01-05-2026

1. Invest India:

Context: Invest India, the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has facilitated the grounding of 60 projects worth over USD 6.1 billion during Financial Year 2025–26. These investments span 14 states and are estimated to generate more than 31,000 potential jobs, reflecting sustained and deepening global confidence in India as a preferred investment destination.

About Invest India:

- Invest India is the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of the Government of India.
- It was established in 2009 as a not-for-profit company.
- Invest India functions under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- It is supported through a partnership between the Central Government, State Governments, and industry associations.
- The agency acts as the first point of contact for global and domestic investors.
- Invest India provides end-to-end investment support from pre-investment advisory to aftercare services.
- It assists investors in project facilitation, expansion, and business operations in India.

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2. India Post Payments Bank:

Context: India Post Payments Bank (IPPB), a 100% Government of India-owned entity under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, announced the launch of its Self Help Group (SHG) Savings Account, a dedicated offering aimed at advancing financial inclusion and empowering women-led SHGs across rural India.

The IPPB SHG Savings Account is designed to be:

- Zero balance, zero charges account to ensure affordability.
- Digitally enabled for simplified on-boarding.
- Delivered through the vast network of Post Offices and Postmen/ Gramin Dak Sevaks.

Key Features:

- No minimum initial deposit requirement.
- No Monthly Average Balance (MAB) requirement.
- Maximum balance limit of ₹2,00,000.
- Quarterly interest pay-outs as per applicable savings rates.
- Nil charges for cash deposits and withdrawals.
- One free physical account statement per month.
- No account closure charges.
- No QR card issuance charges.

About India Post Payments Bank:

- India Post Payments Bank was established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications.
- The Government of India owns 100% equity in India Post Payments Bank (IPPB).

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- IPPB was launched on 1 September 2018.
- The bank aims to become the most accessible, affordable, and trusted bank for common citizens.
- Its core mandate is to provide banking services to the unbanked and underbanked population.
- IPPB leverages India's vast postal network to deliver banking services at the last mile.
- The bank operates through nearly 1.65 lakh post offices across India.
- Around 1.40 lakh post offices in the network are located in rural areas.
- IPPB is supported by nearly 3 lakh postal employees for service delivery.

3. UPI:

Context: The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched on 11 April 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) under the regulatory oversight of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has emerged as the backbone of India's digital payments ecosystem and a critical driver of financial inclusion.

UPI Operational countries:

UAE	Operational, accepted at major merchant points; used by Indian diaspora
Singapore	Operational, linked with Singapore's Pay Now for cross-border transfers
France	Operational, expanding Indian tourist payment acceptance
Bhutan	Operational, NPCI-enabled real-time cross-border payments
Nepal	Operational, accepted across the nation
Sri Lanka	Operational, Indian visitor and diaspora payments
Mauritius	Operational, integrated with local payment infrastructure
Qatar	Operational

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4. Vikram VT 21 project:

Context: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) launched its Vikram VT 21 project with two Advanced Armoured Platforms: wheeled and tracked.

About Vikram VT 21 project:

- It has enhanced armour protection to withstand certain projectiles, blasts, and shrapnel plus which has improved mobility, integrated weapons and surveillance systems.
- It offers STANAG Level 4 and 5 protection which are NATO-defined standards indicating resistance against heavy gunfire, explosions, and artillery fragments with modular blast and ballistic protection.
- It is amphibious.
- It is a potential solution for the Indian Army's requirement of a Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle.

5. Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA):

Context: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) operationalises PaRRVA to boost Transparency and Investor Protection.

About Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA):

- PaRRVA is a new verification mechanism introduced to authenticate past performance claims made by regulated market intermediaries.
- The framework operates through a two-tier structure involving a PaRRVA agency and a PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC).
- A SEBI-registered credit rating agency functions as the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA).
- A recognised stock exchange functions as the PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC).
- CARE Ratings Limited has been recognised as the PaRRVA agency.

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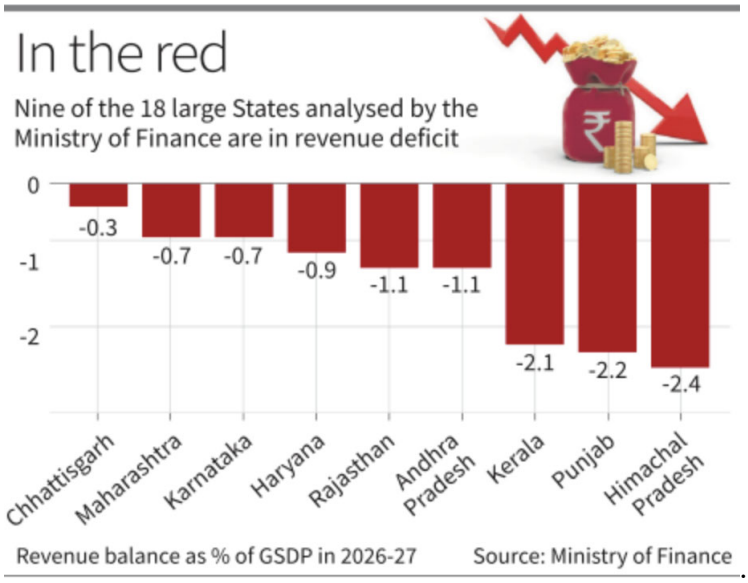
- National Stock Exchange of India will function as the PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC).

6. Revenue-deficit:

Context: The Union Finance Ministry has warned that States with revenue deficits and high debt burdens will find it harder to deal with fiscal shocks, including from the West Asia crisis, forcing them to either reprioritise expenditure away from productive areas, or approach the Centre for more funds at a time when it is trying to consolidate its own finances.

More details:



- A revenue deficit occurs when a government's total revenue expenditure (regular, day-to-day operating expenses) exceeds its total revenue receipts (income from taxes, fees, and other regular sources).
- The Department of Economic Affairs released its Monthly Economic Review for April 2026.
- The review analysed the fiscal position of 18 large Indian States for 2026–27.
- Nine States are projected to run revenue deficits in 2026–27.

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- Seven States are projected to record revenue surpluses.
- One State is projected to remain in revenue balance.
- A revenue deficit occurs when recurring expenditure exceeds revenue receipts from taxes and fees.
- Revenue expenditure includes salaries, pensions, subsidies, and interest payments.
- States projected to have revenue deficits include Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh.
- Punjab is projected to have the highest interest payments-to-revenue receipts ratio at 22.8%.
- Revenue-deficit States generally carry higher outstanding liabilities and debt-servicing burdens.
- Many revenue-deficit States spend over 15% of their revenue receipts on interest payments.
- Such States may face limited fiscal flexibility during economic shocks.
- These States may require expenditure restructuring or higher central transfers during crises.
- Tamil Nadu and West Bengal were excluded as only interim budgets were presented for 2026–27.
- States projected to record revenue surpluses include Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Telangana, and Bihar.
- Odisha is projected to record the highest revenue surplus at 3% of GSDP.
- Most revenue-surplus States have capital outlay levels higher than their projected fiscal deficits.

7. Komagata Maru incident:

Context: In the spring of 1914, a Japanese steamship called the Komagata Maru sailed from Hong Kong toward Vancouver, British Columbia, carrying 376 passengers: 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus from Punjab in British India. They were British subjects hoping to build new lives in Canada. What awaited them was a two-month standoff in the harbour, a brutal denouement on the docks of Calcutta, and a place in the history of both India's anti-colonial movement and Canada's long reckoning with its own past. The episode was recently mentioned by singer Diljit Dosanjh on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon.

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More details of the incident:

- Komagata Maru Incident was closely linked to the political and economic conditions in Punjab under British rule.
- By 1914, Punjab had become the main recruiting ground for the British Indian Army.
- The British promoted Punjabis as a "martial race" loyal to the Empire.
- Rural indebtedness, malaria, and plague pushed many Punjabis toward overseas migration.
- Punjabi migrants on the U.S. West Coast founded the Ghadar Movement in 1913.
- The Ghadar Movement aimed at the armed overthrow of British rule in India.
- Ghadar activists boarded the Komagata Maru at Yokohama and spread anti-colonial literature.
- The voyage was organised by Gurdit Singh to challenge discriminatory Canadian immigration laws.
- Canada's 1908 "continuous journey regulation" restricted Indian immigration.
- The ship reached Vancouver on May 23, 1914.
- Canadian authorities refused to allow the ship to dock at Burrard Inlet.
- Prime Minister Robert Borden kept the ship anchored offshore.
- The local South Asian community raised funds and pursued a legal challenge against the discriminatory laws.
- The British Columbia Court of Appeal upheld Canada's exclusionary immigration policy.
- Canadian authorities restricted food and water supplies to passengers aboard the ship.
- An armed police force attempted to board the vessel on July 19, 1914, but passengers resisted.
- Canada deployed a naval cruiser to escort the ship out of Canadian waters.
- Only 22 passengers were allowed to disembark in Canada.
- British colonial authorities denied the ship permission to dock in Hong Kong and Singapore.
- When the ship reached near Calcutta, police attempted to force passengers onto trains to Punjab.
- Passengers resisted and marched toward the city, leading to police firing.

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- Twenty passengers were killed in the confrontation near Calcutta.
- Gurdit Singh evaded arrest before surrendering in 1920 and later served five years in prison.
- The incident boosted recruitment and revolutionary activity within the Ghadar Movement.
- A planned Ghadar uprising in Punjab in 1915 failed due to informers and mass arrests.
- Many Ghadar revolutionaries were executed and later remembered as martyrs.
- Stephen Harper issued an apology in 2008 that many considered inadequate.
- Justin Trudeau delivered a formal apology in the Canadian Parliament in 2016.
- The Komagata Maru incident exposed racial discrimination within the British Empire's citizenship system.

8. Canine distemper virus (CDV):

Context: A tigress and her four cubs died in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR) in the past two weeks, with the mother and a cub passing away. Chief Wildlife Warden Samita Rajora told The Hindu that the presence of CDV had been confirmed in the third cub.

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.

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- 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.

9. International Labour Day:

Context: Every year 1st May is observed as May Day and is also known as International Labour Day worldwide. The day is observed as an occasion to commemorate the contributions of labourers and the working class.

About May day:

- International Labour Day commemorates the achievements of the labour movement.
- Its origins trace back to Chicago in 1886.
- Workers in Chicago launched a strike on May 1, 1886 demanding an eight-hour workday.
- The protests culminated in the Haymarket Affair.
- Violence erupted at Haymarket Square on May 4, 1886 after a bomb was thrown at police.
- The incident resulted in the deaths of police officers and civilians.
- The Haymarket Affair became a landmark event in global labour history.
- Trade unions and socialist groups later declared May 1 as an international day of workers' solidarity.
- The decision was formally adopted in 1889 at the Paris meeting of the Second International.
- More than 80 countries, including India, China, and Cuba, observe International Labour Day.

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- The United States and Canada celebrate Labour Day on the first Monday of September instead of May 1.
- India's first Labour Day celebration was held in Chennai in 1923.
- The event in India was organised by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan.
- International Labour Day is commonly marked through rallies, parades, union meetings, and awareness programmes on workers' rights.
- For May Day 2026 (International Labour Day), the prominent theme centers on "Ensuring a Healthy Psychosocial Working Environment".

Quick Bites:

- Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, in the august presence of Union Minister of Communications Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia will be launching mobile-based disaster communication systems on 2nd May 2026. The system has been developed by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications, in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Government of India to ensure timely dissemination of critical information to its citizens.
- In a landmark achievement in high-altitude medical care and humanitarian outreach, the Indian Army successfully conducted a four-day Advanced Surgical Eye Camp, 'Op Netra 1.0,' at 153 General Hospital, Leh from April 27-30, 2026.

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02-05-2026

1. INS Mahendragiri (Yard 12654):

Context: Mahendragiri (Yard 12654), the sixth ship of Nilgiri-class (Project 17A) and fourth ship of the class built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL), was delivered to the Indian Navy on 30 Apr 2026 at MDSL, Mumbai.

About INS Mahendragiri (Yard 12654):

- Project 17A frigates are advanced multi-mission stealth frigates designed for modern maritime challenges.
- The project represents a major advancement in naval design, stealth, automation, survivability, and firepower.
- P17A frigates are a symbol of India's Aatmanirbharta in indigenous warship building.
- The ships were designed by the Warship Design Bureau (WDB).
- Construction was overseen by the Warship Overseeing Team (Mumbai).
- The project follows the philosophy of Integrated Construction for timely delivery.
- P17A frigates possess more advanced weapons and sensors than the Shivalik-class (P17) frigates.
- The ships are equipped with Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion systems.
- Each ship uses diesel engines and gas turbines driving Controllable Pitch Propellers (CPPs).
- The frigates feature a state-of-the-art Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS).
- The weapon suite includes anti-surface, anti-air, and anti-submarine warfare systems.
- Mahendragiri is the sixth P17A frigate delivered to the Indian Navy.
- Mahendragiri was delivered within 17 months of the first P17A frigate, Nilgiri.

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- The first P17A frigate, Nilgiri, was delivered on 20 December 2024 by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL).
- The project demonstrates India's growing shipbuilding and engineering capabilities.
- P17A frigates have around 75% indigenous content.
- More than 200 MSMEs participated in the project through MDSL.
- The project generated employment for around 4,000 people directly and over 10,000 indirectly.

2. Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) Communication:

Context: TRAI releases Consultation Paper on Regulatory Framework for Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) Communication.

What is Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) Communication?

- Vehicle-to-Everything Communication (V2X) enables vehicles to exchange real-time information with vehicles, infrastructure, pedestrians, and networks.
- V2X shares data such as vehicle position, speed, and movement conditions.
- It is a core component of Intelligent Transport Systems and connected mobility.
- V2X improves road safety through applications like collision avoidance and emergency vehicle warning systems.
- The technology supports safer intersection management and reduces accident risks.
- V2X contributes to achieving SDG 3.6, which aims to halve global road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.
- The Forward Collision Warning System in the USA recorded a 9% reduction in forward collision conflicts.
- V2X enhances traffic efficiency through smart traffic signal coordination and congestion reduction.
- It supports autonomous and self-driving vehicles by providing external real-time data inputs.

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- V2X mainly relies on Dedicated Short-Range Communication (DSRC) and Cellular V2X (C-V2X) technologies.
- DSRC technology is based on Wi-Fi communication standards.
- C-V2X is a broader communication standard that leverages cellular networks.

3. Prosopis juliflora:

Context: Prosopis juliflora, to be used as feedstock for India's first green methanol production plant, designed to fuel ocean-going ships.

About Prosopis juliflora:

- Prosopis juliflora is a leguminous tree species highly resistant to drought and salinity.
- It is regarded as one of the world's most dominant invasive plant species.
- The species is native to Mexico.
- It was first introduced in India by the British in the 1920s to "green" Delhi.
- The Gujarat Forest Department further introduced it in 1961.
- Prosopis juliflora is a phreatophyte with deep roots that absorb groundwater from below the water table.
- The species can worsen hydrological drought by excessive groundwater extraction.
- It reduces native plant diversity and threatens phytodiversity in affected ecosystems.

4. Hepatitis:

Context: Global Hepatitis Report 2026 released by World Health Organization (WHO). As per the report, India is among top contributors to global hepatitis deaths, particularly from hepatitis B and C.

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About Hepatitis:

Types of Hepatitis

	TRANSMISSION	PREVENTION	TREATMENT
Hepatitis A	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	• Practicing good hygiene • Vaccine	No treatment
Hepatitis B	Through contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person	• Practicing good hygiene • Vaccine • Blood screening	• Alpha interferon • Peginterferon
Hepatitis C	Blood-to-blood contact	• Practicing good hygiene • Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Direct-acting antiviral drugs
Hepatitis D	Contact with infected blood (only occurs in people already infected with hepatitis B)	• Hepatitis B vaccine • Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Interferon
Hepatitis E	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	• Practicing good hygiene • Avoid drinking water that has come from a potentially unsafe source	No treatment

- Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver— the irritation or swelling of the liver cells from any cause.
- Usually caused by a group of viruses known as the "hepatotropic" (liver directed) viruses, including A, B, C, D and E.

5. Windfall Tax:

Context: Centre cuts windfall tax on diesel & jet fuel exports in line with the price fluctuations in the international market due to the West Asia war.

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About Windfall Tax:

- Windfall Tax is a government levy imposed on extraordinary profits earned by companies or individuals due to unexpected circumstances.
- It is typically applied when global events such as geopolitical tensions or commodity price surges create abnormal profit gains.
- Sectors like oil and gas often experience windfall gains during such periods.
- The objective is to capture a portion of these excess profits for public welfare.
- Revenue collected through windfall tax is used for funding public projects and reducing fiscal deficits.
- It also supports redistribution of wealth to balance economic inequalities.

6. Himalayan salamander and Indian skimmer:

Context: Barkha Subba and Parveen Shaikh won the Whitley Awards for protecting the Himalayan salamander and Indian skimmer habitats.

About Himalayan salamander and Indian skimmer:

Feature	Himalayan salamander	Indian skimmer
Habitat & Distribution	Rare semi-aquatic amphibian of the Eastern Himalaya; found in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and also reported in Myanmar and Thailand.	Riverine bird; India hosts >90% of global population, especially in the Chambal River.
Conservation & Behaviour	Classified as Vulnerable (IUCN); shows philopatry (returns to natal site for breeding and egg-laying).	Classified as Endangered (IUCN); nests on sandbars and mid-river islands; known for skimming water surface to catch fish using its long orange bill.

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About Whitley Awards:

- Whitley Award is a prestigious conservation award given by the Whitley Fund for Nature, a UK-based nature conservation charity.
- It supports conservationists working to protect wildlife and ecosystems.
- The award is often referred to as the "Green Oscars" due to its global recognition.
- It is awarded annually to outstanding conservation leaders.

7. PM E-DRIVE programme:

Context: The Centre may roll out a fresh electric bus scheme for States after completing the tendering and allocation of all 14,000 buses under the PM E-DRIVE programme, a government official said.

About PM E-DRIVE programme:

- PM E-DRIVE Scheme was approved with an outlay of ₹10,900 crore.
- The PM E-DRIVE Scheme is effective from October 2024 to March 2026.
- The scheme aims to accelerate electric vehicle adoption in India.
- PM E-DRIVE focuses on EV charging infrastructure and domestic EV manufacturing.
- The scheme supports the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- PM E-DRIVE builds on earlier schemes like FAME India Scheme Phase I and FAME India Scheme Phase II.
- The scheme targets electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, e-ambulances, e-trucks, and e-buses.
- e-trucks require scrapping certificates to avail benefits under the scheme.
- Demand incentives are capped at 15% of the ex-factory price or a fixed vehicle limit.
- Only EVs below a prescribed price threshold are eligible for incentives.
- The scheme plans to establish 72,300 public fast EV chargers.

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- Public chargers will be installed in major cities and along selected highways.
- Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited will develop a digital Super App for EV users.
- The Super App will help users book charging slots and make payments.
- PM E-DRIVE allocates ₹780 crore for upgrading EV testing agencies.
- Testing agencies under the Ministry of Heavy Industries will receive advanced technology support.
- Only EVs with advanced battery technology qualify for incentives.
- Government-purchased EVs are excluded from the scheme incentives.
- Eligible vehicles must be registered under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.
- e-2Ws and e-3Ws must be manufactured and registered between October 2024 and March 2026.

Quick Bites:

- Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India has established a Coastal Atmospheric Research Testbed (C-ART) at Andhra University (AU) in Visakhapatnam. This Coastal Atmospheric Research Testbed (C-ART) will serve as a national user facility to provide research observations to support process-level diagnostics of monsoon convection, improve parameterization schemes in numerical weather prediction models, enable data assimilation experiments for enhanced forecast skill and for model evaluation.
- In a major breakthrough against organised narcotics trafficking, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), under Operation WHITE STRIKE, has uncovered a large transnational cocaine trafficking syndicate and seized approximately 349 kilograms of high-grade cocaine valued at nearly ₹1,745 crore in the illicit market from Mumbai and adjoining logistics corridor.
- Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari announced the launch of India's first Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) barrier-less tolling system at the Chorayasi Toll Plaza on the Surat–Bharuch section of NH-48 in Gujarat. The state-of-the-art system enables seamless

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toll collection without requiring vehicles to stop, using advanced technologies such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and FASTag.

- In a landmark step towards safeguarding the rights of platform-based workers, the Karnataka government has launched India's first dedicated digital grievance redressal mechanism for gig workers.
- The annual Mahua flower festival, locally known as 'Ippa Puvvu Panduga', was celebrated with traditional fervour in Jamidi village of Adilabad district, Telangana.
- Karnataka has taken a significant step in advancing India's space innovation ecosystem by launching the country's first state-led Centre of Excellence for Space Technology in Bengaluru.

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03-05-2026

1. National Clean Air Programme (NCAP):

Context: The National Green Tribunal's Southern Zone Bench in Chennai has directed all five southern States and Union Territory Puducherry to ensure "strict and time-bound implementation" of their State Action Plans (SAP) under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

About National Clean Air Programme (NCAP):

- In January 2019, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) to prepare clean air action plans.
- It aimed to cut the concentration of atmospheric Particulate Matter (PM) by 20-30% by 2024, from 2017 levels.
- This was later revised to 40% by 2026.
- Cities continuously violating annual PM levels in India need to prepare and implement annual Clean Air Action Plans (CAAPs).
- To facilitate this, the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has allocated ₹10,422.73 crore.

2. Cell Broadcast Alert System:

Context: Mobile phones across the country went abuzz after Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the cell broadcast alert system on Saturday that will warn citizens about emergency and natural disasters in their area.

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About Cell Broadcast Alert System:

- National Disaster Management Authority operationalized the Integrated Alert System called SACHET for disaster warnings across India.
- The SACHET system was developed by Centre for Development of Telematics under the Department of Telecommunications.
- The system is based on the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) recommended by the International Telecommunication Union.
- SACHET is operational across all 36 States and Union Territories of India.
- The platform sends geo-targeted disaster and emergency alerts through SMS to mobile users.
- More than 134 billion SMS alerts have been disseminated in over 19 Indian languages for cyclones, weather warnings, and natural disasters.
- India introduced Cell Broadcast (CB) technology for faster emergency alerts during events such as earthquakes, tsunamis, lightning strikes, gas leaks, and chemical hazards.
- The indigenous Cell Broadcast Alert System developed by C-DOT and NDMA enables near real-time transmission of public safety alerts directly to mobile phones.

3. Apnoea test:

Context: The Supreme Court has found prima facie a "ring of truth" in a doctor's plea that the apnoea test, alleged to be widely used in Kerala, is not a conclusive assessment of brain death.

What is the Apnoea test and issues surrounding it?

- The apnea test, a critical component of brain death certification in India, is currently under review by the Supreme Court (SC) following allegations of malpractice and subjectivity, which may impact organ harvesting ethics.
- The test checks for spontaneous breathing by disconnecting a patient from a ventilator to observe brainstem reflexes.

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- Supreme Court of India is reviewing the effectiveness and reliability of the apnea test used for brain death certification.
- Concerns have emerged that the apnea test may be too subjective compared to EEG and cerebral angiogram tests.
- Activists and legal petitions argue that premature brain death declarations may be used to facilitate organ transplantation.
- Petitioners demand that the apnea test should act only as a confirmatory test and not the sole basis for declaring brain death.
- Brain death certification in India is governed by the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994.
- The law mandates certification by a four-member medical board, including a neurologist, through two tests conducted 12 hours apart.
- Experts highlighted gaps in training and inconsistent implementation of mandatory videography during apnea tests.
- The Supreme Court directed an All India Institute of Medical Sciences panel to examine protocols and consider mandatory EEG or angiography tests for improved accuracy.

4. Swang (also spelled Swaang or Svang):

Context: In the age of YouTube and Netflix, a folk theatre play has not just survived but thrived for 25 years. The remarkable achievement of Swang Jaani Chor, led by Satish Georgy Kashyap — popularly called the 'King of Swang' — has turned attention to a journey that began inside Hisar jail in 2001 and travelled from village chaupals (gatherings) to international festivals.

About Swang:

- Swang or Saang is a traditional dialogue-driven folk theatre form popular in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Punjab.

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- The folk art combines music, poetry, dance, humour, and dramatic storytelling in open-air performances.
- The term "Swang" originates from the Sanskrit word "Svangam", meaning imitation, disguise, or impersonation.
- Swang performances involve actors portraying characters from mythology, folklore, history, and social life.
- One of the most famous Swang narratives is "Jaani Chor", a Robin Hood-like folk character known for wit and intelligence.
- Swang is generally performed in village squares, courtyards, and rural community spaces.
- The folk theatre form plays an important role in preserving regional dialects, oral traditions, and folk music.
- Swang also promotes social awareness, moral values, communal harmony, and cultural interaction among rural communities.

5. Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme:

Context: An Outreach Workshop on the Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme was organised by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, in collaboration with the Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Telangana, at the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), Hyderabad on May 2, 2026.

About Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme:

- The Atmanirbhar Panchayat Programme aims to strengthen the financial self-reliance of Gram Panchayats and Block Panchayats.
- The programme supports Panchayats in developing financially viable and bankable revenue-generating projects.
- It focuses on increasing Own Sources of Revenue (OSR) for local self-governments.

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- Panchayat proposals will be selected through a transparent national challenge process.
- Selected projects will receive technical assistance from project preparation to financial closure.
- Funding support may involve Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), CSR funds, bank finance, and convergence with government schemes.
- Mandatory Gram Sabha approval ensures community participation and local ownership of projects.
- The programme seeks to create economically confident and self-reliant Panchayats over a four-year implementation period.

6. Medical and Wellness Tourism in India:

Context: Across the world, rising healthcare costs, long waiting times, and the growing burden of lifestyle diseases are driving patients to seek treatment abroad. This global shift has led to the emergence of a multi-billion-dollar Medical Value Travel (MVT) industry.

More details:

- The global Medical Value Travel market was valued at about USD 115.6 billion in 2022. It is projected to reach around USD 286.1 billion by 2030. The market is growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 10.8%.
- India has emerged as one of the most significant destinations in this evolving global landscape. Industry estimates place the medical tourism market at about USD 8.7 billion in 2025, with projections of USD 16.2 billion by 2030.
- Through the flagship "Heal in India" initiative, the Government is positioning the country as a premier destination for integrated and holistic healthcare.

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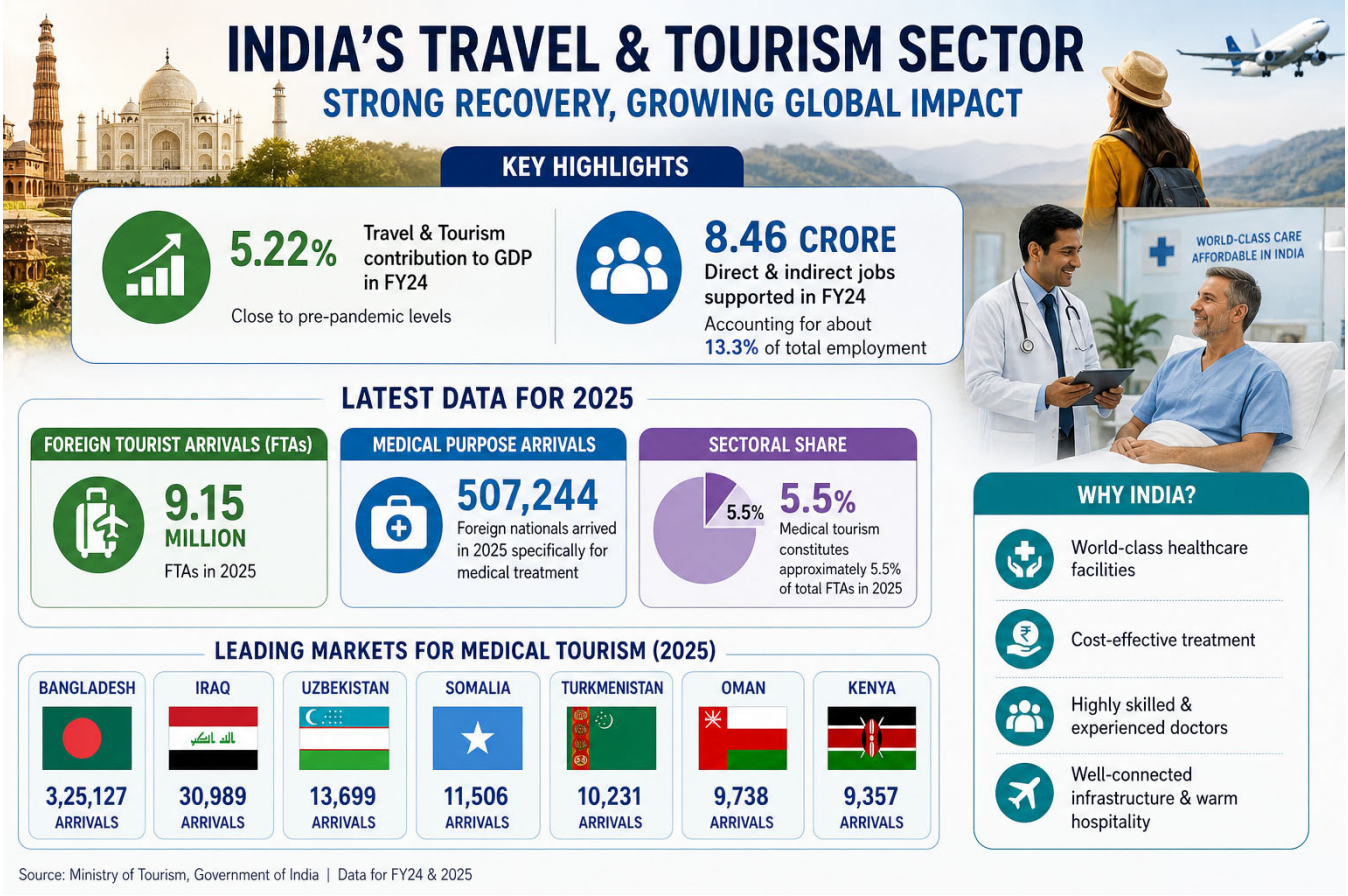

Quick Bites:

- Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) received the prestigious Subhash Chandra Bose 'Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar' 2025 for its outstanding contributions to disaster management and ocean hazard early warning services.
- In India's first international shipyard acquisition, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) last month acquired a 51% stake in Sri Lanka's Colombo Dockyard PLC (CDPLC) for ₹250 crore, boosting India's maritime presence in the Indian Ocean Region. The move is seen as both strategically and commercially significant for both countries.

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- The government has appointed Rohit Jain as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a three-year term. Mr. Jain is replacing T. Rabi Sankar, whose extended tenure ended.
- Renowned Lyricist and Communication Expert Shri Prasoon Joshi Appointed Chairman, Prasar Bharati.
- Karnataka operationalised a grievance redressal mechanism for gig workers and Telangana becomes fifth state to adopt gig workers legislation, following Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand.
- India was retained on Special 301 Report Priority Watch List indicating concerns over intellectual property rights (IPR) protection and enforcement. Special 301 Report released by Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), under Trade Act 1974. The report identifies countries that are considered by the US as not providing adequate and effective protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) or fair and equitable market access to IP rights holders from the US.

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04-05-2026

1. Lipulekh issue:

Context: Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's upcoming visit to Nepal came under a shadow on Sunday with Nepal expressing "concerns" to both India and China over the next season of Kailash Manasarovar Yatra through the Kalapani-Limpiyadhura-Lipulekh region. It reiterated that the region is part of Nepal's sovereign territory.

About Lipulekh region and the dispute:



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- It is located close to the tri-junction of India, China (Tibet) and Nepal and is situated in Uttarakhand (Pithorgarh district).
- It is a major pass of Kumaun region situated in Kali Valley
- The Kalapani region is a disputed territory claimed by both India and Nepal.
- Kalapani derives its name from the Kali (Mahakali) River.
- The Kali River acts as a natural boundary between India and Nepal.
- In Nepal, the Kali River is called the Mahakali River and holds great cultural significance.
- The main dispute revolves around the exact source of the Kali River.
- India claims the river originates in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.
- Nepal claims the river originates from Limpiyadhura or Lipulekh in its Sudurpaschim Province.
- The dispute traces back to the Treaty of Sagauli (1816) between Nepal and the British East India Company.
- The treaty identified the Kali River as Nepal's western boundary with India.
- The Treaty of Sagauli did not clearly define the river's exact source or ridgeline.
- British survey maps later showed different origins of the Kali River, creating ambiguity.
- These cartographic inconsistencies led to the present India–Nepal boundary dispute.
- Nepal officially raised the Kalapani issue with India for the first time in 1998.

2. Abrolhos reefs:

Context: The Abrolhos reefs are the most biodiverse coral ecosystem in the South Atlantic. Their biodiversity has dropped by around 15% over 18 years due to marine heatwaves, a new study has found.

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About Abrolhos reefs:

- The Abrolhos Archipelago are a group of 5 small islands with coral reefs off the southern coast of Bahia state in the northeast of Brazil in the Atlantic Ocean.
- Renowned for unique, mushroom-shaped pinnacles called chapeirões, this area faces significant threats from climate-driven warming, ocean acidification, and sedimentation.
- The region features extensive coral reefs, algal beds, and volcanic islands, providing crucial habitat for numerous endemic species.
- The reefs are characterized by a high proportion of endemic species, including Mussismilia braziliensis.
- The Abrolhos Marine National Park, created in 1983, aims to protect this environment.

3. Mission Drishti:

Context: Mission Drishti, the world's first OptoSAR satellite developed by the Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye has been successfully launched on Sunday aboard a Falcon 9 by SpaceX from Vandenberg, California.

About Mission Drishti:

- Drishti is India's largest privately developed earth observation satellite weighing 190 kg.
- Drishti is the world's first operational satellite integrating both Electro-Optical (EO) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors.
- The satellite provides all-weather, day-and-night imaging capabilities.
- Drishti can capture optical and radar images of the same location simultaneously.
- The technology used is called Opto-SAR technology.
- Optical images provide clear and intuitive visuals similar to normal photography.

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- SAR imaging can penetrate clouds and function effectively during night and adverse weather.
- Combining EO and SAR overcomes limitations of standalone imaging systems.
- The satellite enables more reliable and continuous data acquisition.
- GalaxEye developed Drishti.
- GalaxEye was founded by alumni of Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- Drishti was launched aboard Falcon 9 from Vandenberg Space Force Base.
- The satellite was launched as part of the CAS500-2 mission with 45 payloads.

4. CINBAX-II 2026:

Context: The Indian Army contingent departed for the second edition of India - Cambodia Bilateral Military Exercise CINBAX-II 2026.

About CINBAX-II 2026:

- Exercise CINBAX-II will be held from 4–17 May 2026 at Camp Basil in Cambodia.
- The bilateral exercise is conducted under Chapter VII of the United Nations mandate for operations in sub-conventional environments.
- The Indian contingent includes 120 personnel mainly from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment, while Cambodia has 160 personnel from the Royal Cambodian Army.
- The exercise focuses on Counter-Terrorism operations related to UN peacekeeping missions through tactical drills and validation exercises.
- Special training in drone operations, mortar handling, and sniper tactics aims to improve interoperability, coordination, and operational synergy between both armies.

5. NITI Aayog:

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the appointment of academicians Joram Aniya and R. Balasubramaniam as full-time members of NITI Aayog. Joram Aniya became the

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first person from Arunachal Pradesh and the first person from the Northeast to hold this position in India's policy think tank.

About NITI Aayog:

- NITI Aayog stands for National Institution for Transforming India.
- NITI Aayog was established on 1 January 2015.
- It replaced the erstwhile Planning Commission.
- NITI Aayog serves as the policy think tank of the Government of India.
- It focuses on inclusive development, cooperative federalism, and sustainable growth.
- The Prime Minister of India acts as the Chairperson of NITI Aayog.
- It includes representatives from States, Union Territories, and domain experts.
- NITI Aayog formulates long-term strategic and sectoral policies.
- It promotes cooperative federalism through Centre–State collaboration.
- It monitors and evaluates government schemes and programmes.
- NITI Aayog provides policy innovation, research, and thought leadership.
- It aims to address national challenges through evidence-based policymaking.

About NITI Aayog structure:

- NITI Aayog's Governing Council includes the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of States, and Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories.
- The Prime Minister of India is the Chairperson of NITI Aayog.
- The Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog is appointed by the Prime Minister.
- Up to four Union Ministers are nominated by the Prime Minister as Ex-Officio Members.
- The Governing Council is popularly known as "Team India."

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- Team India includes the PM, Vice Chairperson, Ex-Officio Members, Full-Time Members, Chief Ministers, and Lt Governors.
- Special invitees include administrators of certain Union Territories such as Chandigarh and Lakshadweep.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog is appointed by the Prime Minister.
- The CEO manages day-to-day operations and holds the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.
- Full-Time Members are experts from fields such as economics, science, and public policy.
- Special Invitees include specialists, practitioners, and domain experts from various sectors.
- Regional Councils are created to address specific regional development issues.
- Regional Councils consist of Chief Ministers and Lieutenant Governors.
- Regional Councils are chaired by the Prime Minister or a nominated representative.
- NITI Aayog has specialised support units such as the Circular Economy Cell and North East Forum.
- These supporting cells help promote inclusive growth and effective governance across India.

6. 2026 World Press Freedom Index:

Context: India ranked 157th out of 180 countries in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index released on 30 April 2026 by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). The ranking placed India in the "very serious" category for press freedom, and India fell six places from its 2025 rank of 151.

More details of the report:

- The World Press Freedom Index is released annually by Reporters Without Borders.
- The index evaluates press freedom conditions in 180 countries and territories.

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- It assesses factors such as pluralism, media independence, transparency, legal framework, and journalist safety.
- India ranked 159th out of 180 countries in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index.
- India's rank improved to 157 in the 2026 edition.
- India's 2026 rank was lower than its 2025 position of 151.
- RSF cited violence against journalists as a major concern in India.
- The report highlighted concentrated media ownership and political alignment of media outlets.
- Judicial harassment of independent media was also mentioned in the assessment.
- The use of defamation and national security laws against journalists was highlighted as a challenge to press freedom.
- Norway holds first place for the tenth consecutive year. Eritrea comes last for the third year in a row.

Quick Bites:

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Sunday created another Guinness World Record with the formation of the tallest human stack underwater at Swaraj Dweep, formerly known as Havelock Island, officials said. Fourteen people, including Lt. Gov. D.K. Joshi, took part in forming the 22.3-metre-long stack, and they stayed under water for three minutes. The feat comes a day after the Union Territory administration unfurled the world's largest underwater national flag, measuring approximately 60 by 40 metres, near the same island.
- On the occasion of International Sun Day, 3rd May 2026, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) organised the 'Run for Sun' Marathon — a tribute to the Saur Shakti that has brought light into millions of homes and lives, and will continue to do so for generations to come.

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- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will inaugurate a North Tech Symposium, on the theme 'Raksha Triveni Sangam - Where Technology, Industry & Soldiering Converge', in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh on May 04, 2026. The three-day event is being jointly organised by the Northern
- Command & Central Command of the Indian Army and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM). This symposium will serve as a vibrant platform to showcase and integrate state-of-the-art indigenous technologies to overcome operational challenges.
- In a remarkable feat of endurance and determination, young swimmer Ishank Singh has become the youngest individual to successfully swim across the Palk Strait.
- Indian Railways rolled out the 100th Vande Bharat trainset on 2 May 2026 from the Modern Coach Factory at Raebareli. The trainset is a 16-coach chair-car rake fitted with a Siemens propulsion system and will undergo oscillation trials before induction into regular passenger service.
- Mayon Volcano is an active stratovolcano located in Albay province on Luzon Island, about 330 km southeast of Manila. It is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, a region known for frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. On 3 May 2026, renewed volcanic activity prompted authorities in Philippines to evacuate thousands of residents and maintain Alert Level 3 under the country's volcano warning system.

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- South Korea launched its domestically developed Earth-observation satellite Compact Advanced Satellite 500-2 (CAS500-2) into orbit on 3 May 2026.
- The United States launched Project Freedom on 4 May 2026 to escort commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz and restore freedom of navigation.

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05-05-2026

1. Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK):

Context: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare releases the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) 2.0 Guidelines.

About Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK):

- Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) was launched under the National Health Mission to provide child health screening and early intervention services.
- It covers children from birth to 18 years for the 4Ds—Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies, and Developmental delays.
- The updated guidelines expand the 4Ds framework to include non-communicable diseases, mental health issues, and behavioural conditions.
- It adopts a lifecycle-based approach ensuring continuous screening and care across all stages of child development.
- The programme strengthens referral linkages and ensures continuity of care through integrated health systems.
- It promotes the use of digital health cards for better tracking and monitoring of child health.
- It emphasizes multi-sectoral convergence for comprehensive child healthcare delivery.

2. Pan Asia Power Grid Initiative:

Context: ADB launches $70 billion plan for energy, digital infrastructure in Asia-Pacific. It includes the Pan Asia Power Grid Initiative and the Asia-Pacific Digital Highway, connecting economies through energy and technology.

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About Pan Asia Power Grid Initiative:

- The Pan-Asia Power Grid Initiative was launched by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on May 3, 2026, during its Annual Meeting in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
- It aims to interconnect national power systems across Asia-Pacific to enable cross-border renewable energy trade.
- The initiative targets an investment of $50 billion by 2035, as part of a broader $70 billion infrastructure push.
- Its key objective is to accelerate the renewable energy transition, enhance energy security, and reduce carbon emissions.
- The implementation timeline for the initiative is set up to 2035.

About Asian Development Bank(ADB):

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a multilateral development bank promoting sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth in the Asia-Pacific region.
- It has expanded from 31 members in 1966 to 69 members, including 50 from Asia-Pacific and 19 from outside the region.
- Major shareholders include Japan and the United States (15.6% each), followed by China, India, and Australia (as of Dec 2024).
- Its headquarters is located in Manila, Philippines.

3. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system:

Context: AIIMS Delhi has introduced India's first portable bedside Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system.

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About Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system:

- MRI is a medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of the organs and tissues in your body.
- MRI is a non-invasive way for a medical professional to examine your organs, tissues and skeletal system.
- It produces high-resolution images of the inside of the body that help diagnose a variety of conditions.

4. Samarth Panchayat portal:

Context: Samarth Portal to Expand Panchayat Fiscal Management.

About Samarth Panchayat portal:

- The Samarth Panchayat Portal is a digital platform developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to manage Own Source Revenue (OSR) in Gram Panchayats.
- Own Source Revenue (OSR) refers to tax and non-tax revenues collected directly by Panchayats, including property taxes, user charges, and local levies.
- The portal enables online demand generation, digital payment collection, and real-time monitoring of Panchayat revenue.
- It supports asset management by maintaining records of Panchayat-owned properties and creating a centralised revenue database.
- The platform facilitates taxpayer registration, property mapping, and issuance of demand notices.
- As of 3 May 2026, it covered 15,110 Gram Panchayats, 48.26 lakh taxpayers, and 9.38 lakh registered properties.

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5. Growth Hubs Index:

Context: Bengaluru has been ranked the world's fastest-growing major city through 2035 in Savills' Growth Hubs Index, which is part of the firm's Resilient Cities research programme.

More details:

- The Savills Growth Hubs Index ranks 245 global cities based on projected GDP growth, wealth expansion, demographics, migration, and high-income households.
- It is published by Savills, a global real estate advisory firm analysing urban growth and investment trends.
- Bengaluru secured the top position due to its strong talent pool and role as a hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs).
- GCCs are offshore units of multinational companies handling technology, finance, analytics, and operations.
- India had multiple cities in the top 20, placing it among leading country groups alongside Vietnam, China, Philippines, and Malaysia.

6. James Webb Space Telescope (JWST):

Context: The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), launched by NASA in December 2021, has detected a class of high-redshift objects called Little Red Dots (LRDs). These objects are compact, very red, and point-like in appearance, and they are observed in the early universe at large cosmological distances. LRDs are characterised by a dominant red rest-frame optical continuum and a compact morphology. Astronomers have linked them to galaxies seen at high redshift, which means they are observed as they existed when the universe was much younger.

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About James Webb Space Telescope (JWST):

- The telescope is the result of an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Canadian Space Agency.
- It was launched in December 2021.
- It's the largest, most powerful infrared space telescope ever built.
- It's the successor to the Hubble Telescope.
- It can see backwards in time to just after the Big Bang by looking for galaxies that are so far away.
- It will examine every phase of cosmic history: from the Big Bang to the formation of galaxies, stars, and planets to the evolution of our own Solar System.
- It is placed around 1,500,000 km from Earth and directly opposite the Sun.
- The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is considered the successor and functional replacement for the Hubble Space Telescope (HST).

7. Syndromic surveillance:

Context: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has developed a priority pathogen list for syndromic surveillance in India.

About Syndromic surveillance:

- Syndromic surveillance is a method that tracks patterns of symptoms (like fever, respiratory illness, diarrhoea, and encephalitis) before lab confirmation.
- It is used to detect unusual clusters of illness early, especially in epidemic-prone settings.
- The approach enables timely public health response and outbreak prevention.

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8. Pathfinder:

Context: Pixxel and Sarvam announced Pathfinder on 3 May 2026 as India's first AI-powered orbital data centre satellite. Pathfinder is a 200 kg-class demonstration satellite planned for launch in the fourth quarter of 2026.

About Pathfinder:

- Pathfinder is an orbital data centre satellite that processes data in space instead of sending all raw data to Earth.
- It enables in-orbit data analysis, reducing the time between data capture and insight generation.
- Pixxel will design, build, launch, and operate the satellite.
- Sarvam will provide the AI backbone, including onboard models for training and inference.
- The satellite will carry data centre-class GPUs for high-performance computing and real-time processing.
- It will also include Pixxel's hyperspectral imaging camera for capturing and analysing spectral data.
- Pathfinder will be developed at Pixxel's Gigapixxel facility in India, which targets production of up to 100 satellites.

Quick Bites:

- NASA Finds 2.5-Billion-Year-Old Structure in Great Dyke. The Great Dyke of Zimbabwe is a 550-kilometre-long igneous formation that dates to about 2.5 billion years ago. NASA scientists have identified a hidden internal geological structure within it using satellite imaging and geophysics mapping. The feature is not visible on the surface and appears as a slight difference in the dyke's inner composition.
- Hazaribag in Jharkhand has been notified as India's first pearl farming cluster under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

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- Canada became the first non-European country to participate in a European Political Community (EPC) summit when Prime Minister Mark Carney attended the 8th EPC meeting in Yerevan, Armenia, on 4 May 2026. The European Political Community is a political forum launched in 2022. It includes EU member states and non-EU European countries such as the United Kingdom, Turkey, Norway and Switzerland. The forum does not function as a membership body for the European Union.
- The Paranal solar ESPRESSO Telescope (PoET) achieved first light at the European Southern Observatory's Paranal Observatory in Chile's Atacama Desert. The system completed test observations and acquired spectra of the full solar disc and selected solar regions. PoET is designed to study how variations in starlight, including sunlight, can mask the presence of orbiting exoplanets. The observations support research on the detection and characterisation of worlds beyond the Solar System.

