enhances India's capability to neutralise enemy air-defence systems before air strikes.
- Strengthens precision-strike and stand-off attack capabilities.
- Developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad, along with other DRDO laboratories, supporting Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence.

Project UDAYAK

Context: The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) celebrated the 37th Raising Day of Project UDAYAK on 1 June 2026, recognising its contribution to strengthening connectivity and border infrastructure in Northeast India.

About Project UDAYAK

- Project UDAYAK is a strategic project of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), established in 1989 under the Ministry of Defence.
- Coverage: Maintains over 1,457 km of roads across eastern Arunachal Pradesh (Anjaw, Lohit, Dibang Valley, Longding, Tirap & Changlang) and parts of Assam.
- Strategic Importance: Enhances connectivity along the India-China Line of Actual Control (LAC) and the India-Myanmar border, strengthening defence preparedness.
- Key Role: Develops strategic roads and border fencing infrastructure to improve security, border management, and connectivity in remote regions.

Exercise KHAAN QUEST 2026

Context: An Indian Army contingent travelled to Mongolia to participate in Exercise KHAAN QUEST 2026, held from 20 June to 3 July 2026.



About Exercise KHAAN QUEST

- KHAAN QUEST is an annual multinational military exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational readiness for UN peacekeeping missions.
- Venue: Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- Participants: Armed forces from several countries take part in the exercise.
- Evolution: Started in 2003 as a bilateral exercise between the USA and Mongolia and became a multinational exercise in 2006. The 2026 edition is the 23rd.
- Key Focus: Trains troops for United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which deals with maintaining or restoring international peace and security.