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Polity

Pakistan's 27th Constitutional Amendment: Implications for India

Introduction

- Pakistan's 27th Constitutional Amendment signals a more aggressive adversary for India.
- It increases risks of proxy warfare and nuclear escalation, necessitating enhanced vigilance and strategic preparedness.

Subtopic: Why in news?

- The Pakistani President has signed the 27th Amendment to the Constitution.
- This historic move undermines democracy and formally establishes military supremacy over the state.

Subtopic: Background

- The amendment formally makes Pakistan a garrison state by law, not just by practice.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Terrorism with impunity: With increased military control, groups like Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba may gain greater operational freedom to carry out bolder attacks against India under state protection; the presence of Pakistani Army officers at terrorist funerals killed during Operation Sindoor raised concerns about the military's involvement with terror groups.
- Risk of military escalation: The likelihood of a Kargil-like conflict rises as a unified military command, without civilian oversight, may take risks, assuming India's response will be limited due to nuclear threat concerns.
- Increased nuclear risk: Centralising nuclear authority with a military commander could make decision-making more opaque and riskier; a regime hostile to India may showcase nuclear weapons and lower their use threshold to deter retaliation.
- Hardened positions: Kashmir remains the central pillar of the Pakistani military's ideology; prospects for a political solution or back- channel deal are extinguished, and the official state position will be permanently hardline.
- Weakened diplomatic engagement: With the military directing foreign policy, traditional back-channels and Track- II dialogues become less effective or irrelevant, shrinking room for negotiation and de- escalation.
- India's response — intelligence overhaul: Prioritise HUMINT and TECHINT; strengthen satellite monitoring and SIGINT to track Pakistan's military activities and communications to prevent misadventure.
- India's response — pre- emptive disruption: Refine border management using smart fencing, drones, and AI- based surveillance; strengthen quick- response teams and coordination with local authorities.
- India's response — rapid and punitive strike capabilities: Showcase swift, high- impact conventional strikes below the nuclear threshold; fast- track unified commands for a quicker, coordinated response to Pakistan's CDF structure.
- India's response — nuclear clarity: Clearly spell out that any tactical nuclear weapon use against Indian forces will trigger a massive strategic retaliatory strike, exposing Pakistan's TNW strategy as a bluff and making escalation unavoidable.
- India's response — diplomatic offensive: Strengthen narrative- building; during Operation Sindoor, India's delayed rebuttal of US claims about brokering a ceasefire allowed that narrative to gain unnecessary traction.

Facts/General knowledge

- Establishment of Chief of Defence Forces: Creates a Chief of Defence Forces, permanently held by the Army Chief, granting him command over the Navy and Air Force.
- Legal immunity for five- star officers: Grants complete legal immunity to five- star officers (Field Marshals), broader than that available to the President or Prime Minister.
- Federal Constitutional Court: Replaces the Supreme Court for constitutional jurisdiction, limiting judicial checks on the military.
- Military heads foreign policy: The Army now directs Pakistan's diplomacy, meeting foreign leaders independently of civilian leadership.

Nationwide Implementation of India's Four Labour Codes

Introduction

- India has implemented four Labour Codes, replacing 29 earlier labour laws.
- The reform aims to modernise labour regulation, strengthen worker protections, and create a simpler, future-ready framework supporting a resilient workforce and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- A labour code is a consolidated set of laws regulating employer–employee relations, including wages, social security, industrial relations, and workplace safety.

Why in news?

- The four Labour Codes—Code on Wages, 2019; Industrial Relations Code, 2020; Code on Social Security, 2020; and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020—are being implemented nationwide.

Background

- The four codes were enacted based on the 2nd National Commission on Labour (2002), which recommended merging multiple labour laws into four functional codes.
- Earlier, India had 29 separate labour laws with overlapping provisions, outdated norms, and high compliance burdens, limiting worker coverage.
- Reforms were needed due to changing work patterns (gig, platform, fixed-term), to improve global competitiveness, enhance worker welfare, and boost employment and formalisation.

Significance

- Consolidates and simplifies labour governance, reducing complexity for employers while strengthening workers' rights.

- Establishes uniform wage rules, fair and timely payment, and non-discrimination, promoting gender equality.
- Extends social security to unorganised, gig, and platform workers, with digital processes and portability.
- Balances industrial relations through streamlined union recognition, fixed-term employment with protections, and structured dispute resolution.
- Enhances occupational safety and working conditions with clearer standards and nationwide coverage, supporting a fair, efficient, and future-ready framework.

Facts/General knowledge

- India's Four Labour Codes:
  Code on Wages, 2019: Merges the Payment of Wages Act, 1936; Minimum Wages Act, 1948; Payment of Bonus Act, 1965; and Equal Remuneration Act, 1976; ensures uniform wage rules, timely payment, gender equality, and simplified compliance.
- Industrial Relations Code, 2020: Combines provisions from the Trade Unions Act, 1926; Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946; and Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; streamlines union recognition, employment terms, and dispute resolution.
- Code on Social Security, 2020: Merges nine laws including the Employee's Compensation Act, 1923; Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948; and Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952; extends benefits to unorganised, gig, and platform workers with digital processes.
- Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: Consolidates 13 laws such as the Factories Act, 1948; Plantations Labour Act, 1951; and Mines Act, 1952; strengthens workplace safety and simplifies compliance.
- Major provisions under the Code of Wages, 2019:
  Universal minimum wage for all workers (organised and unorganised), with fixation based on skill, region, and working conditions.
- A statutory floor wage set by the government based on living standards, with regional variation; states cannot set wages below this.
- No gender-based discrimination, including for transgender workers, in hiring, wages, or working conditions.
- Overtime paid at least twice the normal wage rate.
- Employers liable for delayed or non-payment.
- Major provisions under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020:
- Fixed-term employment with equal benefits and gratuity after one year.
- Employers must deposit 15 days' wages per retrenched worker within 45 days to support re-skilling and re-employment.
- A union with 51% membership is the negotiating body; otherwise, a negotiating council is formed from unions with at least 20% representation.
- Mandatory women's representation in grievance bodies.
- Major provisions under the Code on Social Security, 2020:
  Uniform definition of wages (basic pay, dearness allowance, retaining allowance), with at least 50% of total remuneration counted for social security, gratuity, and pension calculations.
- Employees' State Insurance (ESI) applies nationwide; establishments with fewer than 10 employees may opt in; hazardous occupations and plantations are mandatorily covered.
- Employee Provident Fund (EPF) inquiries must start within five years and finish within two years (extendable by one), with no suo motu reopening.
- New definitions of "aggregator," "gig worker," and "platform worker" to enable social security coverage.
- A Social Security Fund to support unorganised, gig, and platform workers with life, health, disability, and old-age benefits, partly financed through compounding penalties.
- Accidents during travel between home and workplace deemed employment-related for compensation.
- Major provisions under the OSH Code, 2020:
  Applicability can extend to establishments with a single employee if work involves high risk.
- Inter-state migrant workers include those hired directly, through contractors, or self-migrating; entitlements include annual travel allowance, ration portability under PDS, and social security benefits across states.
- Night work for women permitted with consent and employer-provided safety.
- Development of a National Worker Database for unorganised workers, including migrants, to improve access to jobs and welfare.
- Working hours capped at 8 per day and 48 per week; overtime at double wages with consent.
- Key concerns regarding the new labour codes:
- Higher compliance burden and labour costs for small businesses and MSMEs due to expanded ESIC, PF, and safety mandates; need for digital HR systems, medical checks, and upgraded standards.
- Coordination challenges between Centre and states under the Concurrent List, with varying thresholds and exemptions potentially causing confusion, gaps, disputes, and uneven protections.
- Union and strike regulation concerns: the 51% rule may marginalise smaller unions; strike restrictions could escalate tensions.
- Awareness gaps among informal, migrant, and contractual workers about entitlements such as appointment letters, ESIC, floor wages, and grievance rights.
- Risks of overuse of fixed-term employment, potential job insecurity, increased litigation on disguised permanency, and the higher retrenchment approval threshold (from 100 to 300 workers) potentially weakening protection.
- Possible workforce disruption during transition as employers adjust wage structures, overtime rules, and employment categorisation.
- Constitution and labour legislation in India:

- Preamble: Values of justice, liberty, equality, and dignity guide labour law interpretation in favour of workers; labour laws reflect social justice, economic fairness, and protection of vulnerable workers.
- Fundamental Rights (Articles 14–35):
  Equality (Arts. 14–18): Fair wages and non-discrimination based on caste, gender, or status.
- Freedom (Arts. 19–22): Freedom of association (trade unions).
- Against Exploitation (Arts. 23–24): Prohibition of forced labour and child labour in hazardous work.
- Life and Personal Liberty (Art. 21): Right to dignified work conditions.
- Constitutional Remedies (Arts. 32–35): PIL used for labour rights enforcement.
- Key judgments:
  Bandhua Mukti Morcha (1984): Right to live with dignity includes labour rights.
- People's Union for Democratic Rights (1983): Less than minimum wage amounts to forced labour under Article 23.
- Neerja Choudhary (1984): Bonded labour must be rehabilitated.
- Measures needed for effective implementation:
  Ensure uniformity across states through a model rulebook or an intergovernmental labour council to harmonise implementation and protection standards.
- Safeguards against misuse of fixed-term employment with clear guidelines, regular audits, and grievance redressal mechanisms.
- Strengthen social security for gig workers with a National Gig and Platform Workers Policy mandating aggregator contributions.
- Provide capacity and compliance support for MSMEs via digital helpdesks, simplified filing modules, and temporary fiscal support such as EPF co-payment.

Geography and environment

Sundarbans: Challenges and Nature-based Solutions

Introduction

- The Sundarbans faces freshwater scarcity, pollution from microplastics and chemicals, and coastal erosion, underscoring the need for sustainable, nature-based solutions to protect this ecosystem.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- Escalating environmental pressures in the Sundarbans make sustainable responses urgent.
- Integrating nature-based approaches into development plans and policies is essential to safeguard the ecosystem and its communities.

Background

- The Sundarbans hosts the largest mangrove forests in the world on the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers on the Bay of Bengal; a specialised mangrove ecosystem between land and sea in tropical and subtropical regions.
- 40% of the Sundarbans lies in India and the rest in Bangladesh.
- Recognitions: UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987 (India) and 1997 (Bangladesh); Sundarban Wetland (India) recognised as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in January 2019.
- Conservation frameworks: Project Tiger protects the forest by preserving the Royal Bengal Tiger population; 2011 India–Bangladesh MoU on Conservation of the Sundarbans.
- Biosphere Reserve with protected areas: Sundarbans National Park (India); Sundarbans East Wildlife Sanctuary (India); Sundarbans South Wildlife Sanctuary (India); Sundarbans West Wildlife Sanctuary (India); Sundarbans Reserve Forest (Bangladesh).

Significance

- Biodiversity: 84 species of flora (including 26 mangrove species); 453 species of fauna; 120 species of fish; 290 species of birds; 42 species of mammals; 35 reptiles; eight amphibians; a natural abode where many species feed, breed and take shelter.
- Rare and globally threatened wildlife: estuarine crocodile, water monitor lizard, Gangetic dolphin and olive ridley turtle.
- Human and ecological value: more than 12 million people (4.5 million in India and 7.5 million in Bangladesh) depend on this estuarine ecosystem; mangroves are climate protectors and sources of livelihood; carbon sequestration and other ecosystem services are significant but threatened.

Facts/General knowledge

- Key challenges:
  Freshwater scarcity due to predominantly saline rivers; fresh groundwater may be deeper than 250 metres and may be saline in places.
- Pollution and erosion from microplastics, chemicals from industrial activities and waste disposal; about four million tonnes of microplastics are released into the Bay of Bengal and the Sundarbans each year from rivers in Bangladesh and India.
- Very little fresh water enters the mangrove system; river erosion, exploitation of forest resources and use of non-forest land for mangrove forestation exacerbate impacts.
- Sea level rise nearly double that of other coastal regions; increasing frequency and intensity of cyclones; rising temperatures, sea levels and biodiversity changes due to climate change.
- Human–wildlife conflict, particularly involving tigers, affecting conservation and community safety.
- Contamination from hydrocarbons and marine paints linked to Bangladesh's Mongla Port and India's Leather Estate.

- Nature-based and collaborative responses:
  Protect streambanks by cultivating native, salt-tolerant grasses — wild rice (Porteresia coarctata), Myriostachya wightiana, biscuit grass (Paspalum vaginatum) and salt couch grass (Sporobolus virginicus) — instead of non-local, non–salt-tolerant vetiver.
- Promote sustainable agriculture with soil-tolerant paddy varieties such as Darsal, Nona Bokra and Talmugur; adopt organic agriculture; implement rainwater harvesting and watershed development to enhance production.
- Utilise non-timber forest resources for livelihoods and conservation: mangroves such as Bayen, Garjan, Golpata, Hogla, Hetal, Kankra, Kumbhi, Kayora, Nona Jhau, Posur, Goran, Gewoya and Sundari; marketable fruits of Hetal, Kayora and Golpata; Hogla flowers for the food industry; ropes from dry leaves.
- Treat wastewater using natural processes and microorganisms, including lactic acid bacteria and photosynthetic bacteria, to maintain water quality and ecosystem health.
- Conserve biodiversity, including indigenous fish species like major carp, to restore and maintain ecosystem health.
- Strengthen India–Bangladesh collaboration by converting the Joint Working Group into a joint high-powered board with interdisciplinary experts; blend institutional mechanisms with flexibility to work across sectors and engage local communities; learn from the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organisation and the Senegal River Basin Development Organisation.
- Work with nature to address complex challenges, integrating nature-based approaches into development plans and policies to promote the long-term health and sustainability of the Sundarbans and its inhabitants.

Cyclone Ditwah and Southern India Rainfall Alerts

Introduction

- Cyclone Ditwah is moving over the southwest Bay of Bengal near the Sri Lanka coast.
- It is expected to track towards north Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and south Andhra Pradesh.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- At least 56 deaths have been reported in Sri Lanka due to Cyclone Ditwah.
- The system is advancing towards Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Background

- Ditwah originated from a deep depression near Sri Lanka's coastline.
- A remnant depression of cyclone Senyar over the Strait of Malacca is contributing to enhanced rainfall activity.
- The system is causing widespread rainfall and strong winds across Sri Lanka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and coastal regions of the Bay of Bengal.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Heavy rainfall alerts are in place across southern India as Ditwah approaches.
- The IMD has classified Ditwah as a cyclonic storm, with no forecast upgrade to a severe cyclone so far.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- Cyclone name origin:
- "Ditwah" was suggested by Yemen.
- Likely inspired by Detwah Lagoon on Yemen's Socotra Island.
- IMD rainfall forecast (29 November – 1 December):
- Rayalaseema and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh: Very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall.
- Tamil Nadu (north coastal districts): Widespread moderate to heavy rainfall, with isolated extremely heavy falls.
- Puducherry and Karaikal: Heavy rainfall with an orange alert.
- Expected wind speeds:
- Near the core: 60–80 kmph, gusting to 90 kmph.
- Outer bands: 35–45 kmph, gusting to 55 kmph.
- Similar wind conditions are expected near Kerala, Lakshadweep, and the Maldives on the Arabian Sea side.

Cheetah Translocation from Botswana to Bharat

Introduction

- The translocation of cheetahs from Botswana to Bharat forms part of India's effort to reintroduce the species after its extinction in 1952.
- This initiative advances Project Cheetah's goals through collaboration between Indian agencies and partners in Botswana.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- During the 1st-ever Presidential visit from India to Botswana, the President of India announced the translocation of 8 cheetahs to India, marking a major milestone in Project Cheetah.
- Botswana symbolically handed over the cheetahs, with 5 quarantined at the Mokolodi Nature Reserve in Botswana.

Background

- Project Cheetah, launched in 2022 under Project Tiger, aims to reintroduce cheetahs extinct in India since 1952, as the world's 1st intercontinental wild carnivore translocation.
- Governance: Implemented by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) along with the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII); a Steering Committee was formed in 2023 to oversee implementation.
- Status: India currently has 27 cheetahs, including 16 born in the country.
- Habitats: Kuno National Park, Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, and the proposed Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary serve as sites for translocated cheetahs.
- Community engagement: Over 350 'Cheetah Mitras' support local awareness and help reduce human–wildlife conflict.

Significance

- Represents a major milestone in Project Cheetah through the handover from Botswana.
- Seeks to restore cheetah populations and revive savanna ecosystems.
- Promotes ecotourism and livelihoods.
- Aims to reduce human–wildlife conflict through community awareness.