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06-05-2026

1. Strength of the Supreme Court:

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today has approved the proposal for introducing The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 in Parliament to amend The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 for increasing the number of Judges of the Supreme Court of India by 4 from the present 33 to 37 (excluding the Chief Justice of India).

More details on strength of Supreme Court:

- Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 provides for increasing the number of Judges of the Supreme Court by 04 i.e. from 33 to 37 (excluding the Chief Justice of India).
- The expenditure on salary of Judges and supporting staff and other facilities will be met from the Consolidated Fund of India.
- Article 124 (1): Supreme Court to have CJI + up to 7 judges (initial provision).
- The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956: Strength fixed at 10 judges (excluding CJI).
- 1960 Amendment: Increased to 13 judges (excluding CJI).
- 1977 Amendment: Increased to 17 judges (excluding CJI).
- 1977–1979 (Cabinet decision): Working strength restricted to 15 judges (excluding CJI), later withdrawn.
- 1986 Amendment: Increased to 25 judges (excluding CJI).
- 2008 Amendment: Increased to 30 judges (excluding CJI).
- The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2019: Increased to 33 judges (excluding CJI) (present strength basis).

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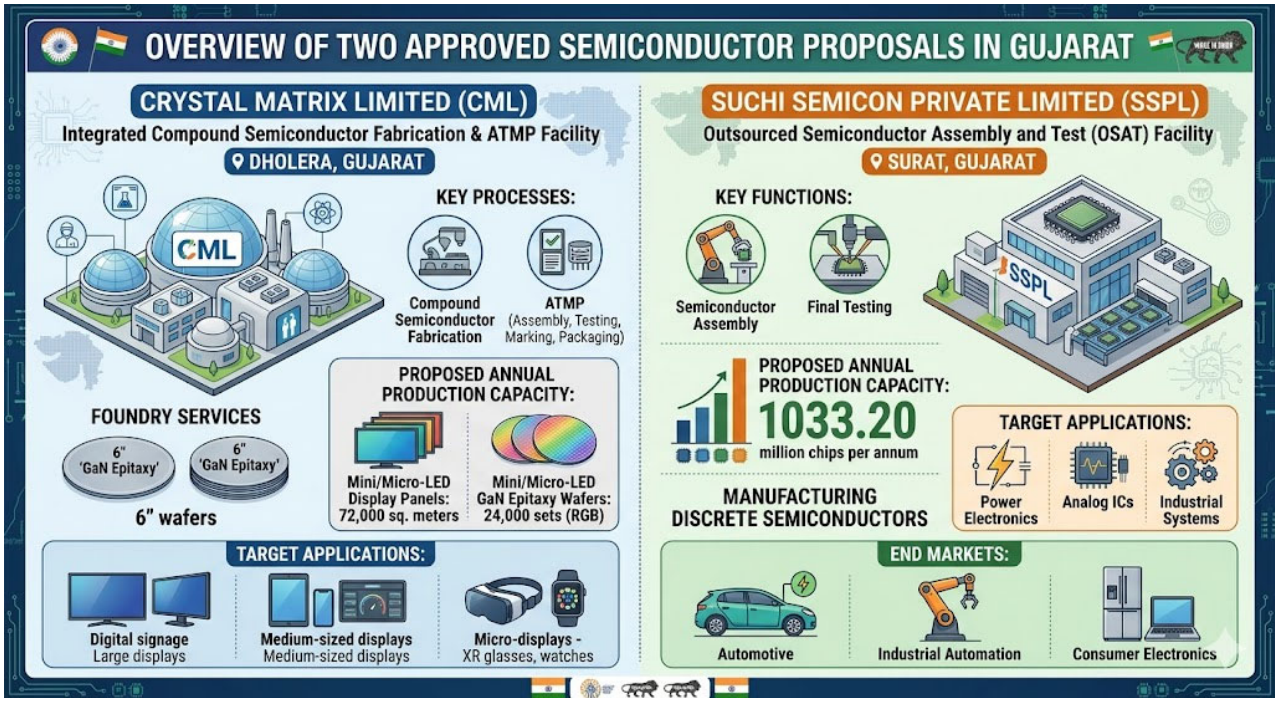
2. India Semi-conductor Mission (ISM):

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved two more semiconductor projects under India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) which includes country's first commercial Mini/Micro-LED display facility based on GaN (Gallium Nitride) Technology and a semiconductor packaging facility.

More details:

- With these two approvals, semiconductor ecosystem in the country would get a significant boost as the total number of approved projects under India Semi-conductor Mission (ISM) reaches 12, with cumulative investments of around Rs.1.64 lakh crore.
- The two approved proposals will set up semiconductor manufacturing facilities in Gujarat with a cumulative investment of around Rs.3,936 crore and are expected to generate cumulative employment for 2,230 skilled professionals.



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About India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):

- **Launch:** Approved in 2021 to strengthen India's position in the global electronics value chain.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Operates under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- **Objective:** Promote chip design startups, indigenous IP, R&D, and reduce semiconductor import dependence.
- **Focus Areas:** Establish chip fabs, packaging/testing units (ATMP/OSAT), support startups, and train skilled talent.
- **Investment Goal:** Attract global semiconductor manufacturers and investors to India.
- **Semiconductor Fabs Scheme:** Offers up to 50% fiscal support for semiconductor wafer fabrication units.
- **Display Fabs Scheme:** Provides up to 50% assistance for AMOLED and LCD display fabrication.
- **Compound Semiconductors & ATMP/OSAT Scheme:** Grants up to 50% support for compound semiconductors, MEMS, sensors, and packaging units.
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme:** Supports chip design startups/MSMEs with funding up to ₹15 crore per company.

3. Mission for Cotton Productivity:

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved Rs.5659.22 crore for Mission for Cotton Productivity (2026–27 to 2030–31) to address bottlenecks, declining growth, and quality concerns in India's cotton sector.

About Mission for Cotton Productivity:

- Mission aligned with 5F vision (Farm → Fibre → Factory → Fashion → Foreign).
- Focus on increasing cotton productivity through high-yielding, pest- and disease-resistant seeds.

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- Emphasis on scaling modern crop technologies via states, KVKs, and SAUs.
- Ensures low-contaminant, high-quality cotton supply to industry.
- Aims to boost high-quality cotton exports.
- Implemented by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Ministry of Textiles.
- Involves Indian Council of Agricultural Research (10 institutes), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (1 institute), and AICRP cotton centres.
- Covers 140 districts in 14 states and ~2000 ginning/processing units initially.
- Focus on climate-resilient seeds, modern farming, and farmer training.
- Promotes quality improvement, traceability, and infrastructure development.
- Encourages sustainable fibres and innovation across the cotton value chain.
- **Target:** 498 lakh bales production (170 kg lint each) by 2031.
- Lint productivity to rise from 440 kg/ha to 755 kg/ha.
- Around 32 lakh farmers to benefit, enhancing self-reliance.
- Promotes Kasturi Cotton Bharat for traceability and certification.
- Aims for <2% trash content in cotton.
- Promotes alternative natural fibres like flax, ramie, sisal, milkweed, bamboo, banana.

4. Vadinar Ship Repair Facility:

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today has approved the development of a state-of-the-art Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar, Gujarat, marking a major expansion of the national ship repair ecosystem.

More about Vadinar Ship Repair Facility:

- Project jointly implemented by Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) and Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) with ₹1,570 crore investment.

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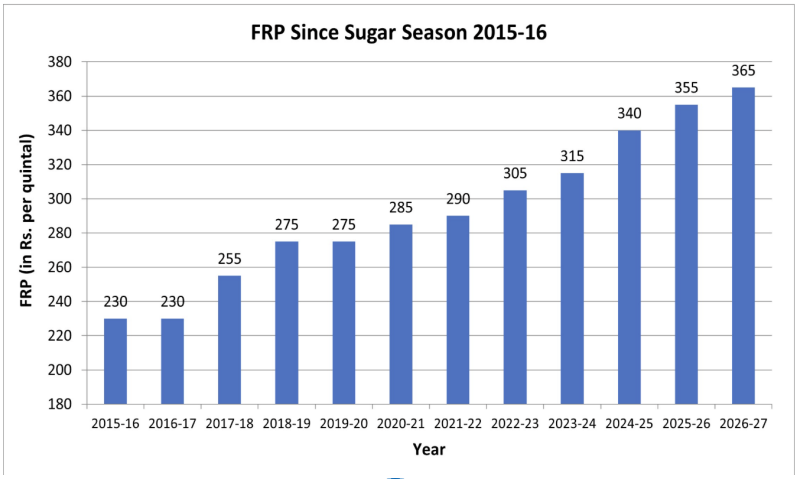
- Planned as a brownfield ship repair facility at Vadinar.
- **Key infrastructure:** 650 m jetty, 2 floating dry docks, workshops, marine support systems.
- **Location advantage:** natural deep draft + proximity to major ports like Mundra Port and Kandla Port.
- Strategically positioned near major global shipping routes.
- Focus on servicing large commercial and foreign-flagged vessels.
- Generates employment and skill development opportunities.
- Boosts MSMEs and maritime ancillary industries in the region.
- Addresses India's capacity gap in repairing vessels >230 m length.
- Enables repair of large vessels up to 300 m within India.
- Reduces dependence on foreign shipyards.

5. Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP):

Context: Cabinet approves Fair and Remunerative Price of Rs.365/qtl for Sugarcane Farmers for season 2026-27.

About Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP):



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- FRP (Fair and Remunerative Price) is the minimum price mills must legally pay farmers for sugarcane.
- Sugar mills can pay FRP in instalments if agreed with farmers.
- Delay in payment attracts up to 15% annual interest.
- Unpaid FRP can be recovered as arrears via property attachment by authorities.
- Governed by Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 under Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- Payment must be made within 14 days of cane delivery.
- FRP is recommended by Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.
- FRP is approved and announced by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.
- CACP is an advisory body under the Ministry of Agriculture; its recommendations are not binding.
- CCEA is chaired by the Prime Minister of India.
- FRP determination is based on the Rangarajan Committee report on sugar sector reforms.

6. India's Steel Sector:

Context: India's steel sector, the backbone of India's growth story, continues to strengthen its march towards domestic reliance. India became the world's second largest steel producer in 2018 and has retained this position since then. Share of global crude steel production rose from 5.2% in 2014 to 7.9% in 2024. This reinforces India's position as a competitive and expanding global player.

More details:

- The country is also the 2nd largest consumer of finished steel as per the World Steel Association. India's finished steel consumption has witnessed a significant rise.
- It increased from 77 million tonnes (MT) in 2014–15 to 163.7 MT in 2025–26.

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ROBUST STEEL SECTOR PERFORMANCE



As world's most widely used engineering and construction material, steel has been recognised as one of India's **'Sunrise Sectors'**. It plays a pivotal role in driving domestic consumption and industrial growth.

Steel production in India continues to show strong and sustained momentum. In March 2026, steel output rose by 2.2% over March 2025. Meanwhile, the cumulative index for FY 2025-26 registered a robust 9.1% growth compared to the same period last year. This reflects enhanced production and demand base.

Steel is an alloy primarily composed of iron, carbon (< 2%) and manganese (1%), along with small quantities of silicon, phosphorus, sulphur and oxygen.

THERE ARE DIFFERENT FORMS OF STEEL AND IRON WHICH ARE VITAL FOR THE STEEL SECTOR. SOME OF THEM ARE:



CRUDE STEEL
First solid steel product formed upon solidification of liquid steel.



FINISHED STEEL
Product obtained upon hot rolling/ forging of semi-finished steel.



HOT METAL
Liquid iron produced in blast furnaces.



PIG IRON AND SPONGE IRON
Key forms of iron that constitute important categories within the steel industry.

CRUDE STEEL



Crude Steel is a raw material for other steel products. It registered production growth from 43.44 MT in 2004-05 to 88.98 MT in 2014-15 and 168.4 MT in 2025-26. This highlights India's resilience and steady expansion in the global steel landscape. The production of crude steel recorded a CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate) of ~9% between 2021-22 and 2025-26. It also witnessed a 10.7% rise in production during FY 2025-26 from the corresponding period of last year.

CRUDE STEEL (IN MT)

	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Production	127.2	144.3	152.2	168.4

HOT METAL, PIG IRON, AND SPONGE IRON

Hot Metal is the liquid iron produced in blast furnaces. It recorded a 7.3% increase in production during April to September, 2025-26 compared to the same period last year. Another direct output of the blast furnace is pig iron. It saw production rise by **6.6%** in April to September 2025–26 vs April to September last year. For the similar period, **Sponge Iron**, or direct-reduced iron, likewise posted strong performance with a **9.1%** increase in output. This reflects broad based expansion across the industry's core segments.

PRODUCTION OF STEEL CATEGORIES

Categories	April-September 2024-25 (MT)	April-September 2025-26 (MT)	Growth (%)
Hot Metal	43.99	47.21	7.3
Pig Iron	4.04	4.31	6.6
Sponge Iron	27.00	29.46	9.1

FINISHED STEEL



The production of finished steel, which serves as a foundational material for modern infrastructure and manufacturing, stood at **160.9 MT**, reflecting an increase of 9.7% during FY 2025-26 over the corresponding period of the previous year. With rising output, the consumption of finished steel also remained strong at **163.7 MT**, marking a 7.6% growth and underscoring sustained domestic demand.

FINISHED STEEL (IN MT)

	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Production	123.2	139.2	146.7	160.9
Consumption	119.9	136.3	152.1	163.7

MARCH 2026 (YOY)
EXPORTS ↑ 29.1%
IMPORTS ↘ 9.5%

TRADE STORY OF STEEL



India's steel trade performance reflects a strengthening and increasingly competitive domestic industry. Exports of steel rose by 29.1% in March 2026 (year-on-year), while imports declined sharply by 9.5%. This signal enhanced domestic capacity and reduced reliance on foreign supply. The positive shift underscores India's emergence as reliable global steel supplier. It also demonstrates the country's improved ability to meet rising domestic demand.



India has also established itself as a leading exporter of iron and steel alloys. Rising exports of steel and related products contribute to higher foreign exchange earnings. This, in turn, helps improve the trade balance. It supports the broader vision of a self-sustained and resilient industrial ecosystem under Atmanirbhar Bharat.



Top destination for India's finished steel exports in March 2026 were Vietnam, Belgium and Taiwan. Together, they comprise of more than 50% of India's total finished steel exports.



Besides, exports of finished steel increased by 35.80% in FY 2025–26 compared to the same period last year. Meanwhile, imports declined by 46.47% during the same period.

GOVERNMENT REFORMS SUPPORTING STEEL SECTOR

The Government has implemented several measures to strengthen raw material availability, ensure global market access, and reduce import dependence. These steps have lowered production costs, driven growth in the steel industry, and supported MSMEs and small steel producers.



Ensuring availability of key raw materials like coal, iron ore and limestone.



Imposing safeguard duties on steel imports to protect domestic industry.



Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with key countries to boost exports.



Reforms in the steel scrap policy to ensure availability of quality raw material.



Promoting technology upgradation and energy efficiency.



Supporting MSMEs and small steel producers through various schemes.

MT: Million Tonnes | Note: 2025-26 – Provisional

Source: Ministry of Steel, Government of India

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7. South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR):

Context: The Union Government will notify the South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR), with headquarters at Visakhapatnam, on 1 June 2026. The zone will become India's 18th railway zone and will cover railway administration in Andhra Pradesh through a new organisational structure.

About South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR):

- The SCoR zone will primarily cover Andhra Pradesh, along with parts of Telangana and Tamil Nadu.
- The South Coast Railway Zone will include the existing Guntakal, Guntur and Vijayawada divisions from South Central Railway.
- It will also include a newly created Visakhapatnam division, which was earlier part of the Waltair division under East Coast Railway.
- The Union Cabinet gave ex post facto approval for the creation of the zone on 7 February 2025.
- As per Item 8 of Schedule 13 (Infrastructure) of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, Indian Railways was required to examine the feasibility of a new railway zone.

8. Pulitzer Prize:

Context: Indian illustrator Anand RK, freelance investigative journalist Suparna Sharma, and Natalie Obiko Pearson of Bloomberg won the 2026 Pulitzer Prize in the Illustrated Reporting and Commentary category on 4 May 2026. The winning work, titled trAPPed, is a visual investigation into India's digital arrest scam.

About Pulitzer Prize:

- The Annual Pulitzer Prize is an esteemed set of awards presented annually by Columbia University in New York City.

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- Pulitzer Prizes were established by Joseph Pulitzer, a Hungarian-American journalist and newspaper publisher, who left money to Columbia University upon his death in 1911.
- It recognizes outstanding achievements in journalism, letters, and music.
- It was first awarded in 1917.

9. BrahMos missile:

Context: India may discuss the sale of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile to Vietnam.

About BrahMos missile:

- The BrahMos missile, an Indo-Russian joint venture, has a range of 290 km and is the fastest cruise missile in the world with a top speed of Mach 2.8.
- BrahMos is named for the rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva.
- It is a two-stage (solid propellant engine in the first stage and liquid ramjet in second) missile.
- It is a multiplatform missile i.e., it can be launched from land, air, and sea and multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions.
- It operates on the "Fire and Forgets" principle i.e it does not require further guidance after launch.

10. Teesta water sharing agreement:

Context: In the wake of the Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the West Bengal Assembly election, Bangladesh has issued an urgent call to consider the long-pending Teesta water sharing agreement under the "current circumstances." Outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has long been seen as a hurdle in efforts to resolve the dispute between India and Bangladesh.

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About Teesta river:

- The Teesta River originates from the Pahunri (or Teesta Kangse) glacier in the Eastern Himalayas in the state of Sikkim, India.
- It flows southward through the Indian states of Sikkim and West Bengal, eventually entering Bangladesh.
- In Bangladesh, it merges with the Brahmaputra River (known locally as the Jamuna River).
- Major tributaries: Rangpo River, the Rangit River, and the Great Rangit River.

Details of Teesta water sharing agreement:

- 1983 Teesta Agreement: Ad-hoc sharing formula—Bangladesh 36%, India 39%, 25% unresolved; never fully implemented.
- Ganges Water Treaty: Established a precedent for India–Bangladesh cooperation on transboundary river water sharing.
- 2011 Teesta Agreement Attempt: Proposed sharing—Bangladesh 37.5%, India 42.5%.
- Opposition to 2011 Deal: West Bengal government opposed it citing potential harm to state agriculture.

11. Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971:

Context: Cabinet gives nod to make insult to Vande Mataram an offence The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 will have to be amended to bring the move into effect and add clauses on punishment.

More details:

- The Union Cabinet on Tuesday gave the go-ahead to amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 to make any insult or obstruction to the singing of National Song Vande Mataram a punishable offence.

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- At present, insults to the National Anthem Jana Gana Mana, the National Flag and the Constitution is mentioned in the 1971 Act and is punishable by imprisonment of up to three years or a fine or both.
- Vande Mataram, the salutation of India imagined as a mother, was written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and published with his novel Anandamath in the early 1880s.
- In 1937, leaders of the Congress, which was leading the national movement, decided to use the first two stanzas at its gatherings, and the Constitution of the modern Republic of India accorded it the status of the National Song.

12. UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access InforMation) portal:

Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) told the Supreme Court on Tuesday that 30 banks have been integrated into its centralised web portal, UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access InforMation), to enable legal heirs to trace funds belonging to deceased account holders.

About UDGAM portal:

- **Reserve Bank of India 'UDGAM' Portal:** Centralised platform to help the public search unclaimed deposits across multiple banks
- **Developing Agencies:** Built collaboratively by Reserve Bank Information Technology Pvt Ltd, Indian Financial Technology & Allied Services, and participating banks
- **Objective:** Enables users to locate, claim, or reactivate their unclaimed bank deposits
- **User Registration:** Customers register using a mobile number on the portal
- **Search Facility:** Allows search using name along with identifiers like PAN, Voter ID, Driving Licence, or Passport
- **Claim Process:** Retrieval requires completion of KYC formalities at the respective bank branch
- **For Deceased Depositors:** Nominees must submit required documents to claim the deposit

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- **Unclaimed Deposits Definition:** Funds in savings/current accounts inactive for 10 years or FDs not claimed within 10 years from maturity

Quick Bites:

- India's defence production reached ₹1.54 lakh crore recording 174 % rise in one decade, while defence export growth rose to ₹23,622 crore recording 34 times rise in one decade.
- Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare today inaugurated the 2-day National Conference on Rare Diseases in New Delhi, being held on 5th and 6th May 2026, marking a significant step towards strengthening India's response to the challenges posed by rare diseases.
- NASA's NISAR satellite observations revealed rapid land subsidence in Mexico City due to excessive groundwater extraction. The NISAR is the first joint Earth observation satellite mission between ISRO and NASA launched in 2025 aboard GSLV-F16 into a sun-synchronous polar orbit with a mission life of 5 years. It is uniquely designed as the first satellite to operate both L-band and S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) from a single platform, enabling advanced Earth observation through fully polarimetric and interferometric data.
- Recently, four mountain bongos were relocated to Kenya from a zoo in the Czech Republic as part of conservation efforts to reintroduce them into their native forests. The Bongo Antelope is the world's largest forest antelope, recognized by its reddish-brown coat with distinctive white vertical stripes and long spiral horns. It has two subspecies—the Western bongo and the rarer Eastern (Mountain) bongo—both adapted to dense forest habitats and facing conservation challenges due to habitat loss and hunting.
- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has launched Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs) as a market instrument for gold trading in India. EGRs are electronic records that represent ownership of gold stored in a vault or approved depository system.
- Yash Khandagale totalled 309kg to finish overall second and take the men's 71kg category silver at the World junior weightlifting championships in Ismailia, Egypt.

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07-05-2026

1. International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA):

Context: India to host International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit, on 1st – 2nd June, 2026, in New Delhi. It is going to be the 1st International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit.

About International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA):

- The IBCA, an inter-governmental international organisation headquartered in India, has been established for the conservation of seven big cats - Lion, Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.
- India would host the first IBCA Summit on 1st June 2026 in New Delhi, with participation expected from Heads of State/Government of Member and Observer countries.
- The Summit, guided by the theme 'Save Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystem'
- IBCA launched in 2023 is a first-of-its-kind platform bringing together countries home to the seven big cats, reflecting India's belief that conservation challenges must be addressed collectively through cooperation, knowledge sharing and mutual support.
- Summit would be the adoption of the first-ever global declaration on big cat conservation, titled the 'Delhi Declaration', which will articulate shared priorities, strengthen transboundary cooperation and promote a landscape-based approach for conserving big cats and their habitats.

2. Caracal:

Context: Rare caracals (locally called padang) spotted in Thar Desert near India-Pakistan border.

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About Caracal:

- Wildlife Institute of India estimates only ~50 Caracal remain in India.
- Caracal is a secretive, nocturnal wild cat known for agility and catching birds mid-air.
- **Habitat:** Dry savannahs, scrublands, deserts, and rugged mountainous regions.
- **Distribution:** Africa, Middle East, Central Asia, and arid regions of India (Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh).
- **Major threats:** Habitat loss, fragmentation, and retaliatory killings.
- **Conservation status:** Least Concern (International Union for Conservation of Nature); Schedule I under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- **Conservation effort:** Included in Species Recovery Programme as a critically endangered species in India.

3. Methane Alert and Response System (MARS):

Context: MARS will now cover coal mines and waste facilities after analysis identified Kanjurmarg landfill, Mumbai among the world's top 3 methane emitting sites. Until now, MARS focused on oil and gas facilities in countries that are part of UNEP's Oil and Gas Methane Partnership 2.0.

About Methane Alert and Response System (MARS):

- The Methane Alert and Response System (MARS) is the first public global satellite-based system to detect and notify very large methane emissions (super-emitters).
- **Nodal agency:** United Nations Environment Programme under the International Methane Emissions Observatory.
- Launched at COP27 climate summit held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt (2022).
- Supports implementation of the Global Methane Pledge.
- Aims to help reduce global methane emissions by at least 30% from 2020 levels by 2030.

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4. Mission Mausam:

Context: Mission Mausam Urban Testbed has been launched in India to improve monsoon prediction through urban-scale weather observation and modelling. The initiative is linked with atmospheric science, numerical weather prediction, and city-level meteorological data collection.

More details:

- Mission Mausam is a weather and climate initiative associated with the Indian Meteorological Department and the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It focuses on improving forecasting of monsoon rainfall, extreme weather events, and local atmospheric conditions.
- An urban testbed is a controlled field setup used to study weather processes in a city environment.
- It generally includes automatic weather stations, rain gauges, radar inputs, and data from surface observations for high-resolution analysis.

5. When does a CM cease to hold office?:

Context: Mamata Banerjee refused to resign after the alleged defeat of the TMC in West Bengal elections, claiming the verdict resulted from conspiracy and unfair electoral practices.

More details:

- **Allegations by TMC:** Ms. Banerjee accused the BJP of misusing central forces, forcibly capturing booths, and influencing election outcomes.
- **Constitutional Provision:** Article 164(1) states that the Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor and holds office "during the pleasure of the Governor."
- **Concern in Constituent Assembly:** Members feared that the phrase "during the pleasure" could enable arbitrary exercise of gubernatorial powers.

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- **Mohammad Ismail Khan's Suggestion:** He proposed replacing "during the pleasure" with "so long as they enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly."
- **Ambedkar's Clarification:** B. R. Ambedkar clarified that the Council of Ministers survives only while enjoying majority confidence, even if not expressly stated.
- **Supreme Court Interpretation:** In A.G. Perarivalan v. State Through Superintendent of Police, the Supreme Court held that the Governor generally acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers.
- **Nature of Governor's Role:** The Governor is the formal constitutional head, while real executive power rests with the elected government.
- **Need for Floor Test:** If the Governor seeks replacement of a sitting CM during the Assembly's tenure, a floor test is mandatory to determine majority support.
- **Purpose of Floor Test:** The Chief Minister must prove majority support in the Legislative Assembly or resign.
- **Failure to Form Government:** If no stable government emerges, President's Rule under Article 356 may be imposed as a last resort.
- **Assembly Duration:** Article 172 provides that a State Legislative Assembly normally continues for five years unless dissolved earlier.
- **West Bengal Assembly Tenure:** The current West Bengal Assembly began on May 8, 2021 and ends on May 7, after which it stands automatically dissolved.
- **Effect on Chief Ministership:** With dissolution of the Assembly, the Chief Minister automatically ceases to hold office regardless of formal resignation.
- **Role of Governor After Dissolution:** The Governor initiates the process for constituting the new Legislative Assembly and government.
- **Election Petition Remedy:** Election petitions can be filed before the Calcutta High Court within 45 days of result declaration.

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- **Legal Basis for Challenge:** Section 100 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 allows elections to be declared void for corrupt practices or procedural violations.
- **Grounds for Writ Petition:** Challenges concerning integrity of the electoral process, including arbitrary voter deletions, may be raised through writ petitions.

Quick Bites:

- Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Shri. Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, virtually inaugurated the 100th N-Gen Post Office of India Post at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, on 6th May, 2026. The upgraded facility has been developed as a modern, youth-centric postal space designed to serve students, faculty members, and residents of the university campus
- Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) opened the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) field training and demonstration Centre at Burari plains in Delhi.
- The Government of India, through a notification issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting dated May 6, 2026, has appointed Shri Shashi Shekhar Vempati as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). He shall hold office for a period of three years from the date of joining.
- India and EU Launched €15.2 Million/~₹169 Crore Joint Initiative to Strengthen EV Battery Recycling under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)-Working Group-2.
- Activists called for inclusion of Ecocide as one of the international crimes under the Rome Statute that governs International Criminal Court. It refers to harms caused to environment by human actions, usually on a major industrial scale or affecting a huge area.
- International Organisation for Migration released the World Migration Report 2026. Top Corridors: Mexico-US (1st), Afghanistan-Iran (2nd), Syria-Turkiye (3rd), Russia-Ukraine (4th), India-UAE (5th) and India-US (6th).

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- The Union Government has extended the duty-free import of yellow peas and black gram until March 2027. Yellow peas are a pulse commodity used in food processing, while black gram, also called urad, is a major pulse crop in India.
- The Indian Institute of Technology Madras Global Research Foundation established its first United States centre in Menlo Park, California, on 6 May 2026.
- India and Algeria held their inaugural Joint Commission meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, marking a significant step forward in bilateral defence ties. According to the Defence Ministry, the discussions focused on enhancing cooperation in key areas such as training, joint military exercises, medical collaboration, and defence industry engagement.

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08-05-2026

1. JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care):

Context: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care) at the recently concluded National Summit on Innovation and Inclusivity – Best Practices Shaping India's Health Future.

About JANANI:

- JANANI is a service-oriented digital platform for monitoring and maintaining digital health records of women during reproductive age.
- It is an upgraded version of the existing Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) portal.
- The platform creates longitudinal digital health records by capturing service delivery events across the continuum of care.
- JANANI tracks maternal and child health services including antenatal care, delivery preparedness, delivery, postnatal care, newborn care, home-based newborn and young child care, and family planning.
- It aims to strengthen continuity of care through continuous monitoring and timely interventions.
- A major feature is QR-enabled digital Mother and Child Health (MCH) Cards for portability and easy access to health records.
- The platform includes automated alerts for high-risk pregnancies and real-time dashboards for supervisory monitoring.
- JANANI generates due-lists for timely tracking and targeted healthcare interventions.
- It is interoperable with national platforms such as U-WIN and POSHAN for seamless data exchange and integrated monitoring.

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- Beneficiaries can register using ABHA, Aadhaar (OTP/biometric), or mobile number.

2. Hantavirus Outbreak:

Context: A suspected outbreak of the rare Hantavirus has trapped approximately 150 people aboard the Dutch cruise ship MV Hondius off the coast of Cape Verde (an island nation in West Africa).

About Hantavirus Outbreak:

- Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome and Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome are severe diseases caused by hantaviruses, leading to respiratory distress, internal bleeding, and kidney failure.
- Hantaviruses are zoonotic viruses mainly transmitted by infected rodents such as deer mice, white-footed mice, and cotton rats.
- Humans usually become infected by inhaling airborne viral particles from rodent urine, droppings, or saliva during activities like sweeping contaminated areas.
- Initial symptoms are flu-like, including fever, fatigue, and muscle aches, with an incubation period of 1–8 weeks.
- Severe infection rapidly progresses to breathing difficulty, chest tightness, and can become fatal without timely treatment.
- Hantavirus infection is diagnosed mainly through PCR testing.
- Globally, hantavirus causes around 150,000–200,000 cases annually and is generally less contagious than COVID-19 or influenza.
- Human-to-human transmission is rare, though the Andes virus strain in Argentina and Chile has shown limited transmission cases.
- There is no specific cure or vaccine; treatment is supportive through oxygen therapy and ventilation, while prevention depends on rodent control and sanitation practices.

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3. Priority Sector Lending (PSL) framework:

Context: EAC-PM paper proposes overhaul of India's Priority Sector Lending (PSL) framework. The paper titled 'Economic Impact Analysis of Priority Sector Lending' was released by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

What is the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) framework?

- Priority Sector Lending is an RBI initiative mandating banks to allocate a fixed share of credit to priority sectors.
- Priority sectors are sectors considered important for national development but underserved by formal credit systems.
- These sectors often face limited credit access due to information asymmetry, banks' preference for larger firms, and social or caste-based biases.
- Domestic commercial banks and foreign banks with more than 20 branches must allocate 40% of lending to priority sectors.
- Small Finance Banks and Urban Cooperative Banks must allocate 60% of lending to priority sectors.
- Regional Rural Banks are required to allocate 75% of lending to priority sectors.
- Priority Sector Lending credit increased by about 85% from ₹23.01 lakh crore in 2019 to ₹42.73 lakh crore in 2024.
- As of 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mandates that domestic commercial banks allocate 40% of their Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to priority sectors, including Agriculture, MSMEs, Export Credit, Education, Housing, Social Infrastructure, Renewable Energy, and Weaker Sections. Key focus areas include small/marginal farmers, affordable housing, and renewable energy projects.

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Issues and suggestion by the paper:

- Private banks often fail to meet Priority Sector Lending (PSL) targets through direct lending and depend heavily on mechanisms like PSLCs and RIDF deposits.
- Nationalised Banks and Small Finance Banks are major sellers of Priority Sector Lending Certificates (PSLCs).
- Mandatory PSL lending can reduce Total Factor Productivity (TFP) and encourage inefficient capital allocation.
- PSL lending often finances lower-yield projects and involves high administrative costs and higher default risks.
- District-level studies using nighttime luminosity as an economic proxy show limited impact of PSL on overall economic growth.
- Priority Sector Advances are geographically concentrated, with less than 10% of districts accounting for over 45% of total PSL credit.
- State capitals, industrial hubs, and southern and western regions receive a disproportionately high share of PSL advances.
- Experts recommend treating PSL mainly as a social equity instrument rather than a primary growth driver.
- Policy suggestions include excluding legacy beneficiaries such as large corporate farmers and focusing on small farmers, micro-enterprises, and weaker sections.
- Recommendations also include reducing overall PSL targets to provide greater flexibility to banks.
- A holistic strategy combining targeted credit with investments in infrastructure, skills, and market linkages is considered more effective for lagging regions.

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4. Chilika lake:

Context: A new genomic study of Chilika Lake in Odisha has found that fluctuations in salinity and seasonal changes play a decisive role in shaping the composition and functional potential of 'cyanobacteria', highlighting the vulnerability of coastal ecosystems to environmental stress.

More details:

- Researchers from CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology studied cyanobacterial communities in Asia's largest brackish water lagoon using metagenomic sequencing.
- Cyanobacteria play an important role in photosynthesis, nitrogen fixation, and carbon sequestration, but uncontrolled growth can cause harmful algal blooms.
- The study reconstructed 83 cyanobacterial Metagenome-Assembled Genomes (MAGs) to analyse seasonal and environmental variations.
- Salinity was identified as the most important factor influencing cyanobacterial community structure, along with phosphate, silicate, oxygen demand, and water transparency.
- Researchers identified 22 core cyanobacterial taxa present across seasons, mainly from the Cyanobiaceae family including Cyanobium and Synechococcus.
- The study also found seasonal changes in genes linked to nutrient cycling and toxin production, highlighting ecological risks associated with algal blooms.

About Chilika lake:

- Chilika Lake is a brackish water lake and shallow lagoon with estuarine characteristics located across Puri, Khurda, and Ganjam districts of Odisha.
- Chilika Lake is the largest brackish water lake in Asia and the second-largest brackish water lagoon in the world after the New Caledonian barrier reef.
- It is situated at the mouth of the Daya River and connected to the Bay of Bengal through a 32-km-long channel.

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- The lake's waterspread area varies between about 900 sq. km. in summer and 1165 sq. km. during monsoon.
- Important islands in Chilika Lake include Nalabana Island, Kalijai Island, Honeymoon Island, Breakfast Island, Beacon Island, and Satpada Island.
- Nalabana Island was declared a Bird Sanctuary in 1987.
- Kalijai Island is famous for the Kalijai Temple.
- In 1981, Chilika Lake became the first Indian wetland designated under the Ramsar Convention.
- Chilika Lake is the largest wintering ground for migratory birds in the Indian subcontinent.
- Migratory birds arrive from regions such as the Caspian Sea, Lake Baikal, Aral Sea, Mongolia, Central Asia, Ladakh, and the Himalayas.
- Important bird species found here include Flamingos, Graylag Geese, Purple Moorhen, Jacana, Herons, and White-bellied Sea Eagles.
- Chilika hosts one of the world's largest breeding colonies of Flamingos.
- The region also supports wildlife such as Blackbuck, Golden Jackals, Spotted Deer, and Hyenas.
- Chilika Lake is especially known for its population of Irrawaddy dolphin.

5. National Crime Records Bureau report: (GS paper 3)

Context: Telangana recorded the highest number of cybercrime cases in the country in 2024, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report released on Wednesday.

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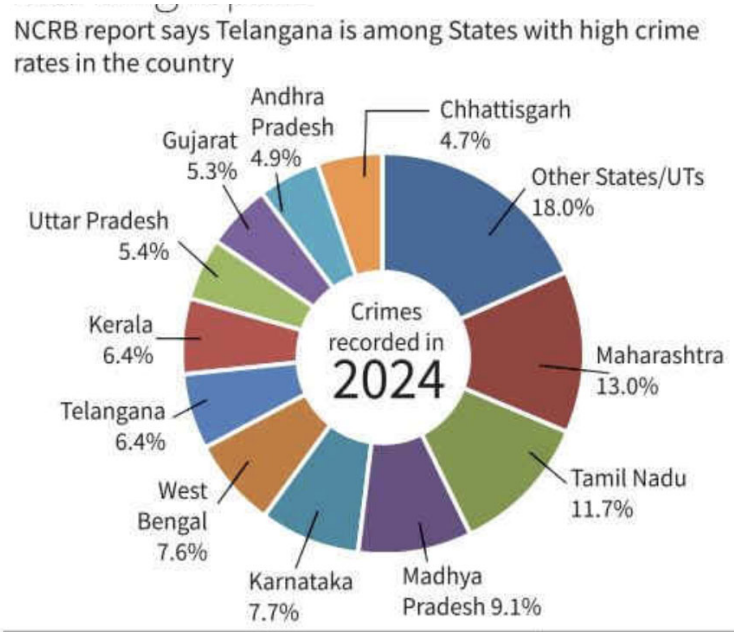
Major details of the report:



Quick Bites:

- IndiaAI, the Government of India's flagship initiative under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), implemented through the Digital India Corporation (DIC),
- today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India's apex body for biomedical and health research. The partnership marks a significant step towards advancing healthcare outcomes through the responsible and scalable application of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The Department of Financial Services (Banking and Insurance Division) has been receiving more than 2.50 lakh grievances in a financial year. It has been consistently figuring in the top 10 Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) rankings amongst various Ministries/Departments since November 2025. The GRAI framework, developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), evaluates ministries and

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departments on the effectiveness and timeliness of grievance resolution through the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS).

- NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Shri Suman Bery and CEO Smt. Nidhi Chhibber released a policy report titled 'School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement' on May 6, 2026. The report is a policy document that presents a comprehensive, decade-long analysis of India's School Education System across key parameters such as access and enrolment, infrastructure, equity and inclusion, and learning outcomes.
- Skyroot Aerospace became India's first space-tech unicorn on 7 May 2026 after raising about 60 million at a valuation of 1.1 billion. Vikram-1 is Skyroot Aerospace's orbital launch vehicle under development for satellite launches into Earth orbit.
- Delhi will host the 22nd Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship (CTTC 2026) from 27 July to 2 August 2026. The seven-day event will be held at Thyagraj Stadium in Delhi and is being organised jointly by the Delhi government and the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI).
- South Korea introduced its first humanoid robot monk, Gabi, at a Buddhist ceremony at Jogyesa Temple in Seoul on 6 May 2026.
- The Indian women's recurve team defeated South Korea 5-1 in the Archery World Cup Stage 2 at Shanghai, China, on 7 May 2026 and entered the final. The team included Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Kumkum Mohod.

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09-05-2026

1. Somnath Temple:

ontext: The Somnath Swabhiman Parv Yatra, organised under the campaign "Chalo Chalein Somnath," was flagged off from Delhi's Safdarjung Railway Station, on 30th April 2026. The special train, carrying over 1,300 devotees, travelled to Somnath, as part of a year-long celebration marking 1,000 years of the temple's faith and resilience. The yatra reached Somnath on 1st May, followed by a series of devotional and cultural programmes, including aarti, temple visits, and a light and sound show held over the following days.

About Somnath temple:

- Somnath, located at Prabhas Patan along the Saurashtra coast in Gujrat, is among India's most sacred pilgrimage centres. The temple enshrines one of the most sacred Jyotirlingas mentioned in the Shiva Purana. It is revered for the worship of Lord Shiva, Lord Krishna and Shakti.
- On 11 May 1951, the temple was ceremonially consecrated by President Dr. Rajendra Prasad. 75 years later, Somnath stands rejuvenated as a symbol of national pride and spiritual endurance.
- The Somnath Swabhiman Parv honours the enduring legacy of the Somnath temple. It marks one thousand years since the first recorded attack on the Somnath Temple in 1026.
- May 11,2026 also marks the 75th anniversary of the reopening of the Somnath Temple in 1951, when it was dedicated to the nation by India's first President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.
- The temple is crowned by a 150-foot Shikhar, topped with a 10-tonne Kalash. Its 27-foot Dhwajdand represents the temple's enduring spiritual presence.

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2. Model Code of Conduct (MCC):

Context: The Election Commission of India (ECI) issued an order on 7 May 2026 lifting the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for the 2026 Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala etc.

About Model Code of Conduct (MCC):

- MCC is a set of guidelines issued to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections.
- The MCC comes into force from the date the election schedule is announced until the date that results are out.
- The MCC contains eight provisions dealing with general conduct, meetings, processions, polling day, polling booths, observers, the party in power, and election manifestos.
- The code ensures that Government in power does not use its official position for campaigning.
- Hence, no policy, project or scheme can be announced that can influence the voting behaviour.
- Holding public meetings during the 48-hour period before the hour fixed for the closing of the poll is also prohibited. The 48-hour period is known as “election silence”.
- MCC traces its origins to the 1960 Assembly elections in Kerala, where a 'Code of Conduct' was prepared by the State Administration for political leaders.
- Subsequently, in the 1962 Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI) circulated the code to all recognized political parties and State governments, which was generally followed.
- The code was renamed the MCC and made more stringent, but despite demands that it be incorporated into the law, no such legislation was passed.
- After 1991, the ECI enforced the MCC using new means, and in cases of violation, the Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan exercised constitutional power under Article 324 to postpone elections.
- The MCC evolved as part of the ECI’s drive to ensure free and fair elections and was the result of a consensus among major political parties.
- It has no statutory backing.

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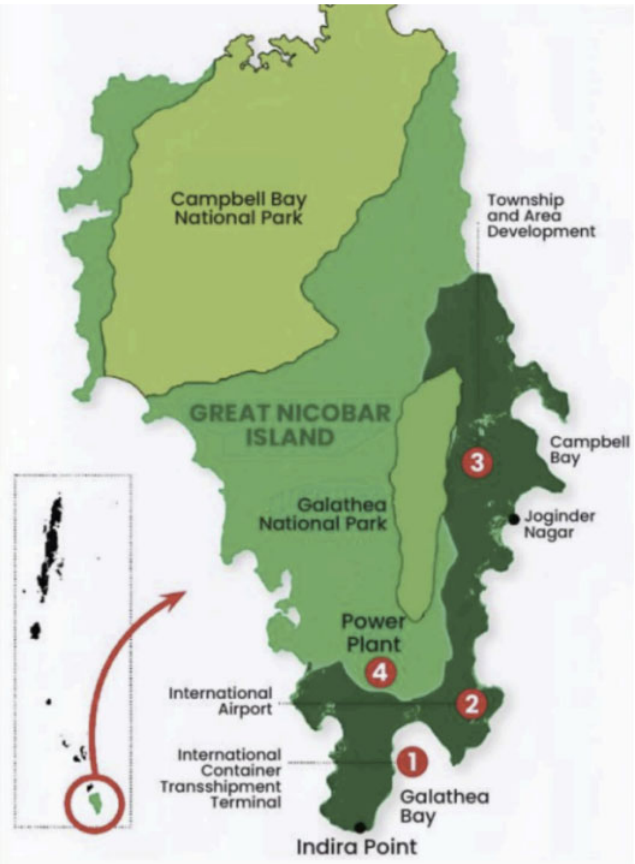
- Everything is voluntary. The EC uses moral sanction or censure for its enforcement.

3. Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve:

Context: Ms. Gupta, a retired IAS officer, filed a series of petitions on government notification reducing the buffer zones for both the Campbell Bay and Galathea Bay National Parks for Great Nicobar project.



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About Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve:

- The Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve encompasses a large part (some 85%) of the island of Great Nicobar, the largest of the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- In 2013 it was included in the list of Man and Biosphere program of UNESCO to promote sustainable development based on local community effort and sound science.
- It incorporates two National parks of India, which were gazetted in 1992: the larger Campbell Bay National Park on the northern part of the island, and Galathea National Park in the southern interior.
- The environment is classified by the World Wide Fund for Nature as a tropical and subtropical moist broadleaf forests biome, and located in the Indomalayan realm.
- The Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve also incorporates territories and traditional lands of the indigenous Nicobarese and Shompen people.

4. Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA):

Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Air Force have conducted the maiden flight-trial of the Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) weapon system off the coast of Odisha.

About Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA):

- TARA, the modular range extension kit, is India's first indigenous glide weapon system to convert unguided warheads into precision guided weapons.
- TARA has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad along with other DRDO laboratories to enhance the lethality and accuracy of a low-cost weapon to neutralise ground-based targets.
- It is the first glide weapon to utilise state-of-the-art low-cost systems.

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- The development of the kit has been undertaken with Development cum Production Partners (DcPP) & other Indian industries, which have already started the production activity.

Quick Bites:

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India (MoCA), jointly with the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), successfully organised the 2nd edition of the India Aircraft Leasing and Financing Summit 2.0 (IALFS 2.0) on Friday, 8th May 2026, at the GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- As Chair of BRICS in 2026, India is spearheading a renewed agenda for MSME cooperation under the BRICS Partnership on the New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR). During India's Chairship, the Ministry of MSME is mandated to convene three SME Working Group Meetings and the inaugural BRICS MSME Forum.
- Rajasthan's state-owned electricity producer sought diversion of 1,742.6 hectares of forest land and felling of around 4.48 lakh trees in Hasdeo-Arand Forest for mining activities, raising environmental concerns. It is a dense sal forest region spread across the Korba, Surguja, and Surajpur districts of Chhattisgarh. Known as the "lungs of central India," it forms the catchment area of the Hasdeo River and Bango Dam, acts as an important tiger dispersal corridor, and supports the livelihoods of tribal communities. The forest hosts rich biodiversity, including several Schedule-I species such as leopards, sloth bears, and elephants.
- Phalera cf. bucephala, commonly called the buff-tip moth, is a moth species in the order Lepidoptera. The species has been linked with agricultural concern in Ladakh, a high-altitude cold desert region in India where farming depends on short growing seasons and limited irrigation.

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- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has released a report titled Invisible Barriers: The Costs of Non-Tariff Measures. The report states that non-tariff measures now impose greater costs on global exports than tariffs for 88% of countries.
- The Karnataka State Policy and Planning Commission (KSPPC) has proposed establishment of Wisdom Valley, a world-class Knowledge City dedicated to promoting education, research, innovation and sustainable urban development at the Bengaluru Airport City, which is located near the Kempegowda International Airport.

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10-05-2026

1. Maharana Pratap:

Context: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tributes to the great warrior Maharana Pratap on his Jayanti on May 9th.

About Maharana Pratap:

- Maharana Pratap was born on 9 May 1540 at Kumbhalgarh Fort.
- He was the 13th ruler of Mewar and the eldest son of Udai Singh II.
- Udai Singh II founded the city of Udaipur and ruled Mewar from Chittor.
- Maharana Pratap is remembered for resisting Mughal expansion under Emperor Akbar.
- The Battle of Haldighati was fought on 18 June 1576 between Maharana Pratap and Mughal forces led by Man Singh I.
- Though the Mughals won the battle, they failed to capture Maharana Pratap.
- After 1579, Maharana Pratap regained Western Mewar including Kumbhalgarh, Udaipur and Gogunda.
- He later established his new capital at Chavand near present-day Dungarpur.
- Maharana Pratap died on 19 January 1597 and was succeeded by his son Amar Singh I.
- Amar Singh I later submitted to Mughal Emperor Jahangir in 1614.
- Chetak was the legendary horse associated with Maharana Pratap during the Battle of Haldighati.
- According to tradition, the wounded Chetak safely carried Maharana Pratap away from the battlefield before dying.
- The story of Chetak is prominently mentioned in Mewar court poems from the 17th century onward.

