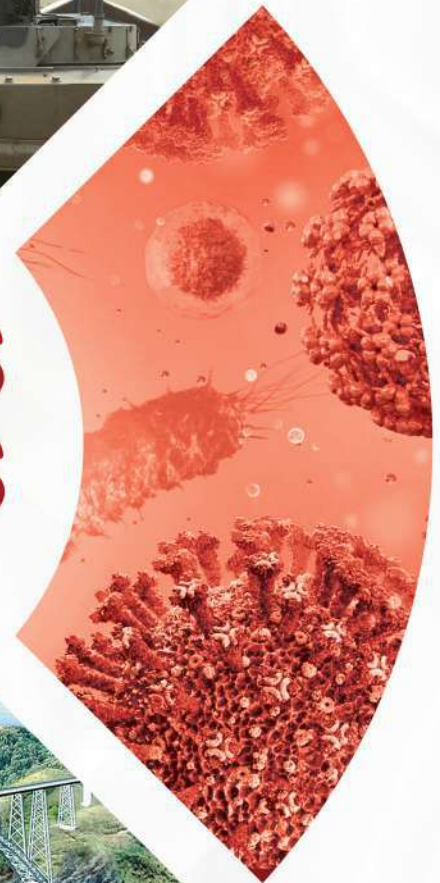


FORTUNE Prelims Precise Compilation



MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

January 2025 - April 2026



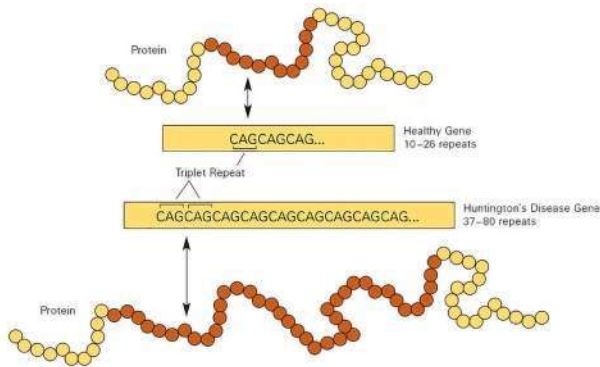
Toppers in Top 100



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Huntington's Disease (HD)



- A new study explains why **Huntington's disease (HD)** symptoms appear in **midlife** despite the gene mutation being **present from birth**.
- Genes are composed of sequences made from four nucleotide bases—**adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G), and thymine (T)**—arranged in various combinations.
- Huntington's disease is caused by an inherited mutation in the **Huntington (HTT) gene** in which a three-letter DNA sequence, **C-A-G, is repeated at least 40 times**.
- HD damages the nerve cells (neurons) that help to control voluntary (intentional) movement, as well as other areas.
- People living with HD **develop uncontrollable dance-like movements (chorea)** and abnormal body postures, as well as problems with behavior, emotion, thinking, and personality.

Entity Locker:

- **The National eGovernance Division (NeGD)**, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has developed Entity Locker.
- It is a digital platform, as part of India's Digital Public Infrastructure, designed to transform the management and **verification of business/organisation documents**.

- Entity Locker is a secure, **cloud-based solution** that simplifies the storage, sharing, and verification of documents for a wide range of entities, including large organisations, corporations, micro, small, and medium Enterprises (MSMEs), trusts, startups and societies.

- Entity Locker is **seamlessly integrated** with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN), the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and other regulatory institutions.

Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

- The **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)**, Hyderabad, has been selected for the 7th **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2025**.
- The annual award is given by the Government of India to recognize individuals and organizations for their **work in disaster management** since 2019.
- It is announced on **January 23**, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
- **INCOIS** was established in 1999 as an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It operates the Indian **Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)** and is recognised by **UNESCO as a top Tsunami Service Provider**.
- Provides forecasts for high waves, cyclones, and storm surges, ensuring coastal safety.
- INCOIS also provides **Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) advisories** for fishermen.

- ➔ Augment post-harvest **storage** at panchayat and block level
- ➔ Improve **irrigation** facilities
- ➔ Facilitate availability of long- and short-term **credit**

Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme

- The Union Budget 2025-26 introduced the Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme, an important initiative to **digitise Indian-language textbooks**.
- This scheme will offer **digital textbooks and educational materials to school and university students** to promote **regional languages in education**.
- It aligns with the **NEP (National Education Policy) 2020** vision to promote multilingualism and emphasises mother-tongue-based education.
- It complements the **ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) initiative**.
 - ★ It will help to achieve the ASMITA aim of developing 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years.
- This scheme will be a **collaborative effort between the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti**, which operates under the Ministry of Education.

Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana

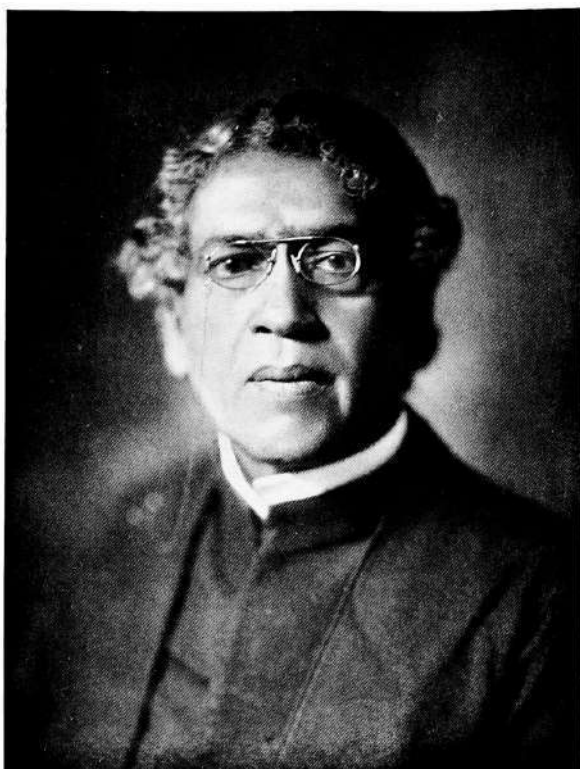
- The Finance Minister announced the Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana, or the **developing agri-districts programme**.
- The programme is motivated by the **Aspirational Districts Programme** which was launched in 2018 to “to quickly and effectively transform 112 most under-developed districts across the country.”
- This new scheme will cover **100 districts with low productivity**, moderate crop intensity, and below-average parameters.
- The **programme’s aims** are to:
 - ➔ Enhance agricultural **productivity**
 - ➔ Adopt crop **diversification** and sustainable agricultural practices

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan

- The allocation for the PM Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM) in the 2025-26 Budget has seen a 37% increase compared to the previous year.
- The PM-SYM is a Voluntary and Contributory Scheme aimed at providing **old-age protection and social security for unorganized sector workers**.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** managed by the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**, and is executed in collaboration with the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** and CSC eGovernance Services India Limited (CSC SPV).
- Subscribers will receive a minimum assured pension of **RS 3000 per month upon reaching the age of 60**.
- The Central Government matches the subscriber’s contributions on a **50:50 basis**, following age-specific contribution amounts.

National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0

- Recently, the Minister of State in the **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs** provided information about the National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0 to the Rajya Sabha.
- The key objectives of the Scheme is to strengthen the **roots of democracy, inculcate healthy habits of discipline, and tolerance of the views of others** and to enable the student community to know about practices and procedures of the Parliament.
- It also aims to enhance **their knowledge of the functioning of the Government**, Constitutional values and for living their life in a democratic way.
- The web-portal of NYPS 2.0 enables **all the citizens of the country to participate in the Youth Parliament programme** of the Ministry through 3 different ways: **Institution Participation, Group Participation and Individual Participation**.



*Yours Sincerely
J.C. Bose*

- The **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)** launched the J. C. Bose Grant, a restructured version of the J. C. Bose Fellowship, to support senior scientists and engineers for outstanding research.
- It offers **₹25 lakh annually for five years**, covering manpower, consumables, travel, contingency, and equipment (up to 20%), plus ₹1 lakh annually for institutional overheads.
- The grant is available **until age 68** and can continue post-superannuation if a host institution supports it.
- **Jagadish Chandra Bose** (1858–1937) was an Indian scientist who pioneered research in **radio waves, microwave optics, and plant physiology**.
- He demonstrated plant responses to stimuli and contributed to early wireless communication and solid-state physics.

Khelo India Winter Games

- The 2nd phase of 5th Khelo India Winter Games 2025 commenced at popular ski resort, **Gulmarg in North Kashmir**.
- The 2nd Phase features four disciplines, including **alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, ski mountaineering, and snowboarding**.
- Under the Khelo India Scheme, **the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS)** organizes National-level competitions.
 - ✦ This includes: Khelo India Youth Games, Khelo India University Games, Khelo India Para Games and Khelo India Winter Games.
- Starting in 2020, so far four editions of the Khelo India Winter Games have been successfully conducted with the participation of 36 States/UTs.
- The fifth edition of Khelo India Winter Games 2025 is being staged in two parts.
 - ➔ The first phase was held in the UT of Ladakh.
 - ➔ J&K is hosting the second and final portion in March.
- Apart from tapping talent, Khelo India Winter Games also showcase a region's art, culture, heritage, and promote tourism through sports.

'Scam Se Bacho' Campaign

- The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and WhatsApp** have launched the 'Scam Se Bacho' campaign to educate citizens on fraud identification and reporting.
- It seeks to **enhance digital safety** through workshops and proactive measures against telecom misuse.
- A key element involves **train-the-trainer workshops for DoT officials, Sanchar Mitras**, (student volunteers) and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs).
- The **Sanchar Mitra program** aims to improve mobile security awareness, clarify radiation myths, promote DoT initiatives, and prevent mobile-related fraud, creating a link between the DoT and citizens on telecom issues.