Facts/General knowledge

- Botswana is a landlocked country in Southern Africa, bordered by South Africa (south and east), Namibia (west), and Zimbabwe (east).
- The Kalahari Desert covers over 70% of its landmass; despite the name, it receives moderate rainfall and supports vegetation.
- The landscape is dominated by savanna grasslands, with baobab trees, some over 2,000 years old.
- Major natural attractions include the Okavango Delta (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and Chobe National Park, famous for having over 50,000 elephants.
- About 17% of Botswana's land is reserved for national parks and game preserves.
- Botswana is one of the world's biggest producers of diamonds, accounting for about 20% of global production.

COP30 Belém outcomes and India's climate actions

Introduction

- COP30 marked a critical juncture in global climate action, highlighting the power of multilateral cooperation despite geopolitical tensions.
- The summit advanced historic finance commitments, pledged to triple adaptation funding by 2035, and launched initiatives for a just transition and deforestation reversal, while falling short on fossil fuel phase-out language.
- It reinforced the urgent need for ambitious, equity-based strategies that integrate social, economic, and environmental goals within a collaborative global framework.

Why in news?

- COP30 in Belém, Brazil, drew global attention for moving from pledges to implementation, unveiling significant finance commitments and new mechanisms across adaptation, just transition, forests, public health, and climate–trade alignment.
- The conference spotlighted unresolved divisions on fossil fuel phase-out, underscoring ongoing geopolitical and responsibility disputes.

Background

- Adoption of the Belém Package: 29 decisions to accelerate Paris Agreement implementation by strengthening climate finance, adaptation tracking, gender inclusion, and global cooperation, reflecting a shift to actionable implementation.
- Climate finance and adaptation: Commitment to mobilising $1.3 trillion annually by 2035, with a tripling of adaptation finance to support vulnerable nations and close persistent finance gaps.
- Global Implementation Accelerator and Belém Mission to 1.5°C: New platforms to monitor national progress, narrow the emissions gap, and enhance accountability and transparency in NDC tracking.
- Just Transition Mechanism (Belém Action Mechanism): Support for workers and fossil fuel-dependent economies to transition towards sustainable models.
- Roadmaps from Brazil: Strategies to halt and reverse deforestation and to pursue a just, equitable fossil fuel transition tailored to national and regional realities.
- Belém Health Action Plan: First global plan linking climate action and public health, addressing climate-induced health risks, emphasising climate justice, and strengthening resilient health systems.
- Tropical Forests Forever Facility: Performance-based, long-term funding for forest conservation, allocating at least 20% to Indigenous peoples and local communities, aligning biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate goals.
- Equity and inclusive governance: Reinforcement of equity, climate justice, transparency, intergenerational rights, gender-responsive policies, and Indigenous leadership.
- Climate-Trade Dialogue: Effort to harmonise climate goals with international trade, reducing conflicts such as carbon border adjustments, and promoting fair transitions.
- Global Mutirão Agreement: A call for collective action to bolster multilateralism and shared responsibility amid geopolitical divisions.

Significance

- Demonstrated the resilience of multilateralism with record finance signals and practical mechanisms to drive implementation.
- Embedded equity, climate justice, and inclusive governance across decisions, elevating gender and Indigenous leadership.
- Integrated climate action with health, trade, forests, and just transitions to deliver co-benefits across sectors.
- Prioritised transparency and accountability to close the emissions gap through measurable tracking of national actions.
- Exposed persistent contention over fossil fuel phase-out, underscoring the need for greater ambition and consensus.

Facts/General knowledge

- Key barriers preventing countries from meeting global climate commitments:
- Gap between NDC pledges and the 1.5°C pathway: Current NDCs cut emissions by about 15% by 2035 versus a required 45%–60%; only 19 countries align with Paris goals; major emitters plan sectoral expansions; projected warming of 2.3–2.5°C by 2100.
- Implementation gap: Emissions are set to exceed necessary reductions by 29–32 Gt CO_2 e in 2030; fossil fuel investments persist and coal phase-outs lag; 2025 EY

findings show 64% of companies have net-zero plans but only 12% achieved substantial progress, with nearly two-thirds relying on carbon credits instead of real reductions, notably in transport and financial services.

- Insufficient climate finance: Despite the $1.3 trillion annual pledge by 2035, current flows from developed countries are about $115 billion per year, far below the $300 billion target and future needs; adaptation remains underfunded at less than one-third of required levels.
- Geopolitical tensions and responsibility disputes: No binding fossil fuel phase-out at COP30; disagreements persist over equitable finance and accountability; inconsistent US–China cooperation; India, representing the Global South, calls for a phase down rather than a phase out of fossil fuels.
- Technological and capacity gaps: Uneven access to clean technologies and limited infrastructure/expertise hinder deployment; Africa's renewable capacity reached only 70 GW in 2024 versus over 800 GW in Europe.
- Data transparency and reporting deficits: Many countries face challenges in comprehensive GHG inventories and uniform reporting; among 133 developing countries (1997–2019), over half made little or no progress, with frequent missed submissions.
- Socioeconomic and just transition challenges: Worker displacement risks and inadequate social protection/reskilling delay policy; the ILO estimates around 24 million green jobs by 2030, while millions in fossil sectors risk loss, especially in coal-reliant regions like Poland, India, and parts of the US.
- Major initiatives undertaken by the Indian Government to meet its climate commitments:
- National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC): Eight missions on solar, energy efficiency, sustainable habitats, water, Himalayan ecosystems, Green India, sustainable agriculture, and climate knowledge.
- National Solar Mission: Expansion of solar capacity to cut fossil fuel dependency.
- National Green Hydrogen Mission: Target of 5 million tonnes annually by 2030 for hard-to-abate sectors.
- Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) Scheme: Market-based industrial energy efficiency with tradable credits.
- Carbon market development: Carbon credit trading scheme expected by 2026 to incentivise reductions.
- Forest conservation and afforestation programmes: Afforestation of 6 million hectares and increasing forest cover from 23% to 33%.
- India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP): Sustainable cooling to cut refrigerants and energy use, with health and equity gains.
- National Bio-Energy Mission: Promotion of bio-energy to diversify the renewable mix.
- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): Pollution reduction measures aligned with climate goals.
- Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI): Coastal ecosystem restoration with livelihood enhancement.
- Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS): Support for industrial decarbonisation through CO_2 capture and reuse/storage.
- Miyawaki urban afforestation technique: Dense native plantations to boost urban green cover and air quality.

COP31 Hosting Compromise: Turkey and Australia

Introduction

- Turkey will host COP31, the 2026 UN Climate Change Conference under the UNFCCC, ensuring continuity in global climate negotiations.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- During COP30 discussions in Brazil, a diplomatic compromise resolved the prolonged hosting dispute and confirmed Turkey as host of COP31.
- No official statements have been issued yet by Australian or Turkish officials.
- Negotiations are ongoing to finalise procedural details and secure consensus among UNFCCC member states.
- Subtopic: Background
- COP is the most important annual gathering under the UNFCCC.
- In 2022, both Turkey and Australia submitted bids to host COP31; neither withdrew, creating a stalemate and concerns over leadership and coordination during a crucial phase for climate action.
- Compromise framework:
  Turkey will officially host COP31 and assume the Presidency, overseeing logistical and diplomatic aspects.
- Australia will lead intergovernmental negotiations, shaping climate policy formulation and implementation strategy.
- A pre-COP event is expected in the Pacific region, emphasising the vulnerability of small island states and bolstering regional engagement.

Significance

- COP31 will shape the post-2030 global climate agenda by:
- Finalising pathways for achieving the 1.5°C limit under the Paris Agreement.
- Accelerating access to climate finance for developing nations.
- Expanding adaptation and resilience frameworks, especially for nations facing sea-level rise and extreme weather.
- Strengthening the loss and damage mechanism formalised during COP27.
- The dual arrangement balances regional representation, influence, and leadership in increasingly complex climate negotiations.
- The model could serve as a precedent for future shared hosting when multiple countries seek influence in global climate discussions.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, established in 1992.

- COP: Annual conference of member countries to discuss global climate policies.
- COP21 (2015): Held in Paris, resulted in the Paris Agreement.
- COP27 (2022): Established a formal Loss and Damage Fund.
- COP30 (2025): Held in Brazil, focused on accelerating climate finance and adaptation goals.

Economy

Nayi Chetna 4.0 Campaign (DAY-NRLM)

Introduction

- 'Nayi Chetna 4.0 – Initiative for Change' is a national campaign under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- It focuses on strengthening women's safety, mobility, dignity, and socio-economic participation, especially in rural India.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- Launched by the Union Minister for Rural Development alongside the Union Minister for Women and Child Development.
- Scheduled to run nationwide from 25 November to 23 December 2025, led by the Self-Help Group (SHG) network under DAY-NRLM.

Background

- This is the fourth edition of the 'Nayi Chetna' campaign.
- DAY-NRLM was launched in 2011 and restructured in 2015; it is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- The mission aims to reduce rural poverty through self-employment, skill development, and sustainable livelihoods via SHGs.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Emphasises elimination of substance abuse, identified as a major cause of domestic violence.
- Promotes village-level campaigns for violence-free communities.
- Stresses women's voices in governance and safe public spaces.
- Encourages shared domestic responsibilities and recognition of women's economic roles.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- DAY-NRLM primarily mobilises rural women into SHGs.
- SHGs receive credit linkages, capacity-building support, and improved market access.
- Key components include financial inclusion, digital literacy, and diversification of livelihood activities to stabilise household incomes in rural areas.

8th Central Pay Commission (CPC)

Introduction

- The 8th Pay Commission will be chaired by Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai.
- It will submit its report within 18 months and may issue interim recommendations on specific matters before completion.
- Recommendations are expected to take effect retrospectively from 1 January 2026.

Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Terms of Reference of the 8th Central Pay Commission.
- Subtopic: Background
- A Pay Commission is established every 10 years under the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- It determines salaries, allowances, and pensions of Central government employees by assessing both monetary and non-monetary benefits, taking into account inflation, cost of living, and the need for parity and fairness in compensation.
- Usually, a retired Supreme Court judge heads the Commission.
- Its recommendations are often adopted by state-owned organisations as well.
- The 7th Pay Commission (2016), chaired by Justice Ashok Kumar Mathur, recommended a 23.55% overall hike.

Significance

- Implementation leads to higher consumption and economic growth.
- It improves the quality of life of employees and pensioners.
- Over 49 lakh Central government employees and 65 lakh pensioners will benefit under the 8th CPC.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- The Terms of Reference serve as a blueprint outlining the mandate, scope, and timelines for the 8th Pay Commission.

Science and technology

India's Indigenous CRISPR Gene Therapy for Sickle Cell Disease

Introduction

- India has launched BIRSA 101, a CRISPR-based gene therapy targeting Sickle Cell Disease.
- It is developed by the CSIR–Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB).
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- The gene therapy BIRSA 101 is dedicated to Bhagwan Birsa Munda, a great tribal freedom fighter.
- It is the first indigenous CRISPR-based gene therapy for Sickle Cell Disease in India.
- An agreement was exchanged between CSIR-IGIB and the Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd. to translate enFnCas9 into scalable, affordable therapies for genetic disorders.

Background

- Gene therapy uses a gene or genes to treat, prevent, or cure a disease or medical disorder.
- Working mechanism includes adding new copies of a broken gene, or replacing a defective or missing gene in a patient's cells with a healthy therapeutic gene.
- Sickle-cell disease is a genetic disorder affecting haemoglobin, causing red blood cells to become rigid and sickle-shaped, leading to blockages in blood flow.
- It particularly affects India's tribal population, with 1 in 86

births among Scheduled Tribes having Sickle Cell Disease.

Significance

- Addresses Sickle Cell Disease, a condition that particularly affects India's tribal population.
- The agreement on enFnCas9 aims to enable scalable, affordable therapies for genetic disorders.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- CRISPR stands for Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats and is a genome-editing tool enabling precise DNA modifications.
- Guide RNA is designed to find and bind to specific parts of the target genome.
- Cas9 (CRISPR-associated protein 9) acts as molecular scissors to cut both strands of DNA.
- enFnCas9 is an engineered high-fidelity CRISPR-Cas9 platform developed by IGIB, based on Francisella novicida Cas9 (FnCas9).

GSAT-7R (CMS-03) Launch and LVM3-M5

Introduction

- ISRO successfully launched GSAT-7R (also known as CMS-03), India's heaviest indigenously built advanced communication satellite, from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- The mission delivers a major boost to national space capabilities and strengthens naval communications.

Why in news?

- CMS-03 was launched on the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) during its fifth operational flight (LVM3-M5).
- Weighing about 4,400 kg, it is the heaviest communication satellite launched to Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit from India.

Background

- CMS-03 is a multi-band communication satellite providing services over a wide oceanic region, including the Indian landmass.
- It has been placed in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit and will reach its final Geostationary Orbit using onboard propulsion.
- Designed for a 15-year mission life, it carries advanced multiband transponders to transmit voice, data, and video.
- It ensures secure, high-capacity communication for the Indian Navy across the Indian Ocean Region.

Significance

- GSAT-7R replaces the decade-old GSAT-7 (Rukmini), launched in 2013, which has reached the end of its operational life.
- The satellite is fully indigenously developed, reflecting progress under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- LVM3-M5 enhances strategic autonomy by reducing dependence on foreign heavy-lift launch vehicles such as the European Ariane-5.
- The mission supports Gaganyaan preparations by demonstrating LVM3's heavy-lift capability and cryogenic engine re-ignition test for future missions.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- LVM-3, earlier referred to as GSLV Mk 3, uses solid, liquid, and cryogenic engines.
- Payload capacity: up to 8,000 kg in Low Earth Orbit and up to 4,000 kg in geosynchronous orbit.
- Major achievements:
  Successfully launched Chandrayaan-2 and Chandrayaan-3 lunar missions.
- Carried India's first crew module (2014) for a re-entry test under the Gaganyaan programme.
- Launched 72 OneWeb satellites to Low Earth Orbit in 2022 amid a global shortage of launch options.
- These missions led ISRO to rebrand it from "GSLV Mk-3" to "LVM-3."
- Upgrades and future enhancements:
  ISRO plans to replace the liquid stage with a semi-cryogenic engine using refined kerosene and liquid oxygen, potentially increasing payload to 10,000 kg in LEO.
- Development of the next-generation Lunar Module Launch Vehicle (LMLV) to carry up to 80,000 kg, positioning LVM-3 as the "Bahubali rocket" for deep-space and human spaceflight ambitions.

NISAR Earth-Observation Satellite

Introduction

- NASA–ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) is a joint Earth-observation satellite mission by ISRO and NASA.
- Designed to provide high-resolution radar imagery of Earth's surface.
- Aims to monitor changes in land, vegetation, ice, and water resources with exceptional precision.
- Represents one of the most significant international collaborations in space science.

Why in news?

- Launched aboard the GSLV-F16 rocket from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- Marks another milestone in Indo–U.S. space cooperation.

Background

- Conceived to combine the technological expertise of India and the United States in remote sensing and radar imaging.
- Primary objectives include:
  Monitoring earthquakes, landslides, and volcanic activity by detecting subtle ground movements.
- Measuring glacier and ice-sheet dynamics to assess the impact of climate change on sea-level rise.
- Mapping ecosystem changes, deforestation, and agricultural productivity through radar-based biomass estimation.
- Tracking soil moisture and land subsidence caused by groundwater extraction or urbanisation.
- Observing Earth's surface at high temporal and spatial resolution to enhance early warning and long-term environmental management.

Significance

- For India:
  Enhances national capability in remote sensing and environmental monitoring.
- Provides data for resource management, disaster mitigation, and agricultural planning.
- For NASA:
  Advances global climate science and strengthens data-sharing partnerships.
- Globally:
  Supports climate research with consistent, high-quality radar data for Earth system models.
- Aids sustainable development through applications in agriculture, forestry, and land-use management.
- Enables improved disaster risk reduction via more accurate forecasting and post-disaster assessments.

Facts/General knowledge

- First satellite mission to use dual-frequency SAR technology, operating simultaneously in:
- L-band provided by NASA.
- S-band provided by ISRO.
- Dual-band configuration enables study of features above and below the surface with high accuracy.
- Technical specifications:
  Deployable 12-metre radar reflector (one of the largest on an Earth-observation satellite).
- Near-polar, sun-synchronous orbit at approximately 743 kilometres altitude for consistent lighting and regular global coverage.
- Revisit the same location roughly every 12 days for continuous monitoring of surface changes.
- Initial operational life of three years, with potential extensions based on performance.
- Roles and contributions:
  NASA: L-band radar system, high-rate data transmission electronics, mission operations software.
- ISRO: S-band radar, satellite bus, and the launch vehicle.