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- Pratap Gaurav Kendra is a tourist centre dedicated to Maharana Pratap and the heritage of Mewar using modern technology.

2. Scramjet:

Context: Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL) of DRDO has achieved a path-breaking milestone in the development of Hypersonic Missiles by successfully conducting an extensive long-duration test of its Actively Cooled Full Scale Scramjet Combustor. A run-time of over 1,200 seconds was achieved at the state-of-the-art Scramjet Connect Pipe Test (SCPT) Facility in Hyderabad on May 09, 2026, building upon the earlier successful test of over 700 seconds conducted in January this year.

Significance:

- The combustor was designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL).
- The successful test strengthens India's position in advanced aerospace and emerging war technologies.
- The technology is based on a cutting-edge supersonic air-breathing engine.
- The engine uses indigenously developed liquid hydrocarbon endothermic fuel.
- High-temperature thermal barrier coating was incorporated to withstand extreme operating conditions.
- Advanced manufacturing processes were used in the development of the combustor.
- Ground tests were conducted at the SCPT facility.
- The tests successfully validated the design of the advanced active-cooled scramjet combustor.
- The trials also demonstrated the capability of the state-of-the-art testing facility.

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What are scramjets?

- A scramjet is a type of air-breathing jet engine designed for hypersonic speeds.
- The term "scramjet" stands for "Supersonic Combustion Ramjet."
- Unlike conventional jet engines, a scramjet does not use a rotary compressor.
- It compresses incoming air using the engine's forward motion and shock waves.
- In a scramjet engine, combustion occurs at supersonic airflow speeds.
- A ramjet slows incoming air to subsonic speed before combustion, whereas a scramjet does not.
- Scramjets are capable of operating at speeds above Mach 6.
- The technology is important for hypersonic missiles and advanced aerospace systems.

3. Agni missiles:

Context: India conducted the successful flight-trial of an Advanced Agni missile with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle (MIRV) system from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha on May 08, 2026.

About Agni missiles:

- Agni-5 is an ingeniously built advanced surface-to-surface ballistic missile.
- It is a fire-and-forget missile, which cannot be stopped without an interceptor missile.
- Agni-1 to 5 missiles are designed & developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- **Agni I:** Range of 700-800 km.
- **Agni II:** Range more than 2000 km.
- **Agni III:** Range of more than 2,500 Km
- **Agni IV:** Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher.

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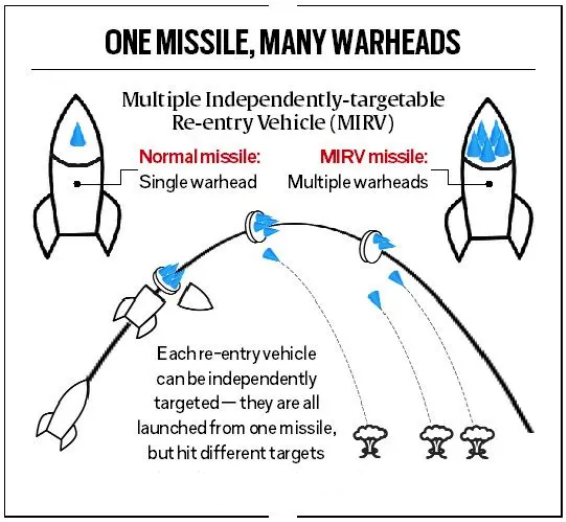
- **Agni-V:** The longest of the Agni series, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km.



About Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology:

- The MIRV can target multiple targets that can be hundreds of kilometers.
- Only five countries United States, Russia, China, France and the UK have MIRV-equipped missiles.
- These missiles can be launched from land or from sea from a submarine.
- In contrast to a traditional missile, which carries one warhead, MIRVs can carry multiple warheads.
- Warheads on MIRVed missiles can be released from the missile at different speeds and in different directions.

4. Chief of Defence Staff:

Context: Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani (Retd) appointed as Chief of Defence Staff.

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About Chief of Defence Staff:

- The post of Chief of Defence Staff was recommended by the Group of Ministers in 2001 after the Kargil Review Committee report, and later reaffirmed by the Shekatkar Committee in 2016.
- General Bipin Rawat became India's first CDS in 2019.
- The CDS is a four-star officer equivalent in rank to the three service chiefs and acts as "Primus Inter Pares" (first among equals).
- The CDS heads the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) under the Ministry of Defence and oversees the revenue budget of the three armed services.
- Administrative control over Cyber, Space, and Special Operations commands lies with the CDS, while the Defence Secretary manages the capital acquisition budget.
- The CDS is appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister; eligible officers include serving three-star and retired four-star officers, with a maximum age limit of 65 years.
- The CDS serves as the Principal Military Advisor to the Defence Minister, permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), and advisor to the Nuclear Command Authority.
- The CDS is a member of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) and Defence Planning Committee (DPC), answers Parliament on tri-service matters, but does not exercise direct operational field command.

5. Jan Suraksha Schemes:

Context: Three Jan Suraksha Schemes - Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) complete 11 years of providing social security cover.

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More details:

Aspect	Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)	Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)	Atal Pension Yojana (APY)
Type of Scheme	Life insurance scheme	Accidental insurance scheme	Pension/social security scheme
Launch Objective	Provide life insurance cover for death due to any reason	Provide accidental death and disability cover	Provide universal social security and pension to unorganised sector workers
Administered By	Life Insurance Corporation of India and other life insurers through banks/Post Offices	Public Sector General Insurance Companies and other insurers through banks/Post Offices	Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority under NPS architecture
Eligibility Age	18–50 years	18–70 years	18–40 years
Eligibility Condition	Individual bank/Post Office account holders with auto-debit consent	Individual bank/Post Office account holders with auto-debit consent	Bank account holders who are not income taxpayers
Nature of Cover	Death due to any cause	Accidental death and disability	Guaranteed monthly pension after 60 years
Policy Period	One-year renewable cover (1 June–31 May)	One-year renewable cover (1 June–31 May)	Long-term pension scheme till age 60
Premium	₹436 per annum	₹20 per annum	Contribution depends on pension amount and age of entry

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Payment Mode	Auto-debit from bank/Post Office account	Auto-debit from bank/Post Office account	Monthly/quarterly/half-yearly contributions
Benefits	₹2 lakh on death due to any cause	₹2 lakh for accidental death/full disability; ₹1 lakh for partial disability	Guaranteed pension of ₹1,000–₹5,000 per month after 60 years
Special Provision	30-day lien period applicable	Covers accidental disability also	Spouse can continue contribution after subscriber's premature death
Exit/Withdrawal	Annual renewal-based scheme	Annual renewal-based scheme	Voluntary exit allowed with conditions
Multiple Accounts Rule	Can join through only one account	Can join through only one account	Not specified similarly
Target Group	Low-cost life insurance seekers	Low-cost accident insurance seekers	Poor, underprivileged and unorganised sector workers

6. National Panchayat Awards 2025:

Context: The winners of the National Panchayat Awards 2025 (NPA-2025) have been announced by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), with a total of 42 Panchayats from across the country being selected. The award distribution ceremony is scheduled to take place on 3rd June 2026 in New Delhi.

About National Panchayat Awards 2025:

- Ministry of Panchayati Raj annually confers the National Panchayat Awards to recognize and incentivize best-performing Panchayats.

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- The awards promote inclusive, participatory, and sustainable rural development.
- The awards are institutionalised under the Incentivization of Panchayats component of the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA).
- The initiative encourages Panchayats to improve local governance, service delivery, and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- In 2023, the awards framework was revamped and aligned with the nine themes of Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).
- The revised framework aims to make assessment more holistic, transparent, and data-driven.
- The awards reinforce the role of Panchayats in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 through grassroots governance.
- The awards are conferred under two major categories: Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP) and Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP).
- DDUPSVP recognises outstanding Gram Panchayats across nine LSDG themes.
- The nine themes include Poverty-Free & Enhanced Livelihoods, Healthy Panchayat, Child-Friendly Panchayat, Water-Sufficient Panchayat, Clean & Green Panchayat, Self-Sufficient Infrastructure, Socially Just & Socially Secured Panchayat, Panchayat with Good Governance, and Women-Friendly Panchayat.
- Under each theme, awards are given for Rank 1, Rank 2, and Rank 3 positions.
- Under National Panchayat Awards (NPA)-2025, 34 Gram Panchayats from 17 States and Union Territories were selected under DDUPSVP.
- The thematic awards are linked to Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0 scores.
- NDSPSVP recognises the best-performing Panchayats at District, Block, and Gram Panchayat levels on an overall basis.
- Under NPA-2025, 8 Panchayats were selected under NDSPSVP categories.

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- The awards included 3 Best District Panchayats, 2 Best Block Panchayats, and 3 Best Gram Panchayats.
- Winning Panchayats receive financial incentives ranging from ₹50 lakh to ₹5 crore depending on category and level.
- The awards are funded under the Incentivization of Panchayats (IoP) scheme of RGSA.



7. Oman ports:

Context: Oman ports provide lifeline to Indian exporters, GCC nations.

More details:

- Oman ports are emerging as an important logistics lifeline for Indian exporters targeting Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets.

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- Indian exporters are increasingly using Omani ports to bypass regional trade disruptions and improve supply-chain efficiency.



- Key Omani ports such as Port of Salalah, Port of Sohar, and Port of Duqm are gaining strategic importance in India-Gulf trade.
- Oman's geographic location near major global shipping routes strengthens its role as a transshipment and re-export hub.
- Indian exporters see Oman as a stable and reliable gateway to GCC countries amid tensions in the Red Sea and West Asia region.
- Omani ports offer faster customs clearance, warehousing, and multimodal logistics connectivity for Indian goods.

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- Sectors such as food products, engineering goods, textiles, and pharmaceuticals are expected to benefit from improved connectivity.
- India and Oman are also exploring stronger economic and maritime cooperation to deepen bilateral trade ties.
- Enhanced use of Omani ports may help Indian exporters reduce shipping costs and delivery time to Gulf markets.

8. Litchi (Litchi chinensis):

Context: Centre forms Expert Panel to assess Litchi Stink Bug damage in Bihar. The panel will be headed by the Director of the National Research Centre in Litchi, Muzaffarpur.

About Litchi (Litchi chinensis):

- It is a juicy subtropical fruit known for its sweet, translucent edible flesh called aril.
- Botanically, it belongs to the Sapindaceae family.
- The crop requires a moist subtropical climate for optimal growth.
- It grows best in low-elevation regions up to about 800 metres.
- Suitable soil conditions include deep, well-drained loamy soil rich in organic matter.
- The ideal soil pH range for cultivation is 5.0–7.0.
- Bihar is the largest producer of the fruit in India.
- Other major producing states include West Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Jharkhand, and Tripura.
- India is the world's second-largest producer of litchi after China.

9. Hantavirus:

Context: Hantavirus outbreak was reported on the Dutch expedition cruise ship MV Hondius in early May 2026.

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More details about Hantavirus:

- Nature of Disease Hantavirus infection is caused by a group of viruses mainly carried by rodents such as rats and mice.
- Mode of Transmission Humans get infected through contact with rodent urine, saliva, or droppings, especially in contaminated environments.
- Airborne Exposure Virus particles can become airborne while cleaning or disturbing rodent-infested areas.
- Affected Organs Hantavirus infections can affect the lungs or kidneys.
- Pulmonary Syndrome Some strains cause Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), a severe respiratory illness.
- Renal Syndrome Other strains cause Haemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS), affecting kidneys and blood vessels.
- Human-to-Human Spread Most hantaviruses do not spread between humans, but the Andes strain can transmit among close contacts.
- Symptoms Common symptoms include fever, muscle pain, fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and dizziness.
- Severe Symptoms Advanced cases may lead to pneumonia, respiratory distress, chest tightness, shock, and lung fluid accumulation.
- Kidney Effects Some forms may cause kidney failure and bleeding complications.
- Diagnostic Challenge Symptoms resemble influenza, COVID-19, dengue, and pneumonia, delaying diagnosis in some cases.
- High-Risk Groups Farmers, forestry workers, campers, construction workers, and people exposed to rodent-prone environments face higher risk.
- Preventive Measures WHO recommends rodent control, sanitation, and safe cleaning practices to reduce infection risk.

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- Treatment Status There is currently no approved vaccine or specific antiviral cure for hantavirus infection.
- Medical Care Treatment mainly includes oxygen therapy, fluid management, intensive care, and mechanical ventilation in severe cases.
- Pandemic Risk WHO stated that hantavirus does not spread as easily as COVID-19 and the overall public risk remains low.
- Zoonotic Concern The outbreak highlighted the growing importance of monitoring zoonotic diseases amid increasing global travel and human-animal interaction.
- Global Response WHO emphasized stronger surveillance, faster reporting, testing systems, and international coordination to manage outbreaks effectively.

10. Rayleigh scattering:

Context: On hotter days, why does the sky seem more grey than blue?

More details:

- The blue colour of the sky is mainly caused by Rayleigh scattering, where shorter blue wavelengths are scattered more efficiently by air molecules.
- On hotter days, the atmosphere contains more moisture, dust, aerosols, and particulate matter.
- Warm air can hold higher humidity in the form of water vapour and fine droplets.
- Heat-driven convective currents lift more dust and aerosols into the atmosphere.
- Larger particles scatter all wavelengths of light more equally through Mie scattering.
- Mie scattering occurs when particles are comparable in size to the wavelength of light.
- Due to Mie scattering, the sky appears pale, hazy, or washed out instead of deep blue.
- Increased brightness and luminance on hot days also affect human visual perception of sky colour.

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11. Odonata Species:

Context: A recent study has revealed an "alarming gap" in biodiversity across the Western Ghats, with researchers able to document only about 65% of the dragonfly and damselfly species historically recorded in the region, pointing to a potential shortfall of nearly 35% of these ecologically critical insects. The survey recorded 143 odonata species — 76 dragonflies and 67 damselflies — of which 40 were endemic to the Western Ghats.

What are Odonata Species?

- Odonata is an ancient insect order comprising dragonflies (Anisoptera), damselflies (Zygoptera), and the relict group Anisozygoptera.
- The order includes more than 6,000 known species worldwide, with India hosting over 500 species.
- Odonata species are globally distributed from tropical regions to boreal forests, except Antarctica.
- They are commonly associated with freshwater habitats such as ponds, rivers, lakes, and wetlands.
- Odonates have distinct features including huge compound eyes, minute antennae, transparent membranous wings, and a long slender abdomen.
- Their larval stage (nymph) is aquatic, while adults are active daytime fliers usually found near water bodies.
- More than 80% of their brain is devoted to processing visual information, making them highly efficient aerial hunters.
- Both adult odonates and their aquatic larvae are voracious predators with biting mouthparts adapted for hunting.

12. D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary:

Context: A tiger has been photographed by a camera trap in Arunachal Pradesh's D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary for the first time in almost two decades, bringing cheers to wildlife enthusiasts, conservationists, and officials.

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About D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary:

- D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary is located near Pasighat in East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The sanctuary covers an area of about 190 sq. km and was established in 1978.
- Around 80% of the sanctuary consists of grasslands, while the remaining area has riverine forests, bamboo groves, and secondary forests.
- The sanctuary supports diverse wildlife including tiger, leopard, and Indian hare.
- A first-ever camera-trap photograph recently confirmed the return of the striped cat species to the sanctuary after it was believed to have disappeared from the area.
- The protected area is named after Daying Ering.
- Daying Ering also chaired the Ering Commission, which influenced the development of the Panchayati Raj system in India.

Quick Bites:

- In a major boost to the diversification of India's agricultural exports and furthering the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, the first-ever export consignment of ODOP honey from Baksa, an Aspirational District in Assam, to the USA was flagged off on 09 May 2026 through the initiative of APEDA.
- The Indian Coast Guard marked a significant enhancement in its operational capability with the commissioning of Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Achal, the latest vessel in the new-generation Adamya-class Fast Patrol Vessel series, at Goa Shipyard Limited on May 09, 2026.
- Huntington's Disease is a hereditary neurodegenerative disorder that causes the gradual breakdown of nerve cells in the brain. It is caused by a genetic mutation inherited from a parent and affects movement, behaviour, cognition, and personality, leading to progressive physical and mental deterioration over time.

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- UN-Habitat launched the Catalogue of Solutions 2026-2029. The Catalogue directly supports the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026-2029, adopted in 2025, which prioritises adequate housing, land, and basic services for all.
- Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan was appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff of India on 9 May 2026.

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11-05-2026

1. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):

Context: Navigating maritime security in the wake of the war in West Asia will be at the top of the agenda as India chairs the 23-nation Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), with a leaders' summit expected next year, says the organisation's Secretary-General Sanjiv Ranjan.

About Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):



- It is an intergovernmental organisation established to promote economic cooperation and regional integration among countries bordering the Indian Ocean.
- IORA member states work on various initiatives related to trade, investment, and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).
- It was established on 7 March 1997 with a secretariat based in Ebène, Mauritius.

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2. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):

Context: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday launched PMGSY-IV during the silver jubilee celebrations marking 25 years of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in Bhairunda of Madhya Pradesh's Sehore district.

About Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):

- **Launch (2000):** 100% centrally sponsored scheme to provide all-weather rural road connectivity.
- **Ministry:** Implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- **Eligibility:** Villages with population >500 (plains) and >250 (hills/difficult areas).
- **Funding Pattern:** Changed in 2015–16 to 60:40 (Centre:States), 90:10 for NE & Himalayan States.
- **PMGSY-I (2000):** Rural connectivity to eligible habitations as per Census 2001.
- **PMGSY-II (2013):** Upgradation of 50,000 km rural roads across States/UTs.
- **RCPLWEA (2016):** Road construction/upgradation in Left-Wing Extremism affected areas.
- **PMGSY-III (2019):** Consolidation of 1,25,000 km to connect rural links with markets, schools & hospitals.
- **National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (NRIDA):** Provides technical and managerial support at the national level.
- **State Rural Roads Development Agencies (SRRDAs):** State-level agencies for implementation of the scheme.
- Decentralized Planning: Involves Panchayati Raj Institutions, MLAs, and MPs.
- **Online Management, Monitoring, and Accounting System (OMMAS):** Web-based monitoring & accounting system developed by C-DAC.
- **eMARG:** Geo-tagged mobile app platform to verify maintenance work and monitor contractors.

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- **Meri Sadak App:** Grievance redressal tool for public complaints on pace, quality, or abandoned works.

3. Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institute (SATHI) scheme:

Context: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh takes stock of interdisciplinary facility "SATHI" set up at BHU, Varanasi with support of Department of Science & Technology (DST) Govt of India.

About Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institute (SATHI) scheme:

- The main objective of Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes is to establish shared, professionally managed, state-of-the-art analytical testing and research facilities to strengthen scientific research, innovation, skill development, and access to advanced scientific infrastructure for academic institutions, startups, industries, and researchers.
- Under the SATHI Scheme, institutions are selected in cluster mode based on academic and research profile.
- Institute of Eminence status is an important criterion for selection under the scheme.
- Selection also considers rankings under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).
- Quality of research publications is a key evaluation parameter.
- Presence of supportive infrastructure is assessed during selection.
- Well-structured plans for skill development and capacity building are evaluated.
- Institutions must contribute at least 25% funding towards the cost slab recommended by DST.
- The four SATHI centers are at Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (Delhi), Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (West Bengal), Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (Telangana)

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4. PM MITRA Parks:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the PM MITRA Park at Warangal, Telangana.

About PM MITRA Parks:

- Pradhan Mantri Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Scheme aims to develop large scale and integrated world class industrial facilities in the shape of integrated textile parks to help Indian textiles industry to build scale, reduce logistics costs and improve its competitiveness.
- Anchored in the 5F vision (Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign), the Scheme aims to facilitate India's textile industry to achieve global size and scale along with the creation of a modern and integrated textile value chain at one location.
- Under this Scheme, the Government has approved 7 (Seven) sites for setting up of PM MITRA Parks, one each in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.



Source: Ministry of Textiles

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- The PM MITRA Parks are envisaged as modern, large scale and integrated parks covering the entire value chain. Hence all parts of the value chain including spinning, weaving, processing, printing, garment and accessories manufacturing etc. are expected to benefit from the employment generated under the initiative.
- The parks will be set up by 2026-27. The total outlay for the project is Rs 4,445 crore, though the initial allocation in the 2023-24 Budget is only Rs 200 crore.
- PM MITRA Park will be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle which will be owned by the Central and State Government and in a Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode.

Quick Bites:

- The Indian trio of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Kumkum Mohod upstaged World Cup Stage-1 champion and host China, consisting of Zhu Jingyi, Huang Yuwei and Yu Qi, 5-4 in the final to claim the recurve women's team gold medal at the Archery World Cup Stage-2 in Shanghai.
- A militia attack killed at least 69 people in Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri province, sources said. Two ethnic groups — Hema and Lendu — have been locked in combat in the mineral-rich region.
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said here on Sunday that an archival cooperation agreement between India and Trinidad and Tobago would help members of the Indian diaspora trace their ancestral roots and reconnect with families, as he underlined New Delhi's efforts to preserve the legacy of the Girmitya community. Girmitya refers to Indian indentured labourers transported by the British to colonies in Fiji, South Africa, Mauritius, and the Caribbean between the 19th and early 20th centuries.
- Kuljeet Kaur Marhas was elected a Fellow of The Meteoritical Society for 2026 on 9 May 2026. She became the first Indian woman to receive this international honour in meteoritics and planetary science.

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12-05-2026

1. Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS):

Context: Union Minister for Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, today inaugurated India's first Integrated CCUS Field Laboratory Facility under Bharat Innovates 2026 at IIT Bombay.

About Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS):

- Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage (CCUS) is a group of technologies used to capture carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from industries and power plants or directly remove CO_2 from the atmosphere.
- CCUS aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change.
- The process involves three stages: capture, transport, and storage/use of CO_2.
- In post-combustion capture, CO_2 is separated from flue gases after fuel burning using solvents.
- In pre-combustion capture, fuel is converted into a hydrogen–CO_2 mixture before combustion, and CO_2 is separated.
- In oxy-fuel combustion, fuel is burned in pure oxygen, producing mainly CO_2 and steam for easier capture.
- Captured CO_2 is compressed and transported through pipelines, ships, rail, or road networks.
- CO_2 is stored in deep geological formations such as depleted oil and gas fields or saline aquifers for long-term sequestration.
- Captured CO_2 can also be utilized in commercial and industrial applications.

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About India's First Integrated CCUS Field Laboratory Facility:

- India's first Integrated Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage Field Laboratory Facility was conceptualized and developed under the leadership of Vikram Vishal.
- The facility is housed at Indian Institute of Technology Bombay.
- It is India's first end-to-end pilot-scale platform integrating Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU) with Geological CO_2 Sequestration (GCS) in basalt formations.
- The project was developed with support from the Government of India, industry partners, and IIT Bombay.
- The facility supports the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and India's Net-Zero commitments.
- It uses an advanced aqueous-based CO_2 capture technology developed at IIT Bombay.
- The technology can capture CO_2 from ambient air and industrial emissions using non-potable water.
- Captured CO_2 can be converted into high-purity carbonate and bicarbonate salts for industrial use.
- The facility promotes a sustainable waste-to-wealth approach through carbon utilization.
- Its Geological CO_2 Sequestration component is India's first pilot-scale scientific drilling initiative to study the storage potential of the Deccan Traps.
- The facility acts as a national testbed for scalable carbon management technologies.
- It aims to facilitate the transition of climate-related innovations from research to industrial deployment.

2. ' SEHAT Mission':

Context: Union Ministers Shri JP Nadda and Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan launch 'SEHAT Mission', a major new initiative linking agriculture and health.

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About Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation ('SEHAT Mission'):

- It seeks to connect agriculture, nutrition and public health through scientific collaboration.
- The mission has been jointly launched by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) with the objective of building a framework for 'Healthy Food, Healthy Farms and a Healthy India'.
- The initiative aims to build a farm-to-plate scientific chain linking agriculture with disease prevention and nutritional security.
- It promotes bio-fortification of crops with essential micronutrients such as zinc and iron.
- The programme encourages cultivation and consumption of nutrient-rich traditional millets like Ragi, Jowar, and Bajra.
- It supports integrated farming systems combining crops, animal husbandry, fisheries, and beekeeping for balanced family nutrition.
- The initiative focuses on farmer health and safety through awareness and scientific measures against pesticide and chemical exposure.
- It promotes dietary solutions for prevention and management of non-communicable diseases such as Diabetes, hypertension, and cancer.
- The programme follows the One Health approach linking human, animal, and environmental health.
- It encourages collaboration between agricultural and medical scientists for integrated health planning.
- The initiative supports science-based policymaking through real-time dashboards and nutrition-oriented research databases.

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3. Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system:

Context: Shri Nitin Gadkari rolls out the first-of-its-kind barrier-less toll plaza at Mundka – Bakkarwala , UER-II (Urban Extension Road) in the National Capital Region (NCR).

About Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system:

- The system integrates Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology with FASTag-based Electronic Toll Collection to facilitate automated user fee collection with minimal human intervention.
- The Multi-Lane Free Flow Tolling System is a barrier-less toll collection system using FASTag and Vehicle Registration Number (VRN) recognition.
- It operates through high-performance RFID readers and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras.
- MLFF enables toll collection without requiring vehicles to stop at toll plazas.
- The system reduces traffic congestion and travel time on highways.
- It improves fuel efficiency by minimizing vehicle idling and stoppage.
- MLFF helps reduce vehicular emissions and supports cleaner transportation.

4. Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB–G RAM G] Act, 2025:

Context: Marking a major milestone in India's rural development journey, the Government of India on 11 May 2026 notified the implementation of the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) [VB–G RAM G] Act, 2025, to be rolled out nationwide from 1 July 2026.

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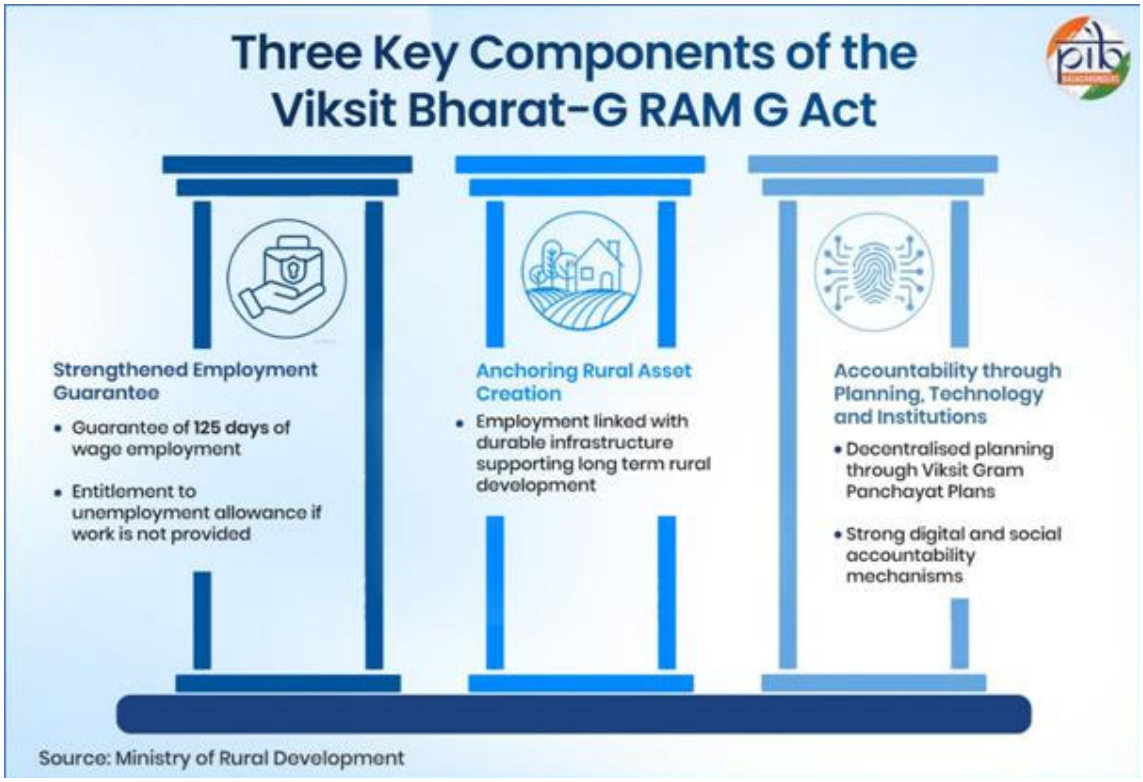
About VB–G RAM G Act, 2025:

- The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 replaces and comprehensively reforms MGNREGA, marking a major shift in rural employment policy.
- The Act aligns rural employment with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision by improving accountability, strengthening infrastructure creation, and enhancing income security in rural areas.



- Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin Act guarantees 125 days of wage employment per rural household annually (increased from 100 days).
- Employment is provided to adult members willing to undertake unskilled manual work, strengthening rural income security.
- A 60-day no-work period is built in to ensure availability of agricultural labour during peak sowing and harvesting seasons.

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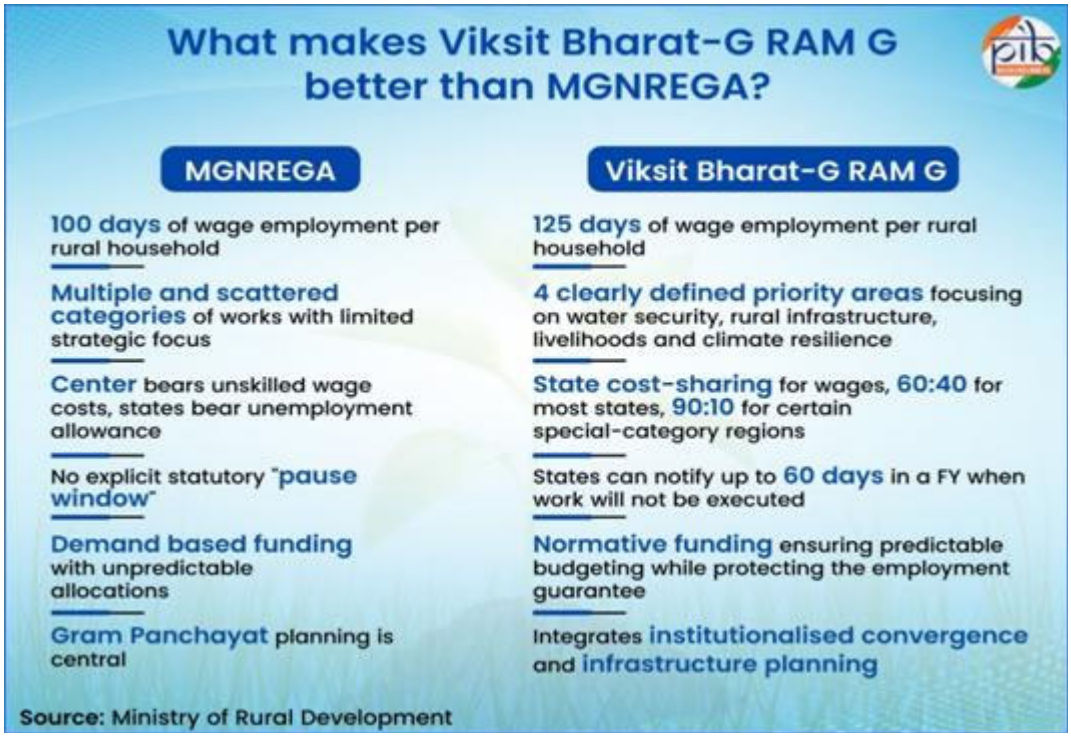
- Workers can still complete 125 days of employment within the remaining 305 days of the year.
- The design aims to balance the needs of farmers and rural labourers.
- Wages are to be paid weekly, and in any case within a fortnight of work completion.



5. 'Divyastra' Missile:

Context: India conducted the 2nd successful flight-trial of 'Divyastra' Missile from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha.

About 'Divyastra' Missile:

- Agni Missile is an advanced missile equipped with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology.

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- Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle allows a single missile to carry multiple nuclear warheads.
- Each warhead in a MIRV-equipped missile can independently strike different targets.
- MIRV technology was originally developed in the early 1960s.
- The United States was the first country to develop MIRV technology.
- Other countries possessing MIRV capability include Russia, United Kingdom, France, and China.

6. National Technology day:

Context: National Technology Day is observed in India on 11 May every year.

About National Technology day:

- The celebration of this day was started in 1999 to honour Indian scientists, engineers and technologists, who ensured the successful conduct of Pokhran tests in May 1998.
- On May 11, 1998, India successfully conducted its first nuclear tests under Pokhran-II, codenamed Operation Shakti.
- The primary objective of National Technology Day is to promote scientific temper and inspire the younger generation to pursue careers in STEM fields.
- It serves as an occasion to raise awareness about the importance of technology in addressing societal challenges and fostering economic growth.
- The theme for National Technology Day 2026 is "Responsible Innovation for Inclusive Growth".

Quick Bites:

➢ The Nigerian military and the "bandit" gangs it is fighting killed around 100 civilians on Sunday, sources said. The Nigerian military killed at least 72 people, many of them civilians, in an airstrike in Zamfara. Another air strike killed 13 civilians in Niger. Armed gangs also killed 30 people in a separate attack in Zamfara.

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- Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Monday announced in open court the launch of a major digital initiative — "One Case One Data" — to integrate the judicial administration at every level, from the taluk court to the top court, into a unified system. The CJI said the mechanism is aimed at creating a more comprehensive and interconnected digital database across courts. The CJI also announced the launch of 'Su Sahay', an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered assistance chatbot integrated with the Supreme Court website to facilitate easier access to justice and court-related services for litigants.
- Gharial was recently spotted in Assam's Kaziranga National Park after a long time and a recent survey recorded 143 Odonata species across Western Ghats, highlighting 35% shortfall in known diversity.
- India added 44 GW of solar capacity in 2025, taking the total installed solar capacity to 150 GW. By March 2026, India's installed solar power capacity had reached 150.2 GW AC, and the country ranked as the world's third-largest producer of solar power.
- Pune is set to establish India's first Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Shivajinagar, a densely polluted area in the central business district. The initiative is being developed by the Pune Municipal Corporation with support from ITDP India and is linked to the Maharashtra Electric Vehicle Policy 2021.

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13-05-2026

1. National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026:

Context: The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards for the year 2026 to the nursing personnel, on the occasion of International Nurses Day, at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (May 12, 2026).

NAMES & CITATIONS OF NATIONAL AWARDEES 2026

S.No.	Category	State / Union Territory	Name
1	ANM	Ladakh (Union Territory)	Ms Kulwinder Parhi
2	ANM	Maharashtra	Ms Ujwala Mahadev Soyam
3	ANM	Mizoram	Ms Lalenthangi Hnamte
4	ANM	Sikkim	Ms Madhu Mala Gurung
5	ANM	Uttarakhand	Ms Pooja Parmar Rana
6	ANM	West Bengal	Ms Gita Karmakar
7	Nurse	Chandigarh (Union Territory)	Ms Poonam Verma
8	Nurse	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (UTs)	Ms Deepa Biju
9	Nurse	Delhi	Dr Sharwan Kumar Dhaka
10	Nurse	Goa	Ms Raksha Rupo Parvatkar
11	Nurse	Karnataka	Ms Kavitha Jagannath
12	Nurse	Keralam	Ms Manju Mol V S
13	Nurse	Lakshadweep (Union Territory)	Ms Aysha Beebi K
14	Nurse	Tamil Nadu	Prof (Dr) R Shankar Shanmugam
15	Nurse	IHQ of MoD (Army), Delhi	Major Gen Lissamma P V

About National Florence Nightingale Awards:

- National Florence Nightingale Awards were instituted in 1973 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The awards honour outstanding nursing personnel serving in Central and State Governments, Union Territories, and voluntary organizations.

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- They recognize meritorious contributions in clinical care, public health, nursing education, and administration.
- The awards are presented in three categories: Registered Nurses and Midwives (RN & RM), Registered Auxiliary Nurses and Midwives (RANM), and Registered Lady Visitors.
- Eligible nominees include nurses working in hospitals, community healthcare, educational institutions, and administrative services.
- Each award includes a Certificate of Merit, a medal, and a cash prize of ₹1,00,000.
- Florence Nightingale was an English social reformer, statistician, and pioneer of modern nursing.
- She gained prominence during the Crimean War for improving healthcare and hygiene for wounded soldiers.
- Florence Nightingale significantly reduced mortality rates through better sanitation and nursing practices.
- She established the Nightingale School of Nursing at St Thomas' Hospital, laying the foundation for modern nursing education.

2. Kimberley Process (KP) Intersessional Meeting 2026:

Context: The Kimberley Process (KP) Intersessional Meeting 2026 commenced in Mumbai under India's Chair. The meeting, being held from May 11 to May 14, 2026, has brought together representatives from Kimberley Process Participants, Observers and industry stakeholders from across the world to deliberate on key issues related to the global trade in natural diamonds.

What is the Kimberley Process (KP)?

- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), established pursuant to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 55/56 (2000), is an international initiative aimed at preventing the flow of conflict diamonds into the legitimate diamond trade.

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- At present, the Kimberley Process has 60 Participants representing 86 countries, with the European Union and its Member States participating as a single bloc.
- Kimberley Process is not a formal international organisation or legally binding treaty.
- It functions through burden-sharing contributions from participating countries with support from industry and civil society groups.
- The Kimberley Process has no permanent office or staff.
- Its rules are implemented through domestic laws rather than international legal obligations.
- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was launched in 2003 to regulate trade in rough diamonds.
- KPCS establishes minimum requirements that all participating members must follow.
- Every international shipment of rough diamonds must carry a tamper-resistant Kimberley Process certificate.
- Trade in rough diamonds is permitted only between certified Kimberley Process participant countries.
- Participating countries must share accurate and timely data on diamond production and trade for transparency.
- India is one of the founding members of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

3. Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP):

Context: The Government of India, in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), today launched a new eight-year Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) for the period 2026–2033, aimed at enhancing rural incomes, strengthening resilience, and scaling sustainable livelihood opportunities across the country.

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About Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP):

- The newly launched strategy focuses on strengthening grassroots institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), and cooperatives.
- These institutions act as platforms linking finance, technology, infrastructure, and markets for rural communities.
- International Fund for Agricultural Development supported programmes in India have significantly improved women's financial inclusion through SHGs.
- IFAD-backed initiatives have enhanced farmers' market access through infrastructure development.
- The programmes also promoted women-led enterprises through value addition and e-commerce integration.
- The Country Strategic Opportunities Programme aims to establish India as a global knowledge leader in rural development.
- COSOP promotes sharing of India's successful rural development models with countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.
- Key areas of knowledge sharing include inclusive rural finance, cooperative governance, digital agriculture services, and climate-resilient value chains.

4. Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme:

Context: The Union Ministry of Education has issued a fresh reminder regarding the pending implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme to West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu after Assembly elections concluded in the three States.

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About Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme:

- It is a Centrally Sponsored scheme announced in 2022.
- It aims to develop more than 14500 schools across the country by strengthening selected existing schools being managed by Central Government/ State/ UT Government/ local bodies.
- The duration of the scheme is from 2022-23 to 2026-27.
- After which it shall be the responsibility of the States/UTs to continue to maintain the benchmarks achieved by these schools.
- Showcasing all components of the National Education Policy 2020.
- The Schools will be developed as Green Schools, incorporating environment-friendly aspects.
- The pedagogy adopted in these schools will be more experiential, holistic, integrated, play/toy-based.
- The focus will be on the learning outcomes of every child in every grade.
- Assessment at all levels will be based on conceptual understanding and application of knowledge.
- Linkage with Sector Skill Councils and local industry.
- A School Quality Assessment Framework (SQAF) is being developed.

5. National Testing Agency (NTA):

Context: NTA cancelling NEET exam was subjected to wide criticism about the paper leakage.

About National Testing Agency (NTA):

- **National Testing Agency (NTA):** National Testing Agency is an autonomous and self-sustained organisation established to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institutions in India.
- **Establishment:** NTA was established as a Society under the Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860.

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- **Purpose:** It conducts transparent, efficient, and standardized entrance examinations for admissions into higher educational institutions.
- **Chairperson:** NTA is chaired by an eminent educationist appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- **CEO:** The Chief Executive Officer serves as the Director-General appointed by the Government of India.
- **Board of Governors:** NTA has a Board of Governors comprising representatives from user institutions.
- **Infrastructure Role:** NTA identifies partner institutions with adequate infrastructure for conducting online examinations smoothly.
- **Question Bank Development:** It develops modern and technology-driven question banks for various subjects.
- **Research & Development:** NTA promotes a strong research and development culture in testing and assessment methods.
- **Expert Pool:** It creates a pool of experts in different areas of examination and testing systems.
- **International Collaboration:** NTA collaborates with international organisations such as Educational Testing Service (ETS).
- **Additional Role:** It conducts examinations entrusted by Ministries and Departments of the Central and State Governments.

6. Mayon volcano:

Context: Thousands evacuated in Philippines as Mayon Volcano erupts.

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About Mayon volcano:

- Also known as Mount Mayon and Mayon Volcano, is an active stratovolcano in the province of Albay in Bicol, Philippines. A popular tourist destination, it is renowned for its "perfect cone" owing to its symmetric conical shape, and is regarded as sacred in Philippine mythology.
- Mayon Volcano Natural Park: Mayon Volcano Natural Park was reclassified and renamed as a natural park in 2000.
- UNESCO Recognition: The park became the centerpiece of the UNESCO-declared Albay Biosphere Reserve in 2016.
- World Heritage Nomination: Mayon Volcano Natural Park is currently being nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Most Active Volcano: Mayon Volcano is the most active volcano in the Philippines.

Quick Bites:

- The Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance held an event chaired by Secretary, DFS to launch the domestic insurance pool, namely 'Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool' (BMIP) of USD 1.5 billion today, with a sovereign guarantee of USD 1.4 billion/₹12,980 crores to facilitate continuous maritime insurance coverages. The pool covers all maritime risks such as Hull and Machinery, Cargo, P&I and War risk for Indian flagged or controlled vessels or vessels destined to or starting from India, in the context of the current Middle East tensions.
- The National Jute Board, headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal, is a statutory body under the Ministry of Textiles and governed by the National Jute Board Act, 2008. It is responsible for promoting the jute sector in India through research and human resource development, focusing on finding new and innovative applications of jute, and enhancing the global market share of Indian jute products in the world economy.
- A recent study found that the world's first approved malaria vaccine, RTS,S/AS01E malaria vaccine, reduced overall child mortality by 13% in parts of Africa. Malaria is a life-threatening

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disease caused by parasites and is transmitted to humans primarily through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquito. The disease does not spread from person to person, as its transmission depends on mosquito vectors rather than direct human contact.

- The Government of India notified a 1% cess on the total cost of construction incurred by employers for building and other construction works under the Code on Social Security, 2020. The notification was issued under Section 100(1) of the Code on Social Security, 2020, and it replaced a notification dated 26 September 1996. Under the new labour codes, individuals building houses costing less than ₹50 lakh are exempt from paying the building cess from 21 November 2025. Earlier, the threshold was ₹10 lakh or properties above 100 square metres.
- The India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will "probably" be implemented on June 1, 2026, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday, following a meeting with the negotiating team from Oman. He added that the India-Chile Free Trade Agreement negotiations have hit some hurdles due to the difference in the sizes of the economies involved.

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14-05-2026

1. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport:

Context: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today has approved the Extension of Lease Period of the Airports Authority of India (AAI)'s land leased to MIL (MIHAN India Limited) beyond 06.08.2039, so as to enable MIL to license Nagpur Airport to the Concessionaire, viz. GMR Nagpur International Airport Limited (GNIAL) for 30 years since Commercial Operation Date (COD).

Background:

- In 2009, AAI and MADC formed a Joint Venture Company (MIL) with a 49:51 equity structure for airport development.
- Airport assets of AAI were transferred to MIL in 2009 for operations, but lease deed was delayed due to land demarcation issues.
- AAI land was later leased to MIL up to 06 August 2039.
- In 2016, MIL invited global bids under the PPP model to identify an airport operator.
- GMR Airports Ltd. (GAL) emerged as the highest bidder with an initial revenue share offer of 5.76%.
- The revenue share was later revised upward to 14.49% of Gross Revenue.
- MIL annulled the bidding process in March 2020.
- The annulment was challenged by GAL before the Bombay High Court and subsequently upheld in its favour.
- The Supreme Court also ruled in favour of GAL in its judgement dated 27 September 2024.

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- Following the Supreme Court order, MIL signed a Concession Agreement with GMR Nagpur International Airport Ltd. (GNIAL) on 8 October 2024.

About Nagpur airport:

- The airport at Nagpur was commissioned during World War I (1917–18) for the Royal Flying Corps (RFC)/Royal Air Force (RAF).
- During World War II, the existing structures were renovated and used as a staging airfield by the RAF.
- After British rule ended, the airport was transferred to the Government of India.
- In 1953, new terminal buildings were constructed with facilities such as refreshment areas, retiring rooms, restrooms, book stalls, and visitor galleries.
- Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport (NAG) serves Nagpur, Maharashtra, the state's winter capital.
- The airport is located at Sonegaon, about 8 km southwest of Nagpur city.
- It covers an area of approximately 1,355 acres (548 hectares).
- In 2005, it was renamed after B. R. Ambedkar, architect of the Indian Constitution and a key national figure.

2. Minimum Support Price (MSP):

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for 14 Kharif Crops for Marketing Season 2026-27.

About Minimum Support Price (MSP):

- It is the price at which the government purchases crops from the farmers, to insure farmers against any sharp fall in farm price

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- It is announced by the Government on the basis of the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), at the beginning of the sowing season.
- Government of India fixes Minimum Support Price (MSP) for 22 mandated agricultural crops.
- The highest absolute increase in MSP over the previous year has been recommended for Sunflower Seed (₹ 622 per quintal) followed by Cotton (Rs. 557 per quintal), Nigerseed (Rs.515 per quintal) and Sesamum (Rs.500 per quintal).
- Ragi (₹5205/quintal) – Highest MSP among Kharif crops in 2026–27
- Sesamum (₹10346/quintal) – Highest MSP among oilseeds
- Cotton – Long Staple (₹8667/quintal) – Highest MSP among commercial crops

3. Thoothukudi Greenfield Shipyard:

Context: Landmark MoU Signed for India's First Mega Greenfield Shipyard at Thoothukudi. A tripartite MoU was signed on 20 April 2026 between HD KSOE (South Korea), NSHIP-TN (Tamil Nadu SPV), and Sagarmala Finance Corporation (MoPSW). The agreement aims to develop India's first Mega Greenfield Shipyard at Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu.

