

23/05/2026 Daily Current News

1. *Khet Bachao Abhiyan:*

Context: Indian Council of Agricultural Research under Department of Agriculture Research and Education has recorded significant achievements under its nationwide 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan', which focuses on soil health, balanced fertiliser use, and sustainable agriculture.

About Khet Bachao Abhiyan:

- ❖ The 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' campaign has established a robust outreach across the country through multiple platforms to educate farmers and stakeholders on scientific nutrient management.
- ❖ To ensure grassroots participation, 4,916 Janpratinidhi Sammelans were held with active involvement of Panchayat, Sarpanch, and Zila Parishad members.
- ❖ The 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' initiative aims to encourage soil test-based nutrient management and reduce overdependence on chemical fertilisers, thereby protecting soil fertility and ensuring long-term agricultural sustainability.

2. *Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):*

Context: The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), implemented by the National Health Authority under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, has achieved a major milestone with over 100 crore health records successfully linked with Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA).

About Ayushman Bharat Mission- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY):

- ❖ Ayushman Bharat is a flagship health protection scheme aimed at achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative healthcare.
- ❖ It provides holistic healthcare services at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- ❖ The scheme targets over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (around 50 crore beneficiaries) identified through the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC).
- ❖ It offers health insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization.
- ❖ Eligible beneficiaries include SC/ST families, families without an earning member above 16 years, families with annual income below ₹2.5 lakh, and those listed in the PM-JAY beneficiary database.
- ❖ There is no restriction on family size, age or gender under the scheme.
- ❖ All pre-existing diseases are covered from the first day of enrollment.
- ❖ The scheme has two components: Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).
- ❖ Health and Wellness Centres provide comprehensive primary healthcare including maternal and child healthcare and treatment for non-communicable diseases.
- ❖ PM-JAY provides cashless hospitalization benefits for secondary and tertiary care treatment.
- ❖ PM-JAY covers 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days of post-hospitalization expenses including medicines and diagnostics.
- ❖ Benefits under PM-JAY are portable across India, allowing treatment in empanelled hospitals nationwide.
- ❖ It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme funded jointly by the Centre and States.
- ❖ The implementing agency of the scheme is the National Health Authority.

About Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):

- ❖ Under the mission, citizens will be able to create their Ayushman Bharat health account numbers, to which their digital health records can be linked.
- ❖ It was launched in September 2021 by the Prime Minister through a video conference.
- ❖ It aims to provide digital health IDs for all Indian citizens to help hospitals, insurance firms, and citizens access health records electronically when required.
- ❖ ABHA serves as a unique digital health identity that enables citizens to securely link and access their health records across hospitals, clinics, laboratories and healthcare providers.
- ❖ Through ABDM's consent-based health information exchange mechanism, citizens can digitally share their medical records with registered healthcare providers, ensuring paperless and efficient access to healthcare services while maintaining privacy and security of personal health information.

About National Health Authority:

- ❖ It is the successor of the National Health Agency, which was functioning as a registered society since 2018.
- ❖ The National Health Agency was reconstituted as the National Health Authority in January 2019.
- ❖ It is an attached office of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with full functional autonomy.
- ❖ It is governed by a Governing Board chaired by the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare.
- ❖ It is headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), an officer of the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.

3. JEEVAN App and SHATAYU:

Context: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment Launched “JEEVAN” (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network) Mobile Application for Senior Citizens and “SHATAYU” (Senior Holistic Care Assistance and Training For Your Utility) Geriatric Caregiver Dashboard.

More details:

- ❖ JEEVAN (Joint Elderly Empowerment & Virtual Assistance Network) mobile application, a dedicated digital platform designed to enhance the safety, welfare, healthcare access and social inclusion of senior citizens in India.
- ❖ The app provides a range of features aimed at addressing the needs and concerns of senior citizens, including information on Government schemes and welfare programmes, emergency assistance and support services, and details of senior citizen homes supported by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ❖ Another, application “SHATAYU” (Senior Holistic Care Assistance and Training For Your Utility) a Dashboard, developed to support and strengthen caregiving services for senior citizens across the country was also launched during the National Workshop on “Creating a Well-Functioning Care Economy.”
- ❖ It provides features such as information on the availability of Geriatric Caregivers in a particular district and the State for the senior citizens.