India's first commercially built PSLV and the Oceansat launch

Introduction

- India is entering a new phase in its space journey with the maiden mission of its first commercially built PSLV planned for early next year.
- The mission will place the Oceansat satellite in orbit.
- This marks a shift towards industry-led rocket production.

Why in news?

- The HAL–L&T consortium has independently manufactured the entire PSLV for the first time.
- The first commercial PSLV is slated to launch Oceansat early next year, with multiple PSLV missions anticipated soon after.

Background

- ISRO is transitioning the production of proven launch vehicles to the private sector while focusing on advanced research and upcoming missions.
- The HAL–L&T consortium faced technical challenges in certain components, with ISRO providing crucial support to ensure progress.
- The consortium is supplying hardware and preparing for future missions under a contract to build five PSLV-XL rockets, with scope for additional orders.

Significance

- Strengthens private sector capability in mainstream space operations.
- Allows ISRO to concentrate on advanced research and future missions.
- Builds a competitive commercial launch ecosystem in India.
- Supports rising global and domestic satellite demand with an increased launch pipeline.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- First commercial PSLV to carry: Oceansat.
- Launch timeline: early next year.
- Manufacturers: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Larsen & Toubro.
- Expected PSLV launches next year: two to three.
- Current contract: five PSLV-XL rockets, with potential for more orders.
- ISRO provided assistance to address component-level technical challenges.

Sentinel-6B Ocean-Tracking Satellite

Introduction

- Sentinel-6B is an ocean-tracking satellite designed to measure rising sea levels and their impacts on the planet.
- It is operated jointly by the United States' NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the European Space Agency.

Why in news?

- Sentinel-6B was launched recently from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

Background

- The mission is part of Copernicus Sentinel-6, also known as the Jason-CS mission (for Continuity of Service).
- It is the latest in a series of satellites launched since the 1990s.
- Sentinel-6B is the twin of the first satellite, Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich (originally Sentinel-6A), which launched in November 2020.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Sharper weather forecasting, including storms and floods, enabling administrators to make better real-time decisions.
- Supports safeguarding of public property and protection of coastal infrastructure.

Facts/General knowledge

- Orbiting speed: 7.2 km per second, completing one revolution every 112 minutes.
- Coverage: Maps more than 90% of the world's ice-free oceans every 10 days.

- Ocean dynamics: Measures significant wave height and wind speed over the oceans to support operational oceanography and forecasting.
- Atmospheric data: Collects high-resolution vertical profiles of temperature and humidity using the GNSS Radio Occultation instrument, improving weather prediction models and climate assessment.
- Inland water: Altimetry data can be used to monitor the height of major rivers and lakes.

Defence and military

Operation Pawan

Introduction

- Operation Pawan was India's first major overseas military campaign post-Independence, undertaken in 1987 in Sri Lanka.

Why in news?

- For decades, veterans and families sought formal recognition for Operation Pawan.
- Despite Sri Lanka constructing a memorial acknowledging the IPKF's role, the operation did not receive formal commemoration at the National War Memorial (Rashtriya Samar Smarak) in New Delhi.
- In 2025, the Army finally acknowledged their long-overlooked sacrifice.

Background

- Initiated by the Rajiv Gandhi government under the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord.
- Deployed the Indian Peace Keeping Force to help quell the civil war between the Tamil and Sinhala communities.
- Aimed to disarm Tamil militant groups, including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and restore peace.

Significance

- The mission evolved into intense counter-insurgency combat as the LTTE turned hostile.
- The severity of the fighting was such that many personnel's bodies could not be recovered.

Facts/General knowledge

- Indo-Sri Lanka Accord date: 29 July 1987; Operation Pawan launched in 1987.
- Scale: nearly 100,000 Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka as part of the IPKF.
- Operational milestone: the IPKF captured Jaffna on 26 October 1987.
- Outcome on adversary leadership: the LTTE dispersed into the jungle and its leader, V. Prabhakaran, eluded capture.
- Casualties: 1,171 Indian soldiers were martyred and over 3,500 were injured.
- Gallantry: Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran, a Param Vir Chakra recipient, was killed on 25 November 1987.
- Closure: the operation formally ended on 24 March 1990 with the withdrawal of the IPKF.

Trishul-2025 Tri-Services Exercise

Introduction

- India has begun the Tri-Services Exercise "Trishul-2025".
- It is being conducted in Sir Creek and the Rajasthan–Gujarat desert sectors, extending into the northern Arabian Sea.

Why in news?

- The tri-services exercise "Trishul-2025" has commenced.

Background

- It is a major tri-services exercise to test joint capabilities across land, air, sea, cyber, and space.
- Aims include validating joint procedures, strengthening network integration, and enhancing inter-service interoperability.
- "Trinetra" and "Mahagujarat" are sub-exercises under the larger annual Tri-Services Exercise Trishul 2025.

Significance

- Validates joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Electronic Warfare, and Cyber Warfare plans.
- Strengthens integrated operations and inter-service interoperability.
- Highlights the effective employment of indigenous systems and demonstrates absorption of the tenets of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.
- Showcases robust inter-agency and multi-domain integration.

Facts/General knowledge

- Coordinator: Headquarters Western Naval Command (Mumbai).
- Core participants: Southern Command (Army), Western Naval Command (Navy), and South Western Air Command (IAF).
- Supporting agencies: Indian Coast Guard, Border Security Force, and other agencies.

Malabar Exercise near Guam

Introduction

- The Malabar exercise is an annual naval drill involving India, the United States, Australia, and Japan (Quad countries).
- It underscores shared commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.

Why in news?

- The latest edition has commenced in the Northern Pacific near Guam.
- INS Sahyadri, an indigenously designed, stealth guided-missile frigate, represents India.
- Subtopic: Background
- Began in 1992 as a bilateral naval drill between India and the United States.
- Japan joined in 2015.
- Australia participated in 2020, making it a four-nation exercise under the Quad framework.

Significance

- Highlights convergence of views among participating countries on maritime issues.
- Strengthens Quad military interoperability and coordinated

maritime operations.
- Supports freedom of navigation and enhances joint readiness.
- Advances India's strategic maritime MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision.
- Operational focus includes improving interoperability, coordination, and communication through joint fleet operations, anti-submarine warfare, gunnery drills, and airborne maritime missions.
- Guam's strategic relevance—owing to proximity to East Asia and contested waters like the South China Sea—enhances the exercise's operational value.

Facts/General knowledge

- Guam is a United States territory in the Pacific.
- The Quad is a strategic forum of the United States, Japan, India, and Australia focused on regional security and economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2025

Introduction

- A joint military drill between the Indian and Sri Lankan Armies to strengthen defence cooperation and enhance interoperability in counter-terrorism and peacekeeping operations.
- Aims to jointly rehearse Sub Conventional Operations under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate.
- The scope includes synergising joint responses during counter-terrorist operations.

Why in news?

- The 11th edition was conducted at Belagavi, Karnataka.
- Featured the use of Drones and Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS) for enhanced operational effectiveness.

Background

- Exercise MITRA SHAKTI is an annual joint training exercise between the Indian and Sri Lankan Armies.
- It has been conducted alternately in both countries since 2012.

Significance

- Advances India–Sri Lanka defence and security cooperation with Sri Lanka's strategic location near key Indian Ocean shipping lanes central to India's 'MAHASAGAR Vision'.
- Reinforces interoperability for sub-conventional, counter-terrorist, and peacekeeping roles.
- Complements broader bilateral military engagements, including the SLINEX naval exercise held alternately in India and Sri Lanka every year.
- Reflects practical collaboration in humanitarian and environmental assistance, with India acting as the "first responder" during maritime emergencies in Sri Lankan waters.

Facts/General knowledge

- Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate deals with action concerning threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression.
- Indian Navy and Coast Guard actions prevented environmental disasters during the MV X-Press Pearl (2021) and MT New Diamond (2020) incidents.
- A Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre for the Sri Lanka Navy, set up under a Government of India grant, was commissioned in 2024.

VINBAX 2025 – India–Vietnam Military Exercise

Introduction

- VINBAX is a bilateral military exercise between the Indian Army (IA) and the Vietnam People's Army (VPA).
- The 2025 edition brings together around 300 personnel from both armies.
- Objectives include strengthening defence cooperation and mutual trust, enhancing interoperability in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), and sharing operational experience and best practices in modern field conditions, including medical aid, engineering tasks and SAR missions.

Why in news?

- VINBAX 2025 began on 11 November 2025 at the National Military Training Centre 4 in Hanoi, Vietnam, and will continue until 27 November 2025.

Background

- The first edition was held in 2018 in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.
- It was formed as part of India's Act East Policy to strengthen ties with Vietnam.
- The exercise is conducted alternately in India and Vietnam every year.

Significance

- Vietnam is the only country with which India conducts an annual field-level UN peacekeeping simulation.

Facts/General knowledge

- VINBAX focuses on UN-mandated peacekeeping simulations rather than combat training.

Exercise Garuda 25

Introduction

- A bilateral air exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the French Air and Space Force (FASF).
- Aims to promote operational interaction, mutual learning, and enhanced interoperability between the two Air Forces.

Why in news?

- The IAF is participating in the 8th edition, 'Garuda 25', at Mont-de-Marsan, France, from 16th to 27th November 2025.

Background

- First held in 2003.
- One of India's longest-running air exercises with a Western nation.
- Reflects deepening defence and strategic ties under the India–France Strategic Partnership (established in 1998).
- Held alternately in India and France.

Participation

- The IAF has deployed six Su-30MKI fighter jets.
- Supported by IL-78 refuellers and C-17 Globemasters.
- Operating alongside French Rafale and other multirole fighters in complex simulated air combat missions.

Focus Areas

- Air-to-air combat drills.
- Air defence missions.
- Joint strike operations.
- Refinement of tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).

Significance

- Promotes India–France collaborations such as the Rafale deal, Indo-Pacific cooperation, and joint space defence research.

Facts/General knowledge

- Other exercises: Varuna (naval), Shakti (army), Desert Knight (India, France, and UAE).

Exercise Ajeya Warrior-25

Introduction

- A bilateral military training exercise between the Indian Army and the British Army
- Aims at improving joint capabilities in counter-terrorism and peacekeeping operations

Why in news?

- India and the United Kingdom have begun the 8th edition of the exercise

Background

- Held biennially since 2011 as a bilateral endeavour between the Indian Army and the British Army
- Conducted under a United Nations mandate aligned with Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which addresses threats to peace, breaches of peace, and counter-terrorism scenarios

Significance

- Enhances interoperability, improves tactical coordination, and facilitates sharing of best practices in counter-terrorism and peacekeeping operations
- Builds preparedness for real-life counter-terror contingencies through realistic training

Facts/General knowledge

- 8th edition dates: 17th to 30th November, 2025
- Venue: Foreign Training Node, Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan
- Participation: 240 personnel with equal representation from both armies; the Indian Army is represented by the Sikh Regiment
- Training focus: simulation-based scenarios and Brigade-level mission planning

Exercise Surya Kiran 2025

Introduction

- A bilateral military exercise between the Indian Army and the Nepal Army.
- Designed to facilitate joint training and coordination between the two forces.

Why in news?

- The 19th edition, SURYAKIRAN-XIX, began on 25 November 2025 at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.
- The 2025 edition is scheduled from 25 November to 08 December 2025.

Background

- Held annually with hosting duties alternating between India and Nepal.
- Conducted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which deals with peacekeeping duties related to threats to peace, breaches of peace, and counter-terrorism scenarios.
- Primarily focuses on counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, and jungle/mountain warfare terrain common to both armies.

Significance

- Aims to enhance interoperability between the Indian Army and the Nepal Army.
- Strengthens military diplomacy and deepens India–Nepal defence cooperation.
- The 2025 edition highlights incorporation of niche and emerging military technologies, such as:
- Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)
- Drone-based Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR)
- AI-enabled decision-support tools
- Unmanned logistics vehicles
- Armoured protection platforms

Facts/General knowledge

- Indian contingent: 334 personnel, mainly from the Assam Regiment.
- Nepalese contingent: 334 personnel, primarily from the Devi Datta Regiment.

India's Withdrawal from Ayni Airbase, Tajikistan

Introduction

- India has officially concluded its presence at Tajikistan's Ayni Airbase, ending a strategic chapter in Central Asia.

Why in news?

- The collaboration to revitalise the Soviet-era base, initiated four years ago, concluded after a bilateral agreement on stationing Indian personnel ended in 2022.
- The base's strategic utility expired after the collapse of India's ally, the Northern Alliance, and the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in 2021.

Background

- Ayni Airbase is located about 10 km west of Dushanbe, Tajikistan's capital.
- In 1998, India set up its first base in Tajikistan at Farkhor with helicopters, a repair unit, and a military hospital that treated Afghan Northern Alliance fighters.
- The Farkhor base was shut down around 2008, and the Ayni base was established as India's second overseas base after Farkhor.

Significance

- Ayni's proximity (around 20 km) to Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor gave India strategic leverage over Pakistan and access to Central Asia.
- Its operational purpose was to support the Northern Alliance through logistics, aerial support, and intelligence.
- During the Taliban's 2021 return, India used the Ayni Airbase to evacuate nationals and officials from Afghanistan via military and civilian aircraft.

Facts/General knowledge

- The airbase was never used for combat missions and had no permanent presence of fighter aircraft.
- India had stationed Mi17 helicopters at Ayni that also assisted Tajikistan forces.
- Ayni was India's second overseas base after the Farkhor base (1998–2008).

Rank report and Awards

Larry Page becomes world's third richest after Alphabet's Gemini 3 boost

Introduction

- Larry Page, Google cofounder and key Alphabet shareholder, overtook Jeff Bezos in the global wealth rankings.
- The change followed Alphabet's strong quarterly performance and the unveiling of Google's Gemini 3 AI model, which lifted market sentiment.

Why in news?

- Alphabet shares surged in early trading after the earnings release and Gemini 3 announcement, later stabilising.
- Larry Page's net worth rose by $7.6 billion on the day; Sergey Brin gained $7 billion.
- The announcements bolstered investor confidence amid advances in AI.

Background

- Larry Page holds a 3.2% stake in Alphabet; Sergey Brin holds 2.9%.
- Gemini 3 is presented as a breakthrough in advanced AI reasoning.
- Alphabet reported a record quarter that beat Wall Street estimates, supporting its long-term AI and cloud strategy.

Significance

- Highlights the market impact of AI innovation and cloud momentum on enterprise value and founder wealth.
- Reinforces Alphabet's growing leadership in AI and cloud computing.
- Results in a reshuffle of global billionaire rankings, with Page moving ahead of Bezos.

Facts/General knowledge

- Date context: 21 November 2025 (Forbes Real-Time Billionaires List reference).
- Gemini 3 AI model: Released November 2025.
- Gemini 3 capabilities: PhD-level academic reasoning; 74% improvement over the previous version.
- Integration: Across Google Cloud services with enhanced performance for enterprise-level AI deployment.
- Alphabet stock move: Up to 6% intraday post-announcement.
- Alphabet Q3 2025 revenue: Over $100 billion; 16% year-on-year growth.
- Google Cloud Q3 revenue: $15.2 billion; up 34% year-on-year.
- Berkshire Hathaway in Alphabet: $4.3 billion stake, a rare move by Warren Buffett into high-growth tech.
- Alphabet ownership: Larry Page 3.2%; Sergey Brin 2.9%.
- Real-time net worths (21 November 2025): Larry Page $246.11 billion; Sergey Brin $228.20 billion; Jeff Bezos $233.6 billion.
- Top five billionaires (21 November 2025): Elon Musk $466.2 billion; Larry Ellison $276.5 billion; Larry Page $246.1 billion; Jeff Bezos $233.6 billion; Sergey Brin $228.2 billion.

India in the WJP Rule of Law Index 2025

Introduction

- The World Justice Project (WJP) released the WJP Rule of Law Index 2025 on 28 October 2025.
- It is the world's leading source of independent data on the rule of law, based on surveys conducted in 143 countries and jurisdictions.
- The 2025 edition reports a global decline in the rule of law, with recent progress rapidly reversing.

Why in news?

- India fell six places to 86th position in the WJP Rule of Law Index 2025.
- India's overall score is 0.49, reflecting a -1.7 percent decline in 2025.