About Thoothukudi Greenfield Shipyard:

- A $4 billion (≈ ₹33,000+ crore) greenfield mega shipyard is being planned at Thoothukudi (Tuticorin), Tamil Nadu, by South Korea's HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE / HD Hyundai group).
- It is being developed through collaboration between HD KSOE, NSHIP-TN (Tamil Nadu SPV), and Sagarmala Finance Corporation Ltd under MoPSW, via a tripartite MoU signed on 20 April 2026.
- The project is India's first foreign-led greenfield shipyard, marking a major shift in global participation in Indian shipbuilding.

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- Planned capacity is around 3.5–4 million Gross Tonnage (GT) per year, making it one of the largest shipbuilding hubs in Asia.
- The shipyard is designed as part of a shipbuilding cluster model under the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, aligning with India's goal of becoming a top global shipbuilding nation.
- It will integrate a full shipbuilding ecosystem including fabrication, vessel construction, offshore engineering, and supporting vendor industries.

4. MuleHunter.AI

Context: Mule accounts, frequently used to launder money and facilitate cybercrime, have consistently posed difficulties for traditional detection approaches.

More about MuleHunter.AI:

- Launched in December 2024 by the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), MuleHunter.AI is an advanced AI-powered tool designed to identify and mitigate "mule" bank accounts used in cybercrimes.
- Unlike traditional rule-based systems, it uses AI/ML-powered tool to analyze transaction patterns in real-time, detecting anomalies that indicate money laundering or illegal betting.
- Successful pilot tests with large public sector banks have shown encouraging results, leading the RBI to encourage wider adoption across the banking ecosystem to strengthen national financial security.

5. Global Forest Goals (GFG) Report 2026:

Context: The report is prepared by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat.

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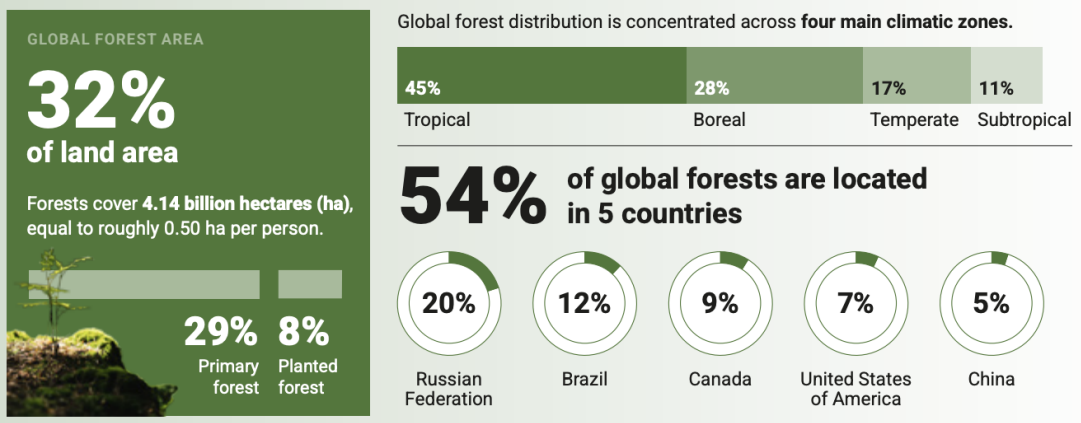
Major highlights of the report:



REGION	FOREST AREA (1 000 HA) 2015	2025	1 000 HA/YEAR	ANNUAL NET CHANGE (%)	2015–2025 NET CHANGE (%)
Africa	692 237	662 630	−2 961	−0.44	**−4.28**
Asia	613 786	630 029	1 624	0.26	**2.65**
Europe	1 024 558	1 038 911	1 435	0.14	**1.40**
North and Central America	778 758	776 162	−260	−0.03	**−0.33**
Oceania	182 499	183 898	140	0.08	**0.77**
South America	889 598	848 587	−4 101	−0.47	**−4.61**
WORLD	**4 181 435**	**4 140 217**	**−4 122**	**−0.10**	**−0.99**

- Global forest cover declined from 4.18 billion ha (2015) to 4.14 billion ha (2025), with an average annual loss of 4.12 million ha.
- The world lost nearly 16 million ha of primary forests (2015–2025), with South America witnessing the highest decline.
- Agricultural expansion remained the largest global driver of deforestation.
- Rising demand for fuelwood and charcoal, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, significantly contributed to forest degradation.
- Climate change impacts such as droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, pests, and diseases are intensifying forest loss.

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- Although 91 countries pledged to restore 190 million ha of forests, only 44 million ha have been restored by 2025.
- Asia led forest restoration efforts, achieving over 31 million ha (42.2% of pledged target).

6. Kallakkadal:

Context: The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), headquartered in Hyderabad, has installed a second Coastal Flood Monitoring System (CFMS) near the Kollam harbour in Kerala to enhance the accuracy of Kallakkadal (swell surge) forecasts along India's southwest coast. The first observational evidence of such waves in Indian waters was recorded during the initial deployment of the CFMS at Vizhinjam.

About Kallakkadal:

- Kallakkadal is essentially coastal flooding during the pre-monsoon (April-May) season by swell waves on the southwest coast of India.
- The term Kallakkadal, used by local fishermen, is a combination of two Malayalam words, including Kallan and Kadal.
- "Kallan means thief and Kadal means sea.
- Ocean swells occur not due to the local winds, but rather due to distant storms like hurricanes, or even long periods of fierce gale winds.
- During such storms, huge energy transfer takes place from the air into the water, leading to the formation of very high waves.
- Such waves can travel thousands of kilometres from the storm centre until they strike shore.
- Usually, Kallakkadal is a consequence of the strong winds in the southern part of the Indian Ocean, where an ocean swell is generated, and the waves then travel north to reach the coast in two or three days.

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- Kallakkadal occurs without precursors or any kind of local wind activity and as a result, it has been very difficult for the coastal population to get an advance warning.

7. Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS):

Context: The Endocrine Society, a global organisation of scientists and physicians devoted to hormone-related conditions, has decided to rename Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) as Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS).

About Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS):

- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is a common hormonal disorder affecting women of reproductive age.
- Women with PCOS may experience irregular ovulation, high androgen levels, and multiple small ovarian cysts.
- Common symptoms include irregular periods, excess hair growth, acne, infertility, and weight gain.
- Major causes include genetic predisposition, obesity, diabetes risk, unhealthy lifestyle, and stress.
- PCOS can be managed through lifestyle modifications, medications, and fertility treatments.

Quick Bites:

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth will inaugurate the third edition of Kalam & Kavach at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi on May 14, 2026. The conference will serve as a premier strategic platform bringing together senior policy makers, military leadership, defence industry stakeholders, diplomats, innovators, start-ups, academia & strategic experts to deliberate on India's evolving defence transformation, indigenous capability development, and future warfighting preparedness.
- Enterprise AI refers to the integration of Artificial Intelligence technologies such as machine learning, Natural Language Processing (NLP) and computer vision into large organizations to improve efficiency and decision-making.

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- Global Report on Internal Displacement 2026 Released by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).
- Maize has become India's single-largest feedstock for ethanol production as of 12 May 2026, with maize-based ethanol reaching 182 crore litres in the first half.
- India approved the Ahmedabad (Sarkhej)–Dholera Semi High-Speed Double Line project on 13 May 2026. The project is estimated at about ₹20,667 crore and will add around 134 km of railway line in Gujarat. It is planned as India's first semi high-speed rail project developed with indigenous technology.
- The Centre has doubled the effective tax paid on the import of gold and silver to a total of 18.4% from the previous 9.2%. The changes, which came into effect on Wednesday, were made through two separate notifications.

Tax	Earlier	Now
Basic customs duty	5%	10%
Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess	1%	5%
Integrated Goods and Services Tax*	3%	3%
Total	**~9.2%**	**~18.4%**

- Visakhapatnam Port has retained its position as the leader in India's marine exports, handling a record share of the country's 19.32 lakh metric tonnes of seafood shipments in the 2025-26 financial year.

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15-05-2026

1. Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2025 Report:

Context: Shri Piyush Goyal Releases LEADS 2025 Report to Benchmark Logistics Performance Across States and Union Territories.

About Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) report:

- LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) 2025 was conceived on the lines of the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) in 2018.
- It now uses a four-tier performance framework (earlier three-tier).
- It assesses states using objective indicators (~59% weightage) such as regulatory support and logistics enablers.
- It also includes perception-based indicators covering logistics infrastructure, logistics services, and sustainable logistics.
- LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) was conceived in 2018 on the lines of the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It evaluates logistics performance across four key pillars: logistics infrastructure, logistics services, operating and regulatory environment, and sustainable logistics.
- It highlights initiatives taken by various States and Union Territories across these pillars.
- It also focuses on State/UT-specific opportunities to support informed decision-making.

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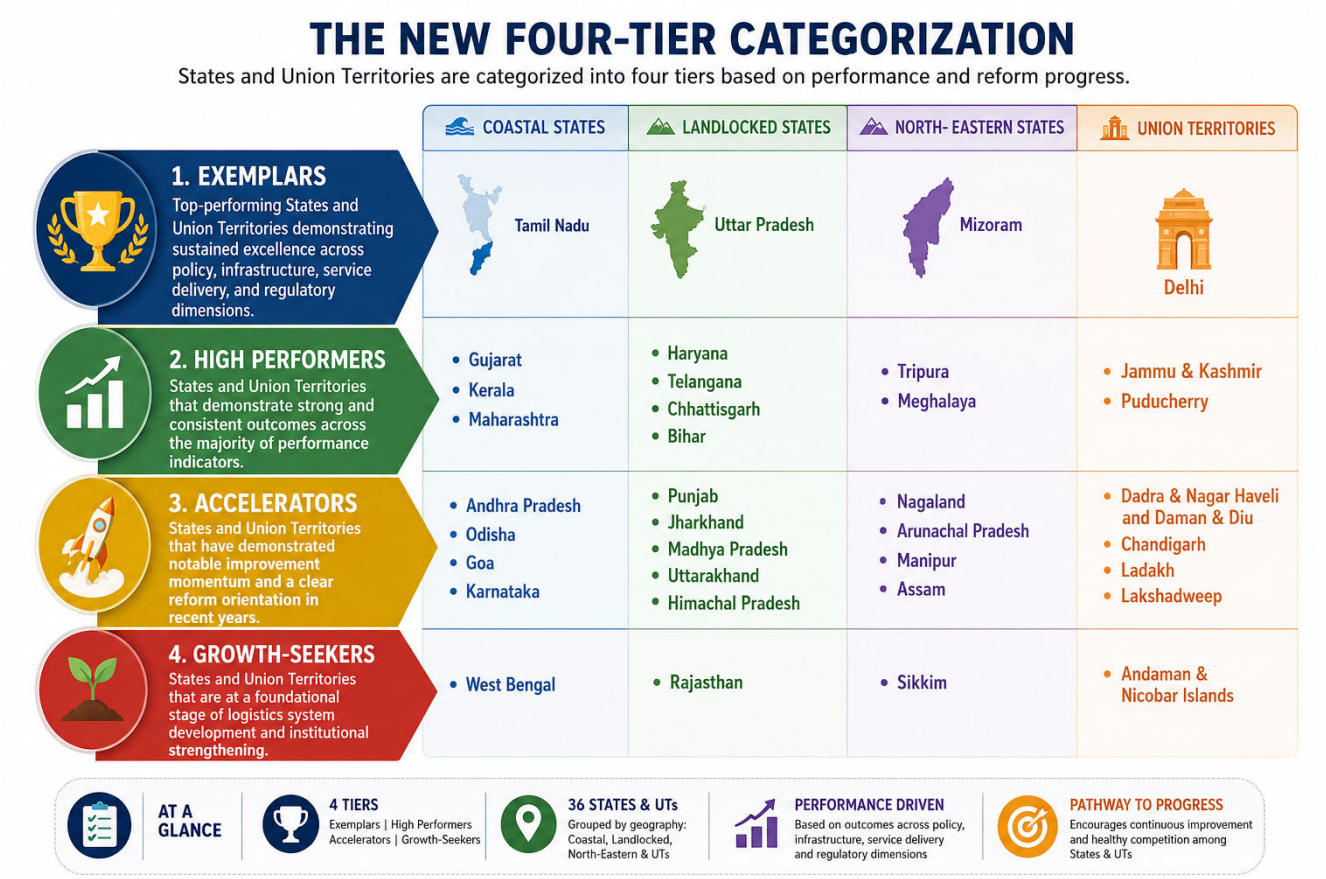

2. Ginger:

Context: Mizoram Ginger Mission was launched by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) and Government of Mizoram for cultivation Mizoram's GI-certified ginger.

About Ginger:

- Ginger (Zingiber officinale Rosc., family: Zingiberaceae) is a major spice crop in India.
- India is one of the leading global producers of ginger.
- Major producing states include Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh.
- It grows best in warm and humid climates up to 1500 m altitude.

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- Ideal temperature range for cultivation is 12–35°C.
- It requires about 1500 mm annual rainfall, with dry conditions before harvesting.
- It thrives in well-drained, friable sandy loam, clay loam, or lateritic loam soils rich in humus.
- Ginger has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.
- It is effective in treating nausea and helping manage blood sugar (HbA1c) and cholesterol levels.

3. Build-Operate-Transfer Model:

Context: The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is opening build-operate-transfer road projects to large institutional investors.

About Build-Operate-Transfer Model:

- The model is a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) used for financing large infrastructure projects.
- In this model, a private company finances, designs, builds, and operates the project for a fixed concession period.
- The private entity collects user charges during the concession period.
- It involves high private sector participation in construction, operation, and maintenance over a long duration.
- After the concession period ends, ownership is transferred back to the government or public authority.
- The private partner bears major risks such as financial risk, traffic/volume risk, and sometimes pricing risk.

4. Donanemab:

Context: India's first Alzheimer's disease therapy donanemab was launched recently. Donanemab (brand name Kisunla) is a monoclonal antibody therapy approved by the FDA (July 2024) and

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launched in India (May 2026) to treat early-stage Alzheimer's disease by removing amyloid plaques in the brain.

About Alzheimer's disease:

- Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder affecting the brain and causing memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioural changes.
- It is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for about 60–80% of cases.
- Symptoms include impaired speech and writing, poor judgment, confusion about time/place, and changes in mood and personality.
- The exact cause is not fully known, but it is linked to abnormal accumulation of amyloid-beta plaques and tau protein tangles in the brain.
- Major risk factors include advancing age (especially above 65), genetic mutations (APP, PSEN1, PSEN2), and lifestyle-related conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, smoking, and inactivity.
- Diagnosis is done through cognitive and neuropsychological tests, brain imaging (MRI, PET scans), and biomarker tests like cerebrospinal fluid analysis.
- There is no cure currently, but medicines and supportive therapies can help manage symptoms temporarily.
- Globally, Alzheimer's affects around 55 million people.
- In India, cases are projected to rise to about 7.6 million by 2030 due to population ageing.

5. Agarwood:

Context: Assam ships first legal agarwood chips to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

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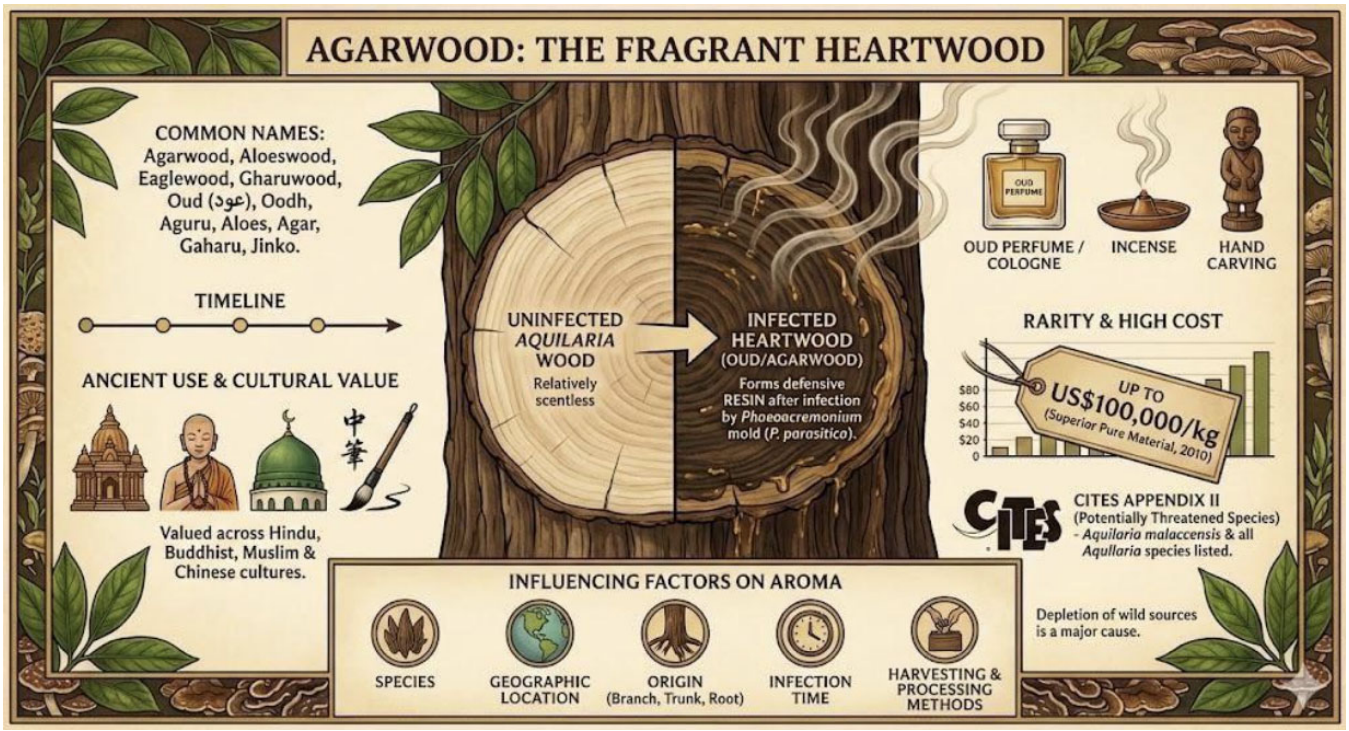
About Agarwood:

- Agarwood is a highly valuable fragrant resinous wood used in perfumes, incense, and traditional medicine.
- It is formed when Aquilaria trees get infected by fungi and produce resin as a defence response.
- India has three Aquilaria species, including agarwood-producing Aquilaria khasiana and Aquilaria malaccensis.
- It is traditionally used in Ayurveda, Unani, and Chinese medicine systems.
- Agarwood is listed under Appendix II of CITES for regulated trade.
- Aquilaria malaccensis is classified as Critically Endangered by the IUCN.



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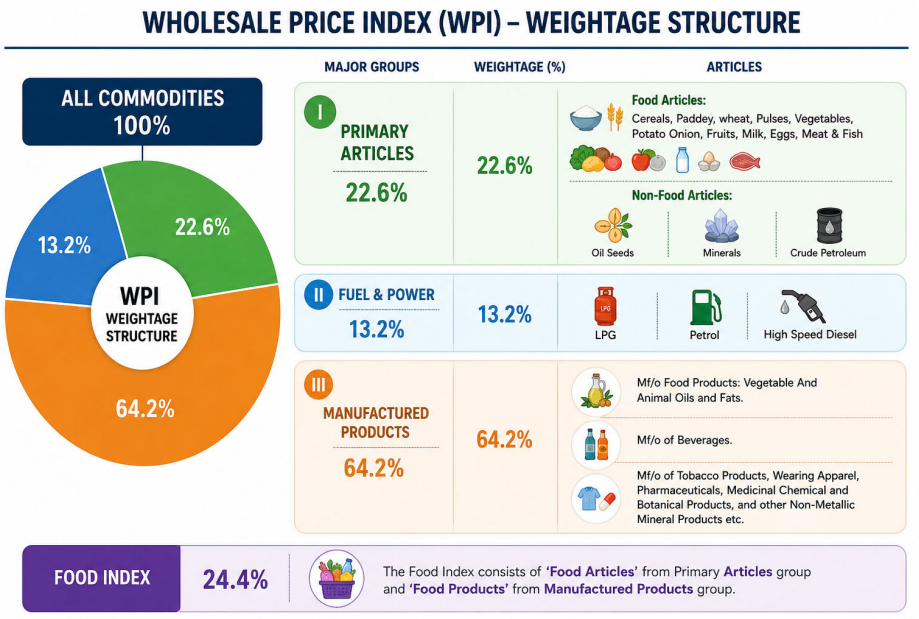
6. Wholesale Price Index (WPI):

Context: In the first sign of the impact of the West Asia crisis on prices in India, wholesale inflation in India jumped to 8.3% in April 2026, its highest level in 3.5 years, driven by the sharp rise in crude oil and natural gas prices. Inflation in this category stood at 67.2% in April.

About Wholesale Price Index (WPI):



- The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) measures changes in the prices of goods traded in bulk at the wholesale level.
- It tracks prices of goods sold by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
- WPI is published by the Office of Economic Adviser under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It is one of the most widely used indicators of inflation in India.
- A major criticism of WPI is that consumers do not purchase goods at wholesale prices.
- The base year of the All-India WPI was revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.

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7. Raniganj Coalfield:

Context: One person died and several others were injured in a landslide in the coal mines of Jamuria in the Raniganj coal belt in West Bengal on Thursday morning. Though the administration started rescue operations, several workers were believed to be still trapped inside the mines even in the evening.

About Raniganj Coalfield:

- Raniganj Coalfield is primarily located in the Asansol and Durgapur subdivisions of Paschim Bardhaman district of West Bengal, India.
- It spreads over to the neighboring districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia and to Dhanbad district of Jharkhand.
- Mainly, coking coal is found here.
- Coalmining in India first started in the Raniganj Coalfield. In 1774, John Sumner and Suetonius Grant Heatly of the British East India Company found coal near Ethora, presently in Salanpur community development block.
- Raniganj Coalfield covers an area of 443.50 km^2 and has total coal reserves of 49.17 billion tonnes, spread across Indian states of West Bengal and Jharkhand.
- It is the second largest coalfield in the country (in terms of reserves) after Jharia in Jharkhand.

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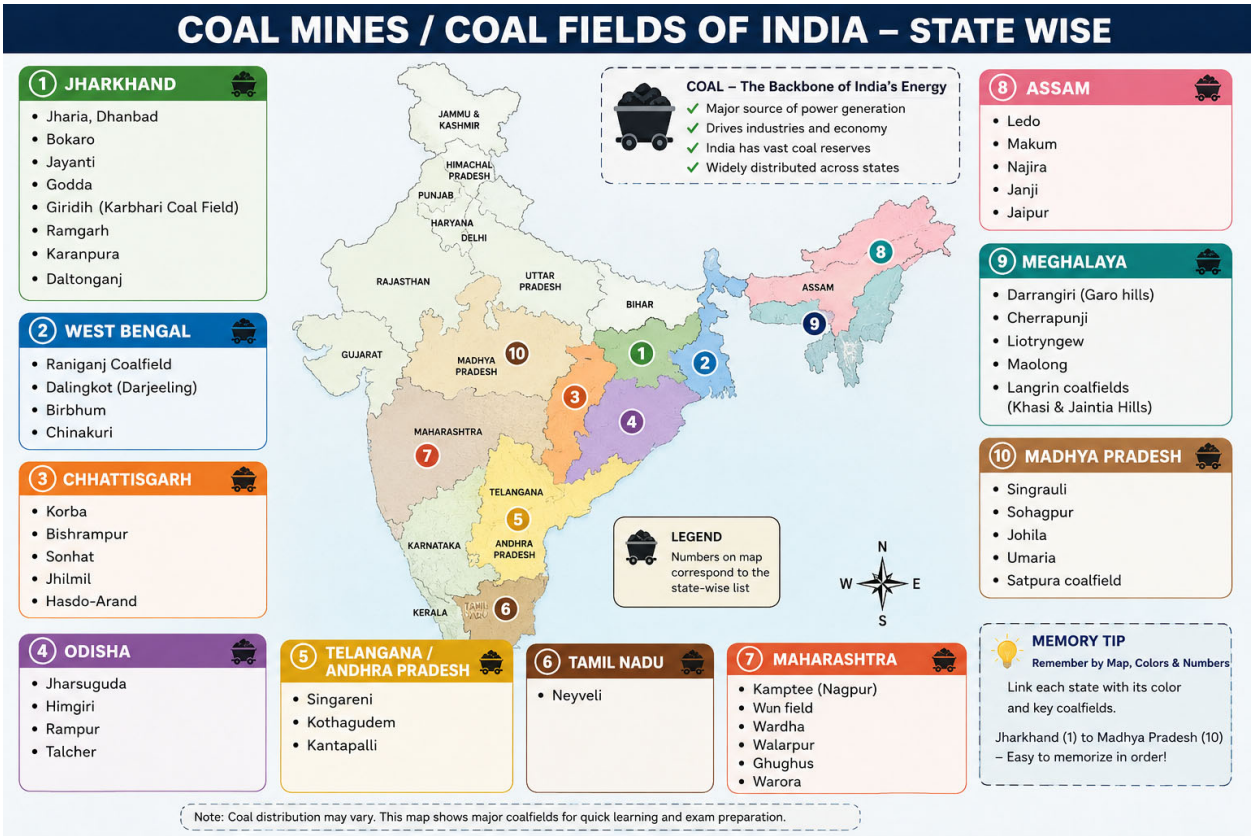
Other major coal fields in India:



Quick Bites:

- Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today announced his new book 'Apnapan', chronicling his 35-year-long association and experiences with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- The government banned export of sugar until September this year to cool domestic prices. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has amended the export policy from 'Restricted' to 'Prohibited'.
- India is advancing a proposed subsea natural gas pipeline from Ras Al Jifan in Oman to Porbandar in Gujarat.

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16-05-2026

1. PM Visit to UAE:

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to the United Arab Emirates.

List of major outcomes:

S.No.	MoU / Agreement	Objective
1	MoU on Strategic Collaboration between Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)	Cooperation for crude oil storage in India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves, including facilities at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Chandikol (Odisha), along with collaboration in Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) storage.
2	Strategic Collaboration Agreement between Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)	Explore long-term supply, sale, and purchase opportunities for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).
3	Framework for the Strategic Defence Partnership	Strengthen defence cooperation in defence industry, advanced technology, training, maritime security, cyber defence, interoperability, and secure communications.
4	MoU between Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) and Drydocks World (DDW)	Establish a Ship Repair Cluster at Vadinar, including offshore fabrication facilities under the Maritime Development Fund Scheme.
5	MoU between Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Drydocks World (DDW) and Centre of Excellence in Maritime & Shipbuilding (CEMS)	Develop skilled maritime workforce through training and employment in shipbuilding and ship repair sectors.

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6	Term Sheet between Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) and Group 42 (G42), United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Set up an 8 Exaflop Supercomputing Cluster under the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Mission India initiative.

2. Commonwealth Games 2026:

Context: Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya chaired a high-level review meeting to assess India's preparations for the Commonwealth Games 2026 scheduled to be held in Glasgow, Scotland.

About Commonwealth Games 2026:

- The Commonwealth Games (CWG) is the world's second-largest multi-sport event after the Olympic Games.
- It brings together athletes from 71 Commonwealth nations and territories.
- The first CWG was held in 1930 at Hamilton in Canada as the British Empire Games.
- In 1954, the event was renamed the British Empire and Commonwealth Games.
- Since 1978, it has officially been known as the Commonwealth Games.
- The Commonwealth Games Federation governs and manages the Games.
- The Commonwealth Games are conducted once every four years.
- The event is popularly called the "Friendly Games."
- The Games are based on the values of Humanity, Equality, and Destiny.
- The CWG promotes sports, education, recreation, and Commonwealth cultural diversity.
- All 74 Commonwealth Games Associations are expected to participate in the 2026 Commonwealth Games. Gabon and Togo are expected to make their debuts since joining the Commonwealth of Nations in June 2022.

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- The 2026 Commonwealth Games will feature only 10 sports due to limited preparation time and urgency in organising the event.
- This is the first Commonwealth Games since 1994 to have such a reduced sports programme.
- For the first time, the Games will include only two compulsory sports.
- The two compulsory sports are Athletics and Swimming.

3. Master Application for International Trade and Regulatory Interface (MAITRI):

Context: India and UAE leaders welcomed the operationalisation of the Virtual Trade Corridor using MAITRI (Master Application for International Trade and Regulatory Interface interface). This digital framework, connecting customs and port authorities on both sides, will streamline cargo movement and reduce both costs and transit time, thereby enabling more efficient trade flows.

About MAITRI:

- The MAITRI Platform aims to digitize international trade documentation and regulatory processes.
- It seeks to reduce processing time and improve trade efficiency.
- The platform is designed to optimize trade flows and support sustainable development.
- MAITRI enables the Virtual Trade Corridor (VTC) between India and the United Arab Emirates under the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).
- The platform aims to expand connectivity to BIMSTEC and ASEAN countries.
- MAITRI uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Blockchain technology to improve efficiency and security in trade operations.

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4. Thucydides Trap:

Context: The Chinese President raised the "Thucydides Trap"and Peloponnesian War in talks with the US president in Beijing.

About Thucydides Trap:

- The term "Thucydides Trap" was coined by Graham Allison.
- The concept is named after the ancient Greek historian Thucydides.
- Thucydides chronicled the Peloponnesian War.
- The Peloponnesian War began in 431 BC between Athens and Sparta.
- Thucydides Trap refers to the risk of conflict when a rising power challenges an existing dominant power.
- The concept explains how power transitions can increase geopolitical tensions and chances of war.
- In modern geopolitics, it is commonly used to analyze relations between the United States and China.
- In this context, the United States is viewed as the established power, while China is seen as the rising power.

5. TATP (Triacetone Triperoxide):

Context: National Investigation Agency (NIA) highlights the use of rare explosive mixture TATP in the 2025 Red Fort blast.

About Triacetone Triperoxide:

- Triacetone Triperoxide (TATP) is also known as the "Mother of Satan" and acetone peroxide.
- TATP is a semi-stable crystalline explosive compound.
- It belongs to the class of organic peroxide explosives.
- TATP is considered attractive for terrorist use because it is relatively easy to prepare.

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- The explosive is extremely sensitive to impact, friction, static electricity, and heat.
- Even small quantities of TATP, around 1 gram, can cause serious injury and damage.
- TATP has been used in major terrorist attacks such as the Paris attacks, 2016 Brussels bombings, and Manchester Arena bombing.

6. Bhojshala temple complex:

Context: The Madhya Pradesh High Court, Indore Bench, declared the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Dhar district a temple on 15 May 2026.

About Bhojshala temple complex:

- It is located in Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh, India.
- It was established by Raja Bhoj, the greatest ruler of the Parmar dynasty, as an educational institute.
- It was originally known for Goddess Wagdevi (Saraswati temple), later converted into Kamal Maulana Mosque by Muslim rulers.
- **Notable features:** Large open courtyard (Mahaāyata), Verandah with decorated pillars (Sthāpanā), Prayer hall with intricately carved ceilings (Shikharākāra).

7. Ganges soft-shell turtle:

Context: India released its first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam on 15 May 2026.

About Ganges soft-shell turtle:

- The Indian Softshell Turtle (Nilssonia gangetica), also called the Ganges Softshell Turtle, is one of the world's largest freshwater turtle species.

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- It has a round-to-oval green carapace (upper shell) with a yellow border, along with a long neck and tube-like snout for breathing above water.
- Its compressed shell helps it move quickly, making it an excellent and fast swimmer.
- The species inhabits deep rivers, streams, canals, lakes, and ponds with sandy or muddy bottoms, often remaining buried under sand in turbid waters.
- It is distributed across India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, mainly in the Indus, Ganga, Brahmaputra, Yamuna, Narmada, Meghna, and Mahanadi river basins.
- Indian Softshell Turtles are omnivorous and feed on fish, amphibians, mollusks, insects, carrion, and aquatic plants; their breeding season is from February to April.
- The turtles are considered sacred in parts of Odisha and are often protected in temple ponds.
- Major threats include habitat destruction, agricultural expansion, poaching, illegal trade, and commercial exploitation; the species is listed as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

8. Ebola disease:

Context: Africa's top public health agency said on Friday that there was a confirmed Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri province, with 65 deaths out of 246 suspected cases so far.

About Ebola disease:

- Ebola Virus Disease is a severe and often deadly viral disease caused by orthoebolaviruses.
- First discovered in 1976 in Democratic Republic of the Congo near the Ebola River.
- Mainly found in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Called a hemorrhagic fever because it damages blood clotting and can cause internal bleeding.
- Six species of the virus are identified; four can infect humans.
- Affects humans and other primates like gorillas, monkeys, and chimpanzees.

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- Transmitted from wild animals such as fruit bats, porcupines, and non-human primates to humans.
- Human-to-human spread occurs through direct contact with blood, body fluids, organs, or contaminated materials.
- Ebola is not airborne.
- Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, vomiting, bleeding, weakness, and sometimes death.
- Average fatality rate is about 50%, varying from 25% to 90% in outbreaks.
- No fully approved cure is available; experimental treatments are being used.
- Treatment mainly includes fluid and electrolyte balance, supportive care, and blood/plasma administration to control bleeding.
- Early treatment, lower viral exposure, strong immunity, and patient age influence recovery chances.

9. Living wage under Article 43:

Context: State's duty is to ensure living wages for workers, not label them as 'terrorists', says SC reminding the State of its obligation to provide a "living wage" to workers, in accordance with the Constitution's Directive Principles of State Policy.

About Article 43:

- The State should ensure employment opportunities for all workers.
- Workers should receive a living wage for a decent life.
- Proper working conditions and decent standards of living must be ensured.
- Workers should get leisure, social, and cultural opportunities.
- The State should promote cottage industries in rural areas.
- Cottage industries should be encouraged on individual and cooperative bases.

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Quick Bites:

- Kimberley Process Intersessional 2026 Concludes in Mumbai Under India's Chairship with Focus on Future of Natural Diamond Sector.
- The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), officially inaugurated its dedicated Incubation Center for Startups in Weather and Climate today. The landmark event was marked by a one-day national meet titled 'Weather and Climate Innovation Meet for Startups and Entrepreneurs (WISE-2026)', signaling a new era of private-sector integration in India's meteorological services.
- Rajasthan gets its first Semiconductor Plant India's first SME-led Semiconductor facility by Sahasra Semiconductors inaugurated at Bhiwadi.
- World Health Statistics Report 2026 Released by WHO. It is annual compilation of health and health-related indicators, been published by World Health Organization (WHO) since 2005.
- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) will begin India's first hydrogen-powered shuttle bus service in Delhi's Central Vista area on 15 May 2026.
- Etor Gidi is an agro-based traditional festival of the Adi community in Arunachal Pradesh. It is celebrated at the beginning of the farming season (generally falls in Mid May) and is associated with agricultural rituals, communal participation, and village-level customs.
- The CBI has launched an AI-based helpbot called "Abhay" for authentication of CBI notices, a system designed to protect citizens from the growing menace of digital arrest scams.

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17-05-2026

1. Government e Marketplace (GeM):

Context: Government e Marketplace (GeM) is observing its Incorporation Day 2026, marking its continued role in supporting public procurement in India through transparency, efficiency and technology-driven governance.

About Government e Marketplace (GeM):

- The Government e Marketplace Special Purpose Vehicle (GeM SPV), a Section 8 non-profit company under the Ministry of Commerce, was incorporated on 17 May 2017 under the Companies Act, 2013 to develop, manage and maintain the GeM platform.
- Over the years, GeM has emerged as a major digital public procurement platform, promoting ease of doing business and wider market access for sellers across the country.
- It is an online platform for public procurement.
- It was launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I).
- It was created with the objective to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers to facilitate the online procurement of goods and services.

2. Operation RAGEPILL:

Context: In a major breakthrough against transnational synthetic drug trafficking networks, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), under Operation RAGEPILL, has successfully unearthed an international drug syndicate involved in the trafficking of Captagon.

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More details:

- The Captagon mainly contains Fenetylline and Amphetamine which are Psychotropic Substances under the NDPS Act.
- This operation marks India's first-ever seizure of Captagon in India and exposes attempts by international syndicates to use India as a transit hub.

3. Jaggery Production and Processing in India:

Context: PIB article on Jaggery was published.

About Jaggery Production and Processing in India:

- Jaggery, commonly known as gur, is a traditional, unrefined, natural sweetener.
- It is produced by concentrating sugarcane juice without the use of chemicals. Often called "medicinal sugar", it is nutritionally comparable to honey.
- India accounts for over 70 percent of global jaggery production. This makes it the world's largest jaggery producer.
- Nearly 20–30 percent of the country's sugarcane production is used for jaggery production.
- A good-quality jaggery typically contains more than 70% sucrose, small amounts of glucose and fructose, and about 5% minerals, with low moisture content.
- Jaggery also contains trace amounts of vitamins, including folic acid and B-complex vitamins, as well as vitamins A, C, D, and E. These micronutrients make jaggery an energy-rich food that can help address deficiencies in these nutrients.

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History of jaggery:

- Jaggery is considered an indigenous Indian sweetener with origins linked to the Vedic period.
- References to sugarcane cultivation in India date back to around 1400–1000 BCE.
- Early thin varieties of sugarcane are believed to have evolved in north-eastern India.
- Sugarcane cultivation later spread across tropical and subtropical regions worldwide.
- The word "sugar" is derived from the Sanskrit term sarkara.
- India has deep cultural roots in sweetener production and sugarcane processing.
- In 647 AD, a Chinese mission visited Magadha to learn sugarcane processing techniques.
- India played a major role in the early global diffusion of sweetener-production knowledge.
- The long tradition of cultivation and processing established India as a leading jaggery producer.





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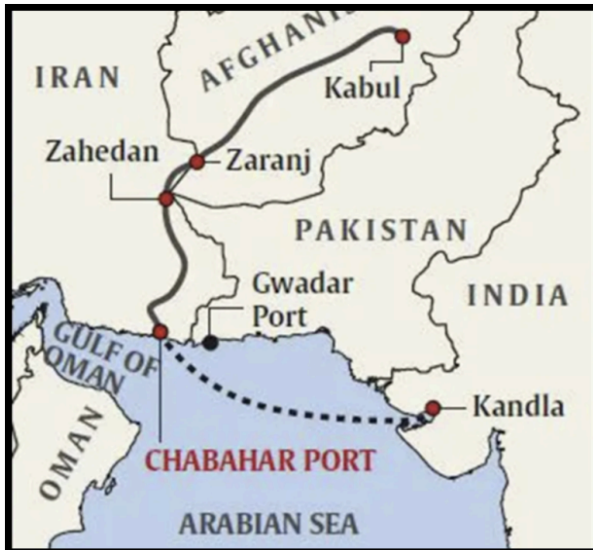
4. Chabahar Port:

Context: Iran's Foreign Minister highlighted Chabahar Port as a key India-Iran cooperation symbol, calling it a golden gate to Central Asia.

About Chabahar Port:

- It is a seaport in the Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran, on the Gulf of Oman, at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz.
- It can potentially help Tehran ward off the effect of Western sanctions.



- Offers India an alternative route that bypasses Pakistan, which does not allow India land access for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- It is also part of the proposed International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) .
- There are two distinct ports in the Chabahar project, Shahid Beheshti and Shahid Kalantari.
- India's investment is restricted to the Shahid Beheshti port.
- India, Iran, and Afghanistan signed a trilateral agreement in April 2016.
- In December 2017, the first phase of Shahid Beheshti port was inaugurated, and India sent its first consignment of wheat to Afghanistan through Chabahar.

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- In December 2018, India Ports Global Limited took over a part of the operations at Shahid Beheshti.

5. Hamsaanandini Nanduri v. Union of India:

Context: The Supreme Court of India delivered a judgment on 17 March 2026 in Hamsaanandini Nanduri v. Union of India. A two-judge bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan struck down Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020.

More details:

- The Supreme Court ruled that adoptive mothers are entitled to 12 weeks of maternity leave irrespective of the child's age at adoption.
- Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020 had earlier limited maternity benefits to adoptions of children below three months of age.
- The Court held that the three-month age restriction was unconstitutional.
- The restriction was found inconsistent with Article 14, which guarantees equality before law.
- The Court also held that the provision violated Article 21, which protects life, personal liberty, and dignity.
- The Code on Social Security, 2020 is one of the four labour codes enacted by Parliament.
- The Code consolidates laws related to maternity benefit, provident fund, gratuity, employees' compensation, and other social security measures.

6. Indus Water Treaty:

Context: India on Saturday rejected an award on the Indus Water Treaty reportedly issued by the Court of Arbitration (CoA) at The Hague on Friday, reiterating that it does not recognise the tribunal as legitimately constituted. The CoA is a five-member arbitral panel, chaired by Sean D. Murphy, constituted in January 2023. It was set up at Pakistan's request after Islamabad challenged

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the design of India's Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects. India has refused to participate, arguing that the technical questions involved fall within the remit of a Neutral Expert appointed in parallel by the World Bank.

About Indus Water Treaty:

- It was signed in 1960 as a water-distribution arrangement between India and Pakistan.
- It develops plans to utilise the Indus and its tributaries as a source of water.
- The World Bank mediated the agreement.
- Under the treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of three rivers, namely
- Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas (Eastern Rivers) were allocated to India for exclusive use.
- While, the waters of Western rivers – Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab were allocated to Pakistan except for specified domestic, non-consumptive, and agricultural use permitted to India as provided in the Treaty.

7. Amur falcons:

Context: Two of the three Amur falcons which were satellite-tagged in Manipur's Tamenglong district in November 2025, are returning to their breeding grounds in the Far East through India, after migrating to the warmer southern Africa region during the winter.

About Amur falcons:

- Amur Falcon is a migratory raptor belonging to the falcon family.
- Scientific name of the Amur Falcon is Falco amurensis.
- It is also known as Eastern Red-footed Falcon, Manchurian Falcon, and Red-legged Falcon.
- The bird breeds in southeastern Siberia and northern China.
- It migrates to southern and eastern Africa during winter.
- Large flocks pass through India, especially the northeastern states, during migration.
- The Amur Falcon undertakes the longest regular overwater migration among raptors.

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- It is an average-sized falcon with a wingspan of 63–71 cm and weighs about 120 g.
- Male and female Amur Falcons show distinct physical differences.
- The male is dark sooty grey with reddish-brown thighs and vent.
- The female has a spotted chest and white underparts with a grey back.
- Both sexes have distinctive orange eye-rings, cere, and feet.
- The male is smaller than the female, similar to many birds of prey.
- Amur Falcons possess sharp eyesight for detecting prey during flight.
- The species is classified as "Least Concern" under the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.

Quick Bites:

- Defence Minister laid the foundation stone for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme facility in Andhra Pradesh. Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft is India's indigenous 5th-generation medium-weight stealth multirole fighter jet being developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency under Defence Research and Development Organisation. The AMCA Mk1 variant will be powered by GE-F414 engines, while the Mk2 variant is planned with indigenous engines. The prototype is expected by 2028–29, with induction into the Indian Air Force targeted by 2034–35.
- Shaheed Sukhdev Thapar's birth anniversary was observed on May 15. Born in 1907 in Ludhiana, Punjab, he was a prominent revolutionary freedom fighter and a key strategist of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). Sukhdev played an important role in revolutionary activities against British rule and was arrested along with Bhagat Singh and Shivaram Rajguru in the Lahore Conspiracy Case related to the assassination of British police officer J.P. Saunders. He was executed in 1931 at the age of 23.
- India and the United Arab Emirates agreed on 15 May 2026 to expand energy cooperation through crude oil storage in India's Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

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- The Netherlands returned the 11th-century Anaimangalam Copper Plates to India on 15 May 2026. Also known as the Leiden Plates, these artefacts belong to the Chola dynasty period in South India and date to the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, who ruled from 985 CE to 1014 CE. The copper plates record land grants and tax arrangements made for the Chudamani Vihara, a Buddhist monastery located at Nagapattinam in present-day Tamil Nadu.
- Scientists working in Antarctica have identified the oldest directly dated ice and air sample on Earth from the Allan Hills region of East Antarctica. The sample contains tiny air bubbles in 6-million-year-old ice and was dated through argon isotope analysis of trapped air.
- The barn swallow (Hirundo rustica) is a widespread synanthrope that has expanded its range across continents. In India, two subspecies of barn swallows are reported to breed in the Himalayas, while one is believed to winter in parts of the country's northeastern region. The researchers note that the study provides the first documentation of a resident breeding population of barn swallows in Manipur, extending the species' known breeding range in the Indian subcontinent.

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18-05-2026

1. C-295 programme:

Context: The first domestically assembled Airbus C-295 military transport aircraft in India was completed at the Tata-Airbus facility in Vadodara on 17 May 2026 and was ready for flight testing.

About C-295:

- The C-295 programme in India includes 16 fly-away aircraft from Spain and 40 aircraft to be manufactured in India under the Make in India framework.
- The first India-made aircraft was expected to begin flight tests in June 2026 and to be delivered to the Indian Air Force in September 2026.
- The aircraft is part of a 56-aircraft contract signed in September 2021 between India and Airbus Defence and Space for the Indian Air Force.
- The Airbus C-295 is designed for tactical airlift operations from semi-prepared strips.
- The aircraft supports transport roles, logistics missions, and medical evacuation tasks for military use.

2. Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe):

Context: The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) led a delegation of nine Indian space-tech companies to Space Meetings Veneto 2026 in Venice, Italy, on 16–17 May 2026. The delegation was headed by Dr. P.K. Jain, Director of the Programme Management and Authorisation Directorate at IN-SPACe.

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About Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe):

- Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) is an autonomous single-window agency under the Department of Space created after India's space sector reforms to promote and regulate private participation in space activities.
- It authorizes, promotes, and supervises non-governmental entities in activities such as satellite building, launch vehicles, and space-based services.
- IN-SPACe facilitates sharing of ISRO/Department of Space infrastructure and acts as an interface between ISRO and private players, educational institutions, and research organisations.
- It functions through three directorates: Promotion Directorate (PD), Technical Directorate (TD), and Program Management & Authorization Directorate (PMAD).
- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) headquarters is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

3. Ebola disease outbreak:

Context: The World Health Organization on Sunday declared the Ebola disease outbreak caused by a rare virus in Congo and neighbouring Uganda a public health emergency of international concern, after more than 300 suspected cases and 88 deaths.

About Ebola disease:

- Ebola Virus Disease is a severe and often deadly viral disease caused by orthoebolaviruses.
- First discovered in 1976 in Democratic Republic of the Congo near the Ebola River.
- Mainly found in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Called a hemorrhagic fever because it damages blood clotting and can cause internal bleeding.
- Six species of the virus are identified; four can infect humans.
- Affects humans and other primates like gorillas, monkeys, and chimpanzees.
- Transmitted from wild animals such as fruit bats, porcupines, and non-human primates to humans.

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- Human-to-human spread occurs through direct contact with blood, body fluids, organs, or contaminated materials.
- Ebola is not airborne.
- Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, vomiting, bleeding, weakness, and sometimes death.
- Average fatality rate is about 50%, varying from 25% to 90% in outbreaks.
- No fully approved cure is available; experimental treatments are being used.
- Treatment mainly includes fluid and electrolyte balance, supportive care, and blood/plasma administration to control bleeding.
- Early treatment, lower viral exposure, strong immunity, and patient age influence recovery chances.