4. Prime Minister's Cultural Gifts during recent foreign tour:

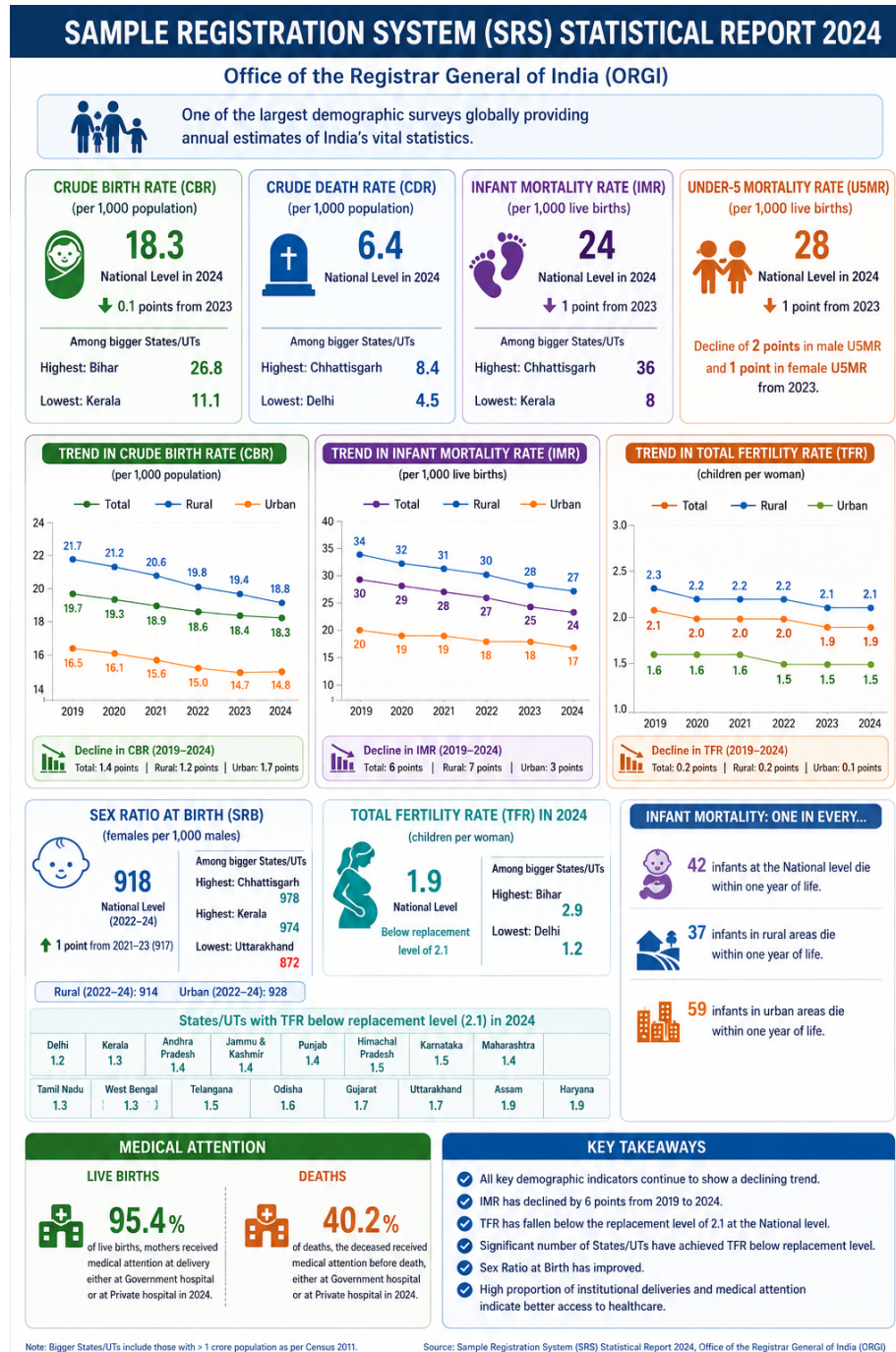
Context: During his five-nation diplomatic tour (the UAE, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Italy), the Prime Minister presented culturally significant, GI-tagged gifts to world leaders, highlighting India's rich art and culture.