Glass-Ceiling Index

- In honor of International Women's Day, **The Economist** released its **annual glass-ceiling index** which analyzes working conditions for women across the 29 countries in the **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**.
- The countries were ranked based on **ten measures**: Higher education, GMAT exams taken by women, Labor-force participation rate, Gender wage gap, Women in managerial positions, Women on company boards, Women in government, Net child-care costs, Paid leave for mothers, & Paid leave for fathers.
- **Political Front**: The OECD observed an average increase in women's parliamentary representation to **34%**.
 - ➔ **Japan and Britain recorded significant gains**, with representation rising to 16% (up from 10%) and 41% (up from 35%), respectively.
 - ➔ In contrast, the United States experienced a slight decline, **with representation falling to 28.7%**.
- **Economic Front**: There is a rise in the percentage of women on corporate boards, reaching 33%.
 - ➔ Also there is an increase in **women's labour-force participation**, which grew to **66.6%, up from 65.8%** the previous year.
 - ➔ However, it remains lower compared to **men at 81%**.

The **"glass ceiling"** is a metaphor describing the invisible barriers that prevent women and minorities from advancing to higher-level positions within organizations, regardless of their qualifications or achievements.

These barriers are often the result of implicit biases, stereotypes, and organizational cultures that favor certain groups over others.

The **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** is an international organization founded in 1961 to promote policies that improve the economic and social well-being of people worldwide.

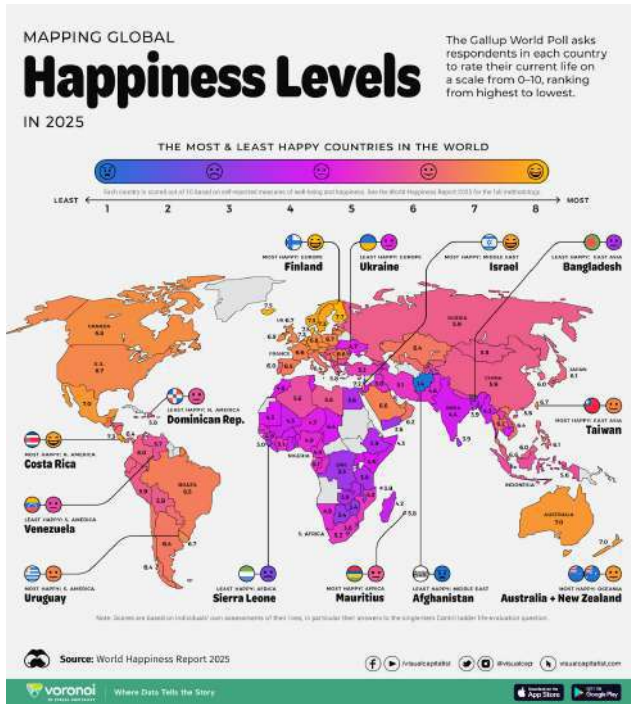
It provides a platform for its 38 member countries to collaborate, share experiences, and develop solutions to common challenges.

The World Happiness Report 2025

- The recently released World Happiness Report 2025 has **placed India at 118 out of 147 countries**.
- World Happiness Report 2025 is published by the **Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford**.
- The country rankings are based on a **three-year average** of each population's average assessment of their quality of life.
- The report also considers the following **six variables**:
 - GDP per capita, Social Support, Healthy life expectancy, Freedom, Generosity & Freedom of corruption.

Key Findings:

- **Finland leads the world in happiness for the eighth year** in a row.
 - ➔ The country reported an average score of 7.736 (out of 10).
- Upward trend seen in countries such as Lithuania (16th), Slovenia (19th) and Czechia (20th).
- **The United States (24th)** falls to its lowest-ever position
- **The United Kingdom (23rd)** reported its lowest average life evaluation since the 2017 report.
- **India** ranks 118th out of 147 countries, with a happiness score of **4.389**.
 - ➔ This places it **below its neighbors** Nepal, Bangladesh, and China.
 - ➔ The drop is **linked to growing mental health concerns**, exacerbated by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing economic pressures.



IISR Surya

- The **Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR), Kozhikode**, has developed a new light-coloured **turmeric** variety specifically for the masala industry.
- The new variety, **IISR Surya**, features a **light-coloured rhizome** (underground plant stem that grows horizontally) that meets the specific needs of the modern powdering industry.
- The new variety with a **pleasant aroma** is a **high-yielding one which offers a 20% to 30% yield increase** compared to that of the existing light-coloured local varieties.

Turmeric (Curcuma longa) is native to **South Asia**, particularly **India**.

India is the largest **producer, consumer and exporter** of turmeric in the world **with more than 30 varieties of turmeric grown** in India and it is grown in over 20 states in the country.

The largest **producing states** of turmeric are Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

India has more than **62 per cent share of world trade** in turmeric.

In 2023, Central government established a **National Turmeric Board** and plans to **double turmeric production to 2 million by 20230**

The State of Social Protection Report 2025

- Nearly two billion people in **low- and middle-income countries (LIC and MIC)** were without adequate social protection as of 2022, according to the **World Bank's State of Social Protection Report 2025**.
- **Social protection** is the set of **public measures that protect individuals and families** against economic and social distress, with the aim of ensuring a minimum level of wellbeing for all.
- The three pillars of social protection are **social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs**.



- Report says that at current growth rates, it will take **18 years to achieve full coverage** for those living in extreme poverty and 20 years to cover the poorest 20% of households in LIC and MIC.



- The index assesses Information and Communications Technology (ICT) deployment, skills, R&D activity, industrial capacity, and access to finance.
- India ranks **99th** for ICT, **113th** for skills, **3rd** for R&D, **10th** for industrial capacity, and **70th** for finance.
- In AI investment, the **US** leads, with **China** second and **India** tenth.
- Among developing countries, **Brazil, China, India, and the Philippines** excel in technology readiness, while **Bhutan, India, Morocco, Moldova, and Timor-Leste** improved in human capital due to better schooling and more high-skill employment.

Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS)

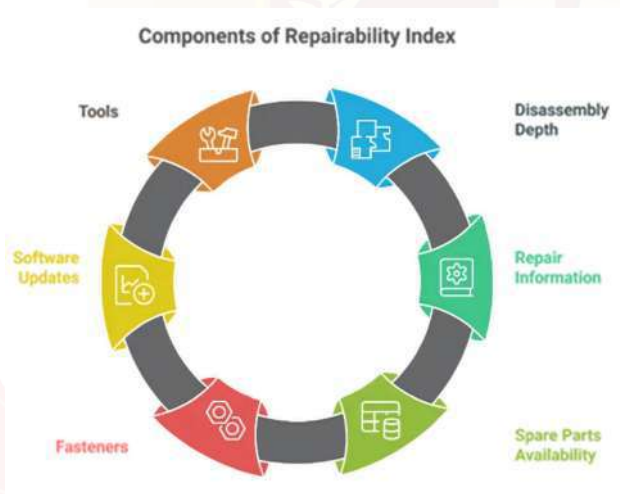
- In a major step toward **boosting the electronics sector and making India self-reliant**, the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has launched the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS).
- ECMS is aimed at boosting **domestic value addition in electronics production**, Strengthen India's integration with **Global Value Chains (GVCs)**, and build robust electronics components and sub-assemblies manufacturing ecosystem.
- It also aims to Attract global and domestic investments & Enhance Domestic Value Addition (DVA).
- ECMS is seen as a **“horizontal scheme,”** as its benefits would extend beyond electronics to sectors such as industrial, power, and automobile manufacturing.
- Note:** Electronics production in India has grown five-fold while exports have expanded more than six-fold, with a **compound annual growth rate (CAGR) exceeding 20% for exports and over 17% for production.**

Frontier Technologies Readiness Index

- The **2025 Technology and Innovation Report** by UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) ranked India **36th** in the 'Readiness for Frontier Technologies' Index, improving from **48th** in 2022.

Repairability Index Framework in Mobile Electronics Sector

- The **Bharat Khera committee** constituted by the **Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** in 2024 for developing the framework of the Repairability Index (RI) has recently submitted the report.
- The Repairability Index (RI) is designed to help consumers understand how easily a product—especially in the mobile and electronics sector—can be repaired.
- The committee recommends that the Repairability Index be displayed at the **point of sale/purchase**, e-commerce platforms, and as a QR code on packaged products, empowering consumers to make informed choices and reduce mindless consumption and wastage.
- **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)** will be required to self-declare the RI based on standard scoring criteria, without facing additional compliance burdens.
- The Repairability Index is assessed on **six core parameters**:



Biometric E-Passports

- India has officially entered the league of over 120 countries, including the United States, Canada, France, Japan, and Australia, by introducing **chip-enabled biometric e-passports**.
- An e-passport is a **conventional passport enhanced with electronic features**.

- It contains a built-in **RFID (Radio Frequency Identification)** chip and an antenna embedded in its cover.
- This chip securely holds the holder's **personal and biometric data**, including fingerprints and facial recognition details.
- Security protocols such as **basic access control (BAC)**, passive authentication (PA), and extended access control (EAC) are used to encrypt this sensitive data, ensuring global standards of protection.
- This allows for **contactless verification through automated e-gates** at immigration points.



Global EV Outlook 2025

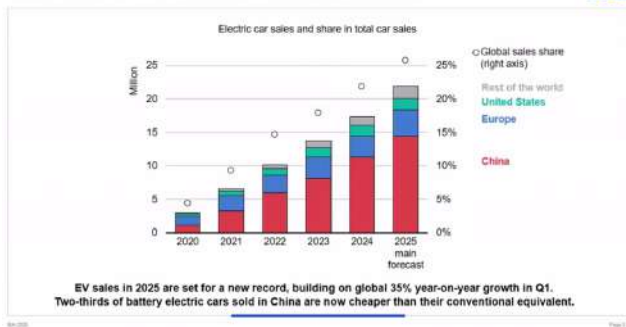
- Global EV Outlook 2025 is released annually by the **International Energy Agency (IEA)**.

Key Findings:

- **Global electric car sales** exceeded 17 million in 2024, with over 20% market share.
- **China led exports** with a 40% global share.
- Asia and Latin America saw over 60% growth, becoming new EV growth hubs.
- **India's EV sales** rose slightly to nearly 1 lakh (2% share), mostly driven by Tata.
- **Battery EV prices fell globally**, but remain 30% higher in the U.S., slowing growth.
- **Electric trucks grew 80%**, nearing 2% of global truck sales.
- 2025 forecast: Over 20 million EVs sold globally, exceeding 25% share.
- By 2030, EVs may reach 40% of all car sales under current policies.