4. Promulgation of Ordinance:

Context: President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated an ordinance increasing the number of judges in the Supreme Court to 37 — excluding the Chief Justice of India. The ordinance has amended Section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 to replace the word "thirty-three" with "thirty-seven".

About promulgation of Ordinance:

- Ordinance-making power of the President is provided under Article 123 of the Constitution of India.
- The President can promulgate an ordinance when Parliament is not in session and immediate action is necessary.
- An ordinance is a temporary law issued by the executive under urgent circumstances.
- Ordinances have the same force and effect as an Act of Parliament.
- The power is an emergency legislative power of the executive, as explained by the Supreme Court.
- India's ordinance system originated from the Indian Councils Act 1861 after the Revolt of 1857.

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- The Government of India Act 1935 gave ordinance powers to the Governor-General, later adopted in the Constitution.
- Ordinances can have a retrospective effect.
- They can amend, repeal, or modify existing laws and tax laws.
- Ordinances cannot amend the Constitution.
- Ordinances must comply with Fundamental Rights under Part III of the Constitution.
- The President acts only on the advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.
- Ordinances can be issued only when both Houses or at least one House of Parliament is not in session.
- The President's satisfaction regarding immediate necessity is subject to judicial review.
- In the R.C. Cooper Case 1970, the Supreme Court held that mala fide ordinances can be challenged in court.
- The 38th Constitutional Amendment Act 1975 made the President's satisfaction non-justiciable.
- The 44th Constitutional Amendment Act 1978 restored judicial review of ordinance-making power.
- Ordinances can be issued only on subjects on which Parliament can legislate.
- Every ordinance must be approved by Parliament after reassembly.
- An ordinance lapses six weeks after Parliament reconvenes if not approved.
- It can be withdrawn earlier if both Houses disapprove it.
- The maximum possible life of an ordinance is about six months and six weeks.

More details on increase of judges:

- Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 provides for increasing the number of Judges of the Supreme Court by 04 i.e. from 33 to 37 (excluding the Chief Justice of India)
- The expenditure on salary of Judges and supporting staff and other facilities will be met from the Consolidated Fund of India.

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- Article 124 (1): Supreme Court to have CJI + up to 7 judges (initial provision).
- The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956: Strength fixed at 10 judges (excluding CJI).
- **1960 Amendment:** Increased to 13 judges (excluding CJI).
- **1977 Amendment:** Increased to 17 judges (excluding CJI).
- **1977–1979 (Cabinet decision):** Working strength restricted to 15 judges (excluding CJI), later withdrawn.
- **1986 Amendment:** Increased to 25 judges (excluding CJI).
- **2008 Amendment:** Increased to 30 judges (excluding CJI).
- **The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2019:** Increased to 33 judges (excluding CJI) (present strength basis).

5. Nalanda University:

Context: Bihar's Nalanda University has formally integrated the ancient Indian tradition of Śāstrārtha, a historical form of philosophical, religious, and intellectual debate, by including it in the programme for the University's third convocation being held this week.

About Nalanda University:

- Nalanda is recognized as the most ancient university on the Indian subcontinent.
- It was established by Kumar Gupta of the Gupta dynasty in Bihar during the early 5th century.
- The university thrived for 600 years until the 12th century.
- It reached its zenith during the reign of Harshavardhan and the Pala monarchs.
- It served as a hub for learning, culture, and intellectual exchange, significantly influencing Indian civilization and beyond.
- It was primarily a place where monks and nuns lived and studied.
- It focused on teaching major philosophies of Buddhism.

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- It attracted students from regions including China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia.
- It offered courses in medicine, Ayurveda, religion, Buddhism, mathematics, grammar, astronomy, and Indian philosophy.
- The university was destroyed in 1193 by Bakhtiyar Khilji, a general of the Turkish ruler Qutbuddin Aibak.
- It was rediscovered in 1812 by Scottish surveyor Francis Buchanan-Hamilton and later identified as the ancient university by Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1861.

Quick Bites:

- In a special ceremony hosted in Gothenburg, Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden conferred upon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi the 'Royal Order of the Polar Star, Degree Commander Grand Cross,' one of Sweden's oldest and most distinguished honours, instituted in the 18th century. The award is Sweden's highest honour conferred on foreign Heads of Government in recognition of exceptional public service and contribution towards strengthening relations with Sweden.
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi accompanied by the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, H.E. Rob Jetten visited the iconic Dutch water management structure, the Afsluitdijk. The visit underscored the shared commitment of both nations to innovative water management solutions, climate resilience, and sustainable infrastructure. The Afsluitdijk, a 32-kilometer-long dam and causeway, is a global benchmark in flood control and land reclamation, protecting large parts of the Netherlands from the North Sea while enabling freshwater storage.
- The Indian Navy inaugurated its premier Naval Sailing Node at Upper Lake, widely known as Bhojtal, in Bhopal on 17 May 2026. Developed as a state-of-the-art facility, the Sailing Node will be extensively utilised by the Indian Navy Sailing Team, the Navy Rowing, Canoeing, and Kayaking Teams, as well as NCC for their training.

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- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated the Innovation & Incubation Centre (IIC) at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

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19-05-2026

1. Coffees of Nagaland:

Context: Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia launches Mission "Coffees of Nagaland"

About Coffees of Nagaland:

- Mission "Coffees of Nagaland" launched with an outlay of ₹175 crore.
- Designed through a whole-of-government approach involving all stakeholders.
- Focuses on ground realities and aspirations of farming communities.
- Adopts a cluster-based coffee development model.
- Tuophema village (Kohima district) selected as pilot cluster for Arabica coffee.
- Ghotovi village (Niuland district) selected as pilot cluster for Robusta coffee.
- Aims to strengthen the entire coffee value chain in Nagaland.
- Includes plantation development and scientific cultivation support.
- Focuses on post-harvest processing and value addition.
- Promotes branding and marketing of Nagaland coffee.
- Emphasises traceability and export promotion.
- Integrates coffee tourism and farmer capacity building initiatives.

2. Demographic Transition Theory (DTT):

Context: Andhra Pradesh has recently announced financial incentives for 3rd child and 4th child to transition Demographics.

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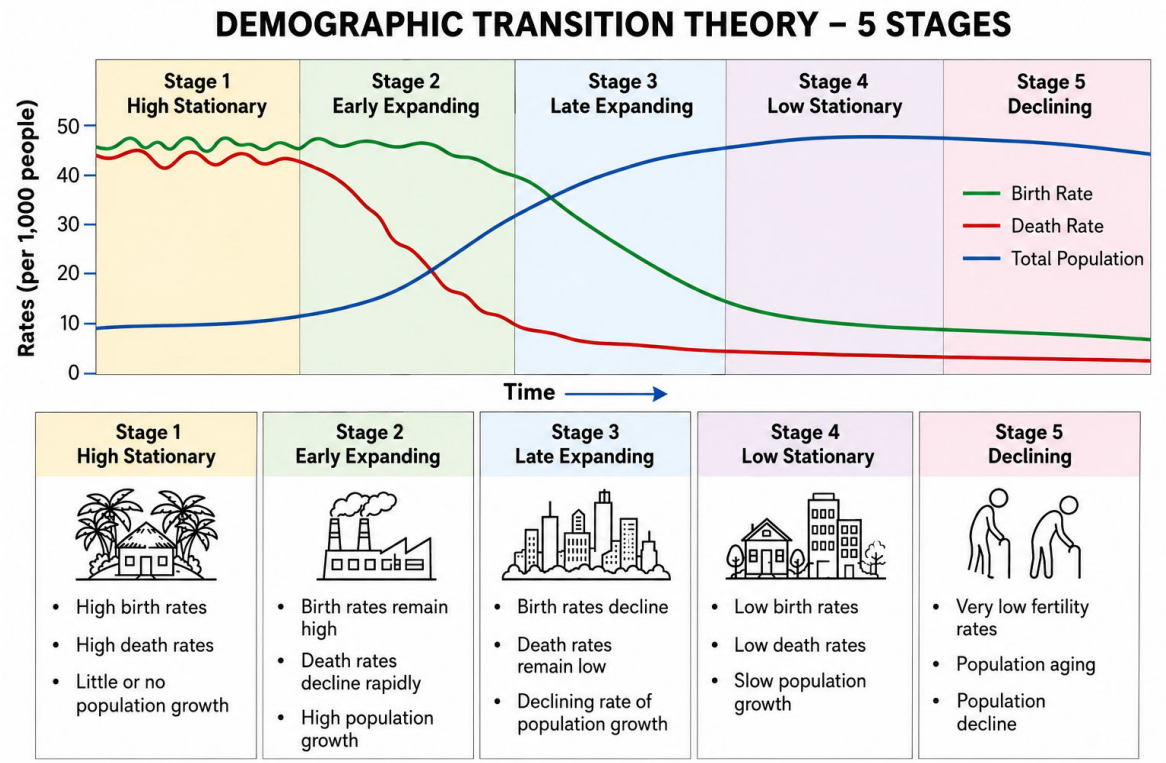
About Demographic Transition Theory (DTT):



- Demographic Transition Theory (DTT) explains the shift from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates.
- It describes changes in population patterns during economic development.
- DTT explains the transformation of a country's population structure over time.
- The theory links demographic change with industrialisation and modernization.
- DTT was first proposed by Warren S. Thompson in 1929.
- The theory was later developed further by Frank W. Notestein in 1945.

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3. Saranda Forest:

Context: Supreme Court has directed Jharkhand to notify the ecologically significant Saranda Forest as a wildlife sanctuary amid concerns over mining, elephant habitats, and conservation of sal forest landscape.

About Saranda Forest:

- Saranda Forest is the largest Sal forest in Asia; "Saranda" means "the land of seven hundred hills."
- Sal is a moist deciduous tree, and the forest also contains Kusum, Mahua, mushrooms and other flora.
- The forest is home to fauna such as elephants and endangered flying lizards.
- Around 80% of the local population belongs to tribal communities including Ho, Munda, Oraon and other primitive tribes.

4. Kalpasar Project:

Context: India's Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Netherlands' Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management signed a Letter of Intent on 17 May 2026 for technical cooperation on Gujarat's Kalpasar Project.

About Kalpasar Project:

- Kalpasar Project is a proposed multipurpose water infrastructure project in Gujarat.
- The project plans to create a freshwater reservoir by constructing a dam across the Gulf of Khambhat.
- It aims to store freshwater from seven rivers flowing into the Gulf of Khambhat.
- The project includes tidal power generation facilities.
- It also proposes irrigation and water supply infrastructure.
- Kalpasar is expected to provide irrigation benefits to nearly 10 lakh hectares of land.

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- The irrigation benefits will cover 42 talukas across nine districts of Saurashtra.
- The project aims to improve transport connectivity between South Gujarat and Saurashtra.
- It seeks to reduce travel distance between South Gujarat and Saurashtra from about 240 km to around 60 km.

5. Operation Smiling Buddha:

Context: India conducted its first successful nuclear test, codenamed Smiling Buddha, on 18 May 1974 at Pokhran in Rajasthan during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The test was officially described as a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion and made India a nuclear-capable nation.

About Operation Smiling Buddha:

- Pokhran Test Range is India's nuclear test site located in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan.
- India conducted its first underground nuclear test at Pokhran in 1974 using plutonium.
- After the 1974 test, India became the sixth country to conduct a nuclear test after the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, France and China.
- India carried out Pokhran-II in May 1998 under Operation Shakti with five nuclear explosions.
- Key scientists associated with Pokhran-II included A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, R. Chidambaram and Anil Kakodkar.
- India declared itself a nuclear weapons state after the 1998 Pokhran-II tests.
- India observes National Technology Day on 11 May to commemorate the Pokhran-II tests and technological achievements.
- A United States nuclear industry delegation is visiting India from 18–21 May 2026 to explore civil nuclear cooperation after the enactment of the SHANTI Act.

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6. Pangolin:

Context: Scientists use DNA maps to find pangolin trafficking hubs. Pangolins are one of the world's most trafficked mammals even as their existence is threatened by shrinking habitats. So to protect them, conservationists are keen to know where they are being poached.

About Pangolin:

- They are nocturnal, toothless mammals that dig burrows and feed on ants and termites.
- Pangolins are scaly anteater mammals and they have large, protective keratin scales covering their skin.
- Pangolin is the only scaly mammal on the planet.
- It uses these scales as armor to defend itself against predators by rolling into a ball when threatened.
- Out of the eight species of pangolin, the Indian Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata) and the Chinese Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) are found in India.
- It occurs in tropical forests, open land, grasslands, and degraded habitat, including in close proximity to villages.

Indian Pangolin

- Range – Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- IUCN – Endangered
- The Indian pangolin, which dons a thick scaly skin, is hunted for meat and used in traditional Chinese medicine.
- Both these species are listed under Schedule I Part I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

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Quick Bites:

- In a special ceremony hosted in Oslo, His Majesty King Herald V of Norway conferred upon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi the 'Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit'.
- The award is Norway's highest honour bestowed on foreign Heads of Government, and is conferred in recognition of the outstanding service in the interest of Norway and humankind.
- Shri Saurabh Vijay assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Monday. He is an IAS officer of the 1998 batch of the Maharashtra cadre.
- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, today inaugurated the Shaheed Veer Gundadhur Seva Dera Jan Suvidha Kendra, a major public service and skill development hub in Bastar, Chhattisgarh.
- India and Norway elevated their bilateral relations to a Green Strategic Partnership on 18 May 2026 in Oslo.
- 'Over 20 IS militants killed' in new strikes by Nigeria, U.S. forces. The Nigerian military said on Monday that a new operation with U.S. forces has killed more than 20 Islamic State group militants in Borno state. The operation in Metele followed the killing of Abu Bakr al-Mainuki, deputy leader of the group's local West African "province".
- Russia launches attacks on Odesa and Dnipro as Ukraine targets Belgorod.

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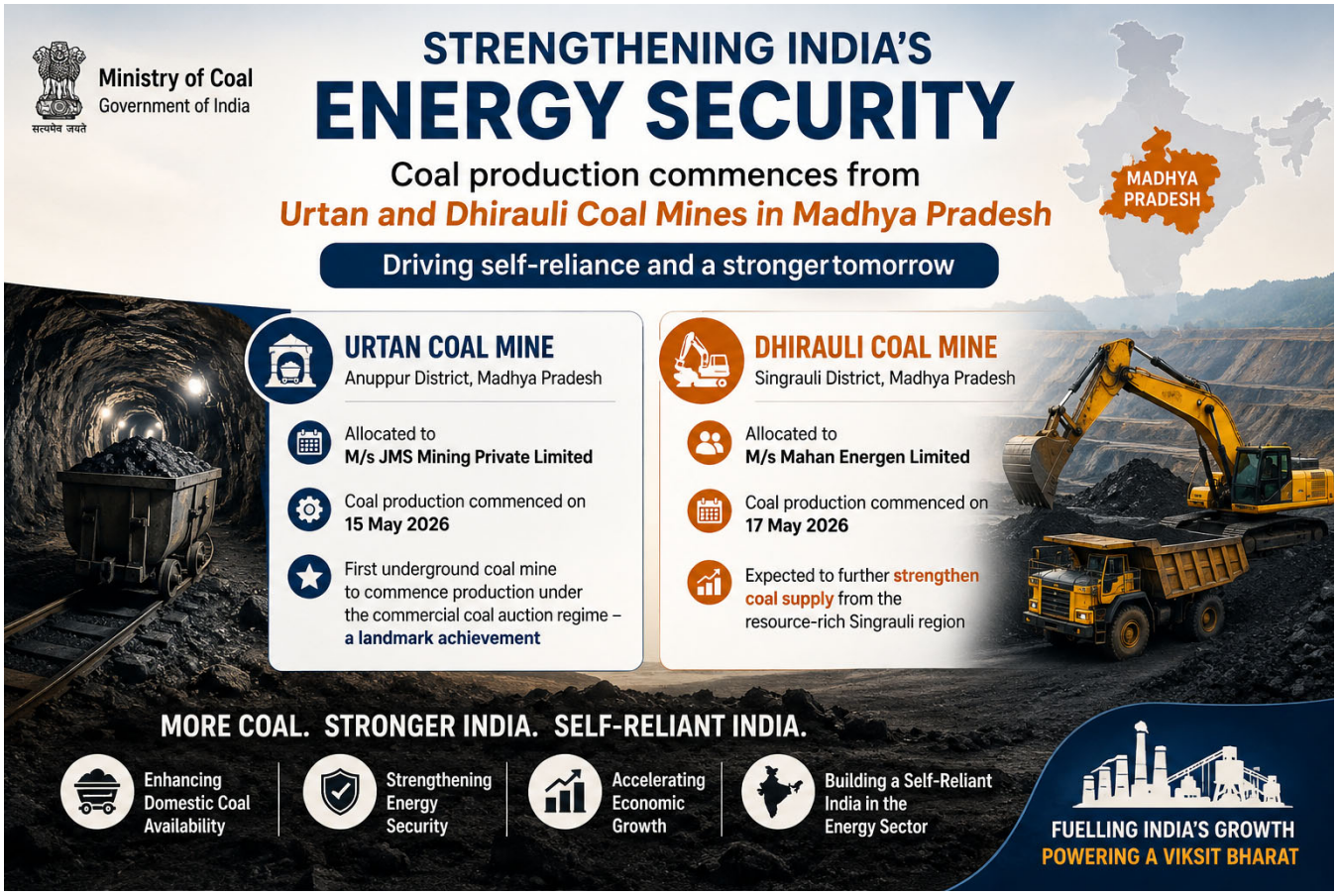
20-05-2026

1. New Coal Mines:

Context: Coal Production commences from Urtan and Dhirauli Mines in Madhya Pradesh.

More details:



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- The Ministry of Coal commenced coal production at the Urtan and Dhirauli coal mines in Madhya Pradesh to strengthen India's energy security and self-reliance.
- The Urtan Coal Mine is located in Anuppur district, Madhya Pradesh, and has been allocated to M/s JMS Mining Private Limited.
- Coal production at the Urtan Coal Mine began on 15 May 2026.
- Urtan became the first underground coal mine to start production under the commercial coal auction regime.
- The Dhirauli Coal Mine is located in Singrauli district, Madhya Pradesh, and has been allocated to M/s Mahan Energen Limited.
- Coal production at the Dhirauli Coal Mine commenced on 17 May 2026.
- The Dhirauli mine is expected to strengthen coal supply from the resource-rich Singrauli region.

2. Zonal Councils:

Context: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, today chaired the 26th meeting of the Central Zonal Council (CZC) in Bastar, Chhattisgarh.

About Zonal Councils:

- Zonal Councils are statutory bodies established under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, to promote cooperative federalism and inter-State coordination.
- The concept of Zonal Councils was proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1956 during discussions on the Fazal Ali Commission Report.
- Five Zonal Councils were created under Sections 15–22 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.

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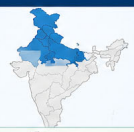
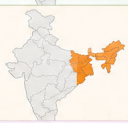
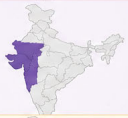
ZONAL COUNCIL & STATES

Zonal Council	States	
NORTHERN ZONAL COUNCIL	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Chandigarh	
CENTRAL ZONAL COUNCIL	Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand	
EASTERN ZONAL COUNCIL	Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim	
WESTERN ZONAL COUNCIL	Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, and Daman & Diu	
SOUTHERN ZONAL COUNCIL	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry	

- The North Eastern region has a separate body called the North Eastern Council, established under the North Eastern Council Act, 1972.
- The Union Home Minister serves as the Chairman of all five Zonal Councils and is also the ex-officio Chairman of the North Eastern Council.
- The Vice-Chairman is the Chief Minister of a member state, selected by annual rotation.
- Members include Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors, Administrators, and two ministers nominated by the Governor from each member state.
- Advisors include nominees from NITI Aayog, along with Chief Secretaries and Development Commissioners of member states.
- Each Zonal Council has a Permanent Committee of Chief Secretaries to examine issues before placing unresolved matters before the full Council.
- Zonal Councils provide a platform for dialogue and coordination between states and the Centre on common issues.

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- Though advisory in nature, Zonal Councils have become important instruments of cooperative federalism, with 61 meetings held in the last 11 years.
- Key issues discussed include speedy investigation of sexual offences, implementation of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs), banking access in villages, ERSS-112, and regional development sectors like health, education, nutrition, electricity, urban planning, and cooperatives.

3. Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Project:

Context: The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) organized a One-day Community Awareness Programme on Dam Safety at the Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Project in Himachal Pradesh on 19 May 2026 with the objective of strengthening public awareness, disaster preparedness and coordination among stakeholders associated with dam safety and emergency response.

About Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Project:

- The Nathpa Jhakri Dam is a concrete gravity dam on the Sutlej river in Rampur Bushahr, Shimla district, Himachal Pradesh, India.
- The primary purpose of the dam is hydroelectric power production and it supplies a 1,500 megawatts (2,000,000 hp) underground power station with water.
- On 6 September 2025, after extreme levels of rainfall a massive landslide near the dam blocked the National Highway-5 nearby and caused concern for the dam.

4. Solar wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer (SMILE) Mission:

Context: The SMILE mission successfully launched aboard a Vega-C rocket from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana.

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About SMILE mission:

- Joint Mission of the European Space Agency and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.
- **Objective:** To capture the first-ever panoramic imaging of the interaction between solar wind and Earth's magnetosphere.
- The mission aims to improve understanding of space weather phenomena such as geomagnetic storms.
- Key instruments include Light Ion Analyser, Magnetometer, Soft X-ray Imager, and Ultraviolet Aurora Imager.
- It features the world's first space-borne Soft X-ray Imager (SXI) to visualize the previously invisible boundaries of Earth's magnetosphere.
- The mission uses an integrated observation system for simultaneous global imaging and direct measurement of solar wind parameters.

5. S-400 Defence System:

Context: India is set to receive the fourth squadron of the Russian-origin S-400 air defence missile system by the end of the week of 19 May 2026.

About S-400 Defence System:

- The S-400 Triumf, also known in India as "Sudarshan Chakra," is one of the world's most advanced long-range surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems developed by Russia's Almaz-Antey.
- India signed a $5.4 billion deal with Russia in 2018 to procure five S-400 units, making it one of India's largest defence acquisitions.
- The S-400 was designed to replace the older S-200 and S-300 air defence systems and counter advanced Western systems like the MIM-104 Patriot.
- During the May 2025 India–Pakistan conflict, India used the S-400 system to intercept Pakistani missiles and drones targeting areas such as Jammu, Pathankot, and Amritsar.

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- The system can engage multiple aerial threats including fighter aircraft, drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles.
- The S-400's radar can detect targets up to 600 km away and simultaneously track around 300 targets while engaging 36 threats.
- Its missile variants include 9M96E/9M96E2 (120 km range), 48N6E3 (250 km range), and 40N6E (400 km range).
- The missiles can travel at speeds up to 17,000 km/h (around Mach 14) and operate at altitudes ranging from 10 metres to 30 km.
- The system is highly mobile, can be deployed within 5–10 minutes, and features "shoot and scoot" capability for rapid relocation after firing.
- The S-400 integrates advanced phased-array radars, electronic warfare resistance, multiple guidance systems, and interoperability with systems like S-300, Tor, and Pantsir, making it a powerful air defence shield.

6. Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967:

Context: The Delhi Police told the Supreme Court that the question of whether prolonged incarceration and delay of trial could override the statutory restrictions on bail under anti-terror laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, may warrant consideration by a larger Bench in view of two "conflicting" judgments rendered by coordinate Benches.

What has happened?

- The case relates to bail pleas filed by accused in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA).
- Section 43D(5) of the UAPA places strict conditions on granting bail in terror-related cases and makes bail difficult if the allegations appear prima facie true.

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- In Union of India v. K.A. Najeeb, the Supreme Court held that prolonged incarceration and delay in trial can override these strict bail restrictions.
- However, a January 2025 Supreme Court judgment denying bail to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam took a stricter view under UAPA.
- On May 18, 2026, another Supreme Court Bench while granting bail in a narco-terror case reaffirmed that "bail is the rule and jail is the exception," even under UAPA, and questioned the earlier January 2025 ruling.
- Due to these differing judgments, the Delhi Police argued that there is a legal conflict regarding bail under UAPA.
- The main issue is whether constitutional rights such as personal liberty and speedy trial can outweigh the statutory restrictions on bail under anti-terror laws.

About Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967:

- Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 was enacted in 1967 to prevent unlawful and anti-national activities in India.
- The Act defines "unlawful activity" as actions aimed at disrupting India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- The Central Government has the power to declare any activity or association as unlawful through an Official Gazette notification.
- The Act provides for stringent punishments, including life imprisonment and the death penalty in certain cases.
- Both Indian and foreign nationals can be prosecuted under UAPA, even for offences committed outside India.

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- Investigating agencies can file a chargesheet within 180 days of arrest, with possible extension through court approval.
- The 2004 amendment added "terrorist act" provisions and empowered the government to ban organisations involved in terrorism; 34 outfits were banned under these provisions.
- Before 2004, the Act mainly dealt with unlawful activities related to secession and cession of territory.
- The 2019 amendment empowered the government to designate individuals, and not just organisations, as terrorists.
- The Act authorises the Director General of the National Investigation Agency to approve seizure or attachment of property in NIA-investigated cases.
- Officers of the NIA of Inspector rank or above are empowered to investigate terrorism cases under the Act.

7. AH-64E Apache attack helicopters:

Context: The U.S. Department of State has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale to India for follow-on sustainment support and related equipment for AH-64E Apache attack helicopters at an estimated cost of $198.2 million.

About AH-64E Apache attack helicopters:

- Boeing AH-64E Apache Guardian is regarded as one of the world's most advanced multi-role combat helicopters.
- The helicopter is widely used for advanced reconnaissance, precision strike, and close air support missions.
- It is manufactured by Boeing in the United States and is also known as the "Apache Guardian."
- The AH-64E is the latest Apache variant operated by the United States Army.

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- Several countries including India, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Kuwait, Netherlands, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, UAE, and the UK operate the Apache helicopter.
- India currently operates 22 AH-64E Apache helicopters with the Indian Air Force, and in 2020, India signed a deal with Boeing for six additional Apaches for the Indian Army.

Quick Bites:

- Under India's BRICS Chairship for 2026, the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India will be organising the BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting on 20–21 May 2026 in Indore.
- Iran has announced the establishment of the Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA), a new regulatory body tasked with overseeing and managing operations in the strategically important Strait of Hormuz. The PGSA will monitor developments and coordinate activities related to the vital global shipping corridor. Under the new regulatory framework, vessels entering the Strait of Hormuz will be required to comply with directives issued by the authority and obtain transit permits before passage.
- Bharat Forge, through its Aerospace business, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 19 May 2026 to establish India's first private-sector Marine Gas Turbine repair, overhaul, and indigenous development complex in Visakhapatnam. The project will come up over about 80 acres within the Andhra Pradesh Defence Manufacturing Corridor and will be located near the Naval Dockyard, INS Eksila, and the Eastern Naval Command Headquarters.
- The solar wind is a stream of charged particles flowing outwards from the sun. As the solar wind nears the magnetic field of a planet, it becomes compressed near the magnetic boundaries. This creates a difference in pressure, or pressure gradient, that squeezes the charged particles along the magnetic field, away from the stream. As a result, closer to the stream is an area with a lower density of charged particles. This is called the Zwan-Wolf effect.

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21-05-2026

1. Metre Convention:

Context: The Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India, today commemorated World Metrology Day 2026, marking the 151st anniversary of the historic Metre Convention signed in Paris on 20th May 1875. The theme of this year's World Metrology Day is "Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making".

About Metre Convention:

- The Metre Convention, also called the Treaty of the Metre, was signed in Paris on 20 May 1875 to establish a globally standardized system of measurements.
- The Convention was initially signed by 17 founding countries including France, USA, Germany, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire.
- The treaty established the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) for international coordination of metrology.
- It also created the CGPM and CIPM as governing bodies for global measurement standards.
- The Convention developed international prototype standards of the metre and kilogram, preserved at the BIPM.
- In 1921, the Convention expanded to include all physical quantities, forming the basis of the International System of Units (SI).
- The SI system evolved from the framework established under the Metre Convention.
- As of October 2024, the Metre Convention has 64 member states worldwide.
- Organizations such as the IAEA, WMO, IRMM, and ESA participate in the CIPM Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA).

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- The Convention promotes uniformity in measurements for science, industry, trade, and technology globally.
- India joined the Metre Convention in 1957 after passing the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1956.
- Membership enabled India to align its standards with internationally accepted measurement systems.
- Indian measurement standards received global recognition through participation in the Metre Convention framework.
- India recently became the 13th country authorized to issue OIML Certificates under the OIML Certification System.

2. PRAGATI 2026:

Context: Multilateral military exercise PRAGATI 2026 commenced today at Umroi Military Station, Meghalaya, with the participation from 12 friendly nations, namely Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

About PRAGATI 2026:

- PRAGATI stands for Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The exercise is conducted in the spirit of equality, friendship, and mutual respect among participating nations.
- PRAGATI provides a common platform for professional military exchange and cooperation.
- The exercise aims to strengthen military-to-military ties among participating armies.
- It focuses on enabling seamless coordination during joint multinational operations.

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- The exercise promotes sharing of expertise and exchange of best practices among participating countries.
- PRAGATI seeks to establish institutional mechanisms for defence cooperation and knowledge sharing.
- Joint training and cultural exchange activities are conducted to enhance camaraderie among troops.
- The exercise also focuses on developing common concepts for intelligence management and sharing in a multinational environment.
- The two-week exercise focuses on counter-terrorism operations in semi-mountainous and jungle terrain.
- Training activities include joint planning exercises, tactical drills, and coordinated operations.
- The exercise aims to improve adaptability, endurance, and tactical proficiency of troops.
- Special emphasis is laid on physical fitness, discipline, and operational coordination in challenging conditions.

3. Arunachal Kiwi:

Context: Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia launches the Mission on "Arunachal Kiwi: The USP of Arunachal Pradesh"

About Arunachal Kiwi:

- Mission on Arunachal Kiwi has been launched with an outlay of approximately ₹167 crore.
- The Mission follows a whole-of-government and convergence-led approach led by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER).
- It integrates schemes of the Ministries of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food Processing Industries.
- Institutions such as NABARD, ICAR-CITH, APEDA, NERAMAC, and private investors are key partners in the Mission.

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- The Mission has been designed by considering the perspectives of all stakeholders in the kiwi value chain.
- The initiative aims to address ground realities and support the aspirations of kiwi-farming communities in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Mission adopts a cluster-based development approach for kiwi cultivation and processing.
- Six integrated cluster-level Post-Harvest Management Hubs have been identified under the Mission.
- The hubs are located in Ziro Valley, Dirang, Kalaktang, Shi Yomi, and Dibang Valley.
- India is an emerging producer of kiwifruit with annual production exceeding 13,000 metric tonnes.
- Kiwi cultivation in India is spread across nearly 4,000–5,000 hectares of land.
- Arunachal Pradesh is the leading kiwi-producing state in India.
- Arunachal Pradesh contributes more than 50% of India's total kiwi production.

4. Nordic group:

Context: 3rd India-Nordic Summit 2026 held in Oslo, Norway. This Summit builds upon the previous two Summits held in Copenhagen in 2022 and Stockholm in 2018.

About Nordic countries:

- Nordic group is a highly advanced regional bloc consisting of 5 countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark).
- The Nordic countries, also known as the Nordics or Norden, form a geographical and cultural region in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic.
- The Nordic region includes Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.
- Autonomous territories in the Nordic region include the Faroe Islands and Greenland.
- Åland is an autonomous region associated with the Nordic countries.

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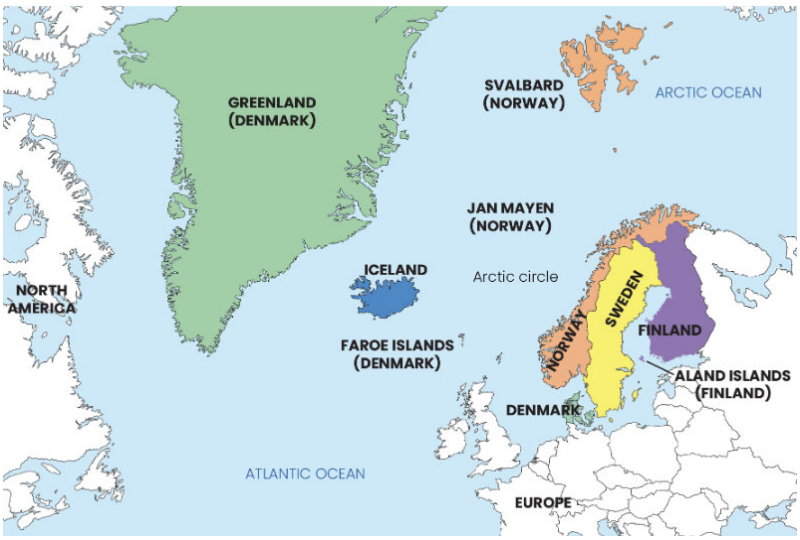
- The Nordic countries share similarities in history, culture, lifestyle, religion, and socio-economic systems.
- The region has a long history of political unions and close cooperation among member countries.
- The Scandinavist movement in the 19th century aimed to unite Denmark, Norway, and Sweden into a single state.
- The movement later expanded following Norway's independence, Finland's independence, and Iceland's constitutional referendum of 1944.
- Modern Nordic cooperation has been institutionalised since 1962 through the Helsinki Treaty.
- The Helsinki Treaty provides the framework for the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.



5. Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3:

Context: DRDO completes development trials of ULPGM-V3.

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About ULPGM-V3:

- ULPGM-V3 is a fully indigenous, lightweight, fire-and-forget precision-guided missile designed for launch from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).
- The missile has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation in collaboration with Bharat Dynamics Limited and Adani Defence Systems.
- ULPGM-V3 has a strike range of up to 10 kilometres.
- The missile operates in dual modes including Air-to-Ground mode for anti-armour and anti-tank strikes, and Air-to-Air mode against drones, helicopters, and low-flying aerial threats.
- It features an Integrated Ground Control System and a dual-channel seeker for high-accuracy day-and-night operations.

6. Hop Experiment:

Context: Scientists have revealed groundbreaking details about the Moon's upper surface at the Shiv Shakti landing site of Chandrayaan-3, utilizing data gathered during the "hop" experiment.

About Hop experiment:

- The Hop Experiment was conducted near the end of the active mission life of the Vikram lander under Indian Space Research Organisation.
- The experiment demonstrated ISRO’s capability to reignite the Vikram lander’s engines after landing on the lunar surface.
- The maneuver successfully lifted the lander off the Moon’s surface, validating technology crucial for future lunar sample-return missions.
- The experiment revealed that the lunar surface has layered “cake-like” strata formed by continuous micrometeorite impacts over time.
- Findings showed that lunar soil becomes denser and more cohesive a few centimeters beneath the surface.

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- Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment observed rapid temperature drops during lunar twilight due to the Moon's airless environment.

7. Shukrayaan mission:

Context: Sweden joins India's Shukrayaan (Venus Orbiter) mission.

About Shukrayaan (Venus Orbiter) mission:

- Indian Space Research Organisation's Venus mission is India's first dedicated scientific mission to explore the planet Venus.
- The mission was approved by the Government of India in 2024.
- The mission aims to study the Venusian surface, subsurface, atmospheric processes, and the Sun's influence on Venus' atmosphere.
- The mission is planned for launch in March 2028.
- ISRO will develop the spacecraft and carry out the mission launch operations.
- LVM3 has been identified as the launch vehicle for the mission.
- The spacecraft will initially be placed into an Elliptical Parking Orbit (EPO) before proceeding toward Venus.

8. 52nd G7 Summit:

Context: French President Emmanuel Macron invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the 52nd G7 Summit, which France will preside over in 2026. The summit is scheduled from 15 to 17 June 2026 in Évian-les-Bains, Haute-Savoie, France.

About G7 summit:

- The G7 originated from a 1973 meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors in Paris, France.

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- The origin of G7 lies in the oil shocks of 1973 and the corresponding financial crisis.
- In order to address the situation after oil shock, the heads of the world's six leading industrial nations decided to hold a meeting in 1975.
- These six nations were - the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan and Italy.
- These countries were joined by Canada in 1976 and G7 came into existence.
- The G7 is not based on a treaty and has no permanent secretariat or office. The agenda of G7 is set by the presiding nation.
- It cannot pass any laws because it is made up of separate nations with their own democratic processes.
- However, decisions taken by G7 have global effects as the member countries are political and economic heavyweights.

9. International Booker Prize:

Context: Taiwanese author Yáng Shuāng-zi and translator Lin King won the International Booker Prize on Tuesday for Taiwan Travelogue, a historical romance set in Japan-occupied Taiwan in the 1930s. It is the first novel written in Mandarin Chinese to win the prestigious prize for fiction translated into English. This is also the second year in a row that the independent press, And Other Stories, has taken home the prize, following Heart Lamp last year.

About International Booker Prize:

- The International Booker Prize is an annual literary award established in 2005 as the Man Booker International Prize.
- It honours the best long-form fiction or short story collections translated into English and published in the UK and/or Ireland.
- The prize recognises both authors and translators, with the £50,000 award shared equally between them.

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- Shortlisted authors and translators each receive an additional £2,500.
- The award aims to promote global literature and encourage reading of quality translated fiction worldwide.
- Indian winners include Geetanjali Shree for Tomb of Sand (2022, translated by Daisy Rockwell), the first Hindi work to win, and Banu Mushtaq for Heart Lamp (2025, translated by Deepa Bhasthi), the first Kannada work to win.

Quick Bites:

- The 68th Session of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Governing Body is being hosted by the Government of India, as Chair of the APO, from 20 to 22 May 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- Ms. Neelam Shami Rao, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, today, launched the Bharat Tex 2026 Event App, a unified digital platform designed to enhance the experience of buyers, international delegates, speakers, sourcing consultants, partners, exhibitors, and visitors at India's largest global textile event.
- World Bee Day is observed on 20 May each year to recognise the role of bees and other pollinators in agriculture, biodiversity, and ecosystem functioning.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the FAO Agricola Medal on 20 May 2026 at the Food and Agriculture Organization Headquarters in Rome, Italy. The Agricola Medal is one of the highest honours of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It is awarded to leaders for work related to agricultural transformation, food security, sustainable agriculture, and rural development.
- The Pune-based private sector defence manufacturer Nibe Ltd. has successfully conducted firing trials of its indigenous Suryastra rockets with strike ranges of 150 km and 300 km at the Integrated Test Range on May 18 and 19. The trials mark the first time an Indian private defence company

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has demonstrated indigenous long-range rocket systems of such capability, representing a significant milestone in India's defence preparedness.

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22-05-2026

1. UMMID (Unique Methods of Management of Inherited Disorders) Programme:

Context: Dr. Jitendra Singh Dedicates UMMID Programme to the Nation; Says Genomic and Precision Medicine Will Shape the Future of Healthcare.

About UMMID (Unique Methods of Management of Inherited Disorders) Programme:

- UMMID initiative aims to use advanced scientific technology and molecular medicine through government hospitals to achieve Universal Health Coverage.
- The programme is based on the principle of "Prevention is better than Cure."
- Congenital malformations and genetic disorders are the third leading cause of newborn mortality in urban India.
- High population, high birth rate, and consanguineous marriages contribute to the high prevalence of genetic disorders in India.
- UMMID seeks to establish NIDAN Kendras for counselling, prenatal testing, diagnosis, and multidisciplinary care in government hospitals.
- The initiative focuses on producing skilled clinicians in Human Genetics.
- It aims to screen pregnant women and newborns for inherited genetic diseases in aspirational districts.
- The programme promotes awareness about genetic disorders among clinicians and strengthens molecular diagnostics in hospitals.
- UMMID aims to shift healthcare focus from "sick-care" to preventive "wellness" care.

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2. World Cities Report 2026:

Context: World Cities Report 2026 Released by UN-Habitat titled "The Global Housing Crisis Pathways to Action".

Highlights of the report:

- **Global Housing Crisis:** Around 3.4 billion people worldwide lack access to adequate housing.
- **Homelessness in India:** India records a homelessness rate of 13 per 10,000 people as per the Institute of Global Homelessness.
- **Climate Threat to Housing:** Climate-related hazards are projected to destroy nearly 167 million homes by 2040.
- **Housing and Emissions:** Housing sector contributes about 17–21% of total global emissions.
- **Weak Housing Policies:** Many national housing policies fail to address affordability, tenure security, accessibility, and other adequacy dimensions.
- **Rising Housing Prices:** Global price-to-income ratios increased from 9.5 (2010) to 11.7 (2023), making housing less affordable.
- **India's Urban Housing Costs:** Mumbai and Delhi have high price-to-income ratios of 14.3 and 10.1 respectively.

3. Ease of Doing Research & Development in India:

Context: Ease of Doing Research & Development in India Report Released by NITI Aayog.

Major highlights:

- **Low R&D Spending:** India's Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) is about 0.65% of GDP, far below the USA, China, and South Korea.
- **Shortage of Researchers:** India has only 262 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) researchers per million people, much lower than the USA and China as per the Global Innovation Index 2025.

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- **Dependence on Public Funding:** Around 64% of India's R&D funding comes from the government, unlike advanced economies where the private sector contributes nearly 60%.
- **Human Resource Challenges:** Delays in scholarship disbursal and weak incentives discourage researchers and innovation.
- **Poor Technology Commercialization:** Limited institutions like Council of Scientific and Industrial Research labs have Independent Business Divisions to translate research into products.
- **Weak State-Level R&D Ecosystem:** State institutions face inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and heavy affiliation burdens on faculty.
- **Increase R&D Investment:** The report recommends raising GERD to at least 2% of GDP within the next 4–5 years.
- **Unified Fellowship System:** Creation of 'Vigyan Nidhi' is suggested to streamline fellowship funding and reduce delays.
- **State-Level Innovation Clusters:** The report proposes RDI clusters integrating HEIs, R&D institutions, MSMEs, PSUs, and industries.
- **Science Policy Institution:** Establishment of a National Institute for Science Policy and Governance (NISPG), similar to South Korea's STEPI and Japan's NISTEP, is recommended.

4. Dollar-Rupee Swap:

Context: RBI announced a $5 billion dollar-rupee swap auction for a tenor of three years to inject liquidity.

About Dollar-Rupee Swap:

- **Nature of the Swap:** The arrangement is a simple buy/sell foreign exchange swap conducted by the Reserve Bank of India.
- **Swap Mechanism:** Banks sell US dollars to the RBI and simultaneously agree to repurchase the same amount at the end of the swap period.

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- **Dollar-Rupee Swap:** It is a forex liquidity management tool involving the exchange of US dollars and Indian rupees with a future reversal agreement.
- **Liquidity Management:** The swap helps the RBI inject or absorb rupee liquidity in the banking system.
- **Forex Market Stability:** It is used to stabilize foreign exchange markets and manage exchange rate volatility.
- **Policy Objective:** Dollar-Rupee swaps support smooth functioning of currency markets and overall financial stability.

5. Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS):

Context: The Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS) for the Gaganyaan mission is an indigenous system developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It replicates Earth's atmospheric conditions, manages air revitalization, and ensures astronaut survival within the crew module during the mission's 400 km orbit.

More details:

- **Carbon Dioxide Removal:** Indian Space Research Organisation's Gaganyaan uses lithium hydroxide canisters and activated charcoal to remove carbon dioxide and cabin odours.
- **Air Revitalisation System:** The ARS supplies oxygen, removes contaminants and circulates air using fans in microgravity conditions.
- **Oxygen Requirement:** Each astronaut requires about 0.84 kg oxygen per day for metabolic activities.
- **Temperature & Humidity Control:** Cabin temperature is maintained between 20–26°C and humidity between 30–70% for crew comfort and equipment safety.
- **Cooling & Condensation:** Heat exchangers remove excess heat while condensing units collect moisture to prevent fogging and short-circuits.

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- **Pressure Maintenance:** Cabin pressure is maintained at 101.3 kPa using sensors and safety valves to simulate Earth-like conditions.
- **Water Management:** Drinking water is stored in pressurised pouches and squeezed directly into the mouth in microgravity.
- **Waste Management:** Suction-based systems collect urine and solid waste, which is chemically treated and stored safely.
- **Fire Safety:** Smoke detectors and fine water mist extinguishers are used to detect and suppress fires in microgravity.

About Gaganyan Mission:

- It is India's ongoing project to send a 3-day manned mission to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with a crew of 4 members and bring them safely back to Earth.
- It will circle Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an altitude of 300-400 km from earth for 5-7 days.
- Its immediate aim is to demonstrate indigenous capability to undertake human space flights.
- **Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM-3):** It is a 3-stage space launch vehicle operated by the ISRO to launch satellites and other space objects into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbits.
- The third stage of this vehicle uses a Cryogenic engine, which uses liquefied oxygen and hydrogen as fuel.
- It has been designed for launching communication satellites.
- GSLV delivers satellites into a higher elliptical orbit - GTO.

Quick Bites:

➢ The Ministry of Education, Government of India, in association with the Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association (IVCA), convened the Bharat Innovates Investor Showcase in Bengaluru on 19 May 2026. The Showcase brought together 24 high-potential Indian DeepTech start-ups from the Bharat Innovates selected cohort, curated by a committee of leading investors.

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- During Indian Prime Minister's official visit to Italy, India and Italy deepened cooperation in elevated bilateral ties from a Strategic Partnership to a Special Strategic Partnership.
- Tata Electronics' semiconductor assembly and test facility is located at Jagiroad in Morigaon district of Assam. Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the commencement of the greenfield project on 13 March 2024. The project involves an investment of ₹27,000 crore, or about USD 3.6 billion.
- The National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) announced RAINMUMBAI on 20 May 2026 as India's first SEBI-approved exchange-traded weather derivatives contract. The contract is a cash-settled futures instrument linked to rainfall data for Mumbai during the monsoon months of June to September. Weather derivatives are financial contracts that derive value from weather variables such as rainfall, temperature, snowfall, or wind speed. They are used in commodity and financial markets to manage weather-linked price and revenue risk.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and the Republic of Korea's Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs Kwon Oh-eul jointly inaugurated the Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Park in Seoul on Wednesday, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Korean War and honouring the contribution of Indian troops during the conflict.

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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.

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- 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.

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- 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.

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- 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 Pacchikari 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.

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	• 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 – Convenient Action 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.