Leader/Country	Cultural Gifts & Details
Italian Leaders	• Muga & Eri Silk – Golden, non-violent (Ahimsa) silk from Assam; known for durability. • Shirui Lily Stole – Inspired by Manipur's rare bell-shaped Shirui Lily flower. • Marble Inlay Box – Agra's intricate <i>Pacchikari</i> art.
UAE Leaders	• Rogan Painting – Rare Kutch (Gujarat) textile art featuring the "Tree of Life" motif. • Fruits – GI-tagged Kesar Mangoes (Gujarat) and Meghalaya Pineapples. • Filigree Box – Karimnagar Nakashi silver craft. • Maheshwari Silk – Madhya Pradesh silk-cotton blend. • Chakhao Rice – Manipur's GI-tagged antioxidant-rich black rice. • Kofgari Dagger – Udaipur's silver/gold inlay work on steel.
Sweden Leaders	• Ladakhi Stole – Pure Himalayan wool reflecting traditional weaving culture. • Other Gifts – Loktak Tea (Manipur), GI-protected Shantiniketan leather bag (West Bengal), Gond Art of Madhya Pradesh. • Book – <i>Convenient Action</i> by Narendra Modi.
Director-General (FAO)	• Joha Rice – Indigenous aromatic rice from Assam's Brahmaputra Valley. • GI Rice Varieties – Gobindobhog rice (West Bengal), Kalanamak rice (Uttar Pradesh), and Basmati rice (Punjab, Haryana, Western UP, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir).
Netherlands Leaders	• GI-tagged Jaipur Blue Pottery (Rajasthan) – Symbol of Indo-Dutch artistic excellence. • GI-tagged Madhubani Painting (Bihar) – Featuring sacred fish motifs.
Denmark PM	• Bidri Silver Work – Traditional silver inlay craft from the Deccan region.
Norway Leaders	• Silver Filigree Sailboat – Odisha's Tarakasi craft symbolizing Indian and Viking heritage. • Palm Leaf Pattachitra – Odisha's ancient palm leaf engraving art.

5. Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report 2024:

Context: Report released by Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) is one of the largest demographic surveys globally providing annual estimates of India's vital statistics.

Major highlights:



6. Sperm whale:

Context: A study has found that the clicking sounds (called codas) used by sperm whales to communicate contain complex sound patterns similar to vowel sounds in human speech.

About Sperm whale:

- ❖ Sperm whales are found in all deep oceans, from the equator to the edge of the pack ice in the Arctic and Antarctic.
- ❖ Sperm whale is the largest toothed whale and has the biggest brain of any known animal.
- ❖ Its massive head contains spermaceti, a waxy fluid that helps in buoyancy during deep dives.
- ❖ Sperm whales produce ambergris, a valuable substance used in perfumes.
- ❖ It is the only living cetacean with a single left-sided blowhole.
- ❖ The conservation status of sperm whale in the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List is Vulnerable.

7. ***Vayu Astra-1:***

Context: Vayu Astra-1 successfully completed high-altitude trials.

About Vayu Astra-1:

- ❖ Vayu Astra-1 is a loitering munition, also known as a kamikaze or suicide drone, capable of hovering, surveillance and precision strikes.
- ❖ A suicide drone is an unmanned aerial weapon that can hover over a target area before crashing into and destroying the target with an onboard explosive payload.
- ❖ Vayu Astra-1 has a tested range of 100 km with a 10-kg warhead payload.
- ❖ Its features include precision strike capability, night operations, high-altitude endurance and intelligent combat features.

8. ***Canine Distemper Virus (CDV):***

Context: Officials are closely monitoring over a hundred Kanha National Park tigers following six tragic deaths from Canine Distemper Virus (CDV).