Background

- The WJP was founded in 2006 by William H. Neukom to promote the rule of law globally.
- Its history includes the 2008 World Justice Forum in Vienna and the annual publication of the WJP Rule of Law Index starting in 2009.
- The organisation has expanded to cover more than 140 countries.
- The index is based on original, independent data from surveys of more than 149,000 people and 3,400 legal experts across 143 countries and jurisdictions.

Significance

- In 2025, 68 percent of countries saw a decline in the rule of law, up from 57 percent the previous year.
- This decline is attributed to a rise in authoritarian tendencies and a significant reduction in checks on government powers.
- The index is used by governments, multilateral organisations, businesses, academia, media, and civil society organisations.

Facts/General knowledge

- Top countries: Denmark ranks first (0.90), Norway second (0.89), Finland third (0.87), Sweden fourth (0.85), followed by New Zealand (0.83), Germany (0.83), Luxembourg (0.83),

Ireland (0.82), Netherlands (0.82), and Estonia (0.82).
- Bottom and selected rankings: Venezuela 143rd; Afghanistan 142nd; Russia 119th; Sudan 137th.
- Top declining countries: Russian Federation (-4.9%), Sudan (-4.4%), Mozambique (-3.9%).
- Top improving countries: Dominican Republic (2.1%), Senegal (1.6%), Sierra Leone (1.4%).
- The United States, with a score of 0.68, slipped one place to 27th amid a 2.8 percent decline.
- China, with an overall score of 0.48, ranks 92nd globally, climbing four spots with a 0.8 percent increase.
- Pakistan remains unchanged at 130th with an overall score of 0.37, showing a -2.3 percent decline.

International Emmy Awards 2025 — Winners and India's Nomination

Introduction

- The International Emmy Awards 2025 were held in New York City, showcasing outstanding global talent across Drama, Documentary, Comedy, News, and Children's Programming.
- India featured through Diljit Dosanjh's film Amar Singh Chamkila, directed by Imtiaz Ali, with two major nominations.

Why in news?

- Amar Singh Chamkila received nominations for Best TV Movie/Mini-Series and Best Performance by an Actor, highlighting international recognition for Indian streaming and cinema.
- Despite strong expectations, the Netflix India project did not secure a win.

Background

- Best TV Movie/Mini-Series: Amar Singh Chamkila competed with Herrhausen (Germany), Vencer o Morir (Chile), and Lost Boys and Fairies (UK), with the UK title winning the award.
- Best Performance by an Actor: Diljit Dosanjh's portrayal of Punjabi legend Chamkila lost to Spain's Oriol Pla for Yo, adicto.

Significance

- The nominations were celebrated as a proud milestone for Indian storytelling on the global stage.
- The selections reflected strong European, Asian, and Latin American representation, underscoring how storytelling for young audiences is evolving worldwide.

Facts/General knowledge

- Best TV Movie/Mini-Series: Lost Boys and Fairies (UK)
- Best Actor: Oriol Pla — Yo, adicto (Spain)
- Best Actress: Anna Maxwell Martin — Until I Kill You (UK)
- Best Drama Series: Rivals (UK)
- Best Comedy: Ludwig (UK)
- Best Art Programming: Ryuichi Sakamoto: Last Days (Japan)
- Best Documentary: Hell Jumper (UK)
- Best Current Affairs: Dispatches Kill Zone: Inside Gaza (UK)
- Best News Programme: Gaza, Search for Life (Qatar)
- Best Telenovela: Deha (Türkiye)
- Best Sports Documentary: It's All Over: The Kiss That Changed Spanish Football (Spain)
- Best Non-Scripted Entertainment: Shaolin Heroes: Denmark (Denmark)
- Best Short-Form Series: La Mediatrice (Canada)
- Children's Programming — Best Kids Animation: Bluey (Australia)
- Children's Programming — Best Kids Live-Action: Fallen (UK)
- Children's Programming — Best Kids Factual & Entertainment: Auf Fritzis Spuren (Germany)

India Skills Report 2026

Introduction

- Released in November 2025 by Educational Testing Service (ETS) in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and Taggd.
- Thirteenth edition highlights India's employability rising to 56.35% in 2026 from 54.81% in 2025.
- Central theme: The Future of Work — Gig Workforce, Freelancing, AI-Supplemented Workforce, Remote Work and Entrepreneurship.

Why in news?

- Women's employability has surpassed men's for the first time in five years, supported by hybrid work and digital skilling initiatives.

Background

- Survey coverage spanned more than 1 lakh candidates via the Global Employability Test (GET), collecting responses across seven key industries.

Significance

- Positions India as a preferred global source of skilled talent with an expanding role in the international labour market.
- Reflects a move towards a skill-first economy influenced by AI adoption, digital skills and global workforce mobility.
- Shows growing participation of women in Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI), education and healthcare, with heightened activity in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
- Indicates strong industry demand for technology-aligned skills across AI, data analytics and automation-driven roles.

Facts/General knowledge

- Gender-based employability: Women 54%; Men 51.5%.
- Hiring intent: 40% for FY 2026–27, up from 29% in the last year; dominant hiring sectors include Technology, BFSI, Manufacturing, Renewable Energy and Healthcare.
- Rising tech employability: Computer science graduates at 80%; IT engineers at 78%.
- Top employable age group: 22–25 years at 75.7% employability.
- AI landscape: India holds 16% of global AI talent; projected to reach 1.25 million AI professionals by 2027; more than 90% of employees across sectors use Generative AI tools; 70% of IT and 50% of BFSI organisations have adopted AI-based recruitment systems.

- Gig economy: Gig and freelance workforce projected to reach 23.5 million by 2030; project-based hiring up 38% compared to last year; permanent jobs account for 72% of employment; gig and third-party positions have increased to 16%.
- Global labour dynamics: Global labour shortages projected to reach 85 million by 2030, while India is expected to supply a surplus of 45 skilled professionals.
- Top employable states:
- Uttar Pradesh (1st): Reflects significant progress in skill development and workforce readiness.
- Maharashtra (2nd): Supported by a strong industrial base, corporate presence and advanced training infrastructure.
- Karnataka (3rd): Driven by leadership in the IT sector, digital innovation and technology-focused skill development programmes.

Hurun India Philanthropy List 2025

Introduction

- The 12th edition of the Hurun India Philanthropy List was released in November 2025 by the EdelGive Foundation in partnership with Hurun India.
- It measures donations in Financial Year 2024–25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025) by the value of cash or cash equivalents.
- Shiv Nadar (80) and his family retained the title of India's Most Generous donors for the fourth time in five years.

Why in news?

- Shiv Nadar & Family topped the 2025 list with Rs 2,708 crore donated in FY25, averaging over Rs 7.4 crore per day, a 26% increase from the previous year.

Background

- Data source: The report draws from the Hurun India Rich List, a ranking of 1,687 wealthiest individuals in India, released in September 2025 for the 14th year.
- Thresholds: Entry into the top 10 more than doubled to Rs 173 crore from Rs 74 crore in 2020; the bar for the top 25 tripled since 2014 to Rs 70 crore.
- About Hurun India: Founder and Chief Researcher – Anas Rahman Junaid; Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra; Founded – 2012.

Significance

- Causes: Education remained the most favoured cause, attracting Rs 4,166 crore from 107 philanthropists; healthcare received Rs 971 crore.
- Sectors: Pharmaceuticals account for 16% of donors, followed by software, automobile, and petrochemicals, indicating broad sector participation.
- CSR leadership: Reliance Industries Limited led with Rs 1,309 crore; Rungta Sons ranked second with Rs 181 crore.
- City leaders: Mumbai hosts 28% of listed philanthropists, followed by New Delhi at 17% and Bengaluru at 8%.
- Self-made surge: 109 new self-made philanthropists featured, a 43% increase from last year.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- Top five donors:
  Shiv Nadar & Family: Rs 2,708 crore; Primary cause – Education; Shiv Nadar Foundation.
- Mukesh Ambani & Family: Rs 626 crore; Primary cause – Education; Reliance Foundation.
- Bajaj Family: Rs 446 crore; Primary cause – Education; Bajaj Group Trust.
- Kumar Mangalam Birla & Family: Rs 440 crore; Primary cause – Healthcare; Aditya Birla Capital Foundation.
- Gautam Adani & Family: Rs 386 crore; Primary cause – Education; Adani Foundation.
- Ranks 6–10: Nandan Nilekani (Rs 365 crore); Hinduja family (Rs 298 crore); Rohini Nilekani (Rs 204 crore); Sudhir & Samir Mehta (Rs 189 crore); Cyrus & Adar Poonawalla (Rs 173 crore).
- New entrants: 12 philanthropists joined; Venu Srinivasan (TVS Motor) was the most generous debutant at Rs 20 crore.
- Personal capacity leaders: Shiv Nadar & Family (Rs 2,537 crore); Nandan Nilekani (Rs 356 crore); Rohini Nilekani (Rs 199 crore).
- Ranjan Pai (Manipal Group): Donated Rs 160 crore, joining the Rs 100-crore club and ranking among top individual philanthropists.
- Generous women: 24 featured; Rohini Nilekani contributed Rs 204 crore (ecosystem building); Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw Rs 83 crore (R&D); Bina Shah Rs 69 crore (education, via Harish and Bina Shah Foundation).
- Youngest philanthropists: Nikhil Kamath (39) and Nithin Kamath (46) donated Rs 147 crore via Rainmatter Foundation, placed 15th among donors contributing over Rs 100 crore; Binny Bansal (42) donated Rs 18 crore; Adar Poonawalla (43) donated Rs 173 crore via Villloo Poonawalla Charitable Foundation.

Swachh Survekshan 2025: Urban Cleanliness Rankings

Introduction

- India's urban cleanliness presents sharp contrasts, with smaller towns outperforming major metropolitan areas.
- Indore, Surat, and Navi Mumbai continue as clean city exemplars, while Bengaluru, Chennai, and Delhi feature among the dirtiest.

Why in news?

- The Swachh Survekshan 2025 survey results rank Madurai as India's dirtiest city and place several metros among the worst performers.

Background

- The 2025 rankings highlight persistent urban hygiene challenges despite a decade of the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Rapid urbanisation, insufficient waste disposal systems, and civic indiscipline are driving poor sanitation outcomes in large cities.
- Smaller and mid-sized cities such as Ahmedabad, Bhopal, Raipur, and Jabalpur have improved through effective waste

segregation, citizen participation, and cleaner public spaces.
- Community-driven initiatives are delivering better results than resource-heavy but poorly managed urban programmes.

Significance

- Demonstrates the strain of unchecked growth on basic civic infrastructure in major metros.
- Shows that financially strong cities continue to grapple with garbage management and drainage inefficiencies.
- Highlights the sustained performance of top clean cities and the rising standards in smaller towns and mid-sized cities.

Facts/General knowledge

- Madurai is the dirtiest city with a score of 4823; followed by Ludhiana, Chennai, Ranchi, and Bengaluru.
- Bengaluru ranks fifth among the dirtiest; Delhi ranks tenth; Greater Mumbai and Faridabad are also listed among poor performers.
- Indore, Surat, and Navi Mumbai are recognised in the "Super Swachh League."
- Smaller towns like Raipur and Jabalpur have outperformed major metros in cleanliness.
- What's new in Swachh Survekshan 2025:
- Super Swachh League: New category to recognise and rank cities with outstanding sanitation performance.
- Population-Based Matrix: Assessment within population categories for fair comparison.
- Tourist Focus: Emphasis on sanitation in tourist destinations and high-footfall areas.
- Simplified Indicators: Ten comprehensive sections covering urban cleanliness and sanitation.
- New Metrics: Added indicators for Project Grounding and CTUs Transformation.
- School-Level Assessment: Introduced to embed the values of Swachhta in the younger generation.

National Water Awards (2024)

Why in news?

- In the Best State category of the 6th National Water Awards (2024), Maharashtra ranked 1st, followed by Gujarat and Haryana.

Background

- Instituted by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Significance

- Aims to create awareness among people about the importance of water and motivate them to adopt the best water usage practices.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- Presented in 10 categories:
- Best State
- Best District
- Best Village Panchayat
- Best Urban Local Body
- Best School or College
- Best Industry
- Best Water User Association
- Best Institution (other than school or college)
- Best Civil Society
- Best Individual

National Water Awards (2024)

Introduction

- An awards framework focused on water, with honours presented across 10 defined categories.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- In the 6th National Water Awards (2024), Maharashtra ranked 1st in the Best State category, followed by Gujarat and Haryana.

Background

- Instituted by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Significance

- Aims to create awareness among people about the importance of water.
- Motivates people to adopt the best water usage practices.

Facts/General knowledge

- Presented in 10 categories:
  Best State
  Best District
  Best Village Panchayat
  Best Urban Local Body
  Best School or College
  Best Industry
  Best Water User Association
  Best Institution (other than school or college)
  Best Civil Society
  Best individual

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar — World Leader for Peace and Security 2025

Introduction

- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a globally revered spiritual leader and founder of the Art of Living Foundation, has been conferred the World Leader for Peace and Security Award 2025 by the Boston Global Forum (BGF) and the AI World Society (AIWS).
- The honour recognises his transformative contributions to global peace, humanitarian leadership, and the integration of spirituality into governance, diplomacy, and social reform.

Why in news?

- The award was presented on 3 November 2025 by Nguyen Anh Tuan, Co- founder and CEO of BGF.
- He praised Gurudev for bridging Eastern wisdom with Western innovation, describing him as a spiritual luminary embodying moral courage and humanity in the AI era.
- The recognition places him alongside leaders such as French President Emmanuel Macron, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and former UN Secretary- General Ban Ki- moon.

Background

- The Art of Living Foundation was established in 1981.
- It has become a leading global NGO focused on stress relief, mental health, and humanitarian work.

Significance

- Direct conflict mediation in regions like Colombia, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Venezuela, and Kashmir.
- Promotion of peace education, dialogue, and inner transformation.
- Sustainable peace- building across 180 countries based on real- world action rather than rhetoric.
- Peace efforts transcending geographical and political boundaries, influencing both grassroots and global platforms.

Facts/General knowledge

- The Art of Living has rehabilitated over 800,000 prisoners worldwide.
- It has revived more than 70 rivers across India through volunteer- driven eco- restoration.
- It provides free education to over 100,000 underprivileged children.
- It promotes Sudarshan Kriya (SKY Breath Meditation), a science- backed breathing technique proven to reduce stress, anxiety, and trauma.
- Through these initiatives, the foundation has made peace a lived experience, not merely a theoretical ideal.

India's Rank in the Global Climate Risk Index 2025

Introduction

- The Climate Risk Index 2025 highlights India's climate vulnerability.
- It underscores the country's long-term exposure to extreme weather events and their impacts.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- India has improved its position, ranking sixth in the Climate Risk Index 2025 by Germanwatch.

Background

- India was among the 10 most affected countries by extreme weather events from 1993 to 2022.
- The country faced major floods in 1993, 1998, and 2013.
- Severe heatwaves occurred in 2002, 2003, and 2015.
- Cyclones also impacted various regions during this period.

Significance

- India accounted for 10% of global fatalities due to extreme weather events.
- It bore 4.3% of global economic losses linked to such events.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- More than 400 extreme events caused $180 billion in losses in India.
- At least 80,000 deaths were attributed to these events.

Mumbai: Asia's Happiest City 2025

Introduction

- Mumbai has been ranked the happiest city in Asia for 2025 by the Time Out City Life Index.

Why in news?

- The 2025 edition of the Time Out City Life Index places Mumbai at the top among Asian cities.
- Subtopic: Background
- The Time Out City Life Index is an annual global survey conducted by Time Out, a UK-based media and lifestyle organisation.
- It evaluates cities on happiness, culture, food, affordability, nightlife, sustainability, and community connection.
- For the 2025 ranking, over 18,000 residents across major Asian cities were surveyed.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Mumbai scored highest on joy, community bonding, lifestyle, street-food culture, and nightlife.
- The survey credited Mumbai's happiness to its Bollywood culture, diverse communities, vibrant social life, and iconic street foods such as vada pav.

Facts/General knowledge

- Ranking among Asian cities: 1) Mumbai, 2) Beijing, 3) Shanghai, 4) Chiang Mai.

International Relation

ACITI Partnership: India, Australia, and Canada

Introduction

- On 22 November 2025, India, Australia, and Canada launched the Australia-Canada-India Technology and Innovation (ACITI) Partnership.
- A landmark trilateral initiative to foster cooperation in critical and emerging technologies.
- Aimed at propelling the three countries towards a secure, sustainable, and net-zero future.