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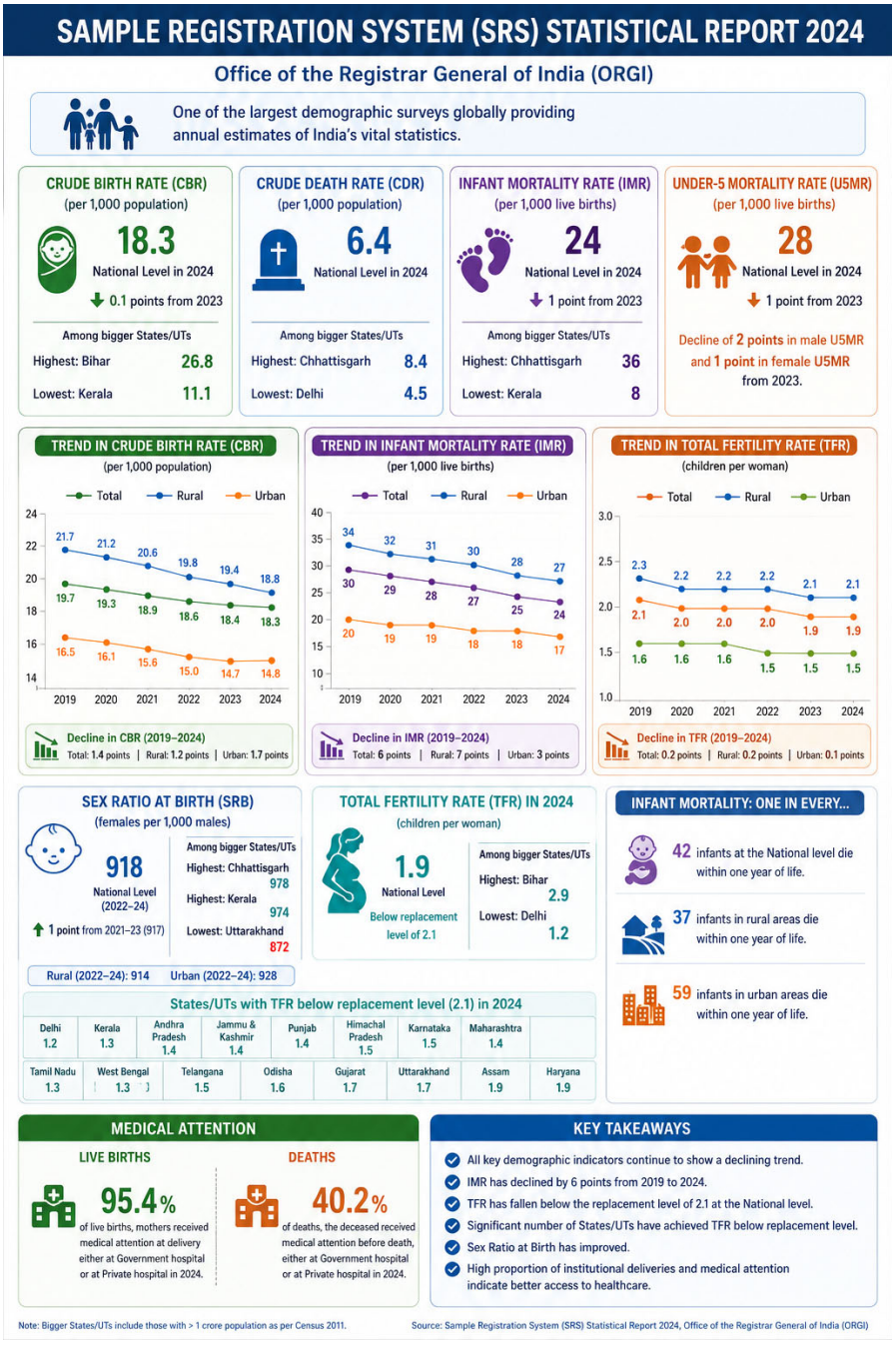
Major highlights:



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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.

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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.

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- 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).

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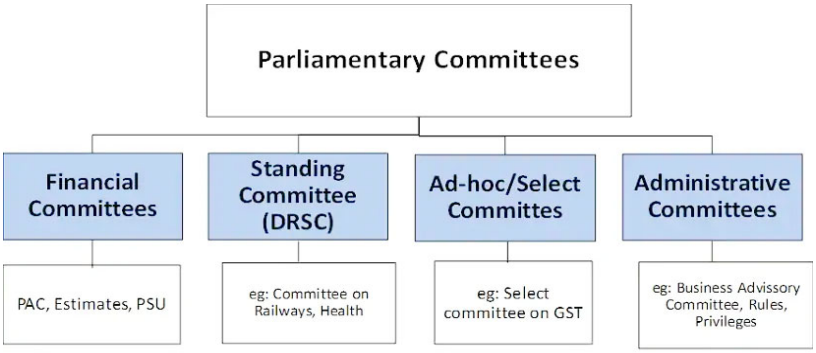

- The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was introduced in 1921 after its mention in the Government of India Act, 1919 (Montford Reforms).
- The PAC is constituted every year under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.
- The Chairman of the PAC is appointed by the Speaker 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.

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- 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 Uprashtrapati Bhavan. Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker is known as the Father of the Library Movement in the Indian state of Kerala.

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- 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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24-05-2026

1. Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA):

Context: The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, has released the detailed operational guidelines for the implementation of the BHAVYA Scheme, a landmark Central Sector Scheme aimed at developing investment-ready, world-class industrial parks across the country.

About Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA):

- The Scheme provides for development of 100 industrial parks over a period of six years from 2026-27 to 2031-32, with a total financial outlay of approximately ₹33,660 crore.
- In the first phase, up to 50 industrial parks will be taken up through a challenge-based competitive selection process.
- The scheme aims to develop world-class industrial infrastructure, unlocking manufacturing potential and driving India's growth story.
- Building on the success of Industrial Smart Cities developed under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) framework, BHAVYA will be implemented in partnership with states and private sector players.
- Under the scheme, industrial parks ranging from 100 to 1000 acres will be taken up for development.
- Financial support of up to Rs. One crore per acre will be provided for:
  - Core infrastructure (internal roads, underground utilities, drainage, common treatment facilities, ICT and administrative systems)
  - Value-added infrastructure (ready-built factory sheds, built-to-suit units, testing labs, warehousing)

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- Social infrastructure (worker housing and support amenities)
- Support for external infrastructure will also be provided up to 25% of the project cost, ensuring seamless connectivity and integration with existing networks.

2. Sakura Science Programme:

Context: Indian students to visit Japan under Sakura Science Programme 2026. The Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India, today flagged off a group of students participating in the Sakura Science Programme 2026 at a ceremony held at NCERT, New Delhi.

About Sakura Science Programme:

- From May 24 to May 30, 2026, 56 school students and 4 supervisors from India will visit Japan as part of the Sakura Science Programme, alongside participants from Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa. These 56 students (24 boys and 32 girls) are from Government schools across 15 States and Union Territories.
- The participants are recipients of scholarships under the National Means cum Merit Scholarship (NMMS) Scheme of the Government of India.
- To broaden intellectual horizons and foster scientific exploration among young learners, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) has been implementing the 'Japan Asia Youth Exchange Program in Science', also known as the 'Sakura Science Programme', since 2014.
- Under the programme, students are invited to Japan for one week to experience the country's advanced science and technology ecosystem and its rich cultural heritage.
- India has been participating in the programme since April 2016.

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3. IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre):

Context: The Department of Space (DoS) has approved establishment of Common Technical Facilities (CTFs), to be built with the support of IN-SPACe, in Gujarat (Khoraj) and Tamil Nadu (Thoothukudi). These CTFs will be located within plug-and-play manufacturing clusters exclusively designated for space activities (spacecraft, payload systems, etc.).

About IN-SPACe:

- Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) is an autonomous single-window agency under the Department of Space created after India's space sector reforms to promote and regulate private participation in space activities.
- It authorizes, promotes, and supervises non-governmental entities in activities such as satellite building, launch vehicles, and space-based services.
- IN-SPACe facilitates sharing of ISRO/Department of Space infrastructure and acts as an interface between ISRO and private players, educational institutions, and research organisations.
- It functions through three directorates: Promotion Directorate (PD), Technical Directorate (TD) and Program Management & Authorization Directorate (PMAD).
- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) headquarters is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

4. Chandrayaan-3 Mission:

Context: India's Chandrayaan-3 mission was honored with the prestigious 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA). It is the highest honor bestowed by AIAA for notable achievements in the field of astronautics.

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About Chandrayaan-3 Mission:

- Chandrayaan-3 is India's third lunar mission and second attempt to achieve a soft landing on the Moon.
- It was launched on 14 July 2023 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre and successfully landed near the Moon's south pole on 23 August 2023.
- The spacecraft entered lunar orbit on 5 August 2023 before the successful soft landing of the Vikram lander.
- Main objectives: safe and soft lunar landing, rover movement on the Moon, and in-situ scientific experiments.
- Chandrayaan-3 consists of three modules: Propulsion Module, Lander Module (Vikram), and Rover Module (Pragyan).
- The Propulsion Module carried the lander-rover system to lunar orbit and hosted the SHAPE payload to study Earth from lunar orbit.
- The Vikram Lander carried payloads like ChaSTE, ILSA, Langmuir Probe, and NASA's Laser Retroreflector Array to study lunar surface, temperature, plasma, and seismic activity.
- The Pragyan Rover carried APXS and LIBS instruments to analyze the elemental composition of the lunar surface near the landing site.

5. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

Context: AIIB launched an "Energy, Food Security and Economic Resilience Facility" to support members whose development may be affected by the conflict in the Middle East. It offers a time-bound financing envelope of up to USD10 billion over two years.

About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank established in 2016 with headquarters in Beijing.

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- Its main objective is to promote sustainable infrastructure development, regional connectivity, and economic growth, especially in Asia.
- AIIB has more than 111 approved member countries from across the world.
- India is a founding member, the second-largest shareholder after China, and also the largest borrower from AIIB.

6. Hutti Gold Mines:

Context: The soaring price of gold in the global market alone has helped Hutti Gold Mines — the only functional gold mine in the country — earn a whopping ₹633.34 crore more in 2025-26, when the average gold selling price increased by 34.11%.

About Hutti Gold Mines:

- Hutti Gold Mines, also spelled Hatti, is a notified area council in Raichur district in the Indian state of Karnataka. The mines are owned and operated by Hutti Gold Mines Limited.
- The mines have been worked for thousands of years, with ancient miners reaching depths of over 2,300 feet using fire-setting techniques. Modern operations date back to the late 1800s.
- The complex features the main underground mine at Hutti, along with satellite open-cast and exploratory mines at Uti and Hira Buddini.

7. Enhanced alkalinity:

Context: A climate mitigation strategy called 'enhanced alkalinity' involves spreading crushed rocks like silicates on land or in water. When the rocks dissolve, they release minerals that help the ocean absorb and hold CO_2. Now, two researchers from New Zealand and the U.S. have reported a flaw: as the minerals travel from soil to the sea, they're often trapped in secondary minerals like clay, removing the alkalinity needed to store carbon and smothering the method's efficacy.

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About Enhanced alkalinity:

- Ocean alkalinity enhancement is a method to remove carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere and store it in the ocean by changing the chemistry of seawater.
- It is one of several "carbon removal" techniques that help address climate change by drawing down CO_2, the most important climate-warming greenhouse gas humans are adding to the atmosphere.
- This absorption happens through chemical reactions between air and seawater at the ocean surface.
- When CO_2 enters the ocean, it reacts with water to form carbonic acid.
- Like all acids, this carbonic acid gives off hydrogen ions, which react with other, "alkaline" molecules in the water that can receive those ions.
- In the end, the carbon from the CO_2 forms stable bicarbonate and carbonate ions.

8. Phishing scam:

Context: The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), has identified a sophisticated phishing campaign targeting Apple iPhone users whose devices have been lost or stolen, according to an advisory issued by the agency.

What is a Phishing scam?

- **Phishing:** It is a cyberattack used to steal sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, bank details and credit card data.
- **Fake Identity:** In phishing attacks, scammers impersonate trusted persons or organisations to deceive victims.
- **Urgency Tactics:** Fraudulent messages create urgency and direct users to fake websites resembling genuine ones.
- **Credential Theft:** Victims are tricked into entering login details, which are then misused for fraud, identity theft or illegal sale of personal information.

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Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C):

- **About I4C:** The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) was established under the Ministry of Home Affairs as the national nodal agency to combat cybercrime.
- **Headquarters:** I4C is headquartered in New Delhi.
- **Main Purpose:** It provides a coordinated framework for law enforcement agencies to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute cybercrimes.
- **Collaborative Platform:** I4C brings together academia, industry, government and the public to strengthen cybercrime response mechanisms.
- **Women & Children Safety:** One of its major objectives is to strengthen action against cybercrimes targeting women and children.
- **Cybercrime Reporting:** It facilitates easy filing of cybercrime complaints and helps identify cybercrime trends and patterns nationwide.
- **Early Warning System:** I4C acts as an early warning system for law enforcement agencies for proactive cybercrime prevention and detection.
- **Capacity Building**: It assists States and UTs in training police officers, prosecutors and judicial officers in cyber forensics, investigation and cyber hygiene.
- **Research & Legal Reforms:** I4C promotes R&D in cyber forensic technologies and suggests amendments in cyber laws to match changing technologies.
- **Key Components:** Major components include the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP), National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC), National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit (TAU), Cybercrime Research and Innovation Centre, and National Cybercrime Forensic Laboratory ecosystem.

Quick Bites:

➢ As India faces intensifying heatwaves due to climate change, parametric insurance is emerging as a tool for automatic financial relief during extreme heat events. Parametric insurance is a non-

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traditional model that pays out a pre-agreed, fixed sum when a specific, measurable event (e.g., temperature, rainfall, wind speed) occurs, rather than compensating for actual physical damages.

- Odisha made the purchase of electric vehicles mandatory for new two-wheelers and four-wheelers used by the state government from 1 June 2026.
- The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) has offered full technology transfer of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) to Indian industry. The PSLV is an ISRO launch vehicle used for placing satellites into polar and sun-synchronous orbits. It is classified as a medium-lift launch vehicle and has been used for Earth observation, navigation, and scientific missions.
- India recorded 97 of the world's 100 hottest cities on 22 May 2026 during a heatwave across northern, central and eastern India. Balangir in Odisha touched 48°C, while Sasaram in Bihar also reached 48°C and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh recorded 47°C.
- Saudi Arabia became the newest member of the International Big Cat Alliance on 22 May 2026. The alliance now has 26 member countries and five observer nations.
- A gas explosion at a coal mine in northern China has killed at least 90 people, state media reported on Saturday, the country's biggest mining disaster in 17 years. A total of 247 workers were underground at the time of the blast, at the Liushenyu coal mine in Shanxi province, according to state news agency Xinhua.
- An Indian peacekeeper serving with the United Nations mission in Lebanon, Major Abhilasha Barak, has been named the recipient of a prestigious military gender advocate award by the UN. Ms. Barak has been honoured with the '2025 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year' award for her outreach efforts with women and girls during her deployment in the West Asian nation.
- The World Health Assembly (WHA) passed the first-ever resolution on strokes on Friday, urging member states to recognise the medical condition as a public health priority and to strengthen national policies across the full care pathway. This involves prevention and risk-factor control,

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timely acute treatment, expanded rehabilitation, and long-term support. The WHO definition of stroke is a medical emergency that occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted, either due to a blockage or bleeding. This lack of blood flow can lead to brain cell death and serious complications.

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25-05-2026

1. Bhagwan Birsa Munda:

Context: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah today addressed the 'Janjati Sanskriti Samagam' organised in New Delhi on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary year of Bhagwan Birsa Munda as the Chief Guest.

About Bhagwan Birsa Munda:

- Birsa Munda was a tribal freedom fighter, religious reformer, and folk hero who led tribal resistance against British rule in India.
- He was born on 15 November 1875 at Ulihatu in a poor sharecropper family and belonged to the Munda tribe of the Chotanagpur plateau.
- His early name was Daud Munda because his father had briefly converted to Christianity; he studied in local and missionary schools, including at Chaibasa.
- Though initially influenced by Christianity, he later rejected it and was inspired by Vaishnavism and Anand Panre, eventually founding the Birsait sect.
- Birsa became known as "Bhagwan" among followers and was lovingly called "Dharti Aaba" (Father of the Earth).
- He promoted worship of Singhbonga (monotheism), opposed alcoholism, black magic, superstitions, and forced labour (beth begari), while encouraging hygiene, spiritual unity, and pride in tribal culture.
- British land policies destroyed the traditional Khuntkatti communal land system, while zamindars and thikadars exploited tribals and pushed many into bonded labour.
- To resist these injustices, Birsa educated tribals about their rights and launched the Ulgulan (Great Rebellion), urging people to stop paying rent to the British.

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- His famous slogan was: "Abua raj ete jana, maharani raj tundu jana" meaning "Let the Queen's rule end and our rule begin."
- The revolt began in 1895 against land encroachment and forced labour; Birsa was arrested in 1895, jailed for two years, and after release in 1897 continued mobilising tribals village to village.
- Birsa Munda died of cholera in 1900, bringing the active phase of the rebellion to an end.
- His struggle led to the 1908 Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, which protected tribal land rights and banned beth begari; since 2021, 15 November is observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas in his honour.

2. 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee:

Context: NITI Aayog convenes the first meeting of the High Powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee.

Background and details:

- Para-51 of the Union Budget 2026–27 proposes a High-Powered 'Education to Employment and Enterprise' Standing Committee to strengthen India's link between education, skills, jobs, and enterprise.
- The Committee aims to help India capture a 10% share of the global services market by 2047, focusing on long-term growth and global competitiveness.
- Its mandate includes identifying priority sectors to enhance growth, employment generation, and export performance.
- It will also assess the impact of frontier technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) on future jobs, skills, and workforce requirements.
- Based on its assessment, the Committee will recommend policy measures to improve education-to-employment alignment and skill development systems.
- A formal Committee has been constituted under the chairpersonship of the CEO of NITI Aayog with members from relevant Central Ministries, State Governments, industry bodies, and experts.

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- The first meeting was held on 22 May 2026, chaired by the CEO of NITI Aayog, with participation from senior officials including MSDE Secretary Debashree Mukherjee, expert Debjani Ghosh, and representatives from government, industry, and academia.

3. Egyptian Vultures:

Context: An ecological crisis is currently unfolding across the rocky hill ranges of the Sri Sathya Sai district, wherein the endangered Egyptian Vulture, which was once a prevalent sight in the skies of Rayalaseema, is now approaching the brink of local extinction, raising significant concerns among wildlife experts and conservationists.

About Egyptian Vultures:

- The Egyptian Vulture (Neophron percnopterus) is a native bird of Europe, Central Asia, and Africa, and migrates to Asian countries including India during winter.
- A resident subspecies, Neophron percnopterus ginginianus, is found in India and stays throughout the year.
- It inhabits open, arid landscapes near human settlements, where food sources are relatively available.
- Egyptian vultures are monogamous, forming long-term pair bonds and migrating between breeding seasons as pairs.
- They build large nests, which are repeatedly maintained and refurbished during the breeding season.
- A major threat to the species is illegal poisoning, often intended for carnivores but indirectly affecting vultures.
- The species is classified as Endangered (IUCN Red List) due to declining populations and habitat pressures.

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- India hosts 9 species of vultures, of which several are highly threatened and play an important ecological role as scavengers.
- Four Indian vulture species are Critically Endangered: Indian Vulture (Gyps indicus), White-backed Vulture (Gyps bengalensis), Red-headed Vulture (Sarcogyps calvus), and Slender-billed Vulture (Gyps tenuirostris).
- Other vultures in India include the Egyptian Vulture (Endangered), while species like Cinereous, Bearded, and Himalayan vultures are Near Threatened, and the Griffon Vulture is Least Concern.

4. 79th annual Cannes Film Festival:

Context: The 79th annual Cannes Film Festival took place from 12 to 23 May 2026.[1][2] South Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wook served as jury president for the main competition. Romanian filmmaker Cristian Mungiu won the Palme d'Or for a second time with the drama film Fjord. Mr. Mungiu becomes just the 10th filmmaker to win the Palme d'Or twice. His 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days won the award in 2007.

About Cannes Film Festival:

- The Cannes Film Festival is widely regarded as the most prestigious film festival in the world.
- It was founded in 1946 in Cannes, France.
- It is held annually, usually in the month of May.
- The festival venue is the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès in Cannes.
- It is an invitation-only film festival.
- It showcases new films of all genres, including documentaries.
- It was officially accredited by FIAPF in 1951.
- It is considered part of the "Big Three" European film festivals along with Venice and Berlin.
- It is also part of the "Big Five" global film festivals along with Venice, Berlin, Toronto, and Sundance

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5. Judicial Custody:

Context: A Delhi court on Sunday sent accused Shubham Khairnar to judicial custody till June 6 in the NEET-UG paper-leak case.

About Judicial Custody:

- Judicial custody means the accused is kept in the custody of the concerned Magistrate and lodged in jail, not in police lock-up.
- In contrast, police custody means the accused remains in the physical custody of the police and is kept in a police station lock-up.
- Judicial custody is governed under Section 167 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) during investigation and remand stages.
- In police custody, the accused must be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest, as per legal requirements.
- Police custody begins immediately after arrest when police take charge of the accused for investigation.
- Judicial custody begins when the court authorises detention, usually when police seek remand beyond initial interrogation needs.
- In judicial custody, the accused remains in jail until bail is granted or court orders release.
- Police custody is primarily for interrogation and evidence collection, whereas judicial custody is for detention under court supervision.
- Maximum police custody is generally up to 15 days (in parts or whole) as permitted by the magistrate.
- Judicial custody can extend up to 60 days or 90 days, depending on the severity of the offence (60 days for lesser offences, 90 days for serious offences like death penalty, life imprisonment, or ≥10 years imprisonment).
- Judicial custody requires judicial oversight, making it more controlled compared to police custody.

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- Both forms of custody are part of the criminal procedure ensuring investigation, legal supervision, and protection of accused rights.

6. Uniform Civil Code:

ontext: Addressing a Sangh Parivar-organised 'Janjati Sanskritik Samagam' at New Delhi's Red Fort, which he referred to as a "Janjatiya [tribal] Mahakumbh", Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday assured Scheduled Tribe communities across the country that any form of a Uniform Civil Code that is implemented in the country will ensure that tribal communities are exempt from its provisions.

About Uniform Civil Code:

- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) refers to a single set of laws governing personal matters like marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance, and succession for all citizens of India.
- It is mentioned in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution under the Directive Principles of State Policy, which directs the State to strive for a uniform civil code across India.
- Article 44 is not legally enforceable, meaning UCC is a guiding principle rather than a fundamental right.
- The idea of UCC originated in colonial India, initially aimed at legal uniformity while keeping Hindu and Muslim personal laws separate.
- The demand gained momentum in the early 20th century, especially from women reformers advocating equality and secularism.
- During the Constituent Assembly debates, leaders like B.R. Ambedkar supported UCC, but it was included as a non-binding Directive Principle as a compromise.
- After independence, India codified Hindu personal laws (1955–56), while Muslim, Christian, and other communities retained separate personal law systems.

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- The Supreme Court revived the UCC debate in landmark cases like Shah Bano (1985), Sarla Mudgal (1995), and Shayara Bano (2017), repeatedly urging its consideration.
- India currently follows a plural legal system, including religious personal laws and secular laws like the Special Marriage Act, 1954, with some regional exceptions under Article 371.
- At present, while UCC remains debated nationally, Goa and Uttarakhand are cited as states with UCC-type provisions, and other states like Assam and Gujarat are exploring its implementation.

Quick Bites:

- The 75th edition of Fit India Sundays on Cycle today witnessed massive participation across more than 8,000 locations nationwide, commemorating Commonwealth Games Day and building momentum toward the historic 2030 Commonwealth Games in Ahmedabad. The Ahmedabad edition, themed "A New Icon for a Fitter India – Pedalling to 2030," featured a grand 5-kilometre cycling rally alongside Yoga and Zumba demonstrations, turning the Sabarmati Riverfront into a celebration of fitness, culture and India's sporting development.
- Raghav Chadha, a Rajya Sabha member, was appointed chairman of the Committee on Petitions of the Upper House on 23 May 2026.
- India's third phase of Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE III) norms is scheduled from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2032. The norms are framed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the Ministry of Power and apply to M1 category passenger vehicles with seating capacity of up to nine persons and a gross vehicle weight of up to 3,500 kg.
- The archaeological site in Hazaribag district of Jharkhand has yielded evidence of a layered settlement in the Mohane river basin in Chauparan block. The site includes villages such as Dehar, Sohra, Mangarh, and Hathinder, where artefacts have been recovered during farming and foundation digging.
- Odisha's Handlooms, Textiles and Handicrafts department has launched a revival plan for the original Bomkai weaving tradition in Ganjam district.

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26-05-2026

1. WorldSkills Invitational Tournament 2026:

- **Context:** Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, Shri Jayant Chaudhary sent off the Indian contingent participating in the international vocational and technical skills competition, 2026 Taipei Capital Cup WorldSkills Invitational Tournament, being held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 26–28 May 2026.

About WorldSkills Invitational Tournament 2026:

- WorldSkills Invitational Tournament is a high-level, warm-up event that gives young vocational talents international exposure before the primary global championship.
- The five-member Indian contingent, the future global champions, will compete with participants from around 15 countries in the tournament organised as a warm-up event ahead of WorldSkills Shanghai 2026.
- The competition promotes global skills development, technical excellence, international collaboration, and workforce innovation while helping participants gain real-world competitive experience at an international level.
- India will compete in five skill categories at the 2026 Taipei Capital Cup WorldSkills Competition, with Arjun Sumathi Vijayabashkar representing the country in Mobile Applications Development, Mohamed Mafaz Poonaikannan Rabi Ahamed in Software Applications Development, Muskan in Painting & Decorating, Md Seraj in Automobile Technology, and Suresh Kumar Ganesan Meena in Digital Construction.

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- This year's edition of the competition features 10 skill categories spanning critical sectors linked to smart manufacturing and digital transformation, including Industrial Mechanics, IT Network Systems Administration, Mobile Applications Development, Industry 4.0, Automobile Technology, and Digital Construction (BIM).
- India's participation in the tournament marks an important step in the country's preparation journey towards the 48th WorldSkills Shanghai 2026.
- The competition will provide Team India with early exposure to international standards and act as a crucial warm-up platform ahead of the global competition

2. Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY):

Context: PM-AJAY portal and AJAY mobile app will be launched by Hon'ble Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment. The portal is designed to facilitate seamless coordination among stakeholders while ensuring faster and more accountable service delivery to beneficiaries.

About Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY):

- PM-AJAY (Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana) aims to reduce poverty among Scheduled Caste (SC) communities through skill development, employment generation, and income-enhancing initiatives.
- The Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojna (PM-AJAY) falls under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- The scheme also focuses on increasing literacy and improving enrolment of SC students in schools and higher educational institutions by providing quality residential facilities.
- It gives special attention to aspirational districts, SC-majority blocks, and other SC-concentrated regions across India.
- One major component is the development of SC-dominated villages into "Adarsh Grams", earlier known as Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY).

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- The Adarsh Gram component aims to ensure integrated socio-economic development of SC-majority villages through adequate infrastructure and welfare measures.
- Progress under the scheme is monitored through socio-economic indicators spread across 10 domains such as education, health, sanitation, roads, electricity, financial inclusion, digitization, agriculture, and skill development.
- The scheme seeks to eliminate disparities between SC and non-SC populations in access to basic services and development opportunities.
- It emphasizes ensuring secondary-level education for all SC children and addressing maternal mortality, infant mortality, and malnutrition among women and children.
- During FY 2023–24, a total of 1834 villages were declared as Adarsh Grams under the scheme.
- Another component provides Grants-in-Aid for District and State-level projects, earlier known as Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Caste Sub Plan.
- These grants support comprehensive livelihood projects that create sustainable income opportunities and social advancement exclusively for SC communities.
- The scheme supports skill development programmes aligned with the norms of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and also funds skill training infrastructure and institutions.
- Beneficiaries can receive financial assistance for livelihood assets, up to ₹50,000 or 50% of the asset cost, whichever is lower, as part of integrated livelihood projects.
- Funds can also be used for infrastructure development, including hostels and residential schools related to livelihood and educational projects.
- Special provisions include:
  - Up to 15% of grants reserved for SC women-focused economic schemes,
  - Up to 30% for infrastructure development,
  - At least 10% for skill development activities,

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- Promotion of SC women cooperatives engaged in production and marketing activities.

3. Index of Industrial Production:

Context: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released the report of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC-IIP) on revising the base year of the All-India Index of Industrial Production (IIP). The committee, chaired by Mridul K. Saggar and constituted in September 2024, held 11 meetings to improve the methodology, accuracy, and relevance of the IIP.

About Index of Industrial Production (IIP):

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) measures short-term changes in the volume of industrial production in India.
- It is an important indicator used to assess the growth or slowdown of industrial activity and overall economic performance.
- The IIP is published by the Central Statistics Office under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- The previous base year of the IIP is 2011–12, adopted to better reflect the modern industrial structure and production trends.
- The base year of the index has been revised periodically since earlier base years such as 1937, 1946, 1951, and 1956.
- The IIP is divided into three major sectors: Manufacturing – 77.63% weight, Mining – 14.37% weight and Electricity – 7.99% weight
- Manufacturing has the highest weight in the index with 809 items, followed by Mining with 29 items and Electricity with 1 item.

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About Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI):

- The Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) is released by the Office of Economic Advisor under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The ICI measures the production performance of eight core industries: Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, and Electricity.
- These eight industries together account for 40.27% weight in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), making them crucial indicators of industrial growth.
- Among the core industries, Refinery Products have the highest weight (28.04%), followed by Electricity (19.85%) and Steel (17.92%).
- The remaining sectors and their weights are: Coal (10.33%), Crude Oil (8.98%), Natural Gas (6.88%), Cement (5.37%), and Fertilizers (2.63%).

Major Changes in New Series of IIP with base 2022-23:

- The new IIP series expands its scope by including Minor Minerals, Rare Earth Minerals, Gas Supply, Water Supply and Sewerage & Waste Management, thereby broadening the overall coverage of the index.
- The item basket and weights have been revised to add relevant commodities and remove outdated ones, ensuring that each item or sector is assigned appropriate significance.
- The revised basket consists of 1,042 products mapped to 463 item groups. The updated IIP series is aligned with the National Industrial Classification (NIC-2025).
- The new series also introduces greater granularity through sub-indices, including separate indices for electricity generated from renewable and non-renewable sources.
- Similarly, the Mining and Quarrying sector is now divided into three sub-indices covering Fuel Minerals, Metallic Minerals (including Rare Earth Minerals), and Non-Metallic Minerals (including Minor Minerals).

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- In addition, methodological enhancements have been proposed in index compilation. These include the substitution of factories that are permanently closed or have significantly altered their production lines with comparable units, as well as the augmentation of panel of the factories by incorporating newly commissioned large-scale factories that begin producing relevant items during the currency of the IIP series.
- The new series will adopt the Geometric Mean method for linking the 2011–12 series with the new 2022–23 series. The linking factors will be computed at aggregated levels, namely for the General Index and the Sectoral Indices.

4. Geothermal Energy:

Context: Ladakh to Host India's First Geothermal Power Plant. Ladakh's Lt. Governor approved a five-year extension to MoU with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to set up this plant at an altitude of 14, 000 feet in Puga Valley. Under the revised MoU, ONGC will establish a 1-MWe pilot geothermal power plant and prepare a detailed project report (DPR) for large-scale commercial exploitation of geothermal resources in Ladakh.

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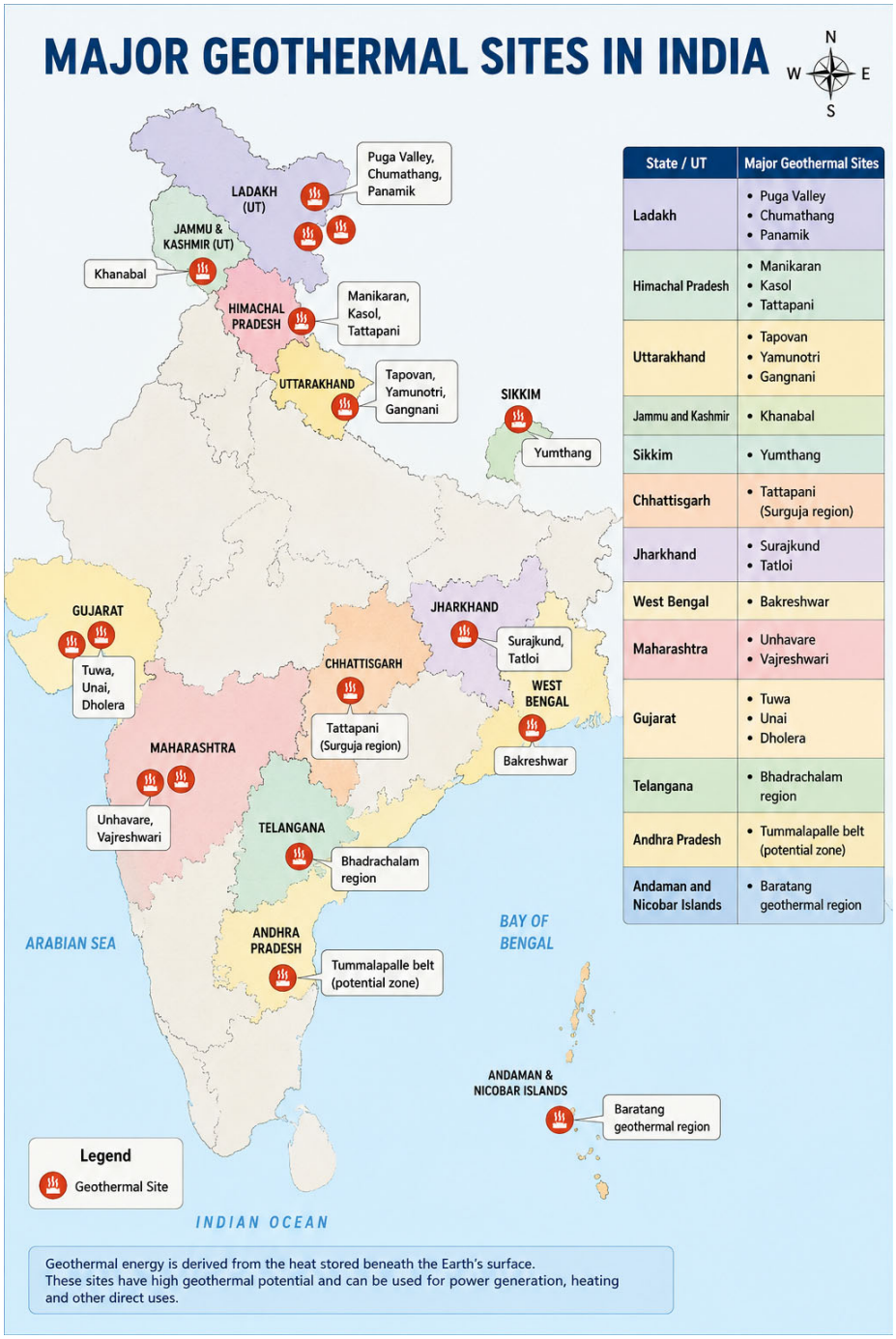
About Geothermal Energy:



State / UT	Major Geothermal Sites
Ladakh	• Puga Valley • Chumathang • Panamik
Himachal Pradesh	• Manikaran • Kasol • Tattapani
Uttarakhand	• Tapovan • Yamunotri • Gangnani
Jammu and Kashmir	• Khanabal
Sikkim	• Yumthang
Chhattisgarh	• Tattapani (Surguja region)
Jharkhand	• Surajkund • Tatloi
West Bengal	• Bakreshwar
Maharashtra	• Unhavare • Vajreshwari
Gujarat	• Tuwa • Unai • Dholera
Telangana	• Bhadrachalam region
Andhra Pradesh	• Tummalapalle belt (potential zone)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	• Baratang geothermal region

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- Geothermal energy harnesses heat stored within the Earth's crust for power generation and direct-use applications.
- A geothermal system includes production and reinjection wells, pumps, pipelines, heat exchangers, and end-use distribution systems.
- High-enthalpy geothermal resources such as volcanic regions, geysers, and hot springs are mainly used for electricity generation.
- Low- and medium-enthalpy resources like hot rocks and shallow ground layers are suitable for heating, cooling, agriculture, food processing, and aquaculture.
- The Geological Survey of India has identified 381 hot springs in India with temperatures ranging from 35°C to 89°C.
- India has 10 geothermal provinces, including the Himalayan Geothermal Province and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands region.
- India's estimated geothermal power potential is around 10,600 MW.
- The Puga and Chumathang regions in Ladakh are considered the most promising geothermal energy sites.
- The National Policy on Geothermal Energy (2025) aims to develop geothermal energy as a key part of India's renewable energy mix.
- The policy supports India's 2070 Net Zero target, energy security, and sustainable clean energy transition.

5. Pratas Island:

Context: A Chinese Coast Guard ship was recently spotted near Taiwan's strategically located Pratas Islands at top of South China Sea.

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About Pratas Island:

- The Pratas Islands, also known as the Dongsha Islands, are a group of three islands located in the northern part of the South China Sea.
- The islands form a circular atoll structure, with Dongsha Island being the only island above sea level, while the other two remain submerged.
- The atoll is mainly made of coral reefs and reef flats spread over about 24 km in diameter, enclosing a lagoon around 16 km wide.
- The islands were known since the ancient Han Dynasty period and served as an important point along historic trade and fishing routes.
- They are located near key maritime passages such as the Taiwan Strait and the Bashi Channel.
- The islands hold strategic importance because they lie along major sea routes connecting the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean.
- The Pratas Islands are located about 445 km southwest of Kaohsiung in Taiwan and around 320 km southeast of Hong Kong.
- China claims the islands, but they are currently controlled by Taiwan as part of the Dongsha Atoll National Park.
- The islands have no permanent civilian population, though Taiwanese marines are stationed there.

6. Abraham Accords:

Context: Donald Trump stated that countries such as Qatar, Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan should mandatorily join the Abraham Accords, which were brokered by the U.S. in 2020 to normalize relations with Israel. He said the agreements were important for strengthening regional peace and cooperation in West Asia.

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About Abraham Accords:

- The Abraham Accords are a series of agreements signed in 2020 to normalize diplomatic relations between Israel and several Arab nations.
- The accords were first announced on August 13, 2020, involving Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States.
- The official signing ceremony took place on September 15, 2020, in Washington D.C.
- The initial signatories included UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Bahrain Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.
- Later, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco also joined the accords.
- The name "Abraham Accords" refers to Abraham, a revered figure in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, symbolizing shared cultural and religious heritage.
- The agreements marked a major shift in West Asian geopolitics, as Arab countries moved toward open cooperation with Israel after decades of strained relations.
- Under the accords, countries agreed to establish embassies, exchange ambassadors, and strengthen diplomatic relations.
- The accords promoted cooperation in sectors such as trade, tourism, healthcare, technology, defence, and security.
- The agreements also facilitated access for Muslims worldwide to visit religious sites in Jerusalem, including the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- The accords signaled that several Arab states were willing to engage with Israel despite the unresolved Palestine issue.
- The agreements aim to promote peace, coexistence, interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and mutual respect among nations.
- The accords emphasize resolving conflicts through cooperation and diplomacy rather than confrontation.

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- They also focus on countering radicalization, strengthening regional security, and promoting prosperity in West Asia.
- For India, the accords provide greater diplomatic flexibility to maintain strong relations with both Israel and Arab countries while expanding cooperation in trade, energy, technology, and defence.

7. Memflation:

Context: The semiconductor industry globally is experiencing a severe structural 'memflation' (inflation caused by memory chips shortage), with skyrocketing prices leading to huge disruptions in price sensitive consumer electronics and mobile phone markets in India, said industry experts.

About Memflation:

- **Meaning:** Memflation (memory inflation) refers to the rapid rise in prices of semiconductor memory chips, especially DRAM (Dynamic Random Access Memory) and NAND (Not AND) Flash Memory.
- **Cause:** The trend is driven by rising demand from AI, cloud computing, and data-centre infrastructure, which is straining global memory chip supply chains.
- **DRAM Price Rise:** DRAM prices are projected to increase by nearly 125% year-on-year.
- **NAND Flash Price Rise:** NAND flash memory prices are expected to rise by over 230%.
- **Impact on Electronics:** Higher memory chip costs are increasing prices of smartphones, PCs, and other electronic devices.
- **Impact in India:** Entry-level smartphone prices have risen by around 30–40% in price-sensitive markets.
- **Frequent Price Revisions:** Electronics brands are frequently revising prices because of rising component costs.
- **Retailer Effect:** Retailers initially gain temporary profits by selling older inventory at newer inflated prices.

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- **Distributor Challenge:** Distributors face increased working capital pressure due to higher procurement costs.
- **Consumer Behaviour:** Rising prices are reducing overall sales as consumers postpone purchases of electronic goods.

8. Amber fort:

Context: United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited the Amber Fort in Jaipur along with his wife Jeanette Rubio and U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor.

About Amber fort:

- **Location:** Amber Fort (also called Amer Fort) is located in Amer, about 11 km from Jaipur, and is built on the Aravalli Hills.
- **Strategic Setting:** The fort's hilltop position provides strong strategic defence and a commanding view of the surrounding region.
- **Builder:** It was initially constructed by Raja Man Singh I of the Kachwaha Rajputs in the late 16th century.
- **Historical Link:** Raja Man Singh I was a trusted general of Emperor Akbar and one of the Navaratnas in his court.
- **Capital History:** Amer served as the capital of the Kachwaha Rajputs before it was shifted to Jaipur.
- **Construction Start:** The construction of the fort began in 1592.
- Expansion: Significant expansion was carried out under Jai Singh I (1621–1667), who enhanced its architectural grandeur.
- **Key Structures:** Jai Singh I is credited with adding the Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience) and the Sheesh Mahal (Mirror Palace).

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- **Continued Development:** Successive Kachwaha rulers further developed the fort until the capital shifted to Jaipur in 1727.
- **Heritage Status:** Amber Fort is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Quick Bites:

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Tecahnology (MeitY), in collaboration with Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business (ISB), on 23 May 2026, hosted the Governance Summit 2026: Inclusive AI for Viksit Bharat at the ISB Mohali Campus.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), under the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, successfully organized "Medical Innovations Patent Mitra: Innovators-to-Industry (I2I) Connect"—India's largest biomedical and technology transfer facilitation event today, at the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi.
- The 1st BRICS 2026 Tourism Working Group (TWG) Meeting was successfully convened in virtual mode on 25 May 2026, under India's BRICS 2026 Chairship. The meeting was chaired by the Joint Secretary (Tourism), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- Oil India Limited recently discovered a new natural gas reserve in the Dandewala field of Rajasthan, marking the first confirmed gas presence in the Sanu Formation. Natural gas is a fossil fuel mainly composed of methane (CH_4), along with small quantities of natural gas liquids and non-hydrocarbon gases such as carbon dioxide and water vapour.
- China launched the Shenzhou-23 mission on 24 May 2026 with a three-member crew aboard a Long March 2-F rocket from the Jiuquan launch centre in north-western China. The spacecraft docked with the Tiangong space station about 3.5 hours after liftoff on 25 May 2026.
- Gurindervir Singh set the men's 100 metres national record at 10.09 seconds on 23 May 2026 at the National Senior Athletics Federation Competition in Ranchi.

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- The Reserve Bank of India formed the Q-SAFE panel to protect the financial sector from quantum-related risks. The committee is convened (chaired) by Dr. Anil Prabhakar, Professor at the Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Madras.
- 28 At least 28 people died when a landslide hit an illegal gold mining site in Angola's Bengo province, one of the country's deadliest of such accidents. Illegal mining in Angola had historically been associated with the diamond industry. But the country's mining diversification drive has fuelled a boom in artisanal mining of other metals such as gold. Angola, a third major diamond producer after Russia and Botswana and is diversifying into metals such as copper and gold as diamond prices fall and synthetic diamonds rise.

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27-05-2026

1. Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme:

Context: In a major step towards strengthening India's digital public infrastructure and improving ease of internet access for citizens, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has introduced a series of user-friendly reforms under the PM-WANI (Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) framework.

About PM-WANI scheme:

- It aims to bring large scale deployment of Wi-Fi hotspots through the country to drive up connectivity options and improve digital access.
- The scheme envisages setting up of public Wi-Fi networks and access points by local Kirana without any licence, fee or registration.
- A person, who wants to use public Wi-Fi, can do so via an app and will make payments as per usage.
- A central registry will be maintained by the Centre for Development of Telematics.
- Department of Telecom (DoT), Ministry of Communications is the nodal agency to proliferate Broadband through Public Wi-Fi networks.
- The new measures include:
  - QR-based authentication for laptops and secondary devices
  - Introduction of flexible short-duration Wi-Fi plans of 15, 30 and 60 minutes
  - Standardisation of PM-WANI hotspot names (SSIDs) for easier identification and enhanced reliability.

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2. India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):

Context: India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), MeitY Launches "Investors Support" Portal to extend support towards ecosystem players and Investors. Under the Semicon India Programme, so far, 12 Fab/Packaging projects have been approved along with 24 semiconductors design projects.

About India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):

- **Launch:** Approved in 2021 to strengthen India's position in the global electronics value chain.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Operates under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- **Objective:** Promote chip design startups, indigenous IP, R&D, and reduce semiconductor import dependence.
- **Focus Areas:** Establish chip fabs, packaging/testing units (ATMP/OSAT), support startups, and train skilled talent.
- **Investment Goal:** Attract global semiconductor manufacturers and investors to India.
- **Semiconductor Fabs Scheme:** Offers up to 50% fiscal support for semiconductor wafer fabrication units.
- **Display Fabs Scheme:** Provides up to 50% assistance for AMOLED and LCD display fabrication.
- **Compound Semiconductors & ATMP/OSAT Scheme:** Grants up to 50% support for compound semiconductors, MEMS, sensors, and packaging units.
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme:** Supports chip design startups/MSMEs with funding up to ₹15 crore per company.