About Canine Distemper Virus (CDV):

- ❖ Canine Distemper is a contagious and serious disease caused by the canine distemper virus (CDV).
- ❖ The virus attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems of dogs.
- ❖ Puppies below four months and unvaccinated dogs are at highest risk of infection.
- ❖ CDV can also infect ferrets and several wild carnivores.
- ❖ Wildlife species affected include foxes, wolves, raccoons, and skunks.
- ❖ Cats may become infected but rarely develop serious illness.
- ❖ The disease spreads through direct contact and airborne exposure.
- ❖ The virus does not survive long in the environment and is destroyed by most disinfectants.
- ❖ Infected dogs can shed the virus for several months, increasing transmission risk.
- ❖ The infection weakens the immune system and makes animals vulnerable to secondary infections.
- ❖ The skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems may all be affected.
- ❖ Common symptoms include coughing, fever, and discharge from the eyes and nose.
- ❖ Severe neurological symptoms include tremors, twitching, disorientation, and seizures.
- ❖ There is currently no cure or approved antiviral treatment for canine distemper.
- ❖ Vaccination is the most effective method for preventing canine distemper.

About Kanha National Park:

- ❖ Kanha National Park is located in the Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh and covers about 1,945 sq km in the Maikal Hills of the Satpura range.
- ❖ It was declared a national park in 1955 and became a tiger reserve under Project Tiger in 1973.
- ❖ The region is inhabited by indigenous tribal communities such as the Gonds and the Baigas.
- ❖ Major fauna include Bengal tigers and Barasingha (Swamp Deer), while the flora mainly consists of tropical moist and dry deciduous forests.
- ❖ Kanha National Park is believed to have inspired The Jungle Book written by Rudyard Kipling.

9. *Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB):*

Context: The board, at its 623rd meeting held in Mumbai under the chairmanship of Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra, decided to transfer ₹1,09,379.64 crore towards the contingent risk buffer (CRB) for FY26 as against ₹44,861.70 crore in the previous year, and maintain the CRB at 6.5% of the size of the RBI balance sheet.

About Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB):

- ❖ CRB (Contingent Risk Buffer) is a specific provision fund maintained by the central bank to deal with unexpected and unforeseen contingencies.
- ❖ Unforeseen contingencies may include depreciation in securities values, risks arising from monetary policy changes and systemic financial risks.
- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India maintains the CRB as a certain percentage of its balance sheet every fiscal year.
- ❖ The level of the CRB is determined by the RBI's Central Board.
- ❖ At present, the CRB is maintained at 5.5–6.5% of the RBI balance sheet as per the recommendations of the Bimal Jalan Committee.

10. *Variable rate repo (VRR) auction:*

Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday injected ₹81,590 crore transient liquidity into the banking system through a three-day variable rate repo (VRR) auction. Transient liquidity is temporary cash flow fluctuations in a financial or banking system, while a VRR auction is a monetary tool used by the RBI to inject short-term liquidity into the banking system.

About Variable rate repo (VRR):

- ❖ Variable Rate Repo (VRR) is a short-term borrowing and lending arrangement used by the Reserve Bank of India to inject liquidity into the banking system.
- ❖ Unlike the fixed repo rate, the interest rate under VRR is determined through an auction process.
- ❖ VRR is a part of the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) used by banks to manage temporary cash shortages.
- ❖ VRR is a short-term liquidity instrument with a tenure ranging from 1 to 14 days.
- ❖ Under VRR, banks bid for funds by specifying the amount and interest rate they are willing to pay.
- ❖ The RBI allocates funds starting from the highest bid until the notified amount is exhausted.

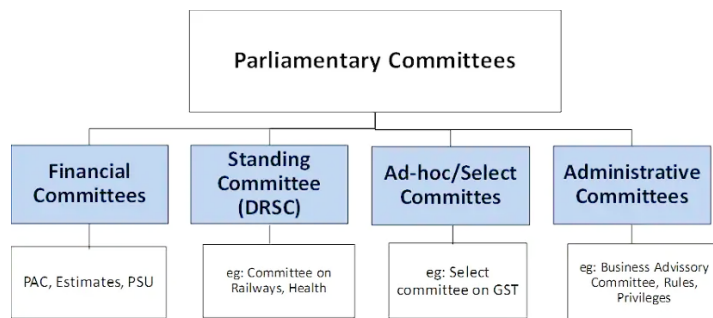
- ❖ Banks are required to provide eligible government securities as collateral for borrowing under VRR.