Global electric car sales continue to break records

iea



Indore: First Beggar-Free City

- **Indore has officially become India's first city without beggars** as per the city administration.
- Last year there were around **5,000 beggars roaming the streets** of the city.
- Steps taken include **awareness campaigns, rehabilitation of beggars**, & a reward of Rs 1,000 is given to anyone providing information about begging among others.

Anti Begging Laws in India:

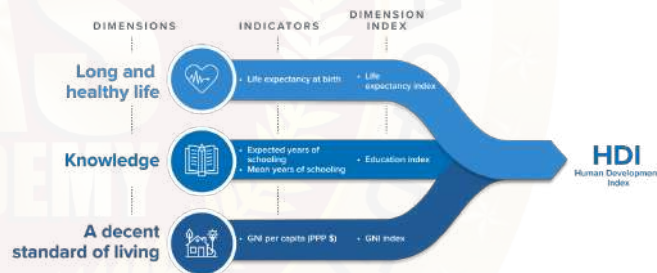
- **Constitutional Safeguard:** The right to a **life free of exploitation** is guaranteed by **Article 23** which eliminates begging and other types of human trafficking.
 - ➔ Article 23 should be interpreted in conjunction with paragraphs **39(e) and 39(f)**, which require the **state to safeguard people against exploitation** and moral and material abandonment.
- **Parliamentary Laws:** Section 363A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 (**Section 139** of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS)) makes it a **crime to kidnap or maim a minor** for the purpose of begging.
- **Section 268** of the IPC (Section 270 of BNS), which deals with **public nuisance**, states that a person is guilty of a public nuisance if he or she causes injury, danger, or irritation to the public.
- **Section 76** of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015: It is a crime to **employ or use a child for the purpose of begging**, or to induce a child to beg.
- **State laws:** **22 states and union territories in India** have anti-begging laws, and the **Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959** serves as the model for most of these laws.

Human Development Report 2025

- India rose in the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking **130 out of 193 countries** in the 2025 Human Development Report (HDR) released today by the **United Nations Development Programme**.
- The 2025 HDR title: **“A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI”**.

Key Findings:

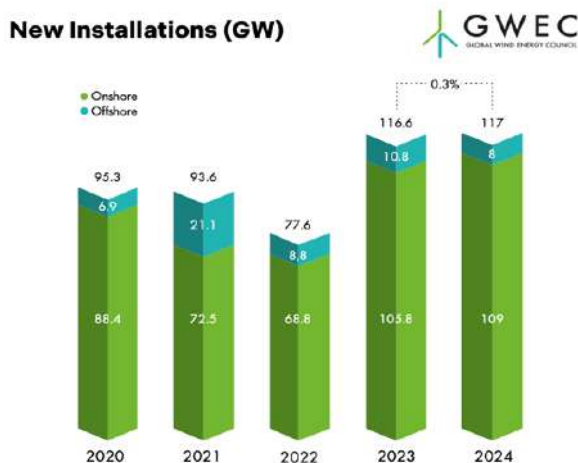
- With an HDI value increasing from **0.676 in 2022 to 0.685 in 2023**, India remains in the **medium human development category**, moving closer to the threshold for high human development (**HDI ≥ 0.700**).
- **Life expectancy:** rose from 58.6 years in 1990 to 72 years in 2023.
- **Schooling:** Children today are expected to **stay in school for 13 years on average**, up from 8.2 years in 1990.
- **Gross National Income per capita:** rose over **four times**, from \$2167.22 (1990) to \$9046.76 (2023) based on 2021 PPP \$.
- **Inequality:** reduces **India's HDI by 30.7%**, one of the highest losses in the region. While health and education inequality have improved, income and gender disparities remain significant.



Global Wind Report

- **The Global Wind Energy Council's flagship Global Wind Report** released recently shows that 2024 was a record year for new capacity, with **117 GW of wind energy** installed across the world.
- **China** came ahead of the **USA** in installations, followed by **Germany, India and Brazil** respectively making the top 5.
- The **Asia-Pacific region saw a 7% year-on-year growth rate**, while Africa & Middle East saw a **107% y-o-y growth rate**, thanks to Egypt installing 794 MW and Saudi Arabia's 390 MW.

- **North America, Latin America and Europe experienced a decline** in new installations compared with 2023.
- The report forecasts a compound average growth rate of 8.8% for the wind industry, which means another 981 GW of wind energy capacity across the globe by 2030.



Source: GWEC's Global Wind Report 2025
GWEC.net/gwr

Mizoram Achieves Full Functional Literacy

- Mizoram was recently declared the **first state** in India to achieve **full functional literacy**.
 - This comes nearly 34 years after Kerala was declared a **“fully literate”** state in 1991.
 - According to the 2011 census, Kerala was the most literate state in India (93.91%), followed by Lakshadweep (92.28%) and Mizoram (91.58%).
 - **The National Literacy Mission (NLM), 1988** defines **full literacy as a minimum of 90%** literacy of its population having attained self-sufficiency in reading, writing, and basic arithmetic.
 - Kerala's declaration of full literacy in 1991 was based on these NLM parameters.
 - The Ministry of Education (MoE) under the **New India Literacy Programme (NILP)** defines **full literacy** (to be considered equivalent to 100% literacy) **will be achieving 95% literacy** in a State/UT that may be considered as equivalent to fully literate.
- ➡ Mizoram falls in this category.
- **Note:** In June 2024, Ladakh became the first fully literate administrative unit.

New India Literacy Programme (NILP)

- It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** with an implementation period of five years from the FYs 2022-23 to 2026-27.
- The scheme aims to cover a target of **5 crore non-literates** in the age group of 15 years and above.
- The Scheme has five components: (i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (ii) Critical Life Skills, (iii) Vocational Skills Development, (iv) Basic Education and (v) Continuing Education.

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

- 6 new sites of traditional agroforestry systems have recently become new additions to the **Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)**.
- **Erva-mate plant in Brazil**, three sites in **China** specializing in pearl mussels, white tea and pears, an ancestral system preserving vital food crops and **biodiversity in Mexico** and a distinctive farming system in the **volcanic landscape of Spain's Lanzarote island** became the latest additions.
- The GIAHS programme of the **Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)** aims to **identify, support and safeguard agricultural systems** that sustain and conserve our biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture, rural livelihoods, knowledge systems, cultures and remarkable landscapes.
- Since 2005, FAO has designated 95 systems in 28 countries as agricultural heritage sites.
- **Indian sites:** Koraput Traditional Agriculture of Orissa, Kuttanad Wetland Agriculture System of Kerala & Pampore Saffron Heritage in Jammu & Kashmir



Global Tobacco Epidemic Report

- The **WHO's Global Tobacco Epidemic 2025 report**, launched at the World Conference on Tobacco Control in Dublin with Bloomberg Philanthropies' support, highlights progress in global tobacco control.
- It tracks six proven strategies under the **MPOWER framework: Monitor** tobacco use, **Protect** people from smoke, **Offer** help to quit, **Warn** about health dangers, **Enforce** bans on ads, and **Raise** taxes.
- As of 2024, 110 countries implement at least one best-practice MPOWER measure, covering 62% of the global population, and 25 countries have adopted plain packaging.
- India stands out for its graphic health warnings**, its pioneering regulation of tobacco content in digital streaming platforms, and is the world's second-largest producer and consumer of unmanufactured tobacco, producing nearly 770,000 tonnes annually.

Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2.0

- The **Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2.0** report was released by the **Ministry of Education** to assess school education performance.
- It was first launched in **2017 with 70 indicators** and in 2023 was revamped with 73 indicators and 6 domains, aligning with National Education Policy, 2020.
- The domains are **Learning Outcomes, Access, Infrastructure & Facilities, Equity, Governance Processes, and Teacher Education & Training**.
- The Grading scale is classified into 10 scales from **Daksh** to **Akanshi-3** from top to bottom.
- Top Rank: **Chandigarh** scored 703 points (Prachesta-1)
- Lowest Rank: **Meghalaya** scored 417 points (Akanshi-3)

- No State in Top 4 Bands:** No State/UT reached Daksh (Top 951-1000) or Utkarsh bands, showing systemic gaps.

Scores (% of total points)	Score range	Grade
91% to 100%	941-1000	Daksh
81% to 90%	881-940	Utkarsh
71% to 80%	821-880	Atti-Utam
61% to 70%	761-820	Uttam
51% to 60%	701-760	Prachesta -1
41% to 50%	641-700	Prachesta -2
31% to 40%	581-640	Prachesta -3
21% to 30%	521-580	Akanshi-1
11% to 20%	461-520	Akanshi-2
Up to 10%	401-460	Akanshi-3

Rinderpest Holding Facility

- India has recently joined the elite global group for **Rinderpest Virus 'Cattle Plague' Containment**.
- The ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD) in Bhopal has been designated as a **Category A Rinderpest Holding Facility**.
- It has been recognised by the **World Organisation for Animal Health – WOA** and the **Food and Agriculture Organization- FAO** of the United Nations.
- Rinderpest, also known as **cattle plague**, was a highly **contagious** and deadly viral disease that primarily affected cloven-hoofed animals, especially cattle and buffalo.
- Rinderpest was **officially declared eradicated** in 2011, making it the second disease, after smallpox, to be eradicated globally.
- The recognition places India among a distinguished group of **only six facilities** worldwide entrusted with the critical responsibility of securely holding rinderpest virus material, mainly for research purposes.

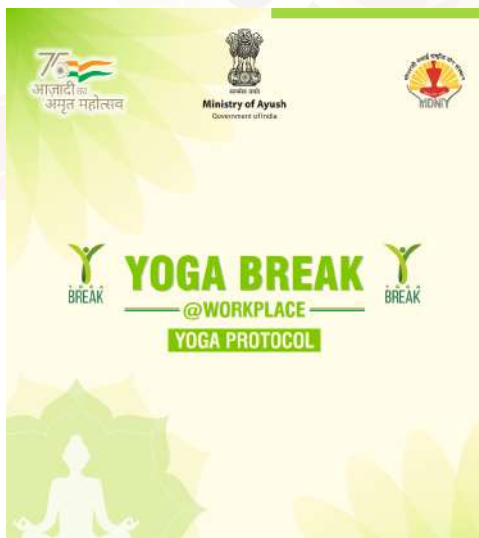
Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)

- The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) recently started the probe on the Air India plane crash at the Ahmedabad airport.
- Section 7 of the Aircraft Act 1934** (now replaced by **The Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024**) empowers the Government of India to make rules for investigation of accidents arising out of or in the course of the navigation in or over India of any aircraft, or anywhere of aircraft registered in India.