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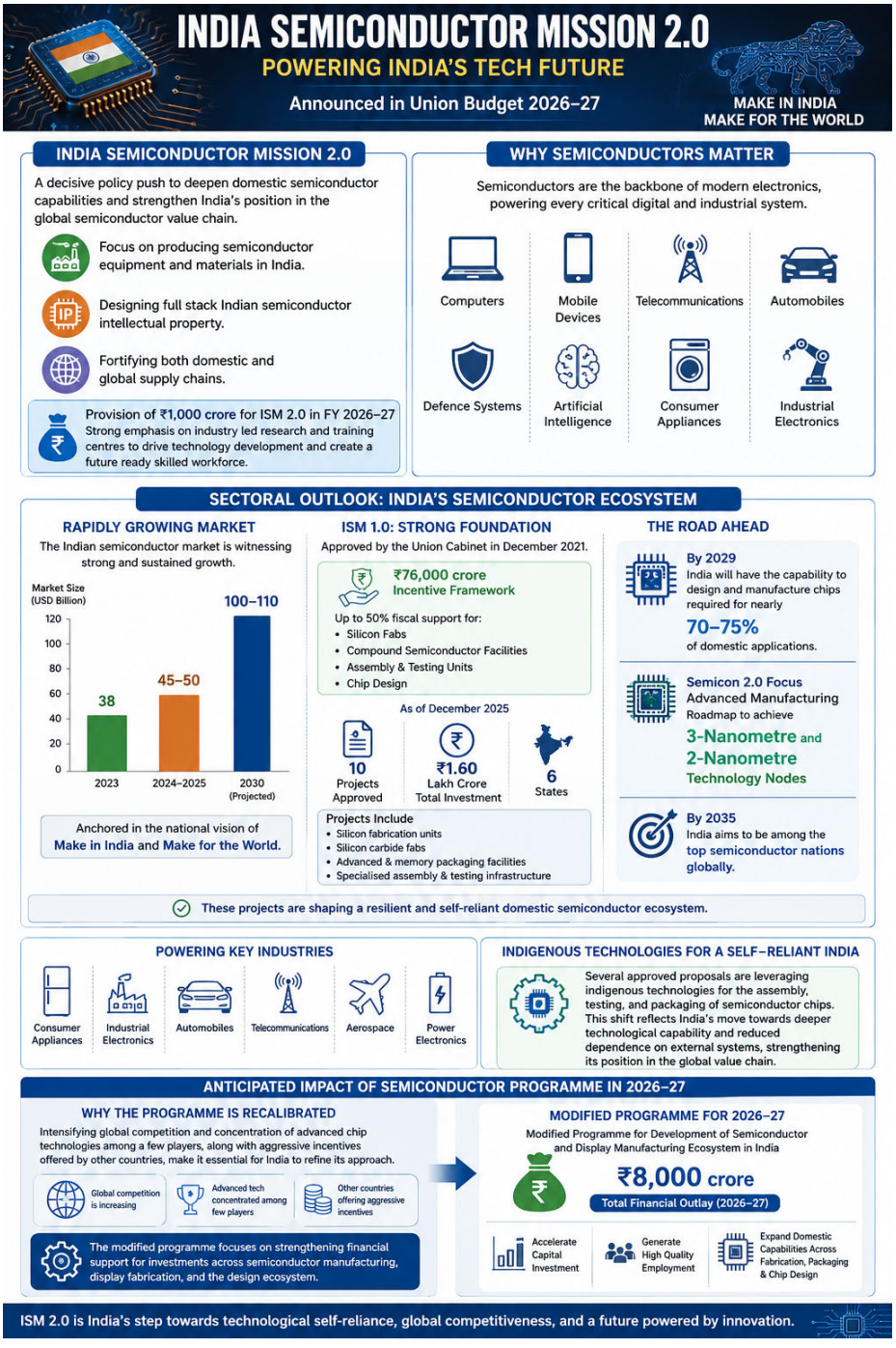

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3. Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar committee:

Context: The Government of India has constituted a High-Level Committee to study the demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal reasons, and to suggest measures to deal with these demographic changes.

About Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar committee:



- The Government of India has constituted a High-Level Committee on Demographic Change.
- The Committee is chaired by Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar (Retired).

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- Members include the Census Commissioner, Shri Durga Shankar Mishra (Retd. IAS), Shri Balaji Srivastava (Retd. IPS), and Dr. Shamika Ravi.
- The Joint Secretary (Foreigners-I), Ministry of Home Affairs, will serve as the Member Secretary.
- The Committee was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 August 2025.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that illegal infiltration and unnatural demographic change pose challenges to sovereignty, national security, and social stability.
- The Committee will scientifically assess demographic changes caused by illegal immigration and other abnormal reasons.
- It will analyse demographic shifts among religious and social communities, especially where trends significantly differ from national patterns.
- The Committee will study causes such as cross-border activities, illegal immigration, economic opportunities, and socio-environmental factors.
- It will identify factors behind abnormal settlement patterns and orchestrated migration.
- The Committee will recommend legal, fair, and time-bound mechanisms for identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.
- It will suggest institutional mechanisms for stronger border management, population stabilization, and monitoring systems.
- The Committee will propose a policy framework to improve coordination between the Central and State Governments on issues related to illegal immigration and demographic imbalance.
- The Committee may recommend additional measures necessary to address demographic challenges in the country.
- The Committee has been asked to submit its report within one year, with a possible extension of up to six months by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

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4. Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science:

Context: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh visited the "Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science" (IACS), Kolkata, the institution where Sir C.V. Raman carried out the work leading to India's first Nobel Prize in Science through the discovery of the Raman Effect, and joined the celebrations marking 150 years of one of India's most iconic scientific institutions spanning the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

About Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science:

- Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science is a public deemed Research University under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.
- It was established on 29 July 1876 by Mahendralal Sarkar.
- It is India's oldest research institute dedicated to basic sciences.
- The institute is located at Jadavpur in South Kolkata near Jadavpur University.
- It functions under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India.
- IACS is developing an advanced SMART campus at Baruipur, West Bengal.
- The institution focuses mainly on fundamental research in basic sciences.
- Research areas include physical sciences, chemical sciences, biological sciences, and materials sciences.
- It also conducts research in mathematical, computational, applied, and interdisciplinary sciences.

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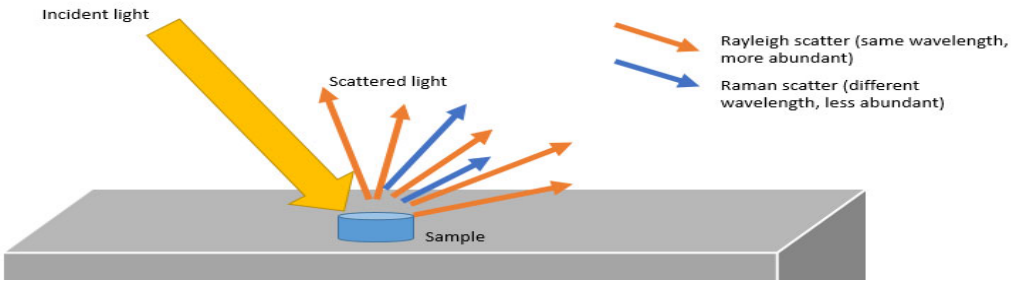
About Raman Effect:



- C. V. Raman discovered the Raman Effect in 1928.
- In simple terms, the Raman Effect is a phenomenon where light changes its colour slightly after interacting with a substance.
- Raman became curious about the deep blue colour of the Mediterranean Sea during a voyage from London to Bombay.
- He rejected the common explanation that the sea appears blue only because it reflects the sky.
- Raman later proved that the blue colour of water is caused by scattering of sunlight by water molecules.
- His studies led to the discovery of the phenomenon of light scattering known as the Raman Effect.
- The Raman Effect occurs when light passing through a substance changes its energy after interacting with molecules.
- This interaction changes the wavelength and colour of the scattered light.
- The change in light energy is caused by molecular vibrations or rotations within the material.
- The Raman Effect is extremely weak because most light passes through matter without interaction.
- Only a very small fraction of light waves — a few in a billion — undergo Raman scattering.
- When light interacts with matter, it may be reflected, refracted, transmitted, or scattered.
- Raman scattering helps scientists study the structure and properties of molecules and materials.

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5. Cleavable Light-Erased Antibody Reporter (CLEAR):

Context: "CLEAR" technology can revolutionize protein imaging & facilitate detection of Cancer and Neurobiological Diseases.

About Cleavable Light-Erased Antibody Reporter (CLEAR):

- Researchers at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research developed a novel imaging platform called CLEAR (Cleavable Light-Erased Antibody Reporter).
- CLEAR enables visualization of a very large number of proteins within the same biological sample.
- The technology uses only a single fluorescent marker (fluorophore) for imaging multiple proteins.
- It is designed to achieve high-resolution and multiplexed imaging across cells and tissues.
- Proteins are important because they control biological functions and serve as key disease markers and therapeutic targets.
- Mapping proteins in their natural spatial arrangement within tissues has been a major scientific challenge.
- CLEAR helps create a comprehensive proteomic map showing the identity and exact spatial organization of proteins.
- The platform can improve understanding of complex diseases by studying protein distribution in tissues.
- It has major applications in cancer biology, immunology, and neurological disorder research.
- The technology could assist pathologists in more accurate disease diagnosis, especially cancer diagnosis.
- CLEAR was developed at JNCASR, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- The innovation has the potential to transform biological research and precision diagnostics.

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6. National Sports Governance Act, 2025:

Context: The Union Government has notified the National Sports Governance (National Sports Board) Rules, 2026 and the National Sports Governance (National Sports Tribunal) Rules, 2026 under the provisions of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.

Major highlights of the rules:

- The National Sports Governance (National Sports Board) Rules, 2026 define the structure, powers, and service conditions of the National Sports Board.
- The Board will consist of one Chairperson and two Members appointed by the Central Government.
- Appointments will be made from a panel recommended by a Search-cum-Selection Committee.
- The Board will regulate recognition of National Sports Bodies in India.
- It will ensure compliance with governance, financial, and ethical standards in sports organizations.
- The National Sports Tribunal Rules, 2026 define the structure and functioning of the Tribunal.
- The Tribunal will handle sports-related disputes as a dedicated adjudicatory body.
- It aims to reduce dependence on civil courts for sports governance issues.
- The Tribunal will provide fast, effective, and cost-efficient dispute resolution.
- It will help reduce multiple litigations by acting as a single-window mechanism.
- The rules include provisions for appointment, re-appointment, salary, and service conditions of Tribunal members.
- The system introduces digital/techno-legal mechanisms for dispute handling.
- A dedicated online portal will be used for filing disputes, notices, responses, and documents.
- Virtual hearings, online communication, and digital record-keeping will be enabled.
- Overall, the framework aims to improve transparency, efficiency, and professionalism in sports governance.

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7. Third India-Nordic Summit:

Context: India and the Nordic countries launched a multidimensional partnership during the First India-Nordic Summit in 2018. The partnership focuses on innovation, green technologies, clean energy, and sustainable development. It aims to support India's economic growth, promote sustainable development pathways, strengthen skilling and talent development, and foster a vibrant innovation ecosystem. India can also leverage Nordic expertise and technology transfers through cooperation in renewable energy and climate action initiatives. The Third India-Nordic Summit, held in Oslo, on 19 May 2026, further advanced this strategic partnership.



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8. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI):

Context: The Union Finance Minister recently launched key SIDBI initiatives on its 37th Foundation Day to strengthen the MSME ecosystem.

Major initiatives launched:

- MachFin Mart is a digital platform that helps MSMEs easily discover and purchase modern machinery.
- It integrates machinery selection with faster, digitized loan processing for easier financing.
- Modernization of Rural Enterprises (MoRE) is an initiative providing targeted financial support to grassroots rural businesses.
- It aims to modernize around 10,000 rural and handicraft enterprises over the next three years.

About Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI):

- Small Industries Development Bank of India is the apex financial institution for promotion, financing, and development of the MSME sector in India.
- It operates under the Ministry of Finance and is headquartered in Lucknow with offices across the country.
- SIDBI was established on 2 April 1990 under an Act of Parliament as a wholly owned subsidiary of Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) Bank.
- It was delinked from IDBI Bank on 27 March 2000 to function as an independent institution.
- SIDBI provides refinance support to banks and financial institutions to boost MSME lending.
- It offers term loans and working capital finance directly to industries.
- It promotes rural enterprises and entrepreneurship development.
- It provides financial assistance to banks, Small Finance Banks, and NBFCs.
- SIDBI also directly lends to MSMEs in addition to its refinance operations.

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9. Wi-Fi 7:

Context: India enters Wi-Fi 7 Era as TP-Link has started local manufacturing of Wi-Fi 7 devices.

About Wi-Fi 7:

- Wi-Fi 7 (IEEE 802.11be) is the next-generation wireless networking standard.
- It aims to significantly improve speed, efficiency, and overall performance over Wi-Fi 6 and Wi-Fi 6E.
- It can deliver speeds up to about 46 Gbps, nearly 4.8× faster than Wi-Fi 6.
- It introduces Multi-Link Operation (MLO), allowing devices to use 2.4 GHz, 5 GHz, and 6 GHz bands simultaneously.
- It provides up to 4× lower latency compared to previous Wi-Fi standards.
- It supports wider channel bandwidths for higher data transmission capacity.
- It improves power efficiency through enhanced Target Wake Time (TWT), extending battery life.
- It uses advanced interference handling through "Preamble Puncturing" to maintain connectivity even in noisy channels.

10. Heat Dome:

Context: Heat dome over Europe scorches many countries like UK, France, Spain.

About Heat Dome:

- A heat dome is a high-pressure atmospheric system that traps warm air near the Earth's surface for a long period.
- It creates extreme heat conditions by preventing hot air from escaping.
- It occurs when sinking (descending) air gets compressed and further heated.
- The high-pressure system suppresses cloud formation and rainfall.
- Hot air expands and forms a "dome-like" structure over a region.

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- This trapped heat leads to prolonged heatwaves.
- It can also trigger drought conditions due to lack of precipitation.
- Heat domes increase the risk of wildfires in affected regions.
- They can cause severe health impacts such as heatstroke and dehydration.
- Overall, heat domes intensify and prolong extreme summer weather events.

11. 11th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM):

Context: Responding to the challenges emanating from the conflict-hit Persian Gulf and the tensions in the South China Sea, the Quad grouping pledged to enhance cooperation in the maritime and energy domains.

Major agreements signed:

- A separate framework on critical minerals was also signed among the four Quad nations — Australia, India, Japan and the United States — which aims at mobilising around $20 billion in government and private-sector support to establish stable supply chains for critical minerals.
- Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration initiative, which is going to leverage each of our country's maritime surveillance capabilities in the Indo-Pacific to enhance information sharing.
- Expansion of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness initiative which can provide near real-time commercial maritime domain awareness data to countries throughout the Indo-Pacific region.
- The Quad Critical Minerals Initiative Framework will help in nurturing projects on critical minerals that are located in 'Quad partner countries' and are 'operated by companies headquartered in Quad partner countries', thereby blocking supply chain gaps in critical minerals.

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12. Mekedatu project:

Context: The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition filed by Tamil Nadu to review a November 2025 decision that termed the State's challenge to Karnataka's proposed Mekedatu Balancing Reservoir cum Drinking Water project as "premature". On November 13, 2025 the court had said the Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the reservoir, submitted by Karnataka, was only being considered by the experts in the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC). The court had said that in case of approval of DPR, the affected parties, including Tamil Nadu, would be free to take measures in accordance with the law.

About Mekedatu project:



- It multi-purpose project involves building a balancing reservoir near Kanakapura in Ramanagara district of Karnataka.
- The reservoir will have a capacity of 284,000 million cubic feet (TMC).
- Its primary objective is to supply drinking water to Bengaluru and recharge the groundwater table in the region.

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- It is named after the village where the project is expected to be constructed.
- The project is proposed at the confluence of Cauvery with its tributary Arkavathi.

13. Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017:

Context: The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to examine a challenge to the constitutional validity of the definition of 'wetlands' in the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 for arbitrarily excluding most human-made, artificial, and historically developed wetlands from environmental protection and diluting accountability through decentralised oversight. Definition of 'wetlands' in Rule 2(g) of the 2017 law was inconsistent with India's binding international obligations under the Ramsar Convention, 1971.

About Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2010:

- The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010 were India's first comprehensive legal framework for wetland protection under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.
- The rules aimed to conserve wetlands and regulate harmful human activities.
- Wetlands were broadly defined to include marshes, lakes, reservoirs, lagoons, estuaries, tanks, backwaters, peatlands, and certain man-made wetlands up to 6 metres depth.
- The definition also covered associated catchment areas of wetlands.
- Prohibited activities included wetland reclamation, industrialization, dumping of hazardous waste, and other ecologically harmful actions.
- Activities such as water withdrawal, dredging, and resource harvesting were regulated and required prior approval.
- The Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority (CWRA) was established for monitoring and regulation.
- CWRA was responsible for identifying wetlands and evaluating proposals submitted by States.

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- State governments were required to prepare and submit wetland documentation for protection consideration.
- Approved wetlands could be officially notified as "Protected Wetlands."
- An appeal mechanism was provided through the National Green Tribunal for disputes related to decisions under the rules.

About Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2017:

- The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 were notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to address gaps in the 2010 Wetland Rules.
- Wetlands are defined as transitional ecosystems between terrestrial and aquatic environments with shallow water or high water tables.
- Wetlands provide important ecosystem services such as water purification, flood control, erosion prevention, and groundwater recharge.
- The Rules mandate the establishment of a State Wetlands Authority in every State and Union Territory.
- The State Wetlands Authority is headed by the State Environment Minister.
- Experts in wetland ecology, hydrology, fisheries, landscape planning, and socioeconomics are included in the authority.
- The authority prepares lists of activities permitted and regulated in notified wetlands and their influence zones.
- It can also recommend additional prohibited activities for specific wetlands.
- The earlier Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority (CWRA) was replaced by a National Wetlands Committee.
- The national committee advises the Central Government on wetland conservation policies and Ramsar site recommendations.

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- The committee also promotes international cooperation on wetland-related issues.
- The Rules emphasize awareness generation among stakeholders and local communities regarding wetland conservation.
- A digital inventory of all wetlands must be prepared within one year and updated every ten years.
- Prohibited activities include wetland conversion, encroachment, industrial expansion, hazardous waste handling, and dumping of untreated waste.
- The Rules decentralize powers by giving State Governments greater responsibility for wetland protection and management.
- The Central Government mainly retains monitoring and policy oversight functions.

Quick Bites:

- Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) (located in Delhi), under the Ministry of Ayush, will organise "Yoga Mahotsav – 25-Day Countdown to International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026" tomorrow at the Western Group of Temples in Khajuraho, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh.
- As preparations for the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 gather momentum across the country and around the world, the Ministry of Ayush presents the IDY Handbook 2026 as a comprehensive resource for all stakeholders associated with the celebration. Designed to support organizers, institutions, yoga practitioners, government agencies, educational establishments and community groups, the multilingual handbook brings together essential information on IDY, the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP), Ministry initiatives and public participation opportunities in one accessible reference document.
- The Semiconductor Training Program for Tribal Students, led by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and supported by MY Bharat under the Department of Youth Affairs, has achieved a significant milestone in youth outreach and participation during its 2026 Phase-II implementation.

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- Amdavad, Gujarat will host the 1st World Yogasana Championship from June 4th to 8th, marking the first time that the global event is being organised. More than 500 participants from 75 countries are expected to take part across 12 events during the championship.
- PAIMANA (Project Assessment Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building) Portal is a centralized web-based system launched by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation to monitor Central Sector infrastructure projects worth ₹150 crore and above. It replaces the earlier OCMS-2006 system and strengthens real-time tracking, transparency, and efficiency in project execution. As of April 2026, it monitors around 1,981 infrastructure projects with an estimated investment of nearly ₹43 lakh crore, helping improve coordination and timely completion of national infrastructure projects.
- Nautapa is a traditional nine-day period in the Hindu calendar that marks the peak of the summer heat in North India, derived from "Nau" (nine) and "Tapa" (heat), beginning when the Sun enters the Rohini Nakshatra in late May and is usually considered the hottest phase of the season.
- The World Health Assembly has recognized stroke as a global public health priority for the first time. A stroke is a medical emergency caused by sudden interruption of blood flow to the brain due to a blockage or bleeding, leading to brain cell damage or death. It includes three main types: ischemic stroke (caused by blood clot), hemorrhagic stroke (caused by bleeding in the brain), and transient ischemic attack (a temporary blockage of blood flow).
- India's first National AI and Digital Water Summit, titled the National AI Summit on Water 2026, will be hosted by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) in Bengaluru on 27 May 2026. The summit is jointly organised by BWSSB and Elets Technomedia Pvt. Ltd.
- India will field its first official freediving team at the World Apnea Pool Championship in Budapest, Hungary, from 2 June 2026. The team has three athletes: Archana Thiagarajan, Akshay Thatte, and Vachan H U. Freediving is a breath-hold underwater sport that includes pool disciplines and depth disciplines.

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- The Indian Army developed two Artificial Intelligence-based digital systems, Kautilya and Q-FORCE, in 2026 for command intelligence and logistics management. Kautilya is an AI-powered command intelligence platform, while Q-FORCE is an integrated digital application for supply chain and sustainment operations.
- Taiwan became the world's fifth-largest stock market on 25 May 2026, when its market capitalisation reached US4.95 trillion and India's market value stood at US4.92 trillion. Taiwan's rise followed a sharp rally in Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., the world's largest chipmaker.
- India's First Private Medical Museum Opens in Thiruvananthapuram. The Museum of Medical Archives opened in Ulloor, Thiruvananthapuram, on 25 May 2026. It is Kerala's first private medical museum and India's first private medical museum.
- The Centre for HR Information Systems, Research and Analytics in Governance (CHIRAG) is a Centre of Excellence of Indian Railways. It was inaugurated on 25 May 2026 at the SCR Grounds near the Zonal Railway Training Institute in Moula-Ali, Hyderabad.
- A Manipuri astrophysicist, Ronaldo Laishram, led an international team that discovered a galaxy protocluster dated to 12.6 billion years ago. The structure was named the Loktak Protocluster after Loktak Lake in Manipur, and it existed when the Universe was about 1.2 billion years old.
- On the sidelines of the 11th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM), India and the United States firmed up an important framework for cooperation in ensuring steady supplies of critical minerals, in a move that follows growing concerns over China's export controls of rare earth minerals and strategic metals vital for technology supply chains "Framework" titled "Securing of supply in the mining and processing of critical minerals and rare earths".

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28-05-2026

1. Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS (SARTHAK PDS):

Context: Cabinet approves Integration and Continuation of two schemes viz. (i) "Assistance to State Agencies for intra-State movement of foodgrains and FPS dealers' margin under NFSA" and (ii) "Scheme for Modernization and Reforms through Technology in Public Distribution System (SMART PDS)" under umbrella scheme SARTHAK-PDS

About SARTHAK-PDS:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Narendra Modi, approved continuation of the SARTHAK-PDS scheme during the 16th Finance Commission period.
- SARTHAK-PDS stands for "Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS".
- The scheme has a Central outlay of ₹25,530 crore and will continue till 31 March 2031.
- SARTHAK-PDS is an umbrella scheme merging assistance for intra-State foodgrain movement and SMART PDS technology reforms.
- The scheme aims to strengthen implementation of the National Food Security Act, 2013 through efficient and transparent PDS operations.
- The scheme provides Central financial assistance for intra-state foodgrain transport, handling and FPS dealer margins.
- SARTHAK-PDS seeks to create a citizen-centric, interoperable and intelligent Public Distribution System (PDS).
- The scheme will use technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Blockchain in PDS operations.

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- The scheme includes unified databases, real-time monitoring systems, AI-based grievance redressal and State Command Control Centres.
- SARTHAK-PDS aims to minimize leakages and improve last-mile delivery of foodgrains.
- The scheme supports food and nutritional security for 81.35 crore beneficiaries covered under NFSA.
- Earlier reforms under PDS include End-to-End Computerization of TPDS, IM-PDS and SMART PDS initiatives.
- Citizen-centric applications under PDS reforms include Mera Ration, Anna Mitra, Rightful Targeting Dashboard and Anna Sahayata.
- Since April 2023, SMART PDS has enabled Aadhaar seeding, e-PoS automation and computerized supply-chain management across 36 States/UTs.

2. National Health Accounts (NHA) estimates for India 2022-23:

Context: The Union Health Ministry released the National Health Accounts (NHA) estimates for India 2022-23. The NHA 2022–23 is the tenth report on health expenditure estimates prepared by the National Health Accounts Technical Secretariat (NHATS), National Health Systems Resource Centre, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, using the System of Health Accounts (2011) framework.

Major details:

- Government Health Expenditure (GHE) as a share of GDP increased from 1.15% in 2013–14 to 1.43% in 2022–23.
- As per the new GDP series with base year 2022–23, GHE as a percentage of GDP is 1.48%.
- GHE's share in General Government Expenditure (GGE) increased from 3.78% in 2013–14 to 4.89% in 2022–23.

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- Per capita Government Health Expenditure increased nearly 2.7 times from ₹1,042 to ₹2,786 between 2013–14 and 2022–23.
- Increased public health expenditure has contributed to a reduction in Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) by citizens.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, government health expenditure rose significantly to 1.84% of GDP in 2021–22.
- Increased spending during the pandemic included Emergency COVID Response Package (ECRP)-I & II and the mass COVID vaccination programme.
- India implemented one of the world's largest COVID vaccination programmes during the pandemic.
- Due to higher government spending, OOPE as a share of Total Health Expenditure (THE) declined to 39.4% during the pandemic period.
- The share of GHE in Total Health Expenditure (THE) increased from 28.6% in 2013–14 to 43.7% in 2022–23.
- The rise in public financing reflects greater prioritization of healthcare in government spending.
- Increased government health expenditure aims to make healthcare more affordable, equitable and accessible.

3. First Indigenous Hydrogen Train:

Context: In a major step towards green and sustainable transportation, Indian Railways has approved the introduction of a 10-car Hydrogen Fuel Cell-based trainset on the dedicated Jind-Sonipat section of Northern Railway. The trainset is all set to start soon and will operate at a maximum speed of 75 kmph, powered by a 1200 KW hydrogen fuel cell propulsion system.

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More details:



- The Jind–Sonipat section in Haryana has been selected as the pilot route for hydrogen train operations.
- An indigenous hydrogen storage and refuelling facility has been established at Jind for the hydrogen train-set.
- The Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) has granted the licence for storage and dispensing of compressed hydrogen gas.
- A hydrogen compression system has been installed for refuelling operations.

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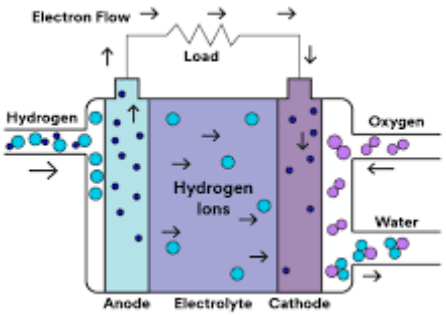
- Necessary technical support and critical spare parts are being provided for reliable and fail-safe functioning.
- A standby compressor unit is also being arranged to ensure uninterrupted operations.
- Safety systems include hydrogen leak detectors and flame detectors at the production, storage and dispensing facility.
- Regular inspection and cleaning of safety sensors will be carried out to prevent dust accumulation and ensure safe functioning.
- Operation and maintenance manuals for the hydrogen train-set and hydrogen plant have been approved by Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO).
- Safety provisions, regular audits and standard operating procedures are being implemented at the proposed maintenance facility in Shakurbasti.
- With this initiative, India joins a select group of countries such as Germany, Japan, China and the United States that are exploring the use of hydrogen for cleaner rail transportation.
- As the technology is still at a nascent stage, only a limited number of countries are currently operating or testing such systems.

About Hydrogen fuel cell technology:



- Hydrogen fuel cell technology generates electricity through a chemical reaction using hydrogen fuel.

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- Water vapour is the only emission from hydrogen fuel cells, making them a clean energy source.
- Hydrogen fuel cell technology is considered a clean alternative to fossil fuel-based traction systems.
- Hydrogen-based rail systems are emerging globally as a sustainable mobility solution.
- Hydrogen fuel cells provide clean, reliable, quiet and efficient electric power.
- The technology works through an electrochemical process that converts hydrogen into electricity.
- Water and heat are the only by-products produced during the process.
- Hydrogen is one of the most abundant elements available on Earth.
- Hydrogen fuel is being promoted as an environmentally friendly alternative energy source.

4. VERVE-102:

Context: The experimental therapy called VERVE-102 reduced harmful LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol by up to 62% in patients with inherited high cholesterol and early heart disease.

About VERVE-102:

- VERVE-102 is an investigational in vivo base editing medicine designed to edit genes directly inside the human body.
- Base editing is a type of genome editing that changes a single DNA base into another base without cutting the DNA completely.
- VERVE-102 uses messenger RNA (mRNA) to produce an adenine base editor inside cells.
- The medicine also contains a guide RNA (gRNA) that directs the editor to the PCSK9 gene.
- The PCSK9 gene produces a liver enzyme that regulates cholesterol levels in the blood.
- Messenger RNA (mRNA) carries genetic instructions that tell cells to make specific proteins using the body's natural cellular machinery.

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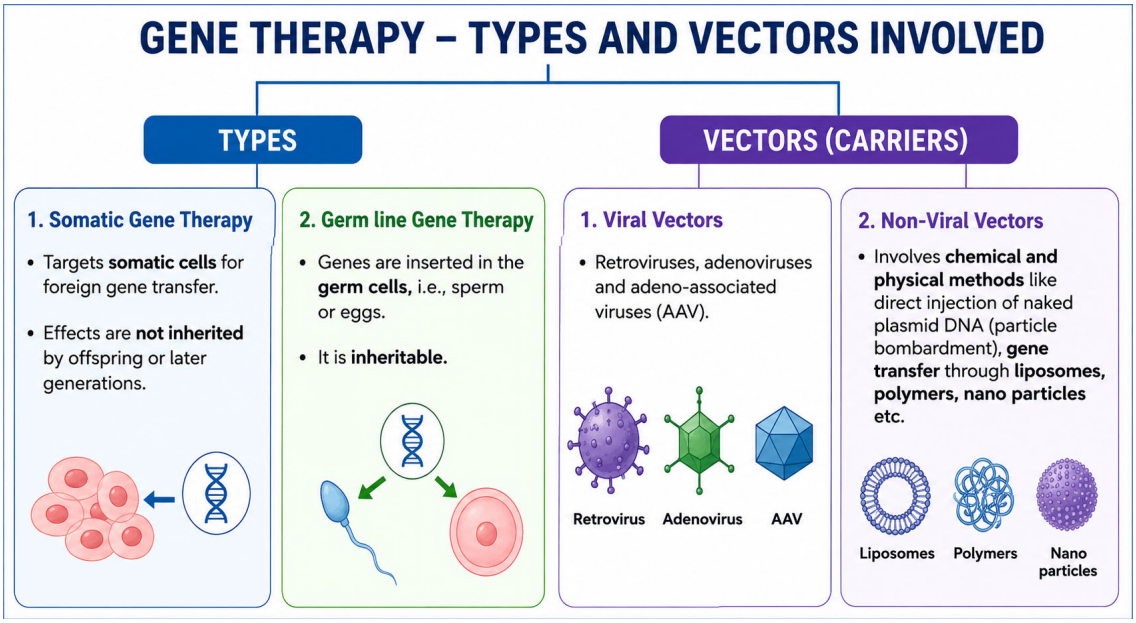
About Gene therapy:

- It is a technique that uses a gene(s) to treat, prevent or cure a disease or medical disorder.
- It works by adding new copies of a gene that is broken, or by replacing a defective or missing gene in a patient's cells with a healthy version of that gene.



5. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS):

Context: Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) commissioned Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Khavda, Gujarat. It is the world's largest single-location battery storage deployment outside China with a capacity of 3.37 Gigawatt-hour (GWh).

About Battery Energy Storage System (BESS):

- Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is an electrochemical system that stores excess electrical energy for later use.

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- BESS provides flexibility in grid connectivity and can operate independently in local mode during grid failure.
- BESS is important for reliable integration of renewable energy into the power system.
- The Central Electricity Authority estimates that about 336 GWh of energy storage capacity will be required by 2029–30.
- Traditional solid rechargeable batteries store energy in solid metal electrodes.
- Examples of traditional rechargeable batteries include Lead-Acid, Lithium-Ion and Zinc-Air batteries.
- Flow batteries store energy in liquid electrolytes kept separately in storage tanks.
- Examples of flow batteries include Vanadium Redox Flow, Zinc-Iron and Zinc-Bromine batteries.

Quick Bites:

- The main celebration of the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 will be held in Kolkata, with the theme for this year's observance is "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", highlighting the role of Yoga in promoting physical health, mental well-being and healthy ageing.
- The Union Minister for the Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER), Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, launched the "Mission Queen Pineapple", a ₹236 crore convergence-led initiative for pineapple cultivation and value chain development in the State of Tripura. The Mission is
- designed as a three-year implementation roadmap from Q2 FY2026 to Q4 FY2028 for promoting Tripura's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) — the GI-tagged Queen Pineapple.
- Recently a study identified Bihar and West Bengal as major aerosol pollution hotspots. Aerosols are small microscopic solid or liquid particles that float in the air. They are emitted by both natural events and human activities.
- US strikes near Strait of Hormuz in Iran's Southern Hormozgan raise ceasefire tensions.Hormozgan Province is a southern province of Iran located along the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. Its capital is Bandar Abbas, situated on the northern coast of the strategically

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important Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's major oil trade routes and a key global energy chokepoint.

- Recently, the Finance Minister reiterated India's target of achieving $100 billion in textile exports and $250 billion in textile production by 2030 during the TEXPROCIL Export Awards 2023–24 ceremony. The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL) was established in 1954 as the first export promotion council set up by the Government of India after Independence. Headquartered in Mumbai, it functions under the Ministry of Textiles as a government-sponsored, autonomous and non-profit organization promoting cotton textile exports from India.
- Vaccinium piliferum, a rare wild relative of the blueberry, was rediscovered in the forests of Vijoynagar in Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh, after 188 years.
- India ranked second after China in the Asia Pacific region in operational data centre capacity as of 27 May 2026, with 1.6 GW of live capacity. India also placed among the top three global markets by development pipeline, with 3.1 GW of capacity under construction and planned.
- Andhra Pradesh has directed the implementation of a "Farm to Home" model for direct delivery of agricultural produce from farmers to consumers.
- Three-time World championship medallist Esha Singh bossed the women's 25m pistol final with a World record score of 43 as she clinched the gold to open India's medal count on the second day of the ISSF World Cup held in Munich, Germany.
- The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday issued the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the indigenous fifth-generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme to three shortlisted bidders, marking a major step forward in India's push for self-reliance in advanced combat aviation. The shortlisted entities include the Larsen and Toubro-Bharat Electronics Limited combine, Tata Advanced Systems, and the Bharat Forge-BEML consortium.
- A task force under the Department of Science and Technology, chaired by Rajkumar Upadhyay with co-chair Manindra Agrawal, has recommended a phased national transition to post-quantum cryptography (PQC) for critical sectors like defence, banking, telecom, power and governance.

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Formed under the National Quantum Mission, the panel warned that future quantum computers could break current encryption systems and compromise sensitive data. It has proposed a migration roadmap for Critical Information Infrastructure, targeting foundational readiness by 2027 and full PQC adoption by 2029 to ensure quantum-resilient digital security.

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29-05-2026

1. 2026 U23 Asian Championships:

Context: Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi congratulated Indian wrestlers for their outstanding performance at the 2026 U23 Asian Championships held in Da Nang, Vietnam.

About 2026 U23 Asian Championships:

- Men's Freestyle Wrestling team secured 9 medals, including 4 Gold medals, registering India's highest-ever overall medal haul in the history of the U23 Asian Championships.
- The women wrestling contingent won 10 medals, including 6 Gold medals.
- The Prime Minister also highlighted that the Greco-Roman team recorded its highest-ever overall medal count with 8 medals.
- Also, India's Men's Freestyle and Women's Wrestling teams won the Team Titles at the 2026 U23 Asian Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam.
- Freestyle wrestling is an international style of amateur wrestling and an official Olympic Sport. It allows competitors to use their entire bodies—including the legs and hips—for both offensive and defensive maneuvers, such as takedowns, throws, and turns, with the ultimate goal of pinning the opponent's shoulders to the mat.
- A Greco-Roman wrestling team represents a nation or club in the sport of Greco-Roman wrestling. This style emphasizes upper-body holds, where wrestlers use only their arms and upper torso to throw and pin opponents, and all attacks on the legs are strictly prohibited.

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2. Veer Savarkar:

Context: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today remembered Veer Savarkar on his Jayanti and paid tribute to his courage, patriotism and contribution to social reform.

About Veer Savarkar:

- Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was born on 28 May 1883 at Bhagur village near Nashik in Maharashtra and was popularly known as "Veer Savarkar."
- He was educated at Shivaji High School, completed graduation from Fergusson College, and later went to England to study law at Gray's Inn Law College.
- Influenced by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, he developed revolutionary nationalist ideas at a young age.
- In 1899, at the age of 16, he founded "Mitra Mela," which was later renamed Abhinav Bharat Society in 1904 as a secret revolutionary organization.
- Abhinav Bharat was inspired by Young Italy of Giuseppe Mazzini and Russian revolutionary societies.
- In 1906, Savarkar founded the Free India Society in London to promote Indian independence among students.
- He was also associated with India House founded by Shyamji Krishna Varma.
- Savarkar organized the 50th anniversary celebration of the Revolt of 1857 in London in 1907 and declared it the "First War of Indian Independence."
- He wrote the book The History of the War of Indian Independence, which highlighted guerrilla warfare during the 1857 revolt and was banned by the British government.
- He advocated armed revolution, promoted Swadeshi, boycott of foreign goods, national education, and revolutionary nationalism to free India from British rule.
- Savarkar was arrested in 1909 for plotting armed revolt against the Morley–Minto Reforms and again in 1910 for his links with revolutionary activities and India House.

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- He was charged with abetment in the murder of Nashik Collector Jackson and conspiracy against the British Crown under IPC Section 121-A.
- In 1911, he was sentenced to two life imprisonments totaling 50 years and transported to the Cellular Jail, popularly known as "Kala Pani."
- During imprisonment and later internment at Ratnagiri, he wrote Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu? and popularized the concept of Hindutva.
- Savarkar became president of the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943 and strongly criticized both Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress.
- He opposed the Quit India Movement of 1942 and supported the idea that Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations.
- Along with revolutionary nationalism, he also campaigned against casteism and untouchability, supported inter-caste marriages, reconversion, rationalism, atheism, and opposed superstitions like cow worship.
- Savarkar was accused in the assassination case of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948 but was acquitted due to lack of evidence; he died on 26 February 1966 after undertaking voluntary fasting unto death.

3. India's Insolvency Framework:

Context: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) which came into force in 2016 has completed 10 years of its existence today.

Background:

- Before the enactment of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016, insolvency resolution in India operated through multiple overlapping legal frameworks.
- Companies facing financial distress were dealt with under different laws such as the Companies Act, the Sick Industrial Companies Act (SICA), debt recovery mechanisms and secured creditor frameworks including SARFAESI.

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- These processes functioned through separate institutions and forums, often resulting in fragmented proceedings and overlapping jurisdiction.

Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016:

- The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016 established a unified framework for resolving insolvency across companies, partnership firms and individuals.
- It consolidated multiple insolvency laws into a single structure, creating a more coordinated and predictable resolution process.
- A key objective introduced by the Code was the transition from a debtor-controlled system towards a creditor-driven resolution framework.
- The emphasis moved beyond mere recovery proceedings towards value maximisation, continuation of viable businesses and balanced treatment of stakeholders.
- At the centre of the framework is the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP), which provides a structured mechanism for resolving corporate insolvency.
- The Committee of Creditors (CoC), comprising financial creditors, evaluates resolution plans.
- They then make important commercial decisions regarding the future of the stressed entity.
- The Code also introduced a time-bound structure for resolution. The CIRP was designed to be completed within 180 days, extendable up to 330 days in specified circumstances. This timeline-based approach aimed to prevent indefinite delays and preserve the economic value of distressed businesses.
- If resolution is not achieved within the prescribed framework, the entity moves into liquidation in accordance with the provisions of the Code.
- The effectiveness of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) depends on a regulated institutional ecosystem created under the Code.
- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) is the regulatory authority overseeing insolvency processes, Insolvency Professionals (IPs), and related institutions.

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- The IBBI frames regulations, rules, and standards for the proper functioning of the insolvency ecosystem in India.
- Insolvency Professionals (IPs) manage the affairs of distressed companies, protect their assets, and conduct meetings of creditors during the resolution process.
- IPs supervise and ensure that the insolvency resolution process is carried out according to the provisions of the IBC and related regulations.
- The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) acts as the adjudicating authority for corporate insolvency cases under the IBC framework.
- Appeals against NCLT decisions are heard by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), creating a structured, supervised, and legally enforceable insolvency resolution system in India.

4. Nirbhaya Fund:

Context: Ministry of Panchayati Raj conducts Training of Trainers Program under 'Nirbhay Raho' Initiative to strengthen Women's Safety in Rural Areas under Nirbhaya Fund. The programme aimed to strengthen the capacities of Elected Women Representatives and Panchayat representatives on issues relating to women's safety, legal awareness, gender sensitivity, institutional response mechanisms and community-level support systems.

About Nirbhaya Fund:

- The Government of India established the Nirbhaya Fund in response to the Nirbhaya Case in 2013.
- It is aimed specifically at projects for improving women's safety and security and is managed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).
- The Empowered Committee (EC), which is composed of officials from several ministries and is chaired by the Secretary of the MWCD, recommends programmes/schemes for funding under Nirbhaya Fund.

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- Some of the major projects under the fund are Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF), One Stop Centers (OSCs), Universalization of Women Helpline (WHL), Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV), etc.

5. Forest Advisory Committee (FAC):

Context: FAC has granted in-principle approval for the diversion of over 3,000 hectares of forest land across several states for key infrastructure projects.

About Forest Advisory Committee (FAC):

- The Advisory Committee is a statutory body constituted under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
- The Director General of Forests serves as the Chairman of the committee.
- It evaluates proposals for diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes such as mining, dam construction, and road projects.

6. Namdapha National Park:

Context: Long-Tailed Duskhawker (Gynacantha khasiaca), a dragonfly, was recorded from the Namdapha National Park. Dragonflies belong to the order Odonata, rank among the world's fastest flying insects and have a nearly 360-degree field of view. They are crucial components of freshwater ecosystems and are instrumental in controlling mosquito population.

About Namdapha National Park:

- Namdapha National Park is located in the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India.
- The national park was established in 1983 and covers an area of about 1,985 sq km.

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- It lies at the tri-junction of India, Myanmar, and China, giving it strategic as well as ecological importance.
- The park forms part of the catchment area of the Noa-Dihing River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra River.
- The highest peak in the park is Dapha Bum.
- Namdapha is bordered by the Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary, the Patkai Hill ranges, and the international border with Myanmar.
- It is a major biodiversity hotspot of the Eastern Himalayas with more than 1,000 floral species and around 1,400 faunal species.
- The park contains the world's northernmost lowland evergreen rainforests at around 27° North latitude.
- It also has extensive dipterocarp forests, forming part of the Mizoram–Manipur–Kachin rainforest ecoregion.
- Namdapha is famous for hosting all four big cat species in one protected area — Tiger, Leopard, Clouded Leopard, and Snow Leopard.
- The critically endangered Namdapha flying squirrel is endemic to the park and was last recorded in 1981.
- The park is highly rich in Lepidoptera species, including both butterflies and moths in large numbers.
- Rare butterfly species found here include Koh-i-noor, Naga treebrown, Red caliph, Cruiser, Wizard, Fluffy tit, and East Himalayan purple emperor.

7. Yamuna River:

Context: Supreme Court constituted a committee under Union Home Secretary to prepare a comprehensive plan to clean up the river Yamuna.

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About Yamuna River:

- Yamuna River is the longest tributary of the Ganga River and is considered one of the most sacred rivers of India.
- It is believed to have once been a tributary of the Ghaggar River, which is often associated with the Vedic Saraswati River.
- The Yamuna originates from the Yamunotri Glacier on the slopes of the Bandarpunch Massif in the Great Himalayas of Uttarakhand.
- The river flows through Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh.
- It joins the Ganga River at Prayagraj at the famous Triveni Sangam.
- The Yamuna is the longest river in India that does not directly flow into the sea.
- Its major tributaries include the Tons (largest tributary), Chambal (longest tributary), Sindh, Betwa, and Ken rivers.

8. ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram or New India Literacy Programme (NILP):

Context: Sikkim was declared a fully literate state on 27 May 2026 under the ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram. The state recorded a literacy rate of 99.82 per cent, which is above the Ministry of Education benchmark of 95 per cent for full literacy.

About ULLAS programme:

- **Definition of Literates:** Literates are those with reading, writing, basic math, digital, and financial literacy skills.
- **Scheme Type:** It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme aligned with NEP 2020.
- **Overall Target:** Aims to educate 5 crore adults (1 crore/year) using the Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS) system.
- **Technology Backbone:** OTLAS is a digital platform developed by NIC for online teaching, learning, and assessment.

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- **Duration:** The scheme runs from FY 2022–23 to 2026–27.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Implemented by the Ministry of Education.
- **Target Group:** Adults aged 15 and above who missed out on formal education.
- **Programme Components:** Includes literacy, numeracy, life skills, vocational skills, and continuing education.Implementation Mode: Driven by volunteerism to instil social responsibility (Kartavya Bodh).
- Sikkim joined Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh among the states and Union Territories recognised as fully literate under the ULLAS programme.
- **Infrastructure:** Samajik Chetna Kendras are set up using existing community spaces with schools as base units.
- **Regional Access:** Content is accessible in regional languages via DIKSHA and ULLAS apps/portals.
- **Assessment:** (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT) is held twice a year or on-demand in local schools for evaluation and certification.

9. Dag Hammarskjöld Medal:

Context: Two Indian peacekeepers, Lance Havildar Harbhajan Singh and Naib Subedar Sujit Kumar Pradhan, will receive the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal posthumously from the United Nations.

About Dag Hammarskjöld Medal:

- The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal is a posthumous award presented by the United Nations to military, police, and civilian personnel who die while serving in UN peacekeeping missions.
- The medal is named after Dag Hammarskjöld, who died in a plane crash in present-day Zambia in 1961.

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- Lance Havildar Harbhajan Singh served in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).
- Naib Subedar Sujit Kumar Pradhan served in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).
- Major Abhilasha Barak serves with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

10. Chandrayaan-2:

Context: Nearly six years after it was launched, India's second moon mission Chandrayaan-2 continues to provide valuable data on the satellite. In a new finding, scientists have found the possible presence of sub-surface ice in the Lunar South Polar Region. These were the findings of scientists from the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) who used observations from the Chandrayaan-2's Dual Frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar (DFSAR) payload. Due to continuous shielding from sunlight and thermal radiation, these regions remain extremely cold (temperatures ~ 25K) and are considered favourable locations for preserving water-ice over long geological timescales.

About Chandrayaan-2:

- Chandrayaan-2 was launched on 22 July 2019 by the GSLV Mk III-M1 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- After several Earth-bound maneuvers, the spacecraft entered the Lunar Transfer Trajectory (LTT) on 14 August 2019.
- The Lunar Orbit Insertion (LOI) maneuver was successfully carried out on 20 August 2019, placing the spacecraft into an elliptical orbit around the Moon.
- Subsequent lunar orbit maneuvers reduced the orbit into a circular polar orbit of about 100 km × 100 km around the Moon.

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- On 2 September 2019, the Vikram Lander separated from the orbiter and performed de-orbiting maneuvers to lower its orbit to 35 km × 101 km.
- The landing attempt was made on 7 September 2019, but communication with the lander was lost when it reached around 2 km above the lunar surface.
- Despite the landing setback, the lander's systems and sensors functioned successfully during descent and demonstrated technologies such as variable thrust propulsion.
- The Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter remained healthy and operational with all payloads functioning normally.
- Chandrayaan-2 carried eight scientific payloads to study the Moon's surface geology, mineral composition, and exosphere, enhancing knowledge from earlier lunar missions.

11. Shangri-La Dialogue:

Context: China said on Thursday it will send a delegation of scholars from its Army's study institutions to attend Asia's premier security forum in Singapore. The Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's top international defence summit, kicks off in the city-state on Friday.