Why in news?

- The announcement marks a new era of strategic collaboration in technology and innovation among the three nations.
- It is not merely a diplomatic step; it is a technology-driven alliance.

Background

- ACITI combines the natural strengths, strategic priorities, and innovation ecosystems of India, Australia, and Canada.
- The trilateral effort complements existing bilateral initiatives among the three nations.
- Reflects a broader alignment of geopolitical and economic interests.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Enhances collaboration on critical and emerging technologies.
- Supports the development and deployment of green energy innovation.
- Diversifies and secures critical mineral supply chains.
- Advances the mass adoption of AI for improving public welfare.

- Builds joint capacity towards achieving net-zero emissions.

Facts/General knowledge

- Full name: Australia-Canada-India Technology and Innovation (ACITI) Partnership.
- Participating countries: India, Australia, and Canada.
- Launch date: 22 November 2025.
- Key areas of focus:
- Green energy innovation:
- Joint development of renewable energy technologies, including solar, wind, and hydrogen.
- Investment in decarbonisation innovations.
- Sharing best practices and R&D to meet net-zero targets.
- Critical minerals and supply chain resilience: Cooperation in identifying, processing, and ensuring access to critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements.
- Diversifying sources of supply and building resilient, transparent supply chains.
- Reducing dependence on geopolitically sensitive regions.
- Artificial intelligence and emerging tech: Exploring frameworks to responsibly scale AI solutions for citizen services, governance, and economic development.

G20 Johannesburg Summit 2025

Introduction

- The 20th G20 Summit 2025 was held in Johannesburg, South Africa—the first-ever G20 summit hosted on the African continent.
- Guided by the theme "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability," it centred Global South priorities.
- The summit secured consensus on the G20 Johannesburg Leaders' Declaration.

Why in news?

- G20 Johannesburg Leaders' Declaration: A 122-paragraph consensus document referencing climate action, multilateral reform, and equitable global governance.
- Spirit of Ubuntu and Multilateralism: Emphasised the African philosophy of Ubuntu (shared global responsibility and interconnectedness), with calls for stronger multilateral cooperation to address conflicts, inequality, and humanitarian suffering.
- UN Security Council Reform: Supported transforming the UNSC to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, with expanded representation for underrepresented regions including Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America.
- Condemnation of Terrorism: Unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all forms and manifestations, reflecting India's longstanding position.
- Expanded Climate Action Commitments: Agreement to scale global climate finance from "billions-to-trillions" and operationalise a more equitable transition under the Paris Agreement.
- Empowerment of Women: Focus on removing barriers, ensuring equal participation in decision-making, and recognising women as agents of peace.
- Debt Crisis and Global Financial Reform: Launch of a Cost of Capital Commission to reform global credit rating practices and reduce the unfair "African risk premium"; highlighted Africa's growing debt burden (USD 1.8 trillion) with over half its population in countries spending more on debt interest than on public services.
- Mission 300: Highlighted an initiative by the World Bank and African Development Bank to provide electricity to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030.
- Critical Minerals Framework: Welcomed a framework to secure sustainable value chains, with investment in mineral exploration and local beneficiation in developing countries.
- Youth & Gender Targets: Adoption of the Nelson Mandela Bay Target to reduce the youth NEET rate by 5% by 2030; commitment to 25% gender parity in labour force participation by 2030.

Background

- Origin and Evolution: Created after the Asian Financial Crisis (1997–98) as a forum for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to strengthen global financial stability; later expanded beyond macroeconomics to trade, climate change, health, food security, energy transitions, and digital governance.
- Leaders' Level: Upgraded during the Global Financial Crisis (2007–08), with annual Leaders' Summits since 2009.
- Composition: Informal grouping of 19 major economies plus the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU); India is a founding member; other countries may be invited as special guests.
- Scale: Members account for 85% of global GDP, over 75% of world trade, and nearly two-thirds of the global population.
- Mandate: Premier forum for international economic cooperation, shaping global governance on growth, trade, financial stability, sustainable development, climate action, health, energy, agriculture, and anti-corruption.
- Structure and Presidency: No headquarters or permanent staff; presidency rotates annually; the Troika (previous, current, and incoming presidencies) ensures continuity. For South Africa's 2025 presidency, the Troika includes Brazil, South Africa, and the United States.

Significance

- Shapes Global Economic Governance: Sets norms on financial regulations, debt sustainability, global tax reforms, digital public infrastructure, and climate finance through initiatives like the G20 Common Framework, and the Declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure, AI and Data for Governance (a joint communiqué by the G20 Troika—India, Brazil and South Africa).
- Drives Sustainable Development Agendas: Advances the 2030 Agenda by coordinating climate action, energy transitions, food security commitments, and progress on the Pact for the Future.
- Enhances Voice of the Global South: Strengthens influence

of emerging economies (including India, Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia) on supply chain resilience, critical minerals, development finance, and technology access.
- Catalyst for Development Financing: Promotes reform of multilateral financial institutions (IMF–World Bank), expansion of lending, and improved representation, including creating a 25th IMF Executive Board seat for Africa.

Facts/General knowledge

- Spirit of Ubuntu—About: An African philosophy of shared humanity—"I am because you are"—stressing collective responsibility, compassion, and mutual support; embodied by Nelson Mandela's leadership during South Africa's peaceful transition.
- Ubuntu and Global Goals:
  Sustainability: Supports development that protects the environment and preserves natural resources.
- Equitable Growth: Advocates fair access to technology, skills, and opportunities, particularly for Global South nations.
- Global Security: Encourages collective action against transnational threats such as the drug-terror nexus.
- Knowledge Preservation: Promotes safeguarding traditional knowledge and cultural heritage for future generations.

G20 Summit Session III – PM Modi on a Fair and Just Future for All

Introduction

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed G20 Summit Session III, titled "A Fair and Just Future for All," in Johannesburg on 23 November 2025.
- The address focused on technology and artificial intelligence within a global context.

Why in news?

- He called for a global compact to prevent the misuse of artificial intelligence.
- He urged that technologies be human-centric rather than finance-centric.

Background

- He advocated for technology applications that are global and based on open-source models, rather than exclusive models.
- He highlighted India's integration of this vision into its technology ecosystem, noting progress in space applications, AI, and digital payments.
- He cited progress at the Delhi G20 on talent mobility and anticipated a global framework in the coming years.

Significance

- He proposed a global agreement on AI anchored in effective human oversight, safety-by-design, and transparency.
- He sought restrictions on AI use in deepfakes, crime, and terror activities.
- He affirmed that AI should enhance human capabilities while ultimate decision-making remains human-centric.
- He emphasised a shift from "jobs of today" to "capabilities of tomorrow," underscoring the future of work and talent mobility.
- He outlined India's approach of equitable access, population-level skilling, and responsible AI deployment to ensure benefits reach all citizens.
- He reaffirmed India's commitment to sustainable development, trusted trade, fair finance, and inclusive progress for shared prosperity.

Facts/General knowledge

- The India-AI Mission aims to provide accessible high-performance computing so AI benefits reach all citizens.
- He announced the AI Impact Summit in February 2026 with the theme "Sarvajanam Hitaya, Sarvajanam Sukhaya" (welfare for all, happiness for all) and invited G20 countries to participate.

President of India's Two-Nation State Visit to Angola and Botswana (9–13 November 2025)

Introduction

- President Droupadi Murmu undertook a State Visit to Angola and Botswana from 9–13 November 2025.
- She participated in Angola's 50th Independence Day celebrations and then visited Botswana, marking the first-ever Presidential visit from India to Angola and the first-ever State Visit by an Indian President to Botswana.

Why in news?

- Attended Angola's Golden Jubilee Parade at Praça da República, Luanda.
- Signed five MoUs/Agreements with Angola: Fisheries & Marine Resources; Biofuels; Wildlife Conservation; Consular Matters; Civil Aviation.
- Held bilateral talks in Angola on energy, defence, agriculture, digital technologies, and economic cooperation.
- Addressed the Angolan National Assembly, underscoring democratic solidarity, South–South partnership, and multipolarity.
- Conducted bilateral discussions in Botswana with President Duma Gideon Boko on trade, renewable energy, education, skills, health, defence, digital innovation, and governance partnership.
- Concluded a Pharmacopoeia Cooperation Agreement with Botswana to enhance regulatory alignment and access to Indian generic medicines.
- India to supply ARV drugs to Botswana; Botswana to send additional cheetahs to India under Project Cheetah.
- Addressed the Botswana National Assembly, calling for deeper youth, business, and democratic cooperation.
- Visited the Diamond Trading Company Botswana (DTCB) and the Three Dikgosi Monument.

Background

- India–Angola:
  Visit undertaken at the invitation of Angolan President João Lourenço.
- Coincided with 50 years of Angola's Independence and 40 years of India–Angola diplomatic relations (1985–2025).
- India–Botswana:
  Final leg of the tour, with arrival in Gaborone on 11 November

2025.
- Visit ahead of 60 years of diplomatic ties (1966–2026).

Significance

- India–Angola:
  Energy Security: Angola is Africa's second-largest oil producer, supporting India's energy diversification.
- Economic Diplomacy: Enhances India's engagement on the Atlantic coast.
- Development Cooperation: Collaboration on biofuels, the blue economy, and wildlife conservation.
- Strategic Outreach: Strengthens India's Global South leadership.
- India–Botswana:
  Wildlife & Environment: Botswana's cheetahs support India's Project Cheetah and ecological restoration.
- Health Diplomacy: Supply of Indian medicines and pharmacopoeia cooperation.
- Democratic Values: Alignment with India's democratic partnership.
- Economic Diversification: Expands India's role in minerals, diamonds, and renewable sectors.
- India–Africa Engagement:
  Political: Deepens ties with democratic, resource-rich African partners.
- Economic: Boosts trade, energy, digital, pharma, and agriculture cooperation.
- Environmental: Focus on wildlife, bio-resources, and sustainable development.
- Global South Solidarity: Advances the India–Africa Forum Summit vision and AU Agenda 2063.

Facts/General knowledge

- Angola:
  Location: West coast of Southern Africa; borders the D.R. Congo (NE), Republic of Congo (N), Zambia (E), Namibia (S), and the Atlantic Ocean (W).
- Capital: Luanda.
  Historical ties with India: Support for the anti-colonial liberation movement; major supplier of crude oil; bilateral trade around USD 4 billion; engagement under the India–Africa Forum Summit framework.
- Botswana:
  Location: Landlocked in Southern Africa; borders South Africa (S), Namibia (W & N), Zambia (N), and Zimbabwe (NE).
- Capital: Gaborone.
  Historical ties with India: Diplomatic relations since 1966; High Commission of India in Gaborone since 1987; Botswana's mission in New Delhi since 2006; cooperation in diamonds, education, and IT training under the ITEC Programme; over 1,000 students from Botswana trained in India in the past decade.

G20 Summit 2025 – Johannesburg Declaration and Global South Priorities

Introduction

- The 20th G20 Summit 2025 was held under the theme "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability".
- The summit centred Global South priorities, with Africa's perspectives shaping deliberations.

Why in news?

- It was the first-ever G20 summit hosted on the African continent, in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Member nations reached consensus on the G20 Johannesburg Leaders' Declaration comprising 122 paragraphs on climate action, multilateral reform, and equitable global governance.

Background

The G20 was created after the Asian Financial Crisis (1997–98) as a forum for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to strengthen global financial stability.
- Its agenda has expanded beyond macroeconomics to include trade, climate change, health, food security, energy transitions, and digital governance.
- It was upgraded to Leaders' level during the Global Financial Crisis of 2007–08, with annual Leaders' Summits taking place since 2009.
- Composition: an informal grouping of 19 major economies, the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU); India is a founding member; other countries can be invited as special guests on an ad hoc basis.
- Mandate: serves as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, shaping global governance on growth, trade, financial stability, sustainable development, climate action, health, energy, agriculture, and anti-corruption.
- Structure and presidency: no headquarters or permanent staff; the presidency rotates annually; the Troika system ensures continuity through previous–current–incoming presidents.

Significance

Multilateralism anchored in Ubuntu:
- The declaration emphasises Ubuntu, the African philosophy of shared humanity and interconnectedness, with calls for stronger multilateral cooperation to address conflicts, inequality, and humanitarian suffering.
- About Ubuntu: "I am because you are"; it stresses collective responsibility, compassion, and mutual support; Nelson Mandela embodied Ubuntu through reconciliation and unity after apartheid.
- Relevance to global goals: supports sustainability; calls for equitable growth and fair access to technology, skills, and opportunities; encourages collective action against transnational threats such as the drug–terror nexus; promotes safeguarding traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.
- UN Security Council reform:
  Supports transforming the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, with expanded representation for Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America.
- Condemnation of terrorism:

Unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all forms and manifestations, reflecting India's longstanding position.

- Expanded climate action commitments:
  Agreement to scale global climate finance toward a "billions-to-trillions" shift and to operationalise a more equitable transition under the Paris Agreement.
- Empowerment of women:
  Calls to remove barriers, ensure equal participation in decision-making, and recognise women as agents of peace.
- Debt crisis and global financial reform:
  Launch of a Cost of Capital Commission to reform global credit rating practices and reduce the unfair "African risk premium".
- Highlighted Africa's growing debt burden at USD 1.8 trillion, with over half its population living in countries spending more on debt interest than on public services.
- Energy access and development:
  Mission 300, led by the World Bank and African Development Bank, to provide electricity to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030.
- Critical minerals and value chains:
  Welcomed the G20 Critical Minerals Framework to secure sustainable value chains, focusing on investment in mineral exploration and local beneficiation in developing countries.
- Youth and labour targets:
  Adoption of the Nelson Mandela Bay Target to reduce the youth Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) rate by 5% by 2030.
- Commitment to 25% gender parity in labour force participation by 2030.
- India's role in shaping the agenda:
  Countering the drug–terror nexus: highlighted drug trafficking, especially fentanyl, as a global security threat and source of terrorism financing; proposed a G20 Initiative on Countering the Drug–Terror Nexus focusing on financial tracking, border coordination, and global enforcement.
- Africa-centric development vision: proposed the G20–Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative to train 1 million certified trainers across Africa in 10 years.
- Health, knowledge, and space cooperation: proposed a G20 Global Healthcare Response Team; a Global Traditional Knowledge Repository; and an Open Satellite Data Partnership for agriculture, fisheries, and disaster management.
- Critical minerals and sustainable transitions: proposed a Critical Minerals Circularity Initiative for recycling, urban mining, and innovation; called for democratic, transparent, and diversified minerals supply chains to reduce dependency on a few countries.
- Responsible, inclusive, and secure AI governance: advocated a Global Compact on AI centred on human oversight, safety-by-design, and transparency, with prohibition of AI misuse in deepfakes, cybercrime, and terrorism; invited all countries to the AI Impact Summit 2026 in India.
- Support for a just, equitable global order: strongly backed UNSC reform to ensure representation for Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific; reaffirmed commitment to multilateralism and a global rules-based order.
- Broader role of the G20 in development:
  Shapes global economic governance on financial regulations, debt sustainability, global tax reforms, digital public infrastructure, and climate finance through initiatives like the G20 Common Framework and the Declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure, AI and Data for Governance (a joint communiqué by the G20 Troika: India, Brazil, and South Africa).
- Drives the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by coordinating climate action, energy transitions, food security commitments, and progress on the Pact for the Future.
- Enhances the voice of the Global South on supply chain resilience, critical minerals, development finance, and technology access; catalyses reform of multilateral financial institutions (IMF–World Bank), expanded lending, and better representation such as creating a 25th IMF Executive Board seat for Africa.
- Pivotal moment:
  The summit placed Africa and the wider Global South at the heart of multilateral priorities, setting the tone for a more equitable, secure, and sustainable world order.

Facts/General knowledge

Together, G20 members account for 85% of global GDP, over 75% of world trade, and nearly two-thirds of the global population.

- The current G20 Troika is Brazil (previous presidency), South Africa (current presidency), and the United States (next presidency).

Schemes and initiative

Yuva AI for All

Introduction

- Yuva AI for All is a national AI literacy programme led by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to expand AI awareness and foundational skills across India.
- Focused especially on youth, it aims to equip citizens with foundational AI capabilities for an emerging AI-driven economy.

Why in news?

- MeitY has launched Kaushal Rath under the National AI Literacy programme titled "Yuva AI for All".
- The initiative is part of the broader IndiaAI Mission to build a digitally empowered, AI-ready workforce.

Background

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming governance, healthcare, education, agriculture, and industry.

- As India positions itself as a global digital power, ensuring AI literacy among citizens is a strategic priority.
- India's digital transformation from Aadhaar to UPI demonstrates inclusive technology at scale.

- Widespread AI adoption requires foundational awareness, basic technical understanding, and responsible and ethical AI usage.
- Recognising these needs, MeitY launched Yuva AI for All as a national AI literacy programme focused on youth.

Significance

Supports the creation of a digitally empowered, AI-ready workforce in India.

- Builds foundational literacy to enable responsible and ethical AI adoption.

Facts/General knowledge

- A first-of-its-kind free AI course introducing AI in simple terms.
- Fully online and self-paced; open to students, professionals, and curious learners.
- Simple and practical curriculum: uses real-life examples, focuses on everyday AI applications, avoids heavy technical jargon, and is designed to be engaging and accessible.
- Available free of cost on major learning platforms, including FutureSkills Prime and iGOT Karmayogi, as well as other leading ed-tech portals, ensuring accessibility across diverse learner groups.
- Completion provides an official Government of India certificate, enhancing employability and skill credentials.

Project Gaja-Lok

Introduction

- Project Gaja-Lok seeks to understand and preserve the cultural, historical, ecological, and environmental significance of the Asian elephant.
- It presents the elephant as a cultural icon and a symbol of ecological resilience.

Why in news?

- Recently, the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) launched Project Gaja-Lok.

Background

- The project began with an exhibition and roundtable discussions in New Delhi, with participation from experts, researchers, and conservationists.
- It promotes cooperation among Asian countries where elephants have cultural and religious significance.
- Figure 1: Elephant murals in the caves of Ajanta and Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- Key features:
  Multi-country initiative enabling a comparative study of the role of elephants across Asian civilisations.
- Documentation of cultural heritage through an exhibition of elephants in temples, sculptures, texts, court art, and folk traditions.
- Integration of history and spirituality by analysing the spiritual role of elephants in Buddhist, Jain, Hindu, and Southeast Asian traditions.
- Research on human–elephant relationships addressing conflict, coexistence, ethics, and modern ecological challenges.
- Climate and environmental focus highlighting elephants' vital role in forests, ecology, and biodiversity.
- Artefacts display including Indus Valley seals, Bharhut railings, and sculptures from Konark, Gwalior Fort, Thailand, and Cambodia.

Significance

- Preserves the role of elephants within various Asian traditions.
- Assists in formulating better policies and conservation strategies.
- Strengthens environmental conservation by highlighting the ecological importance of elephants.
- Uses exhibitions, books, and discussions to strengthen the spirit of conservation in society.
- Improves policymaking on conservation, cultural documentation, and the "nature-culture link."

Facts/General knowledge

- Full name: Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH).
- Established: 1984.
- Form: Non-profit organisation.
- Main objectives:
  Conservation of India's natural, cultural, tangible, intangible, and living heritage.
- Conservation of historical buildings, arts, crafts, archaeological sites, folk traditions, and cultural documentation.
- Running heritage clubs to engage the younger generation in heritage conservation.
- International recognition: Expanding conservation work through collaborations with several global organisations, including UNESCO.

PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Kurukshetra, Haryana (25 November 2025)

Introduction

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Kurukshetra, Haryana on 25 November 2025.
- He participated in the International Gita Mahotsav 2025 and the state-level commemoration of the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- He inaugurated the 'Panchjanya' exhibit at the Mahabharata Experience Centre and visited the Mahabharata Anubhav Kendra.
- He performed Darshan and Pooja at Brahma Sarovar.

Why in news?

- The visit coincided with the International Gita Mahotsav being held in Kurukshetra from 15 November to 5 December.
- A special programme commemorating the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur was addressed by the Prime Minister.
- A Rs 350 commemorative coin and a Rs 5 stamp were released to mark the 350th Shaheedi Diwas.
- The 'Panchjanya' exhibit, honouring the sacred conch of Lord Krishna, was inaugurated.

Background

- Since 1 November 2025, multiple programmes honouring Guru Tegh Bahadur have been held across Haryana, including four religious yatras from the state's four corners to disseminate his teachings.
- The Government of India is observing a year-long commemoration of the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- The Mahabharata Anubhav Kendra is an immersive experiential centre developed under the Ministry of Tourism's 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme, constructed at a cost of Rs 200 crore.

Significance

- The 'Panchjanya' exhibit honours the sacred conch of Lord Krishna; it weighs around 5.5 tonnes and stands nearly 5 metres tall.
- The Mahabharata Experience Centre showcases the Mahabharata's cultural, spiritual, and historical aspects through immersive exhibits, audiovisuals, and interactive installations.
- Brahma Sarovar is one of India's most sacred pilgrimage sites.
- A coffee-table book published by the Haryana government was released during the commemorative programme.

Facts/General knowledge

- Coin (Rs 350): 99.9% pure silver; weight 40 grams; diameter 44 millimetres; edge with 200 serrations.
- Coin obverse: Lion Capital of Ashoka with inscriptions "भारत / INDIA," rupee symbol "₹," and denomination "350."
- Coin reverse: Image of Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib with inscriptions "1675–2025" and commemorative legends in Hindi and English honouring Guru Tegh Bahadur's 350th Shaheedi Diwas.
- Stamp (Rs 5): Features inscriptions in Hindi and English highlighting the martyrdom of the ninth Sikh Guru and celebrating his teachings and legacy.
- Guru Tegh Bahadur: Born on 1 April 1621 in Amritsar, Punjab; ninth Sikh Guru (1664–75); considered the second Sikh martyr executed by the Mughal rulers; remembered for his fight for religious freedom.

National Offshore Wind Energy Policy, 2015

Introduction

- Introduced to promote and regulate exploration and development of offshore wind energy within India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- Establishes a comprehensive framework to utilise maritime wind resources, encourage investment, ensure sustainable development, and integrate offshore wind into the national renewable energy mix.

Why in news?

- Offshore Wind Energy Lease Rules, 2023 introduced to streamline leasing procedures and define agency responsibilities.
- Viability Gap Funding scheme approved to support the first 1 GW of offshore wind capacity by subsidising part of project costs and reducing financial risk.
- Initiatives undertaken to improve data quality, promote international collaborations, and explore floating offshore wind technologies for deeper waters.

Background

- Prior wind energy achievements were largely onshore, concentrated in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Karnataka.
- India's coastline of over 7,500 kilometres offers substantial offshore wind potential.
- Global maturity demonstrated in the North Sea by the United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands informed India's approach, adapted to local environmental, technical, and regulatory contexts.

Significance

- Energy diversification by complementing solar and onshore wind for a balanced renewable mix.
- Industrial growth through new manufacturing hubs for turbines, foundations, and subsea cables.
- Employment generation in design, fabrication, installation, and maintenance, aiding coastal economies.
- Climate change mitigation by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, supporting commitments under the Paris Agreement.
- Regional development via upgrades to ports, roads, and industrial facilities in coastal states.

Facts/General knowledge

- Scope and coverage:
  Applies up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline along India's coast, covering territorial waters and the EEZ.
- Encompasses resource assessment, site surveys, project installation, grid connectivity, and research.
- Institutional framework:
  Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is the nodal ministry, coordinating with defence, environment, shipping, and fisheries.
- National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE), Chennai, is the nodal agency for resource assessments, block identification, developer facilitation, and maintaining national offshore wind databases.
- Objectives:
  Explore and promote deployment of offshore wind farms in the EEZ via public and private participation.
- Enhance energy security by diversifying renewables and reducing fossil fuel dependence.
- Encourage indigenisation, R&D, and skilled manpower development.
- Attract domestic and foreign investment in infrastructure and manufacturing.
- Support coastal development and employment in the renewable sector.

- Key provisions:
  Resource assessment and surveys through mapping, oceanographic studies, and feasibility analysis.
- Block allocation and leasing via transparent competitive bidding.
- Regulatory clearances for environment, maritime safety, defence, and navigation.
- Grid connectivity with emphasis on efficient onshore integration and evacuation systems.
- Indigenisation and R&D to lower costs and reduce import dependence.
- Investment facilitation including up to 100% FDI under the automatic route and PPP promotion.
- Potential and targets:
  Initial potential estimated at around 70 GW, notably off Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
- Targets: 5 GW by 2022 and 30 GW by 2030, with higher capacity utilisation factors than onshore projects.
- Implementation and challenges:
  Implementation progressed slowly, with no commercial projects operational in the early years.
- Progress achieved in resource mapping and preparation of initial blocks off Gujarat and Tamil Nadu; port modernisation and logistical planning initiated.
- Key challenges include high capital costs; technical and logistical constraints (e.g., heavy-lift vessels, port facilities, maintenance bases); regulatory complexity due to multiple clearances; tariff uncertainty; and an underdeveloped domestic supply chain.
- Additional limitations noted:
  Lack of a dedicated financial support system in the early years discouraged private participation.
- Grid connectivity gaps continue to hinder readiness for large-scale deployment.

Dumpsite Remediation Accelerator Programme (DRAP)

Introduction

- A year-long, targeted initiative under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) 2.0.
- Aims to achieve Lakshya Zero Dumpsites by September 2026.

Why in news?

- Launch of the Dumpsite Remediation Accelerator Programme (DRAP).

Background

- SBM-U 2.0 was launched in 2021 to achieve Garbage Free Status for all cities.
- It also targets remediation of all legacy dumpsites and their conversion into green zones.

Significance

- Prioritises high-impact locations for accelerated remediation.
- Emphasises priority-based project selection to maximise outcomes.
- Tailors eligibility to ensure wider participation, including UTs and North Eastern States.

Facts/General knowledge

- Scope: Approximately 8.8 crore MT of legacy waste is targeted.
- Legacy waste: Aged municipal solid waste in landfills or dumpsites; a mix of partially or completely decomposed biodegradable waste, plastic waste, etc.
- Concentration: About 80% of legacy waste is concentrated in 214 sites across 202 Urban Local Bodies.
- Ministry: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- Eligibility: All States/UTs with ongoing legacy waste projects; priority to sites containing over 45,000 MT of legacy wastes; no minimum threshold for UTs and North Eastern States.
- Remediation status: 1,428 sites are undergoing remediation; 1,048 have been fully remediated.
- Major emissions of primary concern:
- Leachate: Polluted water that emerges at the base of dumpsite waste.
- Landfill gas: Mixture of carbon dioxide and methane formed because of anaerobic conditions created in dumpsites during waste decomposition.

Project Cheetah — Botswana Donates Eight Cheetahs to India

Introduction

- India will receive 8 cheetahs from Botswana under Project Cheetah, advancing the species' reintroduction after its extinction in India in 1952.
- The announcement was made during President Droupadi Murmu's state visit to Botswana, highlighting bilateral cooperation and environmental diplomacy.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- A formal announcement was made in Gaborone following talks between President Murmu and Botswana's President Duma Boko.
- A symbolic handover ceremony is scheduled in Gaborone, Botswana, in the presence of President Murmu, with the date set for November 2025.

Background

- Project Cheetah is India's flagship initiative to reintroduce cheetahs sourced from Africa, where viable populations remain in select ecosystems.
- Key objectives:
  Restoring ecological balance in grasslands
- Promoting eco-tourism and awareness
- Strengthening wildlife conservation frameworks in India
- Creating transcontinental wildlife cooperation
- Earlier, cheetahs were translocated from Namibia in 2022 and released at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh.

Subtopic: Significance

- Botswana, home to one of the largest wild cheetah populations, will bolster genetic diversity in India's cheetah population.

- The animals are adapted to similar savannah-like climates, aiding acclimatisation.
- The move deepens India–Botswana strategic and conservation ties and reflects Africa's support for India's conservation efforts, paving the way for future collaboration.
- President Murmu's visit marks the first-ever State visit by an Indian Head of State to both Angola and Botswana, reflecting India's expanding South–South cooperation in:
- Environment and biodiversity
- Cultural exchange and diplomacy
- Bilateral trade and capacity building
- Her participation in the handover underscores environmental diplomacy and people-centric conservation models.

Facts/General knowledge

- Project Name: Project Cheetah
- Announced by: Government of India
- Extinction Year in India: 1952
- Reintroduction Started: 2022 (from Namibia)
- New Cheetahs Donated by: Botswana
- Number of Cheetahs: 8
- Symbolic Handover Date: November 2025
- Location: Gaborone, Botswana

Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE)

Introduction

- A Union Cabinet–approved scheme designed to boost India's export ecosystem by enhancing liquidity, enabling easier access to credit and de- risking lending to exporters.
- Implemented by the Department of Financial Services (DFS) to encourage market diversification and strengthen global export competitiveness.

Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE), providing fully guaranteed additional export credit through a structured mechanism.

Background

- Exporters commonly face liquidity constraints, especially during shipment cycles and while entering new markets; a structured guarantee mechanism addresses this challenge.
- Exports account for about 21% of GDP in FY 2024- 25, with MSMEs contributing around 45% of total exports—underscoring the need to strengthen export credit access for a key growth segment.

Significance

- Strengthening export liquidity by enabling easier access to working capital and term credit through a full guarantee framework.
- Boosting market diversification and competitiveness by reducing financial risk, encouraging entry into new and emerging markets, adoption of new technologies and adherence to global standards.
- Supporting India's export ambition by advancing the US$ 1 trillion export target and contributing to the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" vision.
- Enabling employment generation and value- chain augmentation through stronger export- oriented manufacturing and services linkages.

Facts/General knowledge

- Credit guarantee coverage: Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) receive 100% guarantee from the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) for additional credit extended under CGSE.
- Loan quantum: Up to ₹20,000 crore of additional credit facilities will be made available to eligible exporters.
- Collateral- free access: Exporters can obtain credit without traditional collateral security.
- Coverage: Applicable to eligible exporters across both MSME and non- MSME categories.
- Implementing agency: NCGTC will operationalise the scheme through MLIs under DFS.
- Oversight: A Management Committee chaired by the Secretary (DFS) will monitor and review implementation.
- Eligible beneficiaries and flow: MLIs extend additional credit to eligible exporters; NCGTC provides full guarantee cover, reducing lender risk and unlocking easier credit flow.

Export Promotion Mission (EPM) and Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE)

Introduction

- The Export Promotion Mission (EPM) is a comprehensive, flexible, digitally driven framework to promote exports over a six-year period.
- It is complemented by the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE) to enhance liquidity and competitiveness across exporter segments.

Why in news?

- Announced in the Union Budget 2025–26.
- The Cabinet approved the introduction of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE).

Background

- Consolidation and modernisation of existing schemes, such as the Interest Equalisation Scheme and the Market Access Initiative.
- Logistics constraints: inadequate infrastructure, transit delays, sharp rise in freight costs, and shipping disruptions (e.g., disturbances in the Red Sea route).
- Market access challenges: limited visibility, weak buyer connections, and difficulty in identifying new markets.
- Regulatory hurdles: recurring documentation requirements including certificate of origin, quality inspection certificate, and packing list.
- International constraints: stronger competition (e.g., Chinese products due to lower costs and higher innovation), rising trade barriers and tariffs (e.g., recent 50% U.S. tariff on Indian

goods), quality standards issues, and supply chain disruptions.

Significance

- Offers a unified, digitally enabled approach to export promotion, with priority support to sectors impacted by global tariff escalations (textiles, leather, gems & jewellery, engineering goods, and marine products).
- Expands access to affordable trade finance to facilitate diversification into new markets.
- Enhances market readiness and competitiveness through support on export quality and compliance, international branding, warehousing, and logistics.
- Strengthens liquidity, market diversification, employment, and global competitiveness through credit guarantees applicable to both MSME and non-MSME exporters.
- Proposed complementary steps to further promote exports:
- Finalising Free Trade Agreements to improve market access and secure favourable trading terms (e.g., Europe, Central Asia).
- Harnessing demand for high-value technical services in R&D, manufacturing services, supply chain management, and maintenance and repair.
- Bolstering MSME exports via greater participation in trade shows and targeted training on procedures, documentation, and standards.
- Advancing innovation and value addition (e.g., APEDA's BHARATI initiative).
- Unlocking e-commerce exports by creating separate customs supervision codes.
- Creating a National Trade Network (NTN) to unify export–import processes across customs, DGFT, banks, and ports, thereby reducing transaction costs and addressing informational asymmetry.