- Earlier, The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**'s **Air Safety Directorate** handled aircraft related investigations.
- As per **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**'s **international standards** regulation of airspace and investigation had to be independent.
- Subsequently, the **Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules, 2012** led to the formation of AAIB under the **Ministry of Civil Aviation**.
- AAIB, now a statutory body under the 2024 Act, investigates accidents and suggests safety measures.

Yoga break at workplace

- The **5-minute yoga break at workplace** is getting global acceptance particularly in the context of **World Yoga Day (June 21)**.
- It was developed by India's **Ministry of AYUSH**.
- Its aim is to help working professionals **de-stress, refresh, and re-focus** during their workday, thereby improving productivity and overall well-being.
- It comprises simple **yoga practices** including **asanas (postures), pranayama (breathing techniques), and dhyana (meditation)** that can often be done even at one's desk.
- The Y-Break protocol was launched in **January 2020** on a pilot project basis in six major metro cities.
- The Y-Break mobile app was formally launched later, on **September 1, 2021**, by the Ministry of AYUSH



July

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

- Recently the Union Cabinet has approved the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY), a scheme to develop 100 agricultural districts through the **convergence** of 36 schemes of 11 ministries.
- PMDDKY is launched under **Union Budget 2025-26** for 6 years.
- Objectives : **Improving agricultural productivity, adopting crop diversification** and sustainable agriculture practices, **Augmenting post-harvest storage** at the panchayat and block level, **Improving irrigation facilities** and **Facilitating availability of long-term and short-term credit** for farmers.
- It selects **100 districts** with parameters like low productivity, moderate crop intensity, and below-average credit.
- This initiative is followed by the success of the **Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP)**.
- ADP is an initiative launched by the government of India to **rapidly and effectively transform** 112 of the country's most underdeveloped districts.

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

- 1 First announced in the **Union Budget 2025-26**.
- 2 Focus on **100 agri-districts**.
- 3 Saturation-based Convergence of **36 Central Schemes** across **11 Ministries**.
- 4 Annual outlay of **₹24,000 crore** for a **6 years**.
- 5 Implementation begins from **FY 2025-26**.
- 6 Projected to benefit **1.7 crore farmers** directly.

Source: PIB

PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshen 2025

- Results of the PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshen (PARAKH RS), formerly known as the **National Achievement Survey (NAS)**, have been published.
- Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development Rashtriya Sarvekshen (PARAKH RS) is a national-level assessment of student learning.
- It was **formerly known as the National Achievement Survey (NAS)**.
- The primary goal is to evaluate the **competencies of students in Grades 3, 6, and 9** to understand their baseline performance at the end of key educational stages. L.
- It assesses students in five key areas: language, mathematics, science, social science, and environmental understanding.
- The assessment is **released by PARAKH, set up in NCERT** as an independent constituent unit in 2023.
 - It is dedicated to enhancing the quality of education in India through competency-based assessment, achievement surveys, and the development of holistic progress cards.

Unicode Consortium

- **The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** rejoined the **Unicode Consortium as a Supporting Member** this year, becoming one of just two government members (the other being Oman) with a vote on the body.
- **Unicode** is a universal character encoding standard that assigns a **unique code to every character** from all writing systems across the world, including English, Hindi, Tamil, Arabic, Chinese, and even emojis.
- This ensures that **text appears consistently** across different devices, platforms, and software.
- For example, the English letter “A” has the code U+0041, while the Devanagari letter “अ” is U+0915, and the emoji “😊” is U+1F642.

- Unicode is maintained by the **California based NGO, Unicode Consortium**—which includes major tech companies like Google, Apple, and Microsoft.
- The IT Ministry was **previously a member** from 2000 to 2019, and then for one year in 2021.

ASCII is a foundational character encoding standard that uses a fixed 7-bit system to represent a limited set of 128 English characters, numbers, and symbols. In contrast, Unicode is a modern, universal standard that can represent over 144,000 characters from virtually all languages and is used to create a single, consistent encoding system for global communication.

WHO 3 by 35 Initiative

- The World Health Organization (WHO) launched the “3 by 35” initiative to **reduce use of harmful products** (tobacco, alcohol, sugary drinks) by raising their real prices by 50% by 2035 through health taxes.
- The initiative aims to prevent 50 million premature deaths over 50 years and raise US\$1 trillion in the next decade.
- **Non-Communicable Diseases** (like heart disease, cancer, diabetes) cause 75% of global deaths.
- From 2012–2022, **140 countries increased tobacco taxes**, raising real prices by over 50%.
- **India** taxes cigarettes under GST (28%) + cess, but bidis and smokeless tobacco, widely used by low-income groups, remain under-taxed.

India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI)

- The India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) 2024 was launched by **NITI Aayog**, to assess and guide states on their **electric vehicle (EV) transition**.
- The index **scores each state on a scale of 0 to 100** based on **16 key indicators**, categorized into **three themes**: transport electrification progress, charging infrastructure readiness, and EV research and innovation.
- The index categorizes states and Union Territories into **three performance groups**— **Frontrunners** (scoring 65-99), **Performers** (50-64), and **Aspirants** (0-49)
- No State has scored 100 to claim ‘Achiever’ status.
- **Delhi** (score 77), **Maharashtra** (68), and **Chandigarh** (65) have been respectively ranked one, two, and three and listed as the only three ‘Front-runners’ on the list.
- They are followed by the ‘Performers’, Karnataka (64), Tamil Nadu (59) and Haryana (54).
- All remaining States and UTs have ‘Aspirant’ status.
- **Findings** state that national EV penetration has risen from 0.5% in 2018 to 7.7% in 2024, and over 25,000 public charging stations installed nationwide.

MERITE Scheme

- The Union Cabinet approved the **MERITE Scheme** to strengthen technical education in **275 government and aided institutions** including engineering colleges, polytechnics, and technical universities.
- Implemented as a **Central Sector Scheme** (2025–30) with an outlay of **₹4,200 crore** (₹2,100 crore as a World Bank loan), it aims to improve quality assurance, governance, accreditation, and industry-aligned curricula.
- Key interventions include **internships, faculty development, research hubs, incubation centers, skill labs, and language workshops**, enhancing graduate employability, placements, and reducing unemployment

Adi Karmayogi initiative

- **Adi Karmayogi initiative** is a **Tribal Affairs Ministry** programme that aims to create **20 lakh change leaders** in tribal villages to improve last-mile delivery of welfare schemes.
- Launched in 2025 under the **Dharti Aba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyaan**, promotes self-driven solutions and helps residents prepare “**Village Vision 2030**” documents, to be used as blueprints for state action.
- It also establishes **one lakh Adi Sewa Kendras** as single-point centers to ensure 100% saturation of welfare schemes

Definitive list of Ayurveda Aahara Products

- The FSSAI, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Ayush**, has released a definitive list of **Ayurveda Aahara products** to standardize traditional Ayurvedic food formulations under modern food safety norms.
- Based on recipes and processes from classical Ayurvedic texts listed in Schedule A of the **Food Safety and Standards (Ayurveda Aahara) Regulations, 2021**.
- This ensures authenticity and adherence to traditional formulations.
- **Ayurveda Aahara** refers to foods aligned with Ayurvedic dietary principles, emphasising balance, seasonal suitability, and natural ingredients with therapeutic benefits.

UDISE+ 2024-25 report

- The **Unified District Information System for Education+ (UDISE+) 2024-25 report** released by the Ministry of Education provides a comprehensive overview of school education in India.
- **UDISE** was **started in 2012-13**, as a unified platform to collect and manage data on school education across India and in 2018-19 is UDISE+ with expanded data coverage to include **infrastructure quality, learning outcomes, digital access, sanitation, inclusivity, and other indicators**
- **Key highlights: Dropout** rates fell (Preparatory 2.3%, Middle 3.5%, Secondary 8.2%), while retention improved (Foundational 98.9%, Preparatory 92.4%, Middle 82.8%, Secondary 47.2%).
- **Gross enrolment** rose to 90.3% (Middle) and 68.5% (Secondary). **School infrastructure** improved with 64.7% having computers, 63.5% internet, 93.6% electricity, and 99.3% safe drinking water.
- **Girls' enrolment** reached 48.3%; sanitation is nearly universal, and accessibility for children with disabilities rose to 54.9%.
- **Single-teacher schools** fell 6%, zero-enrolment schools 38%, and female teachers now make up 54.2% of staff.

The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2025

- **India ranks 115th** in the Global Peace Index 2025, showing gradual improvement despite South Asia being the second least peaceful region.
- The **Global Peace Index (GPI) 2025**, by the Institute for Economics and Peace, reports a **0.36% decline** in global peacefulness.
- The GPI evaluates **163 countries** using **23 indicators** across **societal safety, conflict, and militarisation**.
- **Iceland** retains the top spot as the world's most peaceful country.

- The **Middle East and North Africa** remain the least peaceful region for the tenth consecutive year.
- **India's GPI score:** 2.229, improving slightly from 2024. Nine indicators improved, three worsened, and nine remained unchanged.
- India ranks **above Bangladesh (#123), Pakistan (#144), and Afghanistan (#158)**

Ramon Magsaysay Award

- An Indian non-profit organisation, '**Educate Girls**', working for education of **out-of-school girls in remote villages** is among the 2025 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees announced recently.
- **The Foundation to Educate Girls Globally, widely known as 'Educate Girls,'** has made history as the **first Indian organisation** to receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award.
- Considered the **Asian equivalent of the Nobel Prize**, the Ramon Magsaysay Award recognises the greatness of spirit shown in selfless service to the peoples of Asia.
- The 2025 Awardees will each receive a medallion bearing the likeness of **President Ramon Magsaysay**, a certificate inscribed with their citation, and a cash prize.
- **Ramon Magsaysay** was the seventh **President of the Philippines**, known for his integrity, populist reforms, and strong stance against communism.
- Following his death in 1957, the Award was established in his honor **to recognize individuals in Asia who demonstrate the same "greatness of spirit"** and selfless service that he championed.

Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan

- The **Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan** was launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in partnership with the UN in India.
- It aims to be the **world's largest tribal grassroots leadership movement**, empowering tribal communities through youth leadership. It comprises two key schemes:
 - ✓ **Adi Yuva Fellowship** – A first-of-its-kind **12-month paid fellowship** for tribal youth.

- ✓ **Adi Karmayogi Volunteers Programme** – Supported by **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**, this initiative equips tribal youth to act as **catalysts for grassroots change**, improving last-mile delivery of government and social services in tribal regions.

- The initiative targets **11 crore citizens** across **one lakh tribal villages** in **550 districts** of **30 States and UTs** in India



7 Toppers

from Fortune IAS Cleared in Their

1st Attempt

"Achieve your Dream with Fortune IAS"

October

The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP)

- The BBBP scheme launched in **2015, at Panipat, Haryana** has completed a decade.
- **Goals:** Improve Child Sex Ratio (CSR), prevent gender-biased sex selection, promote survival, protection, and education of the girl child.
- **Implementing ministries:** Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Education.
- It is now **integrated with Mission Shakti** for implementation during the **15th Finance Commission period, i.e., from 2021-22 to 2025-26**.
- **Key Achievements:** Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) improved from 918 (2014-15) to 930 (2023-24); girls' secondary enrollment rose from 75.5% to 78%; institutional deliveries increased from 61% to over 97%.

Pandemic Emergency

- **WHO's International Health Regulations (IHR)** has been amended to include a new category of "pandemic emergency".
- **Pandemic emergency** is defined as a public health crisis caused by a **communicable disease** that spreads across multiple countries, **overwhelms health systems**, disrupts society and the economy, and **requires rapid, coordinated international and whole-of-society** response
- WHO's IHR is a **legally binding** framework upon **196 States Parties (194 WHO members and 2 non-members)**, to help them prevent, detect, and respond to cross-border public health risks.
- The IHR has its **roots** in 19th-century Europe, starting with the **1851 International Sanitary Conference on cholera and later including plague, yellow fever etc.**
- In 1969, IHR was adopted by the **World Health Assembly (WHA)** replacing earlier international sanitary conventions.

PM-SETU Scheme

- Recently the Prime Minister of India launched the **PM-SETU (Prime Minister's Scheme for Empowerment through Technology Upgradation)**.
- Under the PM-SETU, **new, demand-driven courses will be introduced** in a bid to transform **1,000 government vocational training Industrial Training Institutes (ITI)** across India into modern, industry-aligned training institutions.
- It will follow a **hub-and-spoke model** and envisages strengthening of National Skill Training Institutes as Centres of Excellence with global partnerships.
- **The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** said that **special purpose vehicles** will be set up under the Rs 60,000-crore scheme to manage clusters and ensure outcome-based training.
- A **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** is a separate entity created to manage a specific project or goal, keeping its finances and risks separate.

PM VIKAS Scheme

- **The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA)** recently signed an MoU for a **skilling project under the Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS)** scheme with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Palakkad.
- **PM VIKAS** is a **skilling initiative by the Ministry of Minority Affairs** targeting **minority and artisan communities** for skill development, entrepreneurship, and leadership training.
- The scheme aims to select art and craft clusters in **Minority Concentrated Areas (MCAs)** for implementation.
- Implemented in alignment with **Skill India Mission** and the **Skill India Portal**, it integrates five schemes: **Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni, and Nai Manzil**.
- This **Central Sector Scheme** runs under the **15th Finance Commission cycle**.

The Nobel Prize 2025

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine

- **Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell and Shimon Sakaguchi** were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2025 for their fundamental discoveries relating to **peripheral immune tolerance**.
- Our **immune system** is a complex of several kinds of cells – **B cells, T cells, neutrophils, macrophages** – that have a role in identifying and eliminating foreign bodies that may bring with it disease.
- However, without regulation, these cells **can mistakenly attack** the body's own tissues, causing **autoimmune diseases**.
- The laureates found that **regulatory T cells monitor and control other immune cells**, ensuring the immune system attacks only harmful invaders and not the body itself.
- Their discovery is important because it explains how the body maintains **immune tolerance**—preventing autoimmune disorders—and provides a **foundation for new treatments for diseases** such as type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and even cancer immunotherapy.

Nobel Prize in Physics

- The **2025 Nobel Prize in Physics** was awarded to **John Clarke, Michel H. Devoret, and John Martinis** for their work on **macroscopic quantum tunnelling and energy quantisation in electric circuits**.
- They showed that quantum effects, like **tunnelling**—where particles pass through barriers—can be observed in **large-scale systems**.
- Using a **Josephson junction** with two superconductors, they controlled a collective behavior of particles, making them act like a single “particle” and simulate electricity flow even without voltage.
- A **Josephson junction** consists of **two superconductors separated by a thin insulating layer**, allowing **Cooper pairs** (paired electrons that move without resistance in a superconductor) to **tunnel across the barrier** due to quantum effects.

- This enables **supercurrent flow without voltage** and forms the basis of **quantum circuits and superconducting qubits**.

Quantum tunneling is a quantum phenomenon where particles can pass through barriers they cannot cross according to classical physics. This happens because particles also behave like **waves**, giving them a probability to “tunnel” through obstacles. It is key to processes like **nuclear fusion, semiconductors**, and can even be demonstrated in **macroscopic superconducting circuits**.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry

- The **2025 Nobel Prize in Chemistry** was awarded to **Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson, and Omar Yaghi** for creating **Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs)**.
- **MOFs** are a revolutionary type of material made by connecting **metal ions with organic (carbon-based) molecules**.
- This forms a **crystalline structure full of tiny cavities**, making MOFs highly porous.
- The key **finding** is that MOFs can be **designed to trap, store, or release specific molecules** with great precision.
- By changing the metal ions or organic linkers, scientists can tailor MOFs for different purposes.
- The **importance** of MOFs lies in their wide-ranging applications: they can **capture carbon dioxide, filter harmful chemicals like PFAS from water, break down pharmaceutical residues in the environment**, or even **harvest water from desert air**.
- They can also **drive chemical reactions or conduct electricity**, offering solutions for energy, environmental, and industrial challenges.

Nobel Prize in Literature

- The **2025 Nobel Prize in Literature** was awarded to **Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai**.
- Born in 1954 in Gyula, Hungary, he gained fame with his 1985 debut **Satantango**, a postmodern novel depicting a collapsing rural community.
- Known for **long, intense sentences**, he is often compared to **Gogol, Melville, and Kafka**.
- Last year, the prize went to **South Korean writer Han Kang**

Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the **Sveriges Riksbank Prize** in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2025 to Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt for having explained innovation-driven economic growth.
- Mokyr demonstrated, using historical analysis, that **sustained growth requires not only inventions but also scientific understanding of why innovations work**.
- Aghion and Howitt developed the **“creative destruction” model**, showing how new innovations replace older products or firms, driving growth while creating conflicts with established businesses.
- Their work **explains why modern economies have grown rapidly** over the last two centuries, lifting millions out of poverty, and guides policymakers and businesses in fostering innovation, managing economic transitions, and addressing global growth disparities.

Nobel Peace Prize

- The **2025 Nobel Peace Prize** was awarded to **María Corina Machado** for her efforts to **promote democracy** and human rights in **Venezuela** and push for a peaceful transition from dictatorship.
- Venezuela has shifted from a democratic, prosperous country to an authoritarian state facing **economic and humanitarian crises**, with widespread poverty and systematic suppression of opposition through election manipulation and legal persecution..

Note: Only the **Nobel Peace Prize** is awarded by the **Norwegian** Nobel Committee, appointed by the Norwegian Parliament, while all other Nobel Prizes are by **Swedish** institutions—Physics, Chemistry, and Economic Sciences (Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), Medicine (Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institute) and Literature (Swedish Academy)

Commonwealth Games 2030

- India has been formally ratified as the host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games, with Ahmedabad (Amdavad), Gujarat as venue.
 - This has paved the way for staging the event a second time as New Delhi hosted the game in 2010.
 - As the host, India can propose up to two new or traditional sports and the Indian delegation said one of the sports identified is yoga.
 - The Commonwealth or the Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary organization of 56 member countries, including India, the UK, Canada, and Australia.
 - Members are sovereign and independent but work together through shared values, agreements,
 - Commonwealth Games are quadrennial international multisport events contested by athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations and managed by the Commonwealth Games Federation, based in London, England.
- ➔ The first ever Commonwealth Games was held in the Canadian city of Hamilton in 1930.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

- The 2024 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development was awarded to Michelle Bachelet,
- Chile's first woman President, for reforms promoting inclusive pensions, social protection for women and children, and increased women's political participation.
- Instituted in 1985 to honor Indira Gandhi's contributions, the prize is administered by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust and includes Rs. 10 million, a trophy, and a citation.
- The trophy, made of Haematite Jasper—the same stone as at Gandhi's samadhi in New Delhi—is one of India's hardest stones, estimated to be 2,000 million years old.

UNESCO Creative Cities Network

- Lucknow has been named a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy during the 43rd UNESCO General Conference in Uzbekistan, celebrating its centuries-old Awadhi cuisine and food traditions.
- It joins 70 gastronomy cities worldwide and is the second Indian city after Hyderabad.
- Famous for dishes like Galouti Kabab, Awadhi Biryani, Chaat, Golgappe, and desserts like Makhan Malai, Lucknow's recognition highlights its rich culinary heritage.
- The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), established in 2004, promotes collaboration among cities leveraging creativity for sustainable urban development.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

- India's Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), launched in 1975, has completed 50 years.
- ICDS is the world's largest community-based programme for child nutrition, early learning, and maternal health.
- It is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by States/UTs and is now under Mission POSHAN 2.0.
- Targeting children up to 6 years and women aged 16–44, services are delivered at local Anganwadi centres by Anganwadi Workers.
- ICDS combines health, education, and nutrition, offering supplementary nutrition, pre-school education, immunisation, health check-ups, referrals, and nutrition education.

GI Tag

- 3 new products of India received Geographical Indication (GI) tag under Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- A GI tag recognises products that possess unique qualities or characteristics linked to their geographical origin.

- The Geographical Indications Registry under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** grants the tag which is valid for 10 years, renewed indefinitely.
- Both Indian and Non-Indian items (must have GI recognition in their own country first) can get the recognition.

Meerut Bugle:

- The bugle is a brass wind instrument used by the armed forces for signaling, parades, and ceremonies.
- Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, has been a center of bugle-making since the late 19th century, and most of India's army, paramilitary, and police forces still use Meerut-made bugles



Arunachal Dao:

- The 'dao' is a handcrafted multipurpose blade symbolizing the courage, cultural heritage, and metallurgical tradition of Arunachal Pradesh's tribal communities.



Ambaji Marble:

- Ambaji marble, quarried in Ambaji town, Gujarat, is renowned for its pure white color, exceptional shine, high calcium content, and durability.
- Its mines date back 1,200–1,500 years, around the period of the Dilwara Jain Temples in Mount Abu.



December

Asia Power Index



- India has secured **third ranking in the Asia Power Index 2025**, while the U.S. and China occupy the first and second spots.
- The Index is published annually by the **Australia-based think tank, Lowy Institute** and it assesses the ability of nations, **particularly of those in the Asian continent**, to influence their external environment.
- It evaluates the **power of 27 countries and territories across Asia**, based on 131 indicators across eight thematic measures, including Military Capability and Defence Networks, Economic Capability and Relationships, Diplomatic and Cultural Influence and Resilience and Future Resources.
- India kept its position at No. 3 in 2025, surpassing Japan last year, with a comprehensive power score of **over 40 points, indicating it is a "major power"**.

Project Mausam

- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** held a national workshop on **Project Mausam**.
- Launched in **2014** by the **Ministry of Culture**, Project Mausam is a **cultural-diplomacy and maritime heritage initiative** implemented by ASI with support from Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (**IGNCA**) and **National Museum**.

- It documents the **diverse cultural, commercial, and religious interactions** across the Indian Ocean, covering **39 countries**, and aims to nominate key sites for **UNESCO World Heritage status**.
- The project also promotes **research on maritime routes** through international seminars and a **multidisciplinary approach**

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

- The Centrally sponsored **PMGSY** marked **25 years in December 2025**, a milestone in rural infrastructure.
- Launched in **2000** by the **Ministry of Rural Development**, it provides **all-weather road connectivity** to previously unconnected villages, linking them to **markets, schools, and healthcare**.
- Currently in **Phase 4 (2024–29)**, PMGSY has sanctioned about **8.25 lakh roads**, with **95% completed**.
- It has **technology-driven monitoring** by using OMMAS (Online Management, Monitoring and Accounting System), e-MARG (electronic Maintenance of Rural Roads under PMGSY), GPS tracking, and a three-tier quality system to ensure accountability and durability

Reservation for Agniveers in CAPFs

- The Union Home Ministry has increased reservation for ex-Agniveers in Group-C posts of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) from 10% to 50%, exempting them from Physical Standard and Efficiency Tests, though they must still clear the written exam.
- The **Agnipath Scheme**, launched on 14 June 2022 and implemented from September 2022, is a short-term recruitment program for the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- Under this scheme, young recruits called **Agniveers** serve a four-year “tour of duty,” and will be recruited as **personnel below officer (PBOR) rank**.
- **About 25% of Agniveers are retained** in regular service based on merit, while the rest exit with a service certificate, skills training, and a **Seva Nidhi** corpus of ₹11–12 lakh (tax-free).

- **Eligibility** is 17.5–21 years (relaxed to 23 for the 2022 batch), open to all genders and classes.
- Agniveers **receive** ₹30,000–40,000 per month plus **allowances**, life insurance, and compensation for death or disability, but no pension for those released.

CAPFs in India are **Central Armed Police Forces under the Ministry of Home Affairs** tasked with maintaining **internal security, border guarding, law and order, and counter-insurgency**. The seven CAPFs are: **BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP, SSB, Assam Rifles, and NSG**, each with specialized roles in **border security, critical infrastructure protection, internal security, and counter-terrorism**.

Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)

- UNESCO has added **Riyadh, AlUla, and Riyadh Al-Khabra** to its **Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)** in 2025.
- Established in **2013**, the GNLC now includes **425 cities from 91 countries**, promoting **lifelong learning, inclusive education, and learning ecosystems** across families, communities, and workplaces.
- It encourages cities to develop **inclusive, accessible, and sustainable learning ecosystems** across **schools, workplaces, communities, and families**
- It supports **SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities)**.
- India’s three GNLC cities, added in 2022, are **Warangal, Thrissur, and Nilambur**.

PM-WANI Scheme

- Parliament was told that as of **November 2025**, over **3.9 lakh PM-WANI Wi-Fi hotspots** have been deployed across India.
- The **Prime Minister’s Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI)**, launched by the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** in 2020, is a flagship initiative to **expand public Wi-Fi access across India**, with a focus on **rural and underserved areas**.

PM-WANI ecosystem:

- ➔ **Public Data Office (PDO):** A small shop or business sets up a Wi-Fi hotspot using a regular broadband connection from a licensed ISP. No separate license is required.

- ➔ **Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA):** The PDO registers with a PDOA, which handles authentication, accounting, and management for multiple PDOs.
 - ➔ **App Providers:** Users access the Wi-Fi through mobile apps or portals provided by App Providers, which connect them to the PDO network.
 - ➔ **Central Registry:** All PDOs, PDOAs, and App Providers are recorded in the Central Registry (maintained by C-DoT) for transparency and regulation.
- PM-WANI Wi-Fi offers highly **affordable, low-cost internet** often with a small free introductory period (like the first 30 mins), followed by **paid plans** that are significantly cheaper than mobile data

Sanchar Saathi App



- The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has mandated (later revoked) that all smartphones sold from March 2026 must come with the **Sanchar Saathi** app pre-installed.
- Launched as a **web portal in 2023** and as a **mobile app in January 2025**, it empowers users to **track, block, and trace lost or stolen phones via IMEI**, verify mobile connections in their name, and report suspicious or forged KYC entries.
- It includes features like **Chakshu** that help report fraud calls, SMS, WhatsApp messages, and digital scams, while the app also detects counterfeit devices and international spoofed calls.
- Voluntary and user-consent based, it complies with the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023**, ensuring privacy, transparency, and individual control.

GI Tags

Product	Place	Description	Image
Ambasamudram Choppu Saman	Tamil Nadu	Handcrafted wooden miniature kitchen toys traditionally used in Navaratri Golu displays .	
Thooyamalli Rice Variety	Tamil Nadu	A fragrant, low-glycemic traditional rice rich in minerals and suitable for diabetic diets.	
Namakkal Makkal Pathirangal	Tamil Nadu	Traditional soapstone cookware (kalchatti) used in South Indian kitchens since ancient times.	 3. Namakkal makkal pathirangal (soapstone cookware)
Kavindapadi Nattu Sakkarai	Erode district, Tamil Nadu	A distinctive jaggery powder made by slowly evaporating sugarcane juice sourced from Lower Bhavani canal-fed fields.	
Woraiyur Cotton Sari	Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu	A traditional cotton sari woven on korvai looms (traditional South Indian handloom technique for weaving Kanchipuram silk sarees) to create a seamless border and body.	
Darjeeling Mandarin Orange	West Bengal	A fragrant and flavourful orange variety, locally called suntala , a major cash crop of the region.	
Ponduru Khadi	Andhra Pradesh	A khadi from woven using pesticide-free short-staple Punasa and hill cotton, uniquely ginned with fish jawbones and admired by Mahatma Gandhi.	

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize



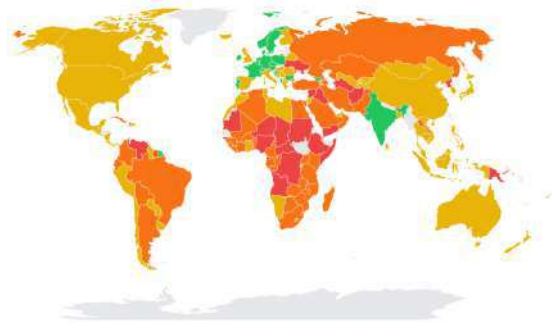
- Recently, **Mozambican rights activist Graca Machel** has been selected for the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2025.
- The award, also called the **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize**, has been presented **annually** since **1986** by the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust** in honor of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- It honours individuals or organisations for **outstanding contributions to international peace, disarmament and development**.
- It consists of a **monetary award of Rs.10 million along with a citation** and **awarded to a person or organization** without any distinction of nationality, race or religion or gender.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- The Union Cabinet approved the **continuation of the Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** up to FY 2030-31.
- Launched on **9 May 2015**, APY aims to provide a **universal social security system**, especially for the poor, underprivileged, and unorganised sector workers.
- Administered by the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** under the National Pension System (NPS), it is open to **citizens aged 18–40** (excluding income taxpayers) and guarantees a **lifelong pension of ₹1,000–5,000 from age 60**, with benefits for spouses and nominees.
- Contributions are eligible for **tax benefits**, with a minimum 20-year contribution period.

Responsible Nations Index

- India launched the **Responsible Nations Index (RNI)**, a global framework aimed at **assessing countries on ethical governance**, social well-being, environmental stewardship and global responsibility, moving **beyond traditional measures of power and economic strength**.
- RNI is **developed by the World Intellectual Foundation (WIF)** in collaboration with Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), IIM Mumbai, and the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre.
- It is a pioneering, **India-led framework evaluating 154 nations on ethical, environmental, and social responsibility rather than just GDP** and in the inaugural 2026 report, **Singapore ranked 1st, while India secured 16th place**.
- It is structured around **three core dimensions**, namely
 - ★ **Internal responsibility:** It focuses on dignity, justice, and the well-being of citizens;
 - ★ **Environmental responsibility:** It is covering stewardship of natural resources and climate action.
 - ★ **External responsibility:** It measures a country's contribution to peace, cooperation, and global stability



Top 20 (High Responsibility) Rank 21-80 (Medium) Rank 81-130 (Low-Medium) Rank 131-154 (Low) No Data

The Padma Awards



Padma Vibhushan

Padma Bhushan

Padma Shri

- The Padma Awards 2026 were announced on the eve of Republic Day.
- It is **one of India's highest civilian honours**, conferred **to recognise distinguished and exceptional service involving an element of public service across diverse fields**.
- It was **instituted by the Government Of India in 1954** which originally had three classes later renamed in 1955 as Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.
- The Awards are given in three categories: **Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service)**, **Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher order)** and **Padma Shri (distinguished service)**.
- It is **open to all persons irrespective of race, gender, occupation or position; Government servants (including PSU employees) are generally not eligible**, except doctors and scientists and **normally not conferred posthumously**, but allowed in exceptional cases.
- Nominations for **Padma Awards** are invited online annually (public, officials, awardees, MPs, ministries, institutes) via **padmaawards.gov.in** or **awards.gov.in**.
- The **Padma Awards Committee**, constituted annually by the Prime Minister, headed by the **Cabinet Secretary** and including senior officials and eminent persons, evaluates nominations based on **lifetime contributions** and recommends candidates to the **Prime Minister and President**.
- Awards are **announced on Republic Day eve** and presented at **Rashtrapati Bhavan** in March/April.
- The **awardees receive a Sanad (certificate) and a medallion** and it **does not constitute a title and cannot be used as a prefix or suffix**.
- According to guidelines, the total number of Padma Awards granted in a year is limited to a **maximum of 120**.
 - ✓ This, however, does not include awards given to foreigners, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), and posthumous awards.

Land Stack



- The Land Stack, a **GIS-based digital platform to centralize land records**, was launched by the Ministry of **Rural Development**.
- Piloted in Chandigarh and Tamil Nadu, it offers **single-window access to land data**, aiming to modernize land governance, reduce fraud, and increase transparency..
- **Land Stack** consolidates all land-related data (in stacks)—such as ownership records, boundaries, transactions, and revenue details—into a **single accessible system** for citizens, officials, and other stakeholders.
- It was **launched under the Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP)**.
- It uses **Geographic Information System (GIS) technology** to **map land parcels, boundaries, and attributes spatially**, allowing visual representation, analysis, and better decision-making for land management, planning, and e-governance.
- This **helps** prevent disputes, reduce fraudulent transactions, and improve inter-departmental coordination.

SANKALP scheme

- The **Public Accounts Committee (PAC)** recently criticised the government for slow progress and weak monitoring of the **SANKALP scheme**.
- Launched in **2018** by the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** with **World Bank support**, **SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion)** is a flagship programme to improve **short-term skill training**.
- This **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** focuses on **institutional strengthening, quality assurance, and inclusion of women, SC/ST, and PwD**, while aligning training with **industry needs**.
- The scheme strengthens **District Skill Committees** and works closely with Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) to provide certified, market-relevant skills.
- Its goal is to enhance **employability, livelihoods, and inclusive skill development** across India.

Note: The PAC is a **financial standing committee** of the **Indian Parliament** established in 1921, **oversees government revenue and expenditure** to ensure accountability, transparency, and proper use of public funds. It reviews reports from the **Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)** on appropriation accounts, aiming to detect and prevent waste, corruption, and financial irregularities.

Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)

- The Union Home Minister recently launched **Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)** in Assam's Cachar district to support the overall development of villages along India's borders.
- Building on VVP-I, which focused on northern borders, VVP-II covers border villages across **15 States and 2 UTs**: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, J&K (UT), Ladakh (UT), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal

- The programme aims to **improve infrastructure, provide better living conditions, and create sustainable livelihoods** to reduce out-migration and strengthen strategic villages.
- It focuses on ensuring **essential services for all**, such as **all-weather roads, reliable electricity, telecom and TV connectivity**, and other basic amenities, with implementation planned from FY 2024–25 to 2025–26 and funding support available until 2028–29.

Bharat-VISTAAR

- The Union Agriculture Minister launched **Bharat-VISTAAR** (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources), an AI-powered multilingual platform announced in the 2026–27 Budget.
- It provides **real-time, personalised advisories** to farmers via voice, chat, and mobile access, acting as a single digital gateway for schemes, markets, and grievance redressal.
- Initially in Hindi and English, it will expand to **11 languages** and includes a toll-free helpline (155261) and AI assistant "Bharati."
- Integrating **AgriStack portals and ICAR practices**, it covers schemes like PM-KISAN, PMFBY, Soil Health Card, and Kisan Credit Card, helping farmers improve productivity, decision-making, and risk management.

Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)

- The Union Cabinet has approved the launch of the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) with ₹1 lakh crore Central assistance to drive market-led urban transformation.
- UCF is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** designed to **support transformative and bankable urban infrastructure projects** through a competitive **"challenge mode"** framework implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.
- The **challenge mode** means cities compete for funding by submitting projects, and only the most **innovative, high-impact, and reform-linked proposals** are selected.

- It ensures resources go to initiatives that can **transform cities** and attract **private investment**, rather than funding all projects automatically.
- **At least half of the project funding** must come from **market sources** like municipal bonds, bank loans, or public-private partnerships, reducing dependence on government funds.
- Funding is linked to **reforms** in governance, finance, operations, and urban planning, verified by independent agencies.
- UCF targets **major cities, state capitals, and smaller urban local bodies**, including those in hilly and North-Eastern regions, to build resilient, inclusive, and climate-responsive urban spaces.

- It offers a high-frequency, 160–180 km/h service, aimed at reducing traffic congestion and travel time between major regional hubs
- The **National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)**, a joint venture between the central government and the state governments of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, is responsible for **implementing the RRTS project across the NCR**.

FASTER THAN METROS, MORE FREQUENT THAN TRAINS



Corruption Perceptions Index 2025

- India improved slightly on the **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**, moving to **91st place** in 2025 from 96th in 2024, with a score of **39/100** (0 = highly corrupt, 100 = very clean).
- Released by Berlin, Germany based NGO. **Transparency International**, the CPI ranks 182 countries based on perceived public sector corruption.
- Globally, the **average score has dropped to 42**, and only **5 countries (Denmark, Finland, Singapore, New Zealand, Norway) scored above 80**.
- Denmark tops the list with 89, while **Somalia and South Sudan remain at the bottom** with 9.
- **India's modest improvement** reflects reforms and digitalization, though challenges like bureaucratic opacity and weak enforcement persist.

Lakhpati Didi Initiative

- The Union Minister for Rural Development has directed officials to achieve the revised target of **6 crore 'Lakhpati Didis'** by March 2029.
- A **Lakhpati Didi** is a woman member of a **Self-Help Group (SHG)** earning at least ₹1 lakh per year for four consecutive agricultural or business cycles, reflecting sustained income generation.
- The initiative operates under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**, which focuses on promoting women's economic empowerment.
- To officially count as a **Lakhpati Didi**, the woman must be a member of a Self-Help Group **supported under DAY-NRLM**
- Its strategy includes **expanding livelihood options, capacity building through cascade training, and providing financial assistance and credit linkages** to help women cross the income threshold.

Note: Cascade training is a "train-the-trainer" method where a **small group of master trainers is trained, who then train smaller groups, cascading knowledge down to the final target audience.**

Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

- The Prime Minister has recently launched the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) to boost regional connectivity.
- RRTS, earlier called RapidX and now branded as "Namo Bharat," is **India's first dedicated, semi-high-speed rail network** designed for fast, intercity commuting within the **National Capital Region (NCR)**.

Winter Olympics

- The **25th Winter Olympic Games known as Milano Cortina 2026** was recently held in Italy.
- The Winter Games took place in two main hubs: **Milan**, the second-most populous city in Italy, and **Cortina**, an upscale winter resort in the Dolomites mountain range in the Alps.
- The first Winter Olympic Games were held in **1924 in Chamonix, France**.
- **Originally held in the same year as the Summer Olympics**, the Winter Games were shifted to a **separate four-year cycle in 1994** to alternate every two years with the Summer Games.
- The Winter Olympic Games feature **sports played on snow or ice**, with athletes competing in fifteen events for medals.
- The 2026 edition saw **Norway** topping the medals table followed by **the USA and Netherlands**.
- **India won no medals** but had a two-member team—**Arif Mohammad Khan** (alpine skiing) and **Stanzin Lundup** (cross-country skiing)
- **The International Olympic Committee (IOC)**, based in Lausanne, Switzerland, is the independent, non-profit governing body of the Winter Olympics.
- The **next Winter Olympics** are scheduled to take place in the **French Alps in 2030**, followed by **Salt Lake City, USA**, in 2034.

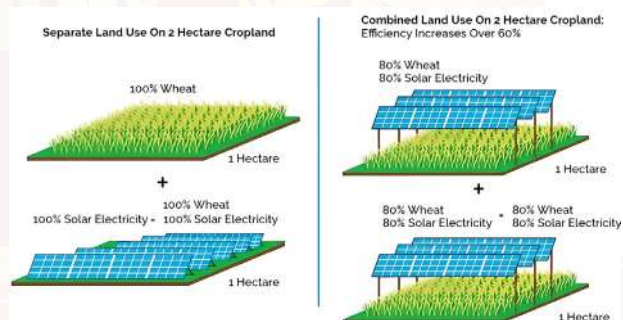


March

Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC)

- The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B)** ordered the **Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC)** to stop publishing **Television Rating Points (TRPs)** for news channels till further notice.
- This is due to **“unwarranted sensationalism”** and speculative reporting of the **Israel-Iran conflict**.
- **TRP**, which measures TV program viewership, is **calculated weekly by BARC** using **“BAR-O-meters”** in 45,000 panel households to guide advertisers.
- It guides advertisers in buying ad spots.
- **Established in 2010** as per **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** recommendations, BARC is a **joint industry body**—broadcasters (60%), advertisers (20%), and media agencies (20%)—operating under I&B Ministry guidelines

Agri-photovoltaics (agriPV)



- In the **Union Budget 2026–27**, the outlay for the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)** scheme nearly doubled to ₹5,000 crore, with plans for a **National Agri-photovoltaics Mission** targeting **10 gigawatts (GW)** capacity.
- **Agri-photovoltaics (AgriPV)** enables dual land use by integrating solar panels with agriculture, creating a microclimate that benefits shade-tolerant crops.
- Panels are installed above or between crops, improving farmer income, conserving water, and protecting crops from extreme weather.
- As of 2026, around **50 pilot projects** exist, with plans to scale up under **PM-KUSUM 2.0**.

National Dental Commission

- The Government of India has constituted the **National Dental Commission (NDC)** under the **National Dental Commission Act, 2026**, replacing the **Dental Council of India (DCI)**.
- It is the apex statutory body regulating dental education, professional conduct, and institutional standards, aiming to improve quality and access to affordable oral healthcare.
- The commission will consist of **33 members**, headed by a Chairperson and includes 8 ex-officio members and 24 part-time members
- The NDC is supported by three boards—for **education, assessment and accreditation, and ethics and registration**—and is responsible for framing regulations, evaluating institutions and workforce, promoting research, and regulating fees in private dental colleges.

Stockholm Water Prize 2026

- **Kaveh Madani** has won the **2026 Stockholm Water Prize**, the world's most prestigious water-related award.
- Established in 1991 by the **Stockholm Water Foundation**, it is presented annually during **World Water Week** by the Swedish King and is often called the "Nobel Prize for Water."
- The prize honors contributions to water conservation, management, and sustainability, promoting innovation and awareness of global water challenges.
- Notable Indian winners include **Rajendra Singh (2015)**, **Bindeshwar Pathak (2009)**, and **M.A. Chitale (1993)**.

Kavach 4.0 System

- The Union Railway Minister informed that **Kavach 4.0** has been deployed over **1,452 route km** on the **Delhi–Mumbai and Delhi–Howrah corridors**.
- **Kavach**, India's indigenous **Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system**, was developed by the **Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO)** in collaboration with three Indian vendors.
- It was created to achieve **zero-accident targets** by automatically controlling train speeds and preventing collisions.
- Key Features of Kavach:
 - **Prevention of Collisions:** Prevents head-on and rear-end collisions, as well as Signal Passing At Danger (SPAD).
 - **Automatic Braking:** Automatically applies brakes if the loco pilot fails to do so in hazardous situations or over-speeding.
 - **High-Speed Support:** Useful for high speeds and foggy weather.
 - **Safety Standards:** Certified to Safety Integrity Level 4 (SIL-4), representing high reliability.
- It uses **RFID tags, onboard locomotive equipment, and radio towers** for real-time monitoring of train position and speed, triggering brakes in case of danger.

- Compared to earlier versions (primarily Version 3.2), **Kavach 4.0 is designed for** large-scale, high-density network deployment, offering higher speed capabilities, better precision, and improved integration with existing infrastructure.
- **Lucknow based RDSO**, established in **1957** is the sole **Research and Development (R&D) wing** of the Ministry of Railways and acts as a **technical advisor and consultant** to the Railway Board, Zonal Railways, and Railway Production Units, focusing on the design, standardization, and modernization of railway technology.

World Happiness Report

- The **World Happiness Report 2026**, backed by the UN, notes that heavy social media use is harming youth well-being.
- Published by the **University of Oxford's Wellbeing Research Centre** with Gallup and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, it ranks countries based on life evaluations (0–10 scale) from about **100,000 people across 140 countries**.
- Rankings consider factors like **GDP per capita, life expectancy, social support, freedom, generosity, and corruption**.
- **Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Costa Rica, and Sweden** rank highest, while **Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Malawi, and Zimbabwe** rank lowest.
- **India improved to 116th in 2026 (from 118th in 2025)**.

Jnanpith Award

- Tamil lyricist and author **R. Vairamuthu** has been selected for the **Jnanpith Award 2025**, India's highest literary honour.
- Instituted in **1961** by a private, non-profit **Bharatiya Jnanpith trust**, it is awarded annually for **lifetime contribution to literature** across languages listed in the **Eighth Schedule (and English)**.
- Initially given for a single work, since **1982** it recognizes overall contribution.
- First awarded in **1965 to G. Sankara Kurup**, it includes a **cash prize, citation, and a bronze Saraswati statuette**, and is conferred by the President of India.

- Importantly, the Jnanpith Award is **not a government award**.
- The selection and funding for award is by **Bharatiya Jnanpith trust**, a research and cultural organization **founded in 1944 by the industrialist Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain and his wife, Rama Jain**
- The **President of India presents it ceremonially**, which adds to its recognition.

Sahitya Akademi Award

- The Sahitya Akademi announced its **annual awards for 2025**.
- They are annual literary honours given in **24 languages** (22 in the Eighth Schedule + English and Rajasthani) for the most outstanding books of literary merit.
- Established in **1954**, they recognize **original works published in the previous 5 years** by Indian citizens across genres like poetry, novels, drama, and essays, with **one award per language**, carrying a **plaque, shawl, and ₹1 lakh**.
- The **Sahitya Akademi**, inaugurated by the Government of India under the **Ministry of Culture** and registered as a society under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**, is the apex body for literary promotion, dialogue, and publication in India, and the only institution working across **24 Indian languages**.

GI-Tagged Joha Rice

- The **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** has facilitated the first export consignment of 25 metric tonnes of GI-tagged Joha rice from Assam to the United Kingdom and Italy.
- Joha rice is an **indigenous aromatic rice variety from Assam** -- received the Geographical Indication status in 2017. Known for its **distinct fragrance, fine grain texture and rich taste**, the variety is increasingly gaining recognition in premium domestic and international markets.
- Other key **GI-tagged rice** includes **Basmati** (North India), **Chak-Hao** (Manipur), **Gobindobhog** (West Bengal), **Kalajeera** (Odisha), **Katarni** (Bihar), **Navara/Pokkali** (Kerala), and **Wada Kolam** (Maharashtra), **Thooyamalli Rice** (Tamil Nadu) ensuring authenticity and regional protection

Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)

- India's online gaming sector is now regulated by the **Online Gaming Authority of India (OGAI)**, which became operational under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), based on the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025** and its rules.
- The OGAI is a **six-member**, government-led digital regulator chaired by the Additional Secretary of MeitY, with representatives from the **Ministries** of Home Affairs, Information and Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports, Department of Financial Services, and Department of Legal Affairs..
- A primary role of the OGAI is to classify online games into three distinct categories:
 - **Online Money Games:** Games involving monetary stakes or user fees (notably, these are **banned** under the Act).
 - **Online Social Games:** Games with no monetary staking; these are subject to data localisation rules.
 - **Esports:** Organised, skill-based competitive gaming (recognized under the National Sports Governance Act) is allowed and promoted as a legitimate sporting activity.
- The framework brings **banks and payment gateways under compliance duties**, requiring them to verify a game's legal status and block or restrict payments for illegal **Online Money Games** as directed by OGAI.
- OGAI also functions as the **second tier of grievance redressal**, handling appeals after platform-level mechanisms.
- Additionally, it enforces **data localisation**, mandating that social gaming and esports platforms store user and traffic data within India.

Goldman Prize

- The **2026 Goldman Environmental Prize** has been awarded to six women environmental defenders from across the world for their grassroots efforts to protect nature and communities.
- Often called the **“Green Nobel,”** it is an annual award given to grassroots activists from six global regions and is considered the world's most prestigious environmental award.
- Established in **1989 by Richard and Rhoda Goldman**, winners are selected through a confidential expert network and an international jury, with announcements made every April around Earth Day.
- Each recipient receives a cash prize and the **“Ouroboros” bronze sculpture**, symbolising nature's renewal and interconnectedness.
- The 2026 edition is notable as the **first all-women cohort**, highlighting the growing role of women in environmental protection and climate justice.
- India** has had Goldman Environmental Prize winners such as **Medha Patkar (1992)** for the Narmada Bachao Andolan, **Ramesh Agrawal (2014)** for anti-illegal coal mining activism, and **Alok Shukla(2024)** for forest conservation efforts in Chhattisgarh.

NAMASTE Scheme

- The government announced **major progress under the NAMASTE Scheme**, highlighting large-scale profiling, PPE distribution, health insurance coverage, and financial assistance for sanitation workers.
- The **NAMASTE Scheme (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem)**, launched in **FY 2023–24** by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, aims to ensure **zero fatalities in sanitation work** and eliminate hazardous manual scavenging through mechanisation and worker safety.
- Under the scheme, over **90,000 sewer and septic tank workers have been profiled**, with around 87,000 provided PPE kits and more than 76,000 covered under health insurance schemes like Ayushman Bharat.
- The scheme also includes **e-KYC-based worker validation, PPE distribution, and awareness workshops** on safe sanitation practices.

- It targets **sewer and septic tank workers and waste pickers**, promoting dignity and safety in sanitation work.
- A new component supports “**sanipreneurs**” by offering a **25% capital subsidy** to private sanitation service providers for mechanised cleaning equipment, encouraging replacement of manual cleaning with machines

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)

- The **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs aimed at strengthening tribal livelihoods and entrepreneurship through better use of forest and tribal resources.
- It was designed by **merging two existing schemes**:
 - ★ **Mechanism** for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP)
 - ★ **Institutional Support** for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce
- The scheme operates through **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs)** (SHG clusters for value addition) and **Van Dhan Producer Enterprises (VDPEs)** (formal producer organisations for tribal entrepreneurship).
- It also provides a **100% centrally funded revolving fund** to state agencies to procure minor forest produce when market prices fall below MSP.
- It prioritises **PVTGs, aspirational districts, and Forest Rights Act beneficiaries**, and promotes **digital platforms, e-commerce marketing, and geo-tagging** for transparent monitoring and better market access.
- It is implemented through Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India (**TRIFED**), established in **1987** to empower tribal communities by **marketing their handicrafts and natural products**.
- It promotes tribal art and forest produce, **operates Tribes India retail outlets**, and implements **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras** for value addition and sustainable livelihoods.,

NCERT Becomes Deemed University

- The Ministry of Education has declared **NCERT and its six regional institutes** as **institutions deemed to be universities**, enabling them to offer academic programmes, including research, PhD, and other degree courses.
- This status **allows NCERT** to function as a **degree-granting institution**, subject to **University Grants Commission norms**, including a prohibition on commercial or profit-making activities.
- It is also permitted to establish **off-campus and international campuses** in line with UGC guidelines.
- The notification requires NCERT to obtain **NAAC and NBA accreditation**, participate in the **NIRF ranking framework**, and implement the **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)** system through digital student credit records.
- Established in **1961**, NCERT is an autonomous body that advises the government on improving school education quality.
- A **deemed-to-be university** is an institution granted university status by the Central Government on UGC recommendation due to academic excellence, allowing it to design courses and award degrees independently.
- Unlike Central or State universities (established by Acts) and private universities (set up by State Acts), deemed universities are not created through legislation but are given **functional autonomy**, while remaining regulated by the UGC and subject to periodic review.