About Shangri-La Dialogue:

- The Shangri-La Dialogue is Asia's premier defence and security summit.
- It brings together defence ministers, military chiefs, policymakers, and strategic experts from across the world.
- The dialogue was launched in 2002.
- It has evolved into the most influential multilateral security forum in the Asia-Pacific region.
- It is held annually in June in Singapore's Shangri-La Hotel.
- The summit is organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London.
- It is co-organized by Singapore's Ministry of Defence.
- The agenda focuses on security developments in the Indo-Pacific/Asia-Pacific region.

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- It discusses both traditional and non-traditional security challenges.
- Traditional security issues include territorial disputes and military cooperation.
- Non-traditional security issues include terrorism, cybersecurity, and climate change.
- The dialogue reflects the security concerns and cooperation needs of the Asia-Pacific region.
- It consists of open plenary discussions and closed-door breakout meetings.
- Open sessions promote transparency, mutual understanding, and strategic trust.
- Closed-door meetings enable detailed negotiations and confidential discussions on sensitive issues.

12. German-Dutch command centre known as "1GNC":

Context: Germany and the Netherlands will set up a joint tactical headquarters in the Baltics this year to command forces on NATO's eastern flank and help deter Russia.

More details:

- The joint German-Dutch command centre known as 1GNC will "assume a command role on NATO's eastern flank, specifically in the region Estonia and Latvia" in coming months, the German Defence Ministry said in a statement.
- "The deployment of an additional tactical headquarters to the region strengthens the cohesion of NATO and supports the deterrence of Russia," .
- 1GNC is a command centre that can control up to 50,000 troops if needed.
- Its tasks include planning and running military exercises, planning for possible conflict and leading forces if a war breaks out.
- The unit, the German-Netherlands Corps, is headquartered in Muenster, Germany, and deploys from there for NATO missions when required.
- Currently, NATO forces in the Baltic region come under the command of a single headquarters in the Polish city of Szczecin.

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About NATO:



- NATO stands for North Atlantic Treaty Organization.
- It is an intergovernmental military alliance formed for collective security and defence.
- NATO was established on 4 April 1949 through the North Atlantic Treaty (Washington Treaty).
- NATO follows the principle of collective defence under Article 5 of the treaty.
- Article 5 states that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all members.
- NATO's headquarters is located in Brussels, Belgium.
- The alliance aims to maintain peace, security, and stability among member countries.
- NATO protects members against external military threats.
- It focuses on crisis management using diplomatic and military measures.

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- NATO strengthens partnerships with non-member countries for global stability.
- The alliance promotes military modernization and strategic preparedness.
- NATO originally had 12 founding member countries in 1949.
- Founding members included the United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal.
- As of 2026, NATO has 32 member countries.
- Finland became the 31st member on 4 April 2023.
- Sweden became the 32nd and newest member on 7 March 2024.

Quick Bites:

- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu presented the 'President of India's Police Colour' to the Sikkim Police. The President of India's Police Colour (also known as Rashtrapati ka Nishan) is the highest ceremonial honour the President can bestow upon a state, union territory, or central police force in India. It recognizes exceptional long-term service, courage, discipline, and professionalism.
- Indian Navy's Sail Training Ship (STS) INS Sudarshini arrived at Antigua on 27 May 2026 after successfully completing a historic trans-Atlantic passage as part of the ongoing Lokayan 26 expedition. The voyage marks the first Atlantic crossing by INS Sudarshini, while the last such crossing was undertaken by INS Tarangini in 2007. Lokayan 26 is a 10-month, 22,000-nautical-mile global expedition by the Indian Navy's sail training ship, INS Sudarshini.
- The iconic Indian Air Force formation aerobatic team, the Suryakiran Aerobatic Team, marked its 30th Anniversary at Air Force Station Bidar on 26 May 2026. The occasion commemorated three glorious decades of inspiring the nation through precision aerobatics and exceptional airmanship.
- Kazipet rail manufacturing unit in Telangana of Indian Railways is on the verge of completion. This is a versatile railway rolling stock manufacturing unit. To begin with, Kazipet will manufacture 200 intercity trains in the next 5 years.

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- The Supreme Court of India declared access to trauma care an integral part of the Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.
- India's first solar power projects operated by women's self-help groups were launched in Telangana on 27 May 2026. A 1 MW solar power plant was inaugurated at Venkatapuram village in Errupalem mandal of Khammam district under the Indira Mahila Shakti scheme.
- Russia and Kazakhstan signed an agreement on 28 May 2026 for the construction of Kazakhstan's first nuclear power plant.
- The 35th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) was held in Beijing, where India and China held constructive and forward-looking discussions on border delimitation and boundary management issues.

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30-05-2026

1. Special Economic Zones (SEZs):

Context: The Government has notified two new Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the Union Territory of Puducherry. Out of these two SEZs, one IT/ITES SEZ will be developed by M/s Oulgaret Municipality at Thattanchavady village in Oulgaret Taluk. This will be the first SEZ in India to be developed by an Urban Local Body, namely a Municipality. The other, a Multi-Sector SEZ, will be developed by M/s Pondicherry Industrial Promotion Development and Investment Corporation (PIPDIC) at Karasur village in Villianur Taluk.

About Special Economic Zones (SEZs):



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- SEZ is a specifically delineated duty-free enclave and deemed to be a territory outside the customs territory of India for authorized operations.
- SEZ units are set up for the manufacture of goods, for rendering of services and providing warehousing services through Free Trade Warehousing Zones.
- Since the enactment of the SEZ Act in May 2005, these zones have significantly accelerated export growth while fostering industrial expansion across sectors.
- India was among the first Asian countries to adopt the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) model to promote exports, establishing Asia's first EPZ at Kandla in 1965.
- However, challenges such as multiple regulatory controls, procedural delays, inadequate infrastructure, and an unstable fiscal regime limited its effectiveness.
- To address these shortcomings and attract greater foreign investment, the Government announced the SEZ Policy in April 2000.
- The Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 came into effect in 2005. Following extensive consultations, the Act, along with the SEZ Rules, 2006, came into force on 10 February 2006.
- This ushered a simplified regulatory framework with single-window clearances for matters relating to both Central and State Governments.
- The Act lays down clear guiding principles for SEZs- generation of economic activity, infrastructure development, and employment creation.
- Currently, there are 368 notified SEZs across India as of 28th February, 2026.

2. SkyCast System:

Context: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh today inaugurated India's first "SkyCast System" at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, calling it the beginning of a new era in Indian aviation. The Minister informed that only 18 such advanced systems exist across the world so far and India has now become the 19th in the world to install this integrated atmospheric remote

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sensing system for aviation weather monitoring. After IGI Airport Delhi, the second such facility will come up at Jewar Airport, Noida, followed by expansion to other airports across India.

About SkyCast System:

- It combines multiple atmospheric observation technologies for fog monitoring, turbulence detection and high-impact weather forecasting.
- The system integrates state-of-the-art atmospheric remote sensing technologies, including Radar Wind Profiler, SODAR, Microwave Radiometer, Ground-based Fog Aerosol Spectrometer (GFAS) and CL61 Lidar-based Ceilometer to provide comprehensive real-time atmospheric intelligence.
- The facility will strengthen monitoring and warning capabilities across runways, making take-offs and landings safer.
- The core of SkyCast is an advanced boundary layer Radar Wind Profiler, which continuously measures wind speed, wind direction, turbulence, vertical velocity and boundary-layer dynamics up to nearly 3 kilometres above the airport.
- These parameters are crucial during aircraft descent and landing operations, where precise atmospheric information helps improve safety.
- The SkyCast facility also includes advanced fog monitoring instruments such as the Ground-based Fog Aerosol Spectrometer (GFAS), which provides detailed information on fog droplets, aerosols and aerosol-fog interactions.
- The scientific foundation of SkyCast comes from the Winter Fog Experiment (WiFEX), jointly initiated by IITM and IMD under the Ministry of Earth Sciences at IGI Airport in 2015.
- WiFEX generated critical understanding of fog formation, aerosol-cloud interaction, visibility reduction and urban boundary-layer processes, which contributed to the development of this next-generation operational system.

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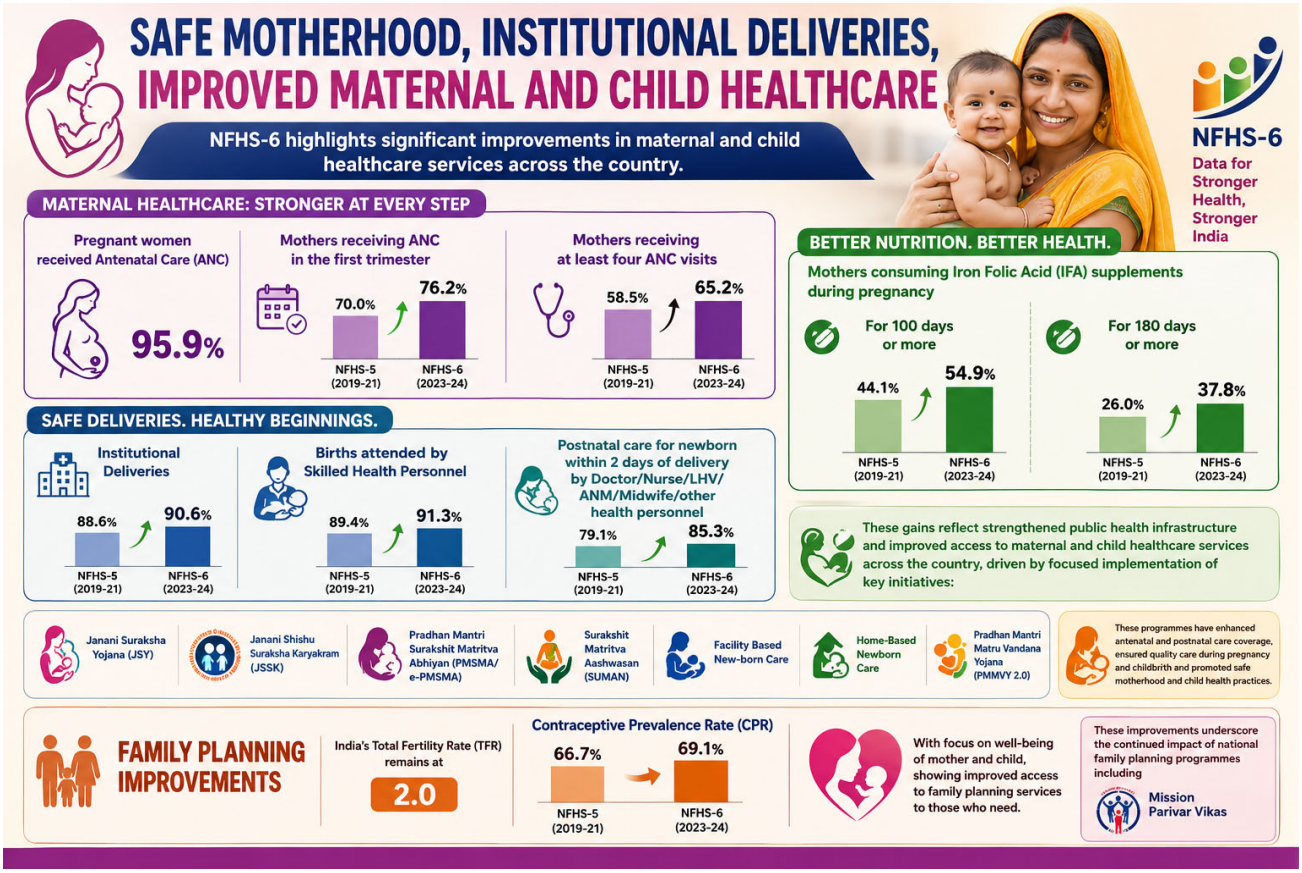
- The SkyCast System under Mission Mausam reflects India's commitment towards building weather-smart infrastructure, strengthening aviation resilience and ensuring safer and more reliable services through scientific innovation.

3. National Family Health Survey – 6:

Context: Union Health Ministry Releases National Family Health Survey – 6. The National Family Health Survey 2023-24 (NFHS-6), the sixth in the NFHS series, provides information on population, health, and nutrition for India and each State/Union Territory (UT) except Manipur.

Major highlights:



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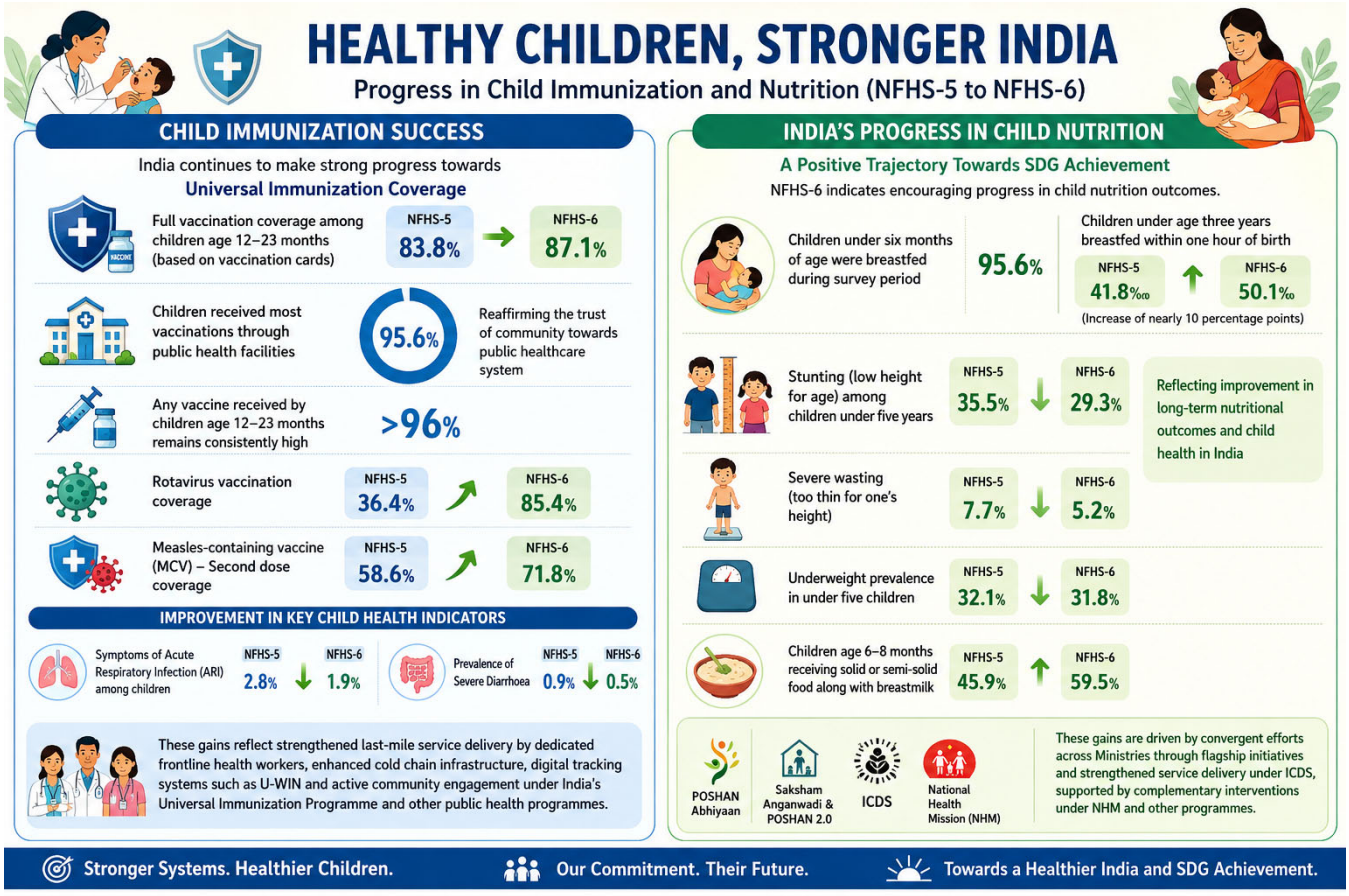
- The NFHS-6 was conducted during 2023-24 by MoHFW with the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai as the nodal agency.
- Covering nearly 6.79 lakh households across 715 districts, the survey provides vital evidence on population, health, nutrition and family welfare indicators and supports evidence-based planning and programme implementation up to the district level.



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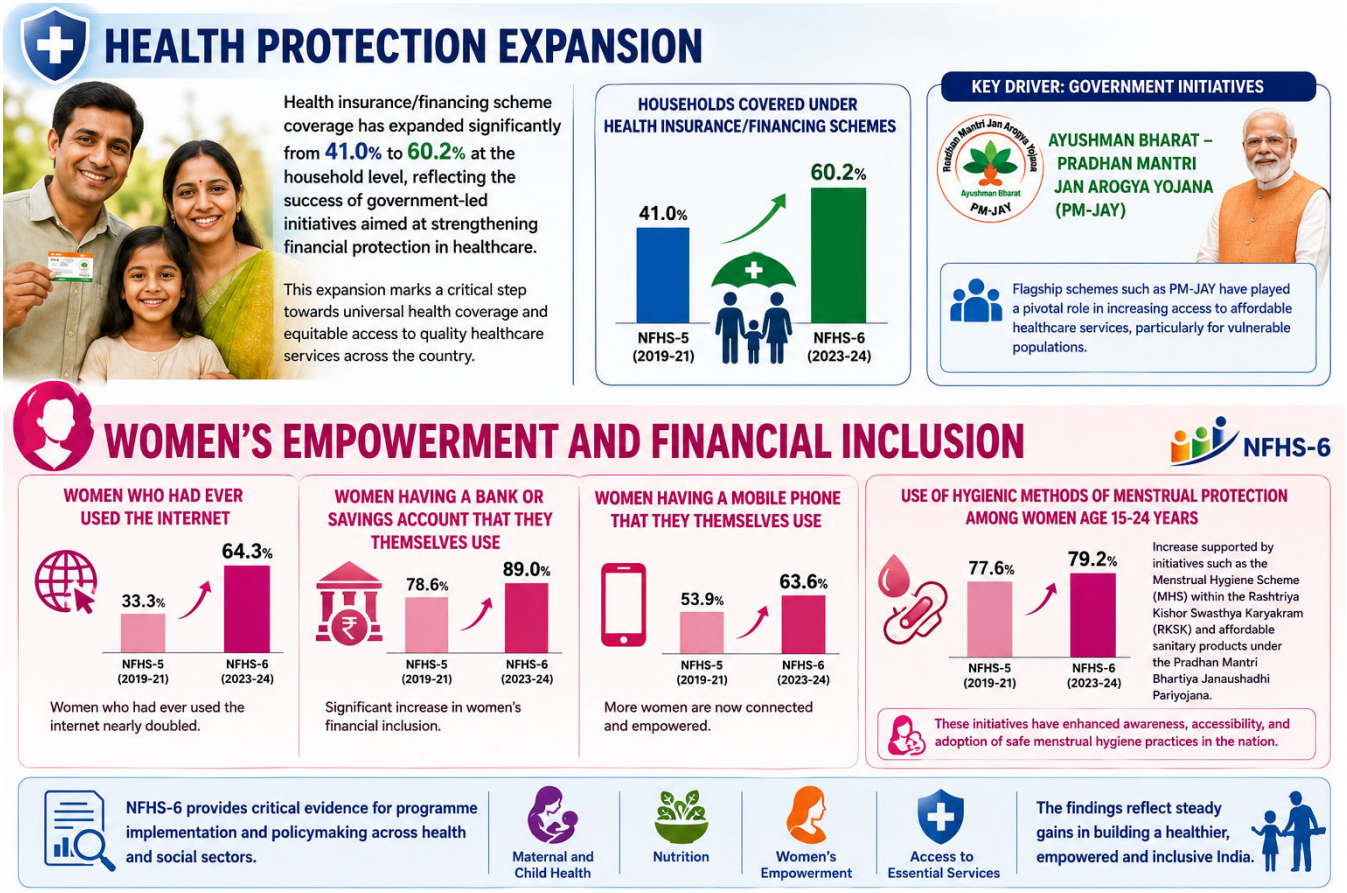

4. Lavender Festival 2026:

Context: The CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, is set to organize the 4th Lavender Festival on 6th-7th June, under the theme, "Lavender goes global", at the Government Degree College, Bhaderwah, Doda, celebrating the continued success of the Purple Revolution and lavender-based rural entrepreneurship in Jammu and Kashmir.

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About Lavender cultivation:

- Lavender Festival has emerged as a national platform showcasing the transformation brought by the CSIR-Aroma Mission in remote Himalayan regions, especially Bhaderwah, which has become a major lavender cultivation hub under the Purple Revolution initiative.
- **Native Region:** Europe; introduced in the temperate regions of Jammu & Kashmir under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Aroma Mission.
- **Type:** Small perennial aromatic herb/shrub.
- **Uses:** Widely used in fragrance, specialty food, pharmaceutical, therapeutic, cosmetic, and industrial sectors.
- **Propagation:** Through seeds, rooted cuttings, tissue culture, and layering.
- **Soil Requirement:** Prefers light, well-aerated, organic matter-rich, neutral to alkaline, well-drained soils; sensitive to waterlogging.
- **Rainfall Requirement:** Suitable for areas receiving 300–1400 mm annual rainfall.
- **Climate Requirement:** Hardy temperate crop; tolerant to drought and frost; grows best under cool winters, cool summers, and ample sunlight.
- **Suitable Areas:** Can be cultivated in hilly regions experiencing snowfall and on degraded or eroded soils.

5. Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI):

Context: India took another step towards modernising its maritime sector with the launch of the Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) for FY 2024-25 and FOUR major digital initiatives aimed at improving governance, transparency and ease of doing business across the shipping ecosystem.

More details:

- The LPPI, developed under the Sagar Aankalan framework, is a national benchmarking mechanism designed to assess and improve the operational performance of Indian ports.

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- The index aligns with the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, and seeks to strengthen India's position in global logistics and maritime trade.
- The LPPI evaluates ports across three cargo segments dry bulk, liquid bulk and container cargo using operational indicators such as cargo handled, vessel turnaround time, berth idle time, pre-berthing waiting time, container dwell time and ship berth day output.
- Among major performers, Paradip Port Authority topped the Dry Bulk Cargo category handling more than 5 million tonnes, while Sikka Port and Terminals led the Liquid Bulk Cargo segment. Mundra Port emerged as the highest-ranked port in the Container Cargo category handling more than 0.5 million TEUs. Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority secured the second position among major container ports in the same category.
- The framework assigns equal weightage to absolute performance and year-on-year improvement, encouraging continuous enhancement of port operations.
- Alongside the LPPI, Sonowal launched four digital initiatives developed by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) to improve service delivery, transparency and accountability for seafarers and maritime stakeholders.
- The initiatives include a 24×7 Grievance Redressal Module under the e-Navik platform, a Ship Registration Module on the e-Samudra platform, a Medical Practitioner Module and a Unified Ship Recycling Credit Note Module.
- Another key reform unveiled during the event was the Unified Ship Recycling Portal for Ship Recycling Credit scheme, part of the Government's ₹70,000-crore maritime development package announced in 2025.
- Under the scheme, ship owners recycling vessels at Hong Kong Convention-compliant Indian yards can receive a credit note equivalent to 40 per cent of the vessel's scrap value, redeemable against new shipbuilding projects in India.

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6. InSPA-StemCellEX-H2 Investigation:

Context: Astronauts aboard the International Space Station are continuing research efforts to manufacture large quantities of stem cells for therapies on Earth through the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Expansion in Space (InSPA-StemCellEX-H2) investigation. InSPA-StemCellEX-H2 Investigation aims to demonstrate large-scale production of blood stem cells for pharmaceutical and clinical use.

About Stem cells:

- **Definition:** Stem cells are undifferentiated foundational cells capable of giving rise to specialized cells such as blood, nerve, and muscle cells.
- **Self-Renewal:** They can divide repeatedly to produce identical copies of themselves.
- **Differentiation:** They can develop into various specialized cell types that perform specific functions in the body.
- **Types by Source:** Embryonic Stem Cells (ESCs), Adult/Somatic Stem Cells, Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells (iPSCs), etc.
- **Types by Differentiation Potential:** Totipotent cells (can form all cell types), Pluripotent cells (can form most body tissues), Multipotent cells (can form a limited range of related cell types), etc.
- **Importance:** Stem cells play a crucial role in growth, tissue repair, regeneration, and regenerative medicine research.

7. RBI Annual Report 2025-26:

Context: The domestic economy in 2026-27 is expected to remain resilient, despite a challenging external environment characterised by elevated energy and commodity prices, rising logistics costs, volatility in global financial markets, and uncertainties surrounding global trade policies, the RBI said in its Annual Report 2025-26 released on Friday.

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Major highlights:

- **RBI Growth Outlook:** The RBI stated that India's growth prospects remain strong due to robust domestic demand, lower dependence on exports, and a stable policy environment.
- **Global Economic Concerns:** Geopolitical tensions, particularly the conflict in West Asia, have emerged as a major risk to global economic growth in 2026.
- **IMF Growth Projection:** The IMF has lowered its global growth forecast for 2026 to 3.1%, from the earlier estimate of 3.3%.
- **Trade Slowdown:** Global merchandise and services trade volume is projected to slow to 2.8% in 2026.
- **Balance of Payments (BoP) Deficit:** India recorded a BoP deficit of $30.8 billion in 2025-26, more than six times higher than the previous year.
- **Shift from Surplus to Deficit:** India's BoP was in surplus as recently as 2023-24 but has now moved into deficit territory.
- **Main Causes of Deficit:** The deficit resulted from a widening current account deficit and a sharp decline in capital inflows.
- **Use of Forex Reserves:** The entire BoP deficit was financed through RBI's foreign exchange reserves, leading to a significant drawdown.
- **BoP Components:** The Balance of Payments consists of the Current Account and the Capital Account.
- **Current Account Explained:** It records trade in goods and services along with certain cross-border income and transfer transactions.
- **Capital Account Explained:** It includes foreign investments, external borrowings, external assistance, and asset transfers.
- **Current Account Deficit (CAD):** India's CAD reached a three-year high of $30.2 billion in 2025-26.

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- **Merchandise Trade Deficit:** Imports exceeded exports by $251.6 billion in 2025-26.
- **Decline in Invisibles Surplus:** The surplus from services and other invisibles fell to $221.4 billion from $263.9 billion in the previous year.
- **Widening CAD:** The fall in services surplus was larger than the improvement in merchandise trade deficit, resulting in a wider CAD.
- **2023-24 BoP Surplus:** India recorded a BoP surplus of $63.7 billion due to a large capital account surplus that outweighed the CAD.
- **Collapse in Capital Surplus:** The capital account surplus plunged to just $72 million in 2025-26, from $16.6 billion in 2024-25.
- **Other Capital Outflows:** Net outflows under the "other capital" category rose to $22.6 billion, reflecting delayed export receipts, advance import payments, and funds parked abroad.
- **Indians Investing Abroad:** Increased overseas investments by Indians contributed significantly to capital outflows.
- **FPI Outflows:** Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) withdrew $4.3 billion more than they invested, reversing the inflow trend of the previous two years.
- **Dollar Outflow Concern:** Rising outflows of dollars have become a major concern for both the government and the RBI.
- **Oil Import Dependence:** India imports nearly 90% of its crude oil requirement, making it vulnerable to large foreign exchange outflows.
- **Gold Import Burden:** India has substantial gold demand despite having negligible domestic gold production.
- **Government Response:** The government has urged citizens to reduce fuel consumption and gold purchases to ease pressure on external accounts.
- **Import Duty Hike:** Import duty on gold and silver was increased from 6% to 15% to discourage imports.

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- **Silver Import Restrictions:** The government has also imposed restrictions on the import of most categories of silver.
- **Economic Significance:** Sustained BoP deficits can weaken forex reserves, increase external vulnerability, and affect macroeconomic stability.

Quick Bites:

- The Reserve Bank of India and the State Bank of Vietnam on 05.05.2026 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cooperation in financial innovation and digital payments, including information sharing, regulatory coordination, and payment system connectivity for cross-border QR Code-based merchant payments.
- A team of scientists from Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST), Mohali, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) have developed a nanocomposite that works as a light-driven catalyst by combining gold and palladium nanoparticles, and a light-absorbing molecule BODIPY. This hybrid material uses light energy to speed up chemical reactions more efficiently than traditional catalysts.
- Team India has made the nation proud at the prestigious Taipei Capital Cup 2026, an international skilling competition held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 26–28 May 2026, by securing two Silver Medals and three Merit Awards across multiple skill categories.
- NITI Aayog's Frontier Tech Hub today released India's first comprehensive 10-year roadmap - "Future of India's Semiconductor Industry". Developed in deep consultation with some of the best minds from industry and government, the roadmap lays out a clear, actionable vision for India to build a USD 120–150 billion semiconductor value chain by 2035. The NITI Frontier Tech Hub was created as an action tank for Viksit Bharat to anticipate emerging mega-technology shifts and shape India's preparedness to unlock their potential for faster economic growth, inclusive societal outcomes, and strategic resilience—advancing the country's journey towards becoming a frontier-technology nation.

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- The Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update 2026-2035 report warns of exceptional global heat and climate extremes for the next five years (2026-2030) released by World Meteorological Organization (WMO), produced by the UK's Met Office.
- Recently, an albino Hog Deer was sighted in Kaziranga National Park. Albinism is a rare inherited genetic condition characterized by little or no production of melanin, the pigment responsible for the color of skin, hair, and eyes. The Hog Deer derives its name from its hog-like running style, moving with its head held low. It is distributed across the Indo-Gangetic plains and parts of South and Southeast Asia, including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. The species is classified as Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List and receives the highest level of protection under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- The Forest Advisory Committee of the Environment Ministry has granted in-principle forest clearance to the Kalai-II Hydel Project in Arunachal Pradesh's Anjaw district on the Lohit River, amid concerns over its impact on the White-bellied Heron. Also known as the Imperial Heron or Great White-bellied Heron, it is one of the world's rarest birds, found mainly in the southern foothills of the eastern Himalayas across Bhutan, Northeast India (Assam and Arunachal Pradesh), and northern Myanmar. Its global population is estimated at fewer than 60 individuals, with only about 10 remaining in India. The species is listed as Critically Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Supply uncertainties arising from the West Asia conflict have raised concerns over the availability of Nickel, a mineral classified as a critical mineral by India. Nickel is a lustrous silvery-white metal with relatively low thermal and electrical conductivity and is generally not found in its pure native state. It is refined into high-purity metal through the Mond (carbonyl) process, which uses a two-step thermal decomposition method. Nickel is an essential input for electric vehicle batteries and stainless-steel production. Globally, Indonesia possesses the largest nickel resources (about 42%) and accounts for around 54% of global production. In India, the entire nickel demand is met

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through imports, while the largest reserves are located in Odisha (about 93%), followed by Jharkhand.

- Recently, India's National Security Advisor participated in the 1st International Security Forum, held in Moscow under the aegis of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. The forum brought together representatives from around 120 countries to deliberate on emerging global and regional security challenges. Its primary objective was to promote dialogue, cooperation, and collective approaches to addressing contemporary threats to international peace, stability, and security.
- The Indian Air Force signed three contracts with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay on 27 May 2026 for predictive maintenance technologies for the Sukhoi Su-30MKI fighter jet fleet. The agreements cover prognostic and prescriptive maintenance systems for military aviation applications in India. The Su-30MKI is a twin-engine, multirole fighter aircraft operated by the Indian Air Force. The aircraft was developed by Sukhoi and customised for India under a licence-production arrangement with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
- India ranked 4th globally in Artificial Intelligence performance and 5th in digital economy rankings in the State of India's Digital Economy 2026 report. India improved its digital economy position from 8th in 2025 to 5th in 2026, and it stood behind the United States, China and Singapore in AI performance. The State of India's Digital Economy 2026 report was released on 29 May 2026 by the ICRIER-Prosus Centre for Internet and Digital Economy.
- Teenaged high jump star Pooja Singh shattered the National senior record en route winning the gold medal to lead a strong Indian show on the second day of the Asian U-20 athletics championships on Friday. The 19-year-old sailed over 1.93m to better Sahana Kumari's mark of 1.92m that had stood since 2012.

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31-05-2026

1. Digi Yatra:

Context: Marking a major milestone for India's digital public infrastructure, the Digi Yatra app has enabled over 10 crore seamless journeys with over 2.4 crore downloads across iOS and Android. The platform stands as one of the most successful digital innovations in global aviation today.

About Digi Yatra:

- Digi Yatra is a facial recognition-based initiative for contactless, seamless, and paperless passenger processing at airports.
- It uses Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) to verify passenger identity linked to the boarding pass.
- Passengers can pass through airport checkpoints without showing physical documents, using their facial features for authentication.
- The platform provides a decentralized mobile wallet-based identity management system, enhancing privacy and data protection.
- The Digi Yatra Foundation was established in 2019 as a Section 8 company under the Companies Act, 2013.
- The Foundation was created to develop and manage the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem (DYCE) and act as the custodian of Passenger ID validation.
- It also promotes coordination among aviation stakeholders and sets compliance standards and guidelines for airports.

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- The first phase was launched at Kempegowda International Airport and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in August 2022, followed by airports such as Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Pune, and Vijayawada.
- The Airports Authority of India is implementing Digi Yatra across airports in a phased manner.
- Key objectives include enhancing passenger experience, reducing processing time, improving airport efficiency, and lowering operational costs.
- It also aims to digitize manual processes, strengthen security standards, and use a secure digital ID backed by Aadhaar or other government-issued identity documents.

2. Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing:

Context: The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has realised Rs. 21.26 crore under the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism during the financial year 2025–26. The amount was generated from approvals granted for research, commercial utilisation, intellectual property rights, bio-survey and bio-utilisation of biological resources, reflecting growing industry participation in India's biodiversity governance framework. During the period, the Seed sector emerged as the largest contributor, accounting for Rs. 11.75 crore, followed by the AYUSH sector with Rs. 5.56 crore.

About Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing:

- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- It was adopted on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.
- The protocol entered into force on 12 October 2014, after the 50th instrument of ratification was deposited.
- It establishes a transparent legal framework for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

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- India ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in 2012.
- The protocol applies to genetic resources covered under the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- It also covers benefits arising from the utilization of these genetic resources.
- The protocol includes traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and ensures benefit sharing from their use.

About Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a legally binding international agreement that came into force in 1993.
- It was the first global treaty to recognize biodiversity conservation as essential for human welfare.
- The CBD covers ecosystems, species, and genetic resources comprehensively.
- It was opened for signature at the Earth Summit 1992.
- The CBD Secretariat is located in Montreal.
- It operates under the United Nations Environment Programme.
- Almost all UN member states have ratified it, except the United States.
- The Conference of the Parties (CoP) is the governing body and meets biennially to guide implementation.
- The CBD has three core objectives: conservation, sustainable use, and equitable benefit-sharing of biodiversity.

3. Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups And MSMEs (PRISM) scheme:

Context: The Ministry of Mines in collaboration with the Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC), Nagpur successfully organized the two-days Interactive Workshop & Technical Evaluation Sessions under the S&T PRISM 5.0 (Promotion of Research & Innovation in Startups and MSMEs) at JNARDDC, Nagpur, during 29-30 May 2026.

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About PRISM scheme:

- PRISM supports individual innovators, start-ups, and MSMEs by providing grants, technical guidance, and mentoring to transform innovative ideas into enterprises.
- The scheme is implemented by Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) through Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIO).
- It promotes innovation across all science and technology disciplines.
- The scheme also supports technology solution providers developing solutions for MSME clusters.
- **PRISM Phase-I (Category-I):** Supports proof of concept, prototypes, and models with project costs up to ₹5 lakh; assistance up to ₹2 lakh or 90% of project cost, whichever is lower.
- **PRISM Phase-I (Category-II):** Supports fabrication of working models, testing, patenting, technology transfer, etc.; projects costing ₹5–35 lakh receive up to ₹20 lakh or 90% of project cost, whichever is lower.
- **PRISM Phase-II:** Focuses on enterprise incubation for projects costing ₹35 lakh–₹1 crore; assistance up to ₹50 lakh, limited to 50% of project cost.
- PRISM-R&D proposals are also eligible for support up to ₹50 lakh, limited to 50% of project cost.
- **Eligibility for Phase-I:** Any Indian citizen, including student innovators, can apply.
- **Eligibility for Phase-II:** Existing PRISM innovators, innovators with a government-supported proof of concept, and public-funded R&D institutions, laboratories, and academic institutions are eligible.

4. Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) scheme:

Context: In a landmark development under the Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) scheme, the National Steering Committee (NSC) has approved the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the Visakhapatnam ITI Cluster in Andhra Pradesh, submitted by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) along with their

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academic partner New Age Makers Institute of Technology (NAMTECH). The approval marks the first-ever Strategic Investment Plan to be cleared under PM-SETU and makes Andhra Pradesh the first State to operationalize an industry partnership under the scheme.

About PM-SETU scheme:

- PM-SETU, a flagship initiative of the Government of India with an outlay of ₹60,000 crore, aims to transform 1,000 Government ITIs through an industry-led Hub-and-Spoke model.
- The scheme seeks to modernise infrastructure, strengthen industry engagement, improve employability outcomes, and establish National Centres of Excellence (NCoEs) in high-growth sectors, building, through stronger government-industry partnerships — a future-ready workforce equipped for advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies.
- Component I – Upgradation of 1,000 Government ITIs (200 Hub ITIs and 800 Spoke ITIs) in a Hub and Spoke model wherein upgradation includes smart classrooms, modern labs, digital content, and new courses aligned to industry needs.
- Component II – Capacity Augmentation of five NSTIs located in Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, and Ludhiana, including setting-up sector-specific National Centres of Excellence for skilling, with focus on advanced training of trainers with global partnership.

5. National Seed Reserve:

Context: Union Agriculture Minister announced the establishment of National Seed Reserve of 1 lakh 74 thousand quintals.

About National Seed Reserve:

- National Seed Reserve (NSR) is an intervention under the National Food Security and Nutrition Mission (NFSNM) within the Krishionnati Yojana.
- **Objective:** To ensure the availability of high-quality certified and foundation seeds for farmers.

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- It serves as a strategic seed reserve for use during natural calamities, disasters, and other crisis situations.
- The reserve helps maintain continuity in agricultural production by ensuring timely seed supply.
- **Implementing Agencies:** National Seeds Corporation, State Seeds Corporations, and State/UT Agriculture Departments where State Seed Corporations do not exist.
- The scheme supports strengthening the country's seed security system.
- Seeds stored under NSR are required to be produced and tracked through the SATHI Portal.
- SATHI (Seed Traceability, Authentication and Holistic Inventory) enables end-to-end seed traceability and inventory management.
- The portal enhances transparency, quality assurance, and authentication in the seed supply chain.
- NSR contributes to improving food security and agricultural resilience in the country.

6. Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) Instrument:

Context: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has enabled companies to fulfill their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations through the ZCZP Instrument.

About Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) Instrument:

- ZCZP (Zero Coupon Zero Principal) is a SEBI-regulated fundraising instrument issued by not-for-profit organizations listed on the Social Stock Exchange.
- It is used to raise funds for eligible social welfare and development projects.
- Unlike conventional bonds, ZCZP instruments provide no interest (zero coupon) to investors.
- They also do not involve repayment of the principal amount (zero principal).
- Investors contribute funds primarily to create measurable social impact, not financial returns.
- The instrument enables philanthropic funding through a regulated capital market framework.
- It promotes transparency and accountability in funding social sector initiatives.

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- Companies can subscribe to ZCZP instruments as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities.
- A company's expenditure on ZCZP subscriptions is capped at 10% of its total CSR expenditure for the relevant financial year.
- ZCZP instruments are a key feature of India's Social Stock Exchange ecosystem for mobilizing social capital.

About Corporate Social Responsibility:

- CSR is a statutory requirement under Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 for eligible companies.
- It requires companies to undertake activities that contribute to the social, environmental, and economic development of the country.
- Eligible companies must spend at least 2% of their average net profits of the preceding three financial years on CSR activities.
- CSR provisions aim to encourage businesses to participate in inclusive and sustainable development.
- The permissible CSR activities are listed under Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013.
- CSR initiatives cover areas such as education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, rural development, and gender equality.

7. BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles:

Context: India has signed a deal to supply BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to Vietnam, and negotiations with Indonesia are in the final stages as of 30 May 2026. The BrahMos agreement with Vietnam includes missile systems, training, and logistical support, with an estimated value of about Rs 60 billion, or around USD 629 million.

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About BrahMos missiles:

- The BrahMos missile, an Indo-Russian joint venture, has a range of 290 km and is the fastest cruise missile in the world with a top speed of Mach 2.8.
- BrahMos is named for the rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva.
- It is a two-stage (solid propellant engine in the first stage and liquid ramjet in second) missile.
- It is a multiplatform missile i.e., it can be launched from land, air, and sea and multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions.
- It operates on the "Fire and Forgets" principle i.e it does not require further guidance after launch.

8. South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR):

Context: The South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR) will begin operations on 1 June 2026 with headquarters at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. It will become the 18th railway zone of Indian Railways and will function under the framework linked to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. The permanent headquarters of SCoR is planned at Mudasarlova in Visakhapatnam.

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About South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR):



9. Indira Gandhi Canal:

Context: The Indira Gandhi Canal serves as a critical water supply resource for Jaisalmer and thousands of remote desert villages; yet scarcity persists, with many still relying on ancestral wells as concerns over groundwater depletion and canal maintenance remain.

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About Indira Gandhi Canal:

- Indira Gandhi Canal (IGC), formerly known as the Rajasthan Canal, is the longest canal in India, with a length of about 837 km.
- It originates from the Harike Barrage, located at the confluence of the Sutlej River and Beas River.
- The canal passes through Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan, terminating near Gadra Road in the Thar Desert.
- It is a major irrigation project that transformed the arid regions of western Rajasthan into cultivable land.
- The canal largely follows the palaeochannel of the ancient Sarasvati River, also known as the Ghaggar palaeochannel.
- Due to the natural gradient of the palaeochannel, the canal operates without requiring pumping stations along its course.
- It is also referred to as "Saraswati Rupa Rajasthan Canal" because it traces the course of the lost Sarasvati River.
- Numerous Indus-Sarasvati Civilization archaeological sites are located along its route.
- The canal plays a crucial role in irrigation, drinking water supply, and desert development in Rajasthan.

Quick Bites:

- 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' to be carried out across the country from June 1 to June 30. The aim is to sensitize the farmers about the balanced use of fertilisers and other agricultural inputs based on soil tests, motivating them to increase the use of green manures, organic and bio-products. Live demonstrations of Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) will also be held.
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath jointly inaugurated 'Nausena Shaurya Vatika' in Lucknow on May 30, 2026. Built at a cost of Rs 19 crore over an area spanning over two acres, this Open-Air Display Museum honours the spirit, valour &

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prowess of the Indian Navy. It showcases the artefacts and weapon systems of INS Gomati, which was decommissioned on May 29, 2022 after 34 years of service.

- To augment availability of cotton for the Indian textile sector, the Central Government has temporarily exempted all customs duties on import of cotton from 1st June, 2026 till 31st October, 2026.
- In coordinated anti-narcotics operations carried out by the Cochin Unit of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), substantial quantities of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including methaqualone, methamphetamine and hashish oil, intended for illicit distribution and trafficking were seized at Kochi, Malappuram and Thiruvananthapuram under Operation Chakravyuh. A total of over 24 kg narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances has been seized in these operations. Five individuals, including key operatives involved in the trafficking networks, have been apprehended under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. Methaqualone is a sedative-hypnotic drug. Methamphetamine is a powerful synthetic stimulant. Hashish oil is a concentrated cannabis extract.
- The 39th National Games will be hosted by the state of Meghalaya in 2027, marking the first time the multi-sport event will be held in the state. The host state agreement was signed in May 2026 between the Government of Meghalaya and the Indian Olympic Association. The Games are scheduled to be held during the February–March 2027 window, with Shillong serving as the main venue, while neighbouring North-Eastern states will also host selected sporting disciplines.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its annual report 2025-26 mentioned that it is exploring the possibility of introducing a 'Kill switch' mechanism. It allows a system, device, account, or service to be disabled or blocked immediately in an emergency or under suspect of attack by fraudsters.
- Ghepang Ghat Glacial Lake, is located at an altitude of about 4,068 metres above Sissu in the Lahaul Valley. The lake has been formed by the retreat of the Ghepan Glacier and is classified as a moraine-dammed glacial lake, meaning it is impounded by a natural barrier of rocks, sand, and debris deposited by the glacier. Rapid melting of the glacier due to rising temperatures has

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increased concerns over the lake's expansion and the potential risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), posing a threat to nearby Sissu village.

- Blue Bonds are innovative debt instruments that raise funds exclusively for ocean-friendly and sustainable marine projects, including marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, coastal ecosystem restoration, pollution control, and protection of critical clean water resources. They support the development of the blue economy while promoting environmental sustainability. The Seychelles became the first country in the world to issue a sovereign blue bond in 2018. In India, Sagarmala Finance Corporation, the country's first maritime-focused state-owned NBFC, is set to launch India's first blue bonds during the current fiscal year to mobilize resources for sustainable maritime and coastal development projects.
- Kerala startup unveils India’s first AI system-on-chip. Kerala-based fabless semiconductor startup Netrasemi launched its flagship AI system-on-chip, the A2000, after silicon bring-up in May 2026. The A2000 is designed in India and uses TSMC’s 12 nm process node for edge devices such as smart cameras, edge AI boxes, and intelligent video gateways.
- A new cascade-dwelling frog species, Amolops kamal, was described on 29 May 2026 from Nagaland. The species was found near Singrep village in Kiphire district during a field survey conducted in August 2024 by scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Shillong.
- Gulveer Singh became the first Indian to run a mile in less than four minutes, enroute to winning the title at the 24th Annual Music City Track Carnival on Saturday. The World Athletics Continental Tour Challenger event was organised at Lee University Cleveland Campus, USA.
- The 22nd Asian U20 Athletics Championships was held in Hong Kong, China, from May 28 to May 31, 2026. This continental track-and-field showcase featured top under-20 athletes from across Asia competing in various track, field, and combined events.
- The head of the World Health Organization on Saturday arrived in eastern Congo’s Bunia, a city at the heart of an outbreak of a rare type of Ebola, where the virus still spreads faster than the response, despite better-organised health facilities and new aid arrivals. WHO Director-General

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Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is expected to visit a treatment centre and meet local authorities, health workers and affected families in Bunia.

- The probability of the Mettur dam getting opened on the scheduled date of June 12 appears to be remote, in view of the poor storage and the forecast of a poor southwest monsoon (June-September) this year. Built in 1934, the Mettur Dam is one of the largest dams in India. It is located at Mettur in Salem district, Tamil Nadu, across the Kaveri River, at the point where the river enters the plains through a gorge. The dam is a masonry gravity dam measuring about 1,700 metres in length, with a maximum water level of 120 feet and a storage capacity of 93.4 TMC ft. It forms the Stanley Reservoir, a large artificial reservoir named after George Stanley, which serves as a major source of irrigation, drinking water supply, and hydroelectric power generation in Tamil Nadu.
- Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing on Saturday offered prayers at the Mahabodhi Temple, a Buddhist pilgrimage place and a UNESCO World Heritage site, in Bihar's Gayaji district.

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