Facts/General knowledge

- EPM financial outlay: Rs. 25,060 crores.
- EPM timeline: Six years (FY 2025–26 to FY 2030–31).
- Mission architecture: two integrated sub-schemes—Niryat Protsahan (financial support) and Niryat Disha (non-financial support).
- Implementing agency for EPM: Directorate General of Foreign Trade.
- CGSE credit support: up to additional ₹20,000 crore, collateral-free, with 100% guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC).
- CGSE beneficiaries: MSME and non-MSME exporters.
- CGSE implementing agency: Department of Financial Services through NCGTC.
- CGSE oversight: Management Committee chaired by Secretary, Department of Financial Services.

State current

Andhra Pradesh: Formation of Three New Districts

Introduction

- The Government of Andhra Pradesh has approved the creation of three additional districts to enhance governance and local access to civic services.
- The reorganisation reshapes the administrative map to align service delivery with local needs.

Why in news?

- The decision was cleared by N. Chandrababu Naidu on behalf of the state government.
- It marks a significant administrative restructuring aimed at improving accessibility and efficiency.

Background

- The restructuring plan introduces new districts, revenue divisions, and a mandal as part of broader administrative reforms.
- Polavaram district will have two revenue divisions—Rampachodavaram and Chinturu—with Rampachodavaram as the district headquarters and a population of 3.49 lakh.
- Specific mandals have been allocated under each division to streamline administration and ensure better delivery of public services.

Significance

- Better administrative accessibility for remote and tribal areas.
- Efficient delivery of public welfare schemes.
- Balanced regional development.
- Streamlined governance tailored to local needs.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- New districts: Polavaram, Markapuram, Madanapalle.
- Total districts after implementation: 29.
- New revenue divisions (5): Nakkapalli (Anakapalli district), Addanki (Prakasam), Pileru (Madanapalle), Banaganapalle (Nandyal), Madakasira (Sri Sathya Sai district).
- New mandal: Pedda Harivanam, to be formed by bifurcating Adoni mandal in Kurnool district.
- Next step: The Group of Ministers' recommendations will be presented to the State Cabinet for final approval, followed by an official notification formally establishing the new districts and revenue divisions.
- Administrative goal: Enhanced governance, accessibility, and regional equity.

Lachit Borphukan

Introduction

- An Assamese military leader who rose to become one of Assam's greatest.
- Best known for leading the Ahom forces to victory in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat.

Why in news?

- On Lachit Diwas, the Prime Minister paid tribute to him, honouring him as a symbol of courage, patriotism, and inspiring leadership.

Background

- Born on 24th November 1622 at Charaideo, Assam; youngest

son of Momai Tamuli Borbarua, a key military administrator under Ahom ruler Pratap Singha.
- Trained in administration, military strategy, and scriptures; grew up amid the Mughal–Ahom wars.
- Recognised for leadership and appointed as Borphukan (Commander-in-Chief) to reclaim Assam from Mughal occupation after the Mir Jumla invasion.

Significance

- Defeated the Mughal army led by Raja Ram Singh I at the Battle of Saraighat (1671) using guerrilla warfare, river-based naval tactics, and strategic fortifications.
- The victory halted Mughal expansion into the Northeast and preserved Assam's sovereignty.
- His life and campaigns exemplify leadership and military strategy.

Facts/General knowledge

- Died in 1672 from illness; his memorial, Lachit Maidan, stands near Jorhat.
- 24th November is celebrated as Lachit Divas.
- The Lachit Borphukan Gold Medal at the National Defence Academy (NDA) honours excellence in military leadership.

Nitish Kumar's Historic 10th Term as Bihar Chief Minister

Introduction

- Nitish Kumar of the Janata Dal (United) was sworn in as Chief Minister of Bihar for an unprecedented 10th term.
- The oath-taking took place at Patna's Gandhi Maidan on 20 November 2025.
- The new term follows the BJP-led NDA's emphatic victory, with promises of development, governance continuity, and renewed alliances.

Why in news?

- Bihar witnessed a historic political milestone with Nitish Kumar beginning his 10th term as Chief Minister.
- The swearing-in ceremony drew some of the country's most influential political leaders and a large public gathering.

Background

- The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance secured a dominant mandate in the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections.
- NDA total seats: 202; Mahagathbandhan: 35.
- BJP seats: 89; JD(U) seats: 85.
- Both BJP and JD(U) contested 101 constituencies each.
- This clear mandate paved the way for Nitish Kumar's return as Chief Minister, further solidifying his longstanding influence in Bihar politics.

Significance

- The robust mandate ushers in a new era in Bihar's political landscape.
- Emphasis areas include development, governance continuity, and renewed alliances.
- The BJP strengthened its role in the government with the appointment of two Deputy Chief Ministers.

Facts/General knowledge

- The ceremony began around 11:30 AM at Gandhi Maidan, Patna.
- High-profile attendees included Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP President JP Nadda, and Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis, N Chandrababu Naidu, and Bhupendra Patel.
- Heavy security arrangements were implemented due to the high-profile attendees and large public gathering.
- Deputy Chief Ministers: Vinay Kumar Sinha (second term) and Samrat Choudhary.
- JD(U) ministers sworn in: Leshi Singh, Madan Sahni, Nitin Nabin, Ram Kripal Yadav, Santosh Kumar Suman, and Sunil Kumar.
- Nitish Kumar greeted the crowd as he prepared for another term as Chief Minister.

Saranda Forest, Jharkhand — Supreme Court Directive

Introduction

- Saranda is Asia's largest Sal forest, located near Jamshedpur in Jharkhand.
- The name "Saranda" means "land of seven hundred hills".
- The forest spans around 900 sq. km.

Why in news?

- The Supreme Court of India directed the Jharkhand government to declare 31,468.25 hectares of the Saranda forest area as a wildlife sanctuary.
- The Court reaffirmed that mining is prohibited inside national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, as well as within a one-kilometre buffer from their boundaries.
- It upheld the erstwhile unified State of Bihar's 1968 notification declaring the area the "Saranda Game Sanctuary".

Background

- Declared as the "Saranda Game Sanctuary" by the erstwhile unified State of Bihar; the area came under Jharkhand's jurisdiction after the State's bifurcation in 2000.
- Historically served as the private hunting ground of the royal family of Seraikela.

Significance

- Ecological: A pristine deciduous forest ecosystem that sustains water cycles and contributes to carbon sequestration, providing habitat for critically endangered and endemic wildlife, including large elephant populations.
- Economic: The Saranda forest division accounts for 26% of India's iron ore reserves.
- Socio-cultural: Inhabited by Ho, Munda, Uraon, and allied Adivasi communities whose livelihoods, culture, and subsistence practices are closely tied to forest resources.

Facts/General knowledge

- Dominant flora: Sal (Shorea robusta), with other major species including Mahua and Kusum.

- Fauna: Habitat for the sal forest tortoise, four-horned antelope, Asian palm civet, endangered species of flying lizards, and hundreds of elephants.

Maharashtra Agriculture: New Logo and Slogan

Introduction

- The Maharashtra Agriculture Department unveiled a new logo and slogan in Mumbai, signalling a refreshed identity and commitment to modern, sustainable agriculture.
- The move is both symbolic and strategic, aiming to redefine the department's role in a changing agricultural landscape.

Why in news?

- The department has officially introduced a new visual identity and motto, marking a notable update in its public branding and policy direction.
- The unveiling reflects a push towards technology-driven, sustainable farming approaches that are farmer-centric.

Background

- The department had operated with the same emblem for 38 years before this change.
- The new slogan was selected through a state-wide public competition that received over 1,700 entries.
- While design specifics were not detailed, the new logo is said to represent innovation in agriculture, farmer empowerment, sustainability, and prosperity.

Significance

- The rebranding signifies a policy and mindset shift in a state with a large agrarian population facing drought, crop failure, and farmer distress.
- It aligns with focus areas including irrigation, market access, organic farming, and technology adoption.
- The initiative aims to rebrand agriculture as tech-savvy and future-ready, inspire confidence among farmers, and connect with young agri-entrepreneurs.
- Leaders underscored the intent:
- CM Devendra Fadnavis emphasised dedication to technology-driven, sustainable farming models.
- Deputy CM Eknath Shinde praised the farmer-centric approach aligned with modern trends.
- Deputy CM Ajit Pawar highlighted blending traditional farming wisdom with modern tools.
- Agriculture Minister Dattatray Bharne called it a "people-powered campaign," acknowledging the public's role in shaping the slogan.

Facts/General knowledge

- Event: Launch of new logo and slogan by the Maharashtra Agriculture Department
- Date: November 2025
- Slogan: "Sashwat Sheti, Samruddha Shetkari" (Meaning: "Sustainable Farming, Prosperous Farmer")
- Selected through: Open state-wide competition (1,700+ entries)
- Launched by: CM Devendra Fadnavis

Khelo India University Games 2025 in Rajasthan

Introduction

- The 5th Khelo India University Games opened with a celebration of India's youth sporting talent alongside Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage.
- Rajasthan is hosting the edition across multiple cities, creating a statewide celebration of sports.

Why in news?

- The Games have begun in Jaipur with the ceremonial lamp lit by Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya.
- A captivating drone show and cultural performances reflecting Rajasthan's traditions set an enthusiastic tone for the competitions ahead.

Background

- Launched in 2020, the Khelo India University Games aim to strengthen the sports ecosystem at the university level and encourage wider participation.
- The platform provides national exposure for student-athletes, promoting excellence, sportsmanship, and healthy competition.

Significance

- Rajasthan is hosting the Games for the first time, marking a step in decentralising sports infrastructure and opportunities across India.
- Minister Mansukh Mandaviya emphasised the vision of promoting India as a global sporting powerhouse, noting Khelo India's role in scouting and nurturing emerging talent.
- Athletes from previous editions have progressed to represent India in major international competitions, underlining the initiative's impact.
- Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma praised India's youth and encouraged consistent dedication and hard work to achieve success.

Facts/General knowledge

- Event: 5th Khelo India University Games.
- Dates: 24 November – 5 December 2025.
- Host state: Rajasthan.
- Primary venue: Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur.
- Host cities: Jaipur, Ajmer, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kota, Bharatpur.
- Participants: Around 7,000 total, including 5,000+ athletes from 230+ universities.
- Sports: 23 competitive disciplines; Kho-Kho showcased as a demonstration event.
- Jaipur's high-profile events include athletics, shooting, archery, badminton, and hockey.

GI Tag for Lepcha Musical Instruments

Introduction

- The Government of India has accorded Geographical

Indication (GI) tags to two traditional Lepcha musical instruments of Sikkim: Tungbuk and Pumtong Pulit.
- This recognition supports the preservation and promotion of Lepcha cultural heritage at national and international levels.

Why in news?

- Date of announcement: 5 November 2025.
- Category: Musical Instruments; registration authority: Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai (Government of India).
- Award ceremony: First Tribal Trade Conference held in New Delhi.
- Organised by the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce & Industry; chief guests: Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Jual Oram.

Background

- Applicants: Ugen Palzor Lepcha (for Tungbuk) and Namgyal Lepcha (for Pumtong Pulit).
- Supporting organisation: NABARD, Gangtok, which provided technical and financial assistance during the GI registration process.
- Duration: Approximately two years to obtain the GI tag.
- Lepcha community: Indigenous people of Sikkim, primarily located in Sikkim, Darjeeling (West Bengal), and parts of Bhutan.
- Cultural context: Nature-centric spiritual beliefs, rich folk music traditions, and craftsmanship in traditional instruments.

Significance

- Provides national recognition and legal protection to the Tungbuk and Pumtong Pulit.
- Promotes cultural revival of Lepcha musical traditions.
- Enhances awareness among youth about indigenous art forms.
- Creates new livelihood opportunities for traditional artisans.

Facts/General knowledge

- Tungbuk: A handmade, three-stringed instrument used in traditional folk music and religious rituals.
- Pumtong Pulit: A bamboo flute made from locally sourced bamboo, played during folk songs and social gatherings.

Sports current

ISSF World Championship Rifle/Pistol 2025 – Cairo, Egypt

Introduction

- Held from 6 to 18 November 2025 in Cairo, the capital of Egypt.
- Organised by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF).
- Featured competitions in both individual and team rifle and pistol events.
- Drew participation from 720 shooters representing 70 National Olympic Committees (NOCs), attracting top marksmen and women from across the world.

Why in news?

- India secured 13 medals and finished third overall, behind China and South Korea.
- The championship witnessed record-breaking performances alongside broad international participation.

Background

- The ISSF was established in 1907 and is headquartered in Munich, Germany, governing rifle, pistol, and shotgun disciplines.
- The first ISSF World Shooting Championships were held in Lyon, France in 1897, originally featuring rifle events.
- The last combined ISSF World Championship across all three categories took place in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2023.
- Rifle and pistol events have since been organised as a separate championship, with the inaugural edition in 2022, also in Cairo, Egypt.

Significance

- India's showing marked a significant rise in its stature in global shooting competitions.
- Gold medallists: Samrat Rana (Men's 10m Air Pistol), Ravinder Singh (Men's 50m Standard Pistol), and the Men's 10m Air Pistol Team.
- Silver medallists included: Anish Bhanwala (Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol; 28 hits in the final; first Indian individual pistol shooter to win a medal in an Olympic event at the ISSF World Championships), Gurpreet Singh (25m Centre Fire Pistol), Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar (50m Rifle 3 Positions), Esha Singh (Women's 10m Air Pistol), and others from team and mixed events involving shooters like Samrat Rana.
- Bronze medallists: Esha Singh (individual 10m air pistol), Elavenil Valarivan (10m Air Rifle), Varun Tomar (10m Air Pistol), and the Women's 10m Air Rifle Team.

Facts/General knowledge

- China topped the medal table with 21 medals, including 12 golds; South Korea followed with 14 medals, including 7 golds; Switzerland and Norway finished fourth and fifth.
- World records at the event:
- Germany's Jacob Hoffman set a new mark in the Men's Target Sprint.
- Poland's Tomasz Bartnik equalled the Men's 300m Rifle 3 Positions world record.
- China's Yao Qianxun won the first gold of the event while setting a new Women's 50m Pistol world record.
- The Chinese Men's 50m Rifle Prone Team set a new world record with a combined score of 1881.3.

Lakshya Sen wins 2025 Australian Open Super 500

Introduction

- Lakshya Sen captured the 2025 Australian Open Super 500 title, marking a triumphant return to form.
- The victory followed a year of close finishes, showcasing renewed consistency and control.

Why in news?

- He secured his first title of 2025 and his third Super 500

crown in the final.
- The win came after a runner-up finish at the Hong Kong Open earlier in the year, underscoring his resurgence.

Background

- Sen's route featured demanding quarterfinal and semifinal wins over Ayush Shetty and Chou Tien Chen, testing his stamina and shot selection.
- The final was comparatively straightforward, with Sen maintaining control through tactical simplicity, clean execution, and calm demeanour under pressure.
- Opponent Yushi Tanaka, a "domestic giant" in Japan, struggled with accuracy and consistency, conceding momentum through unforced errors.
- Post-match, Sen's fingers-in-ears gesture reflected months of focus, training, setbacks, and recovery since his Paris Olympics disappointment in 2024.
- Subtopic: Significance
- Delivers a major morale boost and reasserts his standing among elite players.
- Supports his world ranking prospects, aiding seedings and selection for key 2026 events, including the Thomas Cup and Asian Games qualifiers.
- Although too late for 2025 BWF World Tour Finals qualification, it brings a successful end to his 2025 campaign and sets the tone for a strong comeback season.

Facts/General knowledge

- Event and venue: Australian Open Super 500, Sydney (2025).
- Ranking at the time: World No. 14.
- Final score and duration: 21–15, 21–11 in 38 minutes.
- Match flow: Led throughout; Tanaka narrowed the gap to 15–13 in the first game; at 17–15, a run of errors—especially on drop shots—proved decisive.

Rohit Sharma appointed ambassador for ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026

Introduction

- Rohit Sharma has been named the official tournament ambassador for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.
- The prestigious event will be jointly hosted by India and Sri Lanka.

Why in news?

- The official announcement of his selection as tournament ambassador recognises his excellence and legacy in T20 cricket.
- It underscores his stature as one of the game's most influential modern leaders and match-winners.

Background

- Two-time T20 World Cup winner: part of India's victorious campaigns in 2007 and 2024.
- Captaincy legacy: led India to the T20 World Cup title in 2024.
- T20I record: 4,231 runs at an average of 32.01 and a strike rate of 140.89.
- 2007 World Cup highlights: scored 50* against South Africa and 30* in the final versus Pakistan, contributing to India's title.
- 2024 World Cup highlights: as captain, top-scored for India with 257 runs at a strike rate of 156.70, including standout knocks against Australia and England.
- Widely respected for calm leadership and consistent match-winning capabilities.

Significance

- As tournament ambassador, he will promote the 2026 edition through campaigns and fan engagement initiatives.
- His presence is expected to boost public excitement in the host nations.
- He serves as a role model for aspiring cricketers.
- The appointment highlights India's leadership role in global cricket.

Facts/General knowledge

- Event: ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.
- Host nations: India and Sri Lanka.
- Dates: 7 February to 8 March 2026.

India's landmark performance at the 24th Asian Archery Championships 2025

Introduction

- At the 24th Asian Archery Championships in Dhaka, India finished as the top nation with a record 10 medals, including six golds, marking its best-ever haul at the event.

Why in news?

A decisive power shift in Asian archery, with India breaking South Korea's long-held dominance in recurve disciplines.
- Individual recurve golds by Ankita Bhakat and Dhiraj Bommadevara underscored the breakthrough.

Background

- South Korea had dominated recurve in Asia for over two decades; a 12-year winning streak in men's team recurve was ended this year.
- India's rise reflects systematic training, improved facilities, greater competition exposure, and initiatives such as the Archery Premier League, which provided high-pressure match experience.
- Domestic training programmes have deepened the talent pool, enabling strong performances across categories.

Significance

- Establishes India as a rising superpower in Asian archery with all-round strength in recurve and compound.
- Demonstrates depth of talent, evidenced by an Indian 1–2 in men's recurve and decisive team results.
- Underscores the value of investment in sports infrastructure, grassroots development, and competitive platforms.
- Inspires a new generation, symbolising national ambition and unity.

Facts/General knowledge

- Medal tally: 6 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze; total 10; India topped the table.

- Individual recurve:
  Women: Ankita Bhakat beat Olympic silver medallist Nam Suhyeon (Korea) 7–3 in the final; earlier won a semifinal shoot-off against Deepika Kumari.
- Men: Dhiraj Bommadevara defeated compatriot Rahul 6–2 for gold, delivering a 1–2 Indian finish.
- Sangeeta won women's recurve bronze, overcoming Deepika Kumari in a shoot-off.
- Team recurve:
  Women's team featuring Bhakat took gold, defeating Korea in a dramatic final.
- Team compound:
  Women's team (Deepshikha, Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Prithika Pradeep) beat Korea 236–234 for gold.
- Mixed team (Abhishek Verma, Deepshikha) beat Bangladesh for gold.
- Men's team won silver after a close contest with Kazakhstan.

India's Women Win Kabaddi World Cup 2025 Again

Introduction

- India's women's kabaddi team won the Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025, defeating Chinese Taipei 35–28 in the final held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The successful title defence cemented India's status as a global kabaddi powerhouse.

Why in news?

- India clinched its second consecutive Women's Kabaddi World Cup title.
- The final in Dhaka concluded with a 35–28 victory over Chinese Taipei.

Background

- Final approach:
  Tight defensive setup and calculated raids established a half-time lead.
- Increased offensive momentum after the break disrupted Chinese Taipei's rhythm.
- Maintained control across all phases to secure a composed 35–28 win.
- Route to the final:
  Dominant semi-final against Iran, winning 33–21 with early all-outs and tactical pressure.
- Leadership and performers:
  Captain Ritu Negi and Vice-Captain Pushpa Rana led with clarity.
- Pushpa's swift raids and strong defence balanced the team's gameplay.
- All-round impact from Champa Thakur, Bhawna Thakur, and Sakshi Sharma.
- Sanju Devi, a 23-year-old raider from Chhattisgarh, emerged as the breakout performer and tournament standout.
- Coaching and strategy:
  Head Coach Tejaswi and Assistant Coach Priyanka implemented a methodical game plan.
- Prepared raiding combinations, defensive formations, and effective substitutions underpinned back-to-back titles.

Significance

- Confirms India's supremacy in women's kabaddi through consecutive World Cup triumphs.
- Reflects depth in talent and leadership with a standout young raider elevating performance.
- Underscores the role of structured coaching and tactical planning in consistent championship success.

Facts/General knowledge

- Event: Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025.
- Location: Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Final: India 35–28 Chinese Taipei.
- Semi-final: India 33–21 Iran.
- Achievement: Second consecutive Women's Kabaddi World Cup title.
- Team leadership: Captain – Ritu Negi; Vice-Captain – Pushpa Rana.
- Star performer: Sanju Devi from Chhattisgarh.
- Coaching: Head Coach – Tejaswi; Assistant Coach – Priyanka.

FIDE Chess World Cup 2025 (Goa)

Introduction

- The 11th edition of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) Chess World Cup was held at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Taleigao, Goa, from 31 October to 27 November 2025.

Why in news?

- India hosted the FIDE World Cup again after 23 years.
- Uzbekistan's 19-year-old Grandmaster Javokhir Sindarov became the youngest ever FIDE World Cup champion in 2025, defeating China's Wei Yi in a rapid tiebreak after two drawn classical games.
- The trophy was officially renamed the Viswanathan Anand Cup in honour of India's five-time World Chess Champion.
- On 31 October 2025, FIDE, the All India Chess Federation (AICF), and KIIT University signed a landmark MoU in Goa (2025–2026) to promote chess as a tool for education, social inclusion, and personal development in India, Asia, and globally.

Background

- Format: Eight-round, single-elimination knockout tournament.
- Participation: 206 players from 82 countries.
- India's contingent: 24 key players, including World Champion D Gukesh, R Praggnanandhaa, and Arjun Erigaisi.
- Opening ceremony dignitaries: Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya (MYAS), Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant, FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich, and AICF President Nitin Narang.

Significance

- The event served as a qualification pathway to the 2026 FIDE Candidates Tournament.

- Renaming the trophy as the Viswanathan Anand Cup recognises Anand's outstanding contributions to global chess.
- The FIDE–AICF–KIIT MoU seeks to advance chess for education, social inclusion, and personal development across India, Asia, and worldwide.

Facts/General knowledge

- Prize fund: USD 2 million; first place USD 120,000; second USD 85,000; third USD 60,000; fourth USD 50,000.
- Medal winners:
  Gold and Trophy: Javokhir Sindarov (Uzbekistan)
- Silver: Wei Yi (China)
- Bronze: Andrey Esipenko (Russia)
- Trophy design: Brass and gold-plated peacock symbolising precision, elegance, and passion for chess.
- Upcoming chess events:
  Candidates Tournament 2026: Pegeia near Paphos, Cyprus, 28 March to 16 April; features three qualifiers from the FIDE World Cup 2025—Javokhir Sindarov, Wei Yi, and Andrey Esipenko.
- FIDE Rapid & Blitz 2025: Doha, Qatar, 26 to 30 December 2025.

Miscellaneous

50th Anniversary Celebration of Vande Mataram

Introduction

- The Union Cabinet has approved a nationwide celebration to commemorate 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram".
- The decision underscores the song's profound role in the independence movement and its enduring place in India's cultural heritage.

Why in news?

- The Cabinet will organise countrywide events, educational programmes, and public commemorations across states and Union Territories.
- The government emphasises the song's role in India's freedom struggle as the reason for elevating its celebration.

Background

- "Vande Mataram" was composed in Sanskrit by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and first published in his novel Anandamath in 1882.
- Its first prominent public rendition was at the 1896 Indian National Congress session, when Rabindranath Tagore rendered it.
- It became a rallying cry for patriots and freedom fighters during the anti- colonial struggle.

Significance

- Freedom Movement Emblem: It united freedom fighters and inspired movements, protests, and nationalist literature during colonial rule.
- Cultural Unity: It venerates the motherland in poetic terms, invoking civilisational sentiment beyond linguistic or regional lines.
- Selective Usage: Public use typically limits to the first two stanzas, as later verses contain strong religious imagery seen as divisive in a multi- religious society.
- State Responses: Some regions, including Assam, have seen debate or resistance over adopting it as the sole anthem, with alternative regional songs or state anthems used locally.

Facts/General knowledge

- While India has the national anthem "Jana Gana Mana", the Constituent Assembly accorded "Vande Mataram" the status of national song.
- The Constitution explicitly mandates respect only for the national anthem, not the national song.
- This distinction reflects sensitivity in a plural society, where the national song is honoured for its emotional and historical significance but not enforced by law in the same way as the anthem.

Maldives' Generational Smoking Ban

Introduction

- The Maldives has enforced a generational ban on smoking that prohibits anyone born on or after 1 January 2007 from ever purchasing, possessing, or using tobacco products.
- The ban covers all tobacco forms, including cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco.
- The Maldives already has a complete ban on vaping and e-cigarettes, regardless of age.

Why in news?

- The Maldives is the first country to enforce a generational smoking ban.
- New Zealand was the first to enact a similar law (for those born after 1 January 2009), but it was repealed in 2023 before taking effect.

Background

- The policy aims to phase out tobacco use within one generation.
- Retailers are required to verify age before sale to prevent violations.
- The move is aligned with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

Significance

- Tobacco kills nearly 7 million people annually (WHO).
- The measure strengthens comprehensive tobacco control by targeting all tobacco forms and reinforcing restrictions alongside the existing vaping and e-cigarette ban.

Facts/General knowledge

- WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC):
- The world's first global public health treaty; adopted in 2003 and enforced in 2005.
- Ratified by over 180 parties (including India).
- Objective: to protect present and future generations from the health, social, environmental, and economic consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke.

- Key provisions include:
  Ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.
- Health warnings covering at least 30–50% of packaging.
- Measures to reduce tobacco demand and supply, including taxation and public smoking bans.
- Regulation of illicit trade and protection from industry interference in policy-making.

Indonesia free from Type-2 cVDPV poliovirus

Introduction

- Indonesia has achieved freedom from a vaccine-derived poliovirus strain, marking a public health milestone.

Why in news?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Indonesia free from this poliovirus category.

Background

- The milestone reflects the success of mass immunisation campaigns, surveillance systems, and polio eradication efforts in the country.

Significance

- Strengthens global progress toward complete polio eradication.
- Protects children.
- Improves international health security.

Facts/General knowledge

- Specific virus: Type-2 circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV2).
- No cases have been reported since June 2024.

Jakarta becomes the world's most populous city — UN World Urbanisation Prospects 2025

Introduction

- Jakarta has overtaken Tokyo to become the world's most populous city, as per the United Nations' World Urbanisation Prospects 2025 report.
- The Indonesian capital's estimated population stands at 42 million, leading a list dominated by rapidly expanding Asian megacities.

Why in news?

- The latest UN report places Jakarta first, followed by Dhaka and Tokyo.
- Key rankings (2025):
- Jakarta (Indonesia) – 42 million
- Dhaka (Bangladesh) – 37 million
- Tokyo (Japan) – 33 million
- Tokyo, which led previous rankings including the 2018 UN report, has moved to third place while remaining a major global urban centre.

Background

- The UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs revised urban delimitation criteria to create a more standardised and globally comparable framework.
- Earlier assessments relied on varying national definitions of city boundaries, often favouring cities like Tokyo with expansive administrative coverage.
- The new methodology provides:
  Consistent population and geospatial criteria
- More accurate mapping of functional urban areas
- Better inclusion of urban sprawl and regional connectivity
- Cities are now compared using similar population density and spatial data, offering a more accurate representation of urban size for places such as Jakarta and Dhaka.

Significance

- The reshaped rankings reflect changing dynamics in urbanisation, migration, and demographic growth.
- The report serves as a key resource for policymakers and students of urban development by improving comparability across cities worldwide.
- It underscores Asia's prominent role in contemporary urban expansion.

Facts/General knowledge

- In 1950, only 20% of the global population lived in cities.
- In 2025, nearly half of the world's 8.2 billion people reside in urban areas.
- By 2050, two-thirds of global population growth is expected to occur in cities, with much of the rest in towns.
- The number of megacities (population ≥10 million) has risen from 8 in 1975 to 33 in 2025.
- Nine of the ten most populous cities are in Asia: Jakarta, Dhaka, Tokyo, New Delhi, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Manila, Kolkata, and Seoul; the only non-Asian city in the top ten is Cairo (Egypt).

DigiArivu digital literacy and STEM initiative in Tamil Nadu

Introduction

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Samsung and the UN Global Compact Network India to launch the "DigiArivu" programme.
- Subtopic: Why in news?
- The MoU marks the launch of DigiArivu in Tamil Nadu.

Background

- The programme is intended for school students.
- It promotes digital literacy and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education.

Significance

- It will build technology skills among students.
- It will strengthen innovation capacity and digital readiness.
- It supports India's digital transformation goals.
- Subtopic: Facts/General knowledge
- Name: DigiArivu.
- Stakeholders: Government of Tamil Nadu; Samsung; UN Global Compact Network India.
- Target group: school students.
- Core domains: digital literacy; STEM.
- Strategic alignment: India's digital transformation goals.

Important Days

- Date Day / Event Description / Significance
- 1 November World Vegan Day Promotes awareness about veganism and its benefits; first celebrated in 2023 marking 51 years of the UK Vegan Society.
- 1 November
  Foundation Day of Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh
- Every year on November 1, five Indian states — Karnataka, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh — celebrate their State Formation Day.
- 3 November World Jellyfish Day Marks the migration season of jellyfish to the northern hemisphere shores.
- 5 November World Tsunami Awareness Day Promotes awareness and preparedness to reduce tsunami risks.
- 5 November Guru Nanak Dev's Birth Anniversary (Guru Nanak Jayanti) Celebrates the 556th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism.
- 6 November International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict Declared by UN to protect nature from wartime destruction.
- 7 November National Cancer Awareness Day Promotes early detection and awareness about cancer; initiated in 2014.
- 8 November World Radiography Day Highlights the role of radiographers and importance of diagnostic imaging.
- 9 November National Legal Services Day Raises legal awareness; marks enforcement of Legal Services Authorities Act (1995).
- 9 November Uttarakhand Foundation Day Marks creation of Uttarakhand state in 2000.
- 10 November World Science Day for Peace and Development promotes the role of science in building sustainable societies.
- 11 November National Education Day (India) Birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Education Minister.
- 12 November World Pneumonia Day Raises awareness about pneumonia prevention and treatment.
- 13 November World Kindness DayPromotes acts of kindness and compassion globally.
- 14 November Children's Day (India) Honors children's rights; marks birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru.
- 14 November World Diabetes Day Raises awareness about diabetes management and prevention.
- 15 November Birsa Munda JayantiBirth anniversary of tribal leader and freedom fighter Birsa Munda.
- 16 November National Press Day (India) Celebrates free and responsible press; honors Press Council of India.
- 17 November International Students Day Marks student resistance during Nazi invasion in 1939.
- 17 November National Epilepsy Day (India) Raises awareness about epilepsy and its prevention.
- 19 November World Toilet Day Promotes sanitation and hygiene as part of SDG-6.
- 19 November Indira Gandhi's 108th Birth Anniversary
- Raises awareness about Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.
- 19 November International Men's Day Focuses on men's health, gender equality, and positive male role models.
- 20 November Universal Children's Day Promotes children's welfare and international cooperation.
- 20 November World Children Day
  To promotes children's rights globally, marking the UN's commitment to protection, participation, and equality.
- 21 November World Television Day Recognizes the impact of television in shaping communication and awareness.
- 21 November National Philosophy Day (UNESCO) Celebrates philosophy's role in promoting critical thinking and dialogue.
- 23 November National Cashew Day Celebrates cashews and honors the labor of cashew farmers.
- 24 November Lachit Diwas (Assam) Honors Ahom General Lachit Borphukan for victory at the Battle of Saraighat.
- 24 November Shaheedi Diwas of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Marks martyrdom of the ninth Sikh Guru who defended religious freedom.
- 25 November International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women Raises awareness on ending violence and discrimination against women.
- 26 November National Milk Day (India) Birth anniversary of Dr. Verghese Kurien, Father of the White Revolution.
- 26 November Constitution Day of India (Samvidhan Divas) Commemorates adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949.
- 27 November Thanksgiving Day (USA – 4th Thursday of November) Celebrates harvest and blessings; major U.S. holiday.
- 28 November Red Planet Day Commemorates NASA's Mariner 4 mission to Mars launched in 1964.
- 28 November Black Friday Marks global shopping festival following Thanksgiving.
- 29 November International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People Expresses global solidarity and support for Palestinian rights.
- 29 November International Jaguar Day Promotes conservation of jaguars and biodiversity awareness.
- 30 November Saint Andrew's Day Honors Saint Andrew, Scotland's patron saint; marks start of Scottish winter festivities.