11. Public Accounts Committee (PAC):

Context: The reconstituted Public Accounts Committee (PAC) convened on Friday, during which BJP members objected to PAC Chairperson K.C. Venugopal taking up certain subjects for examination by the committee suo motu.

About Public Accounts Committee (PAC):

- ❖ PAC is one of the three Financial Parliamentary committees, the other two are the Estimates Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings.
- ❖ Parliamentary committees draw their authority from Article 105 (on privileges of Parliament members) and Article 118 (on Parliament's authority to make rules for regulating its procedure and conduct of business).



- ❖ The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was introduced in 1921 after its mention in the Government of India Act, 1919 (Montford Reforms).
- ❖ The PAC is constituted every year under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.
- ❖ The Chairman of the PAC is appointed by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ The PAC is a non-executive and advisory parliamentary committee.
- ❖ The PAC consists of 22 members, with 15 members elected by the Lok Sabha Speaker and 7 members elected by the Rajya Sabha Chairman, and has a term of one year.
- ❖ The PAC examines whether public money granted by Parliament is spent within the “scope of demand”.
- ❖ No Minister can be a member of the PAC.
- ❖ The PAC examines appropriation accounts, Finance Accounts of the government and other accounts laid before Parliament.
- ❖ The PAC also examines CAG reports on appropriation accounts, revenue receipts, departmental expenditure and autonomous bodies.
- ❖ The PAC treats both financial excesses and savings arising from poor estimation or procedural defects with equal scrutiny.
- ❖ The PAC does not examine public undertakings assigned to the Committee on Public Undertakings.

- ❖ The PAC works closely with the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- ❖ The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India acts as the friend, philosopher, and guide to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament.

12. Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD):

Context: Days after U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to China, India will chair a meeting of the Quad's Foreign Ministers on Tuesday, with talks about a "free and open Indo-Pacific" on the top of the agenda. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will host his counterparts from the U.S., Australia, and Japan on May 26, at the end of U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's bilateral visit to India.

About QUAD:

- ❖ It is a strategic forum comprising four countries: the United States, Japan, India, and Australia.
- ❖ The Quad is aimed at promoting regional security and economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ The four countries share a common interest in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.
- ❖ It also aim to counter China's expanding influence in the region.
- ❖ Lacks a formal alliance structure; no decision-making body or secretariat like NATO or the UN.
- ❖ Maintained through summits, meetings, information exchanges, and military drills.
- ❖ Regular "Leaders Summits" have been held since 2021.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ The Vice President of India, C. P. Radhakrishnan today released the book 'The Library Man of India: The Story of P.N. Panicker', authored by P. P. Sathyan, at Uprashtapati Bhavan. Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker is known as the Father of the Library Movement in the Indian state of Kerala.
- ☐ India and Ethiopia signed the bilateral accession protocol in the context of Ethiopia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on 22 May 2026 in Geneva, where the signing ceremony took place.
- ☐ In a major step towards strengthening India's e-commerce logistics ecosystem and enhancing last mile delivery capabilities across the country, the Department of Posts (DoP), Ministry of Communications and Flipkart India Private Limited have signed an Agreement for Last Mile Parcel Delivery Services.
- ☐ International Day for Biological Diversity is observed annually on May 22 to raise awareness about global biodiversity. The 2026 theme was "Acting Locally for Global Impact"
- ☐ "State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2026", India emerged as a major global carbon market with the launch of its Carbon Credit Trading Scheme according to a new World Bank report.
- ☐ India, Cyprus elevate bilateral ties to strategic partnership; ink pact for defence cooperation.
- ☐ Pregabalin has been included under Schedule H1 of the Drugs Rules, 1945, vide a Gazette Notification, according to information released by the Union Health Ministry on Friday. The drug, which is prescribed for the treatment of chronic pain, neuropathies, fibromyalgia, and

certain neurological conditions, has reportedly been misused for its sedative, euphoric, and dissociative effects. The H1 prescription drug comes with caution that it is dangerous to take this preparation except in accordance with the medical advice and that it cannot be sold by retail without the prescription of a registered medical practitioner